



# BRAZILIAN DIPLOMATIC THOUGHT

Policymakers and Agents of Foreign Policy

(1750-1964)

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José Vicente de Sá Pimentel  
editor

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(1750-1964)

Volume II



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**Map of the front cover:**

Designed under Alexandre de Gusmão's guidance, the so-called "Mapa das Cortes" served as the basis for the negotiations of the Treaty of Madrid (1750).

**Map of the back cover:**

World-map made by the Venitian Jeronimo Marini in 1512, the first one to insert the name Brazil in it. It is also unique in placing the Southern Hemisphere at the top.

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PART II  
**THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE  
FIRST REPUBLIC**





## THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC (1889-1930)\*

*Rubens Ricupero*

The initial landmark of the period – the Abolition, the Republic, and the Federation in succession – differentiates it from the preceding period perhaps more sharply than the 1930 Revolution, its conventional closure, differs from what came later. The proclamation of the Republic, briefly anteceded by the abolition of slavery and followed soon after by the adoption of the federative system, represented an extraordinary and unquestionable change in the previous political, institutional, and social conditions.

The presidential republic, with presidents elected for four years and no reelection, replaced the monarchy of parliamentary governments, which were balanced by the Emperor's "moderating" powers. The 1891 Constitution introduced the federative regime, which strengthened regional leaderships and *de facto* state parties. The Federation took the place of monarchic centralization, and the governors, increasingly the source of the federal power as of the Campos Sales's presidency, took the place of the ephemeral

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\* Translated by João Moreira Coelho.

provincial presidents chosen by the Emperor, nearly always from outside the provinces.

The end of slavery, which for 350 years had been the country's "organic" institution par excellence, coincided with the unprecedented upsurge of the inflow of waves of immigrants from Western Europe, Japan, and the Middle East. The Old Republic marked the apex of immigration in Brazilian history: between 1890 and 1930, three million eight hundred thousand immigrants landed in the country. Immigration completed the development begun earlier toward a salaried labor regime and contributed to the emergence of a consumer market, helped by demographic expansion, internal migrations, and the growth of cities.

The coffee sector, whose expansion characterized the Empire's last decades, reached in the First Republic the apogee of its political and economic influence, determining the macro economy's orientation, and heavily weighing on exchange and foreign trade decisions. Capital accumulation in the hands of coffee producers and exporters, coupled with the existence of a consumer market and labor supplied by immigrants, created appropriate conditions for industrialization, further favored by the recurrent coffee economy crises and import financing difficulties. Industry, in turn, generated jobs and reinforced the urbanization trend.

In contrast, the Getúlio Vargas era (1930-1945) gives the impression of a transition phase to contemporary Brazil. The institutional arrangements – the 1934 Constitution and the 1937 Charter – seemed predestined to be short-lived. The ambitious idea of establishing a completely transformed political regime pompously baptized *Estado Novo* (New State) did not outlast Italian fascism, whose corporatism was its source of inspiration. This period's innovative legacy was felt less in the durability of institutional inventions and more markedly in the social and

economic changes that were already under way: industrialization, urbanization, and modernization of the State. Those fifteen years, which certainly do not belong to the First Republic, paved the way for the advent of the Second Republic and the 1946 Constitution, which would last until the 1964 military coup.

The fundamental internal logic, coherence, and continuity of the forty-one year long Old Republic had no correspondence in anything similar on the external front, a timespan that encompassed three heterogeneous phases of world history. The first twenty-five years (1889-1914), more than half of that period, were synchronic with the twilight of the protracted Victorian Era of European hegemony, the Age of Empires, and the intensification of imperialist and nationalist rivalries that would strike a fatal blow to the political and economic globalization of the *Belle Époque*. The little more than nine years of the Baron of Rio Branco's tenure as Minister (1902-1912) were entirely encapsulated in that quarter century.

There followed the four years of World War I (1914-1918), its diplomatic final curtain with the Treaty of Versailles (1919), and the frustrated attempt at rebuilding the international order destroyed by the conflict and by the dissolution of the multinational Austro-Hungarian, Czarist Russian, and Turco-Ottoman Empires.

Lastly, the unstable decade that closed the First Republic overlapped the turbulent 1920s, the beginnings of the Society of Nations' multilateralism, the trauma of hyperinflation, the consolidation of the Bolshevik Revolution, the 1929 New York Exchange collapse, and the approach of the Great Depression and of the 1930s crisis.

The interactions between the external context and the changes in Brazilian diplomacy gave shape in this historic phase to three structuring factors, that is, systemic factors destined to prevail far beyond the 1930s as differentiating features of the Brazilian foreign policy's orientation.

The first of these factors was the emergence and assertion of the United States' political power and of its economic radiation. The second had to do with the enhancement of a more intense, cooperative relationship among Latin American countries themselves, under the form of the Washington-sponsored Pan-Americanism or of autonomous Latin American initiatives. Finally, the third originated from the appearance of a new modality of diplomatic activity, the multilateral or parliamentary diplomacy, developed at the forums of the League of Nations and the Pan American Union that would succeed in creating in due time a strong multilateral tradition in the Brazilian foreign policy.

Diplomacy's three structural changes in the First Republic assumed forms that may be thus summarized: (1) the "Unwritten Alliance" with the United States; (2) the systematic solution of border issues, and emphasis on greater cooperation with Latin American relations; (3) and the first multilateral diplomacy's ventures in its regional, Pan-American version or in the League of Nations' global mode.

Brazilian diplomacy's "Americanization" was unquestionably the most visible and remarkable transformation of the time. Previously, under the Monarchy, Brazil's relations with the United States had been peripheral on both sides, despite later attempts to date the strengthening of ties between the two countries back to the United States' recognition of Brazilian Independence (1824). There was no lack of diplomatic incidents and sharp divergences between the two countries such as the episodes related to free navigation on the Amazon River, to the Rio de Janeiro Court's stance toward the American Civil War, or to Washington's refusal to recognize the Asuncion blockade during the Paraguayan War.

The proclamation of the Republic initiated the phase of identification with the American political model, when its institutions – the Constitution, Federalism, the country's name,

and, at one point, even the flag – were a source of inspiration at the inception of Republicanism among us. The prompt recognition of the 1889 regime by the Washington Government and its favorable attitude toward Floriano Peixoto during the Navy's Revolt consolidated the empathy born of political and ideological affinities, eliciting denunciations from monarchists such as Eduardo Prado in his *A Ilusão Americana* [The American Illusion]. Breaking with the monarchic tradition of abstaining from signing trade agreements with more powerful nations, in reaction against the “unequal treaties” with England, Brazil signed with the United States its first modern trade treaty, in 1891.

Approximation to the United States did not begin in Rio Branco's time, an erroneous later impression that aroused the jealousy of Salvador de Mendonça, a historical Republican, who, as the Republic's first diplomatic representative to Washington, had signed the trade treaty with Secretary of State James C. Blaine. Exasperated at seeing stolen from him the merit of having pioneered the new trend, Mendonça would afterwards resort to irony, saying that when the Baron of Rio Branco sent Joaquim Nabuco to discover America, it had already been discovered, measured, and demarcated – by him, obviously.

Be that as it may, it fell upon Rio Branco to promote, in his own words, the shifting of Brazil's diplomatic center from London to Washington. The establishment of a first Brazilian Embassy in the American Capital, at a time when embassies were rare (there were only six on the banks of the Potomac, and none in Rio de Janeiro) signaled, by its symbolism, that Brazil would favor relations with the United States from then on.

Suggestively, this happened in 1905, the year that, for historians of American diplomacy, coincided with the two events emblematic of the United States' emergence as a world power with global interests: President Theodore Roosevelt's mediation to end

the Russian-Japanese War; and the American participation in the Algeciras conference on the Agadir incident between France and Germany over Morocco.

Learning from the rise of the first world power in the Western Hemisphere, Rio Branco conceived the idea of integrating the Brazilian foreign policy's various dimensions, based on a close cooperation with the United States. What E. Bradford Burns would call the "Unwritten Alliance" consisted in pragmatically seeking assistance from the American power to further Brazilian diplomatic objectives – defense against the aggressive European imperialism, and affirmation concerning border issues or power litigation with South American neighbors. In return, Brazil was willing to support Washington's policies in the Caribbean, Central America, Mexico, and Panama under the nascent Pan-Americanism sponsored by the Americans.

This Americanist, or Monroist diplomacy, as it was called, would become a sort of paradigm that fully encompassed the Brazilian worldview. The virtual or unwritten alliance would evolve into a formal military alliance in 1942, during World War II. Both before and after the war, Brazilian diplomacy often played the role of coordinator and catalyst of solidarity toward the United States on the part of the continent's countries on occasions such as the Pearl Harbor attack, the rupture with the axis countries, the beginning of the Cold War, and the Quitandinha Conference for the signing of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR).

Even as late as in early years of Vargas' second government (1950s), Oswaldo Aranha, lecturing at the War College, would still declare that the only conceivable foreign policy for Brazil was to support the United States at world forums (on Cold War issues) and at regional forums in exchange for American support for Brazil's political and military preeminence in South America.

All of this would come much later, just as would the illusion that there existed a “special relationship,” that is, a privileged relationship between Brazil and the United States. This view had its roots in the policy introduced by Rio Branco himself, as he shifted diplomacy’s axis from Europe to North America, and firmly anchored it on cooperation with the USA.

The commercial and economic axis, on the other hand, had begun to move from Europe to the United States since 1870, much before Rio Branco, and even before the Republic. Early in the twentieth century, the American market already absorbed more than half of Brazil’s coffee sales – coffee was at that time our main export –, sixty percent of our rubber, and most of our cocoa. In the year when the Brazilian Embassy was established in Washington (1905), Brazil ranked sixth as the United States’ trade partner, after England, Germany, France, Canada, and Cuba. At one point, it was its third largest supplier. At the Baron’s death (1912), the US market accounted for thirty-six percent of Brazil’s foreign sales.

A similar trend could be noticed in investment flows and capital movements. American investments began to predominate in the manufacturing industry over British investments, which were concentrated on public services and infrastructure. Slowly, New York became the source for coffee valorization plans financing. In the twentieth century, the American financial center, particularly after World War II, replaced London as a source of funding and foreign direct investments, thereby bringing to an end England’s predominance inherited from the Portuguese.

The newly-inaugurated Brazilian Republic discovered Latin America at the same time it discovered North America. At the time, it was quite common to talk about Americanism as encompassing the entire Western Hemisphere, Pan-Americanism’s conceptual basis. This is what Positivists had in mind when they invoked the “fraternity of American homelands.” The end of the monarchic

exception in the Americas would lead to a foreign policy turned both to the United States and to the Hispanic-Americans, in contrast to the diplomatic isolation, real or not, of the Empire, which supposedly had closer affinity with the Old Continent monarchies.

One of the facets of Latin America's debut on the world stage took the multilateral form of Pan-Americanism. At a time when the parliamentary modality of inter-States relations attempted its first steps (at the 1899 and 1907 Hague Conferences and at the 1906 Geneva Conference), the United States decided to preserve the area where they enjoyed unquestionable hegemony – the Western Hemisphere – to organize on it a system independent from the one dominated by European imperialism's great powers.

Nabuco, one of the most brilliant cooperators with and interpreters of the United States' project, believed that America, a peace continent, was a "neutral Hemisphere," as opposed to the system of Europe and the imperialist rivalries in Asia and Africa, which he called a "belligerent Hemisphere." The building of the Pan-American Union's headquarters on the grand Washington esplanade, where are also located the Capitol, the Supreme Court, the Federal Reserve, all the centers of North American power, including the White House a short distance away, symbolized and proclaimed, in the regional domain, the impetus to organize the international order under the aegis of the United States.

As the American power outdid the other powers, that same impetus to organize a hegemonic order would be manifest in Wilson's truncated proposal of a Society of Nations, in 1919, which would bear fruit to its maximum in 1944-1995, with the establishment of the United Nations Organization, in the political domain, and of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, in the economic field.



Pan-Americanism's backbone was the Monroe Doctrine, a unilateral American policy declaration, which Nabuco and Rio Branco would in vain endeavor to make multilateral and legitimate on the part of the other countries of the Hemisphere. Resistance to the United States' designs, extant since the first Pan-American Conference (1889-1890), particularly in Argentina and in a few other Hispanic countries, would persist in the course of those years marked by numerous American interventions in Cuba, Panama, Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico.

Brazil depended then on the US market much more than it does today. It was far from maintaining with England the same kind of close trade and investment relations, which led Roque Sáenz Peña and Manuel Quintana, the Argentine delegates to the 1889-1890 Conference, to head the opposition to the customs union proposed by Secretary of State James C. Blaine. Distant from the area of direct US interventions, though, Rio de Janeiro did not feel threatened by the *Big Stick* policy, which Oliveira Lima would graphically put into Portuguese, as the "política do cacetão."

For these reasons, and motivated even more by Rio Branco's pragmatic calculation for reinforcing Brazil's frail power through a virtual alliance with the emerging hegemonic power, Brazilian diplomacy endeavored to define its own stance under Pan-Americanism. In 1906, Brazil hosted the Third Inter-American Conference and received the visit of Secretary of State Elihu Root – the first such Conference away from Washington and the first visit of a chief of American diplomacy. The role Brazilians conceived for themselves – that of intermediaries between the United States and the Spanish-speaking neighbors – would find expression in the attempt to turn into multilateral the manifestations of American power and thus subject them to collective control.

Brazil's inter-American policy sought to keep a relative distance from the more truculent expressions of that power, preferring to

stress the moderation of conflicts between hemispheric countries and to prevent the rise of antagonistic situations between the United States and Spanish America. This stance had a long life after its adoption at the 1906 Rio de Janeiro Conference, chaired by Nabuco.

Many of the accomplishments much after the period under review, such as those related to World War II and the Cold War, developed from that initial concept. After disgraceful incidents such as the 1954 intervention in Guatemala and the conflicts over the Cuban Revolution, as the 1950s turned into the 1960s, the concept sang its swan song in the protagonist role the Castelo Branco government accepted to play in the military operation in the Dominican Republic, in the mid-1960s, sixty years after the Rio de Janeiro Conference.

Not everything, though, was owed to the American power's direct or indirect influence. The Republic did trigger genuine enthusiasm for Latin America in Brazil, which was corresponded by the neighboring Hispanics. In the euphoria caused by Argentina's prompt recognition of the new regime, Quintino Bocaiúva, the Provisional Government's Foreign Minister, signed in Montevideo, with his Buenos Aires counterpart, Estanislao Zeballos, the agreement under which the two countries shared, in a Solomonic decision, the contested territory of Palmas, often called Misiones.

That may have been the first manifestation of a phenomenon that still recurs, namely, the premature, naive illusion of a definitive, qualitative change in relations with Argentina as a result of some event: Presidential visits, slogans such as "everything unites us, nothing separates us," Presidential encounters at the border, convergence such as the "Spirit of Uruguaiana," the overcoming of conflicts about the harnessing of hydroelectric power in the La Plata River Basin, Mercosur, and alleged ideological affinities. These were invariably followed

by disappointment, and honeymoons were short-lived. The first such honeymoon, at the Republic's advent, vanished owing to the Brazilians's uncompromising refusal to give up territory, in a reaction that involved even the exiled Emperor, and led to the treaty's rejection and to a return to arbitration.

The combative mobilization of monarchist remnants, which would revive in the Acre episode, betrayed the heavy Empire's legacy of antagonism and resentment toward neighboring countries. One of the ingrained features of Brazilian foreign policy's ideology is its reluctance to admit breaches of diplomatic tradition. There is no denying, though, that the Second Empire's diplomacy toward the La Plata region, dominated by its "interventions policy" introduced by Paulino José Soares de Sousa, the Viscount of Uruguay, as of 1849-1850, contrasts sharply with the Republican Americanist pacifism.

The bellicose spirit of the interventionist policy, which culminated in the greatest war in South American history – the Triple Alliance war that ended on 1 March 1870 –, would still give rise to the *Argentine Question* regarding the dispute about the Chaco border between Argentina and Paraguay. From 1880 on, the consolidation of the national States in Argentina and in Uruguay, the prosperity generated by immigrants, the packinghouses, and the meat, wool, and wheat exports eliminated the chronic instability conditions and the internal conflicts that had been at the origin of Brazilian interventions. The Baron of Rio Branco clearly realized the change, as he expressed in a famous article in which he took stock of the imperial policy and considered the interventions cycle closed forever.

The developments in the La Plata region coincided with the last years of the already declining Empire. It is quite possible that, had the monarchy survived, it would not have been less sensitive to the need to change relations with the southern neighbors,

as the imperial regime was intrinsically no more aggressive or militarized than the republican. Be that as it may, the first Brazilian Republicans clearly felt the need to differentiate themselves from the imperial legacy. This concern was reflected in the 1891 Constitution's provision that required prior recourse to arbitration before any war.

The Acre crisis exposed the Republic's pacifist determination to its most dangerous test. The successful approach to the problem through negotiations and willingness to compromise prevented it from establishing a fateful precedent for future relations with weaker neighbors. The close proximity to an armed clash alerted Rio Branco to the unpostponable priority of systematically solving all remaining border issues.

Rio Branco had previously been the victorious defender of Brazilian rights in the arbitration of the Palmas issue with Argentina (1895) and of the question of Amapá borders with France-Guyana (1900). The Treaty of Petropolis with Bolivia (1903), his masterpiece, paved the way for the long series of negotiations and arbitrations: a treaty with Ecuador, safeguarding possible Peruvian rights (1904) and one with Peru, at first provisionally (1904), then definitively (1909); the arbitration award against Great Britain-British Guyana (1904); the protocol with Venezuela (1905); the agreements with The Netherlands-Surinam (1906) and with Colombia (1907); and the rectification treaty with Uruguay (1909).

In fifteen years, Brazil had achieved with eleven neighbors, three of which were European powers, without wars, exclusively through diplomatic means, what Ambassador Álvaro Teixeira Soares correctly described as one of the greatest achievements in the diplomatic history of any country. The consensual definition of the space within which sovereignty could be legitimately exercised created conditions conducive to a constructive, cooperative

relationship with border countries and with Latin American countries in general.

It is possible that the consummation of such an achievement would not have been possible, either before or after. Not before, because the process of national formation of many South American countries had not been concluded and because the constant armed conflicts made it impossible to think about consensual solutions. Not after, because the exacerbation of nationalisms, owing to the Great War, the subsequent extremist political stances, and the passions of public opinion, increasingly radicalized, left little or no room for negotiated solutions and compromise.

With the *Belle Époque*, died the delusion that it would be possible to humanize war, do away with passports, and solve all disputes through impartial arbitration. Brazil managed to sign more than thirty arbitration agreements, nearly all of them fated to accumulate dust in forgotten archives. The Republic knew how to take advantage, for a negotiated solution of all border issues, of a window of opportunity that would soon close, the first to open in more than one hundred fifty years since the Treaty of Madrid (1750).

The elimination of the territorial dispute proved easier than a qualitative change in relations with Argentina. The spirit of the time did favor resort to International Law, arbitration, negotiated solutions, the idealism that would revive after World War I with Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Principles. That spirit, though, coexisted in dialectic tension with the realism of the European Balance of Powers, the arms race, and the imperialist rivalries that would explode in the canons of August 1914 at the end of the "long nineteenth century".

The influence of some of that was felt in South America, where Brazil and Argentina played their "great game" of strategic rivalry

in the context of the La Plata subsystem. Nothing reflected more dramatically Rio Branco's visceral mistrust toward the Argentine neighbors, classified as "permanent rivals," than the irreconcilable *mano a mano* with Estanislao Zeballos, his nemesis. It was as if the emulation between the two States had taken the form of an interminable duel between two people, evocative of *The Duel*, Joseph Conrad's short story on which Ridley Scott based his film *The Duelists*. The protracted personal dispute that began in the distant 1875 at the apex of the *Argentine Question*, culminated in the Cable no. 9 incident in 1908, and was actually over only after the two duelists died – the Brazilian in 1912 and the Argentine, three times his country's Foreign Minister, in 1923.

Underlying this picturesque exchange of sword blows lurked a real, resilient layer of old suspicions, jealousies, and antipathies. This gradually weakening substratum would nevertheless outlast the two adversaries and underlie the euphoria of the presidential visits of Roca, Campos Sales, and Sáenz Peña. Every now and then, it would resurface and condemn to failure ambitious ideas of understanding and coordination, such as the ABC Pact (Argentina, Brazil, and Chile), one of Rio Branco's rare unsuccessful initiatives. Signed in 1915, after his death, the Pact was ratified only by Brazil and never entered into force.

Despite real achievements in terms of approximation and cooperation between Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires during this period, diplomatic emulation and the dispute between Argentina and Brazil for prestige in their immediate surroundings (Paraguay and Bolivia) or in the world at large could not be dispelled. Neither was it possible to eliminate the military antagonism, intensified by the naval armaments race in the two first decades of the twentieth century, which for long continued to encourage the theoretical war hypotheses entertained by the General Staff on the two sides of the border.

Side by side with the trends toward an “Unwritten Alliance” with the United States and a more intense, cooperative relationship with Latin American neighbors, a third major long-term change introduced under the First Republic’s foreign policy was the innovative and extraordinary development of multilateral diplomacy. The Second Hague Peace Conference (1907) served as a backdrop for Brazil’s grand debut on the stage of a diplomatic modality that would become an inseparable element of its external personality.

Many of the features that still differentiate this personality were anticipated in Rui Barbosa’s performance at that Conference. They include active participation in proposals and in their formulation; action aimed at changing the status quo to allow Brazil to enter “the circle of great international friendships to which it was entitled,” in Rio Branco’s own words; willingness to face opponents of the reform of the international order; and promotion of equal treatment of all States.

Twelve years later, the element that had failed Rio Branco in The Hague, namely, the United States’ protective influence, proved decisive at the Peace Conference right after the end of World War I. Thanks to President Wilson’s support, Brazil succeeded in the recognition of its right to participate in the deliberations with three delegates (instead of only one as the “minor Powers”), as well as the basic satisfaction of its interests pertaining to coffee stored in Germany or on German ships captured during the conflict.

Modern multilateralism had its origin above all in the decision to create the Society of Nations, the first attempt in history to establish a political institution that theoretically brought together all the members of the international system. Once again, American assistance brought its weight to bear on Brazil’s choice as a temporary member of the League of Nations Council at its

inaugural season. Taking full advantage of the opportunity, the Brazilian Government opened in Geneva its first multilateral mission (1924) and thereafter consistently sought to be reelected to the Council (terms lasted only one year then). Except once, it succeeded every time, winning the first or second majority of votes.

Notwithstanding such auspicious beginnings, Brazil would be the first country to withdraw from the League of Nations for political reasons, when it failed to become a permanent member, while Germany was included in that category (1926). The impeccable juridical and political quality of the Brazilian Representative Afranio de Melo Franco's pronouncements at the time of the rupture could not mask the miscalculation on the part of President Artur Bernardes and his Foreign Minister, Felix Pacheco. Indeed, years earlier, Melo Franco himself had realized the isolation in which Brazilian foreign policy had fallen under Bernardes's presidency, when he headed the Brazilian delegation to the Fifth Inter-American Conference, held in Santiago, Chile (1923), which had been marked by divergence about limiting naval armaments.

Other than the changes pointed out as the most significant, it would not be possible to draw a full picture of the diplomatic evolution in that period without mentioning the increasing importance the economic and immigration issues acquired in foreign policy. There were times when trade issues related to coffee, for instance, determined the tenor of relations with the United States. Foreign debt vicissitudes, often critically urgent, pervaded the four decades of the First Republic, from the *funding loan* of Campos Sales's time to the devastating impact of the New York Exchange collapse in 1929.

It is thus not surprising that Nilo Peçanha's Reform of the State Secretariat of External Relations was the first attempt



to establish an Economic and Trade Affairs Section (Fourth Section) separated from consular topics. The same decree lists, among the measures consuls should adopt to promote Brazilian exports, the creation of and support to Chambers of Commerce, the maintenance of products display cases at the Consulates, the promotion of conferences on the economic and trade potential, the mailing of trade publications, and the display of a chart indicating the quotations of our main exports.

All through the First Republic's cycle, the efforts to modernize the Foreign Service were continuous. To have an idea of how modest this service was, it is sufficient to recall that in 1889 there were only 31 employees at the Secretariat, including from the Director-General (as always the venerable Cabo Frio, in office since 1869!) to one doorman, two office boys, and three couriers! The diplomatic and consular services, separated from the Secretariat until the 1930s, employed 70 people, half of them in Europe and the other half in the Americas.

When Rio Branco arrived in Rio de Janeiro in December 1902 to take office as Foreign Minister, the number of employees at the Secretariat had decreased to 27, rising thereafter to 38. Rio Branco undertook a personnel modernization reform, complemented by the restoration of the archives section and the installation of a library and of a map collection, in addition to other material improvements. Nearly all his successors added further improvements and personnel expansions, culminating in the major construction and restoration works during Otávio Mangabeira's tenure. The Library building and the reform of the side buildings were solemnly inaugurated by President Washington Luis about two months before the 1930 Revolution.

The Foreign Service grew with the Republic, as the population rose from 14 million in 1889, of which 80 percent were illiterate,

to an estimated 35 million in 1930. Material progress had been unquestionable. The First Republic's 41 years formed the core of the 110 years (1870-1980) studied by Angus Maddison in *World Economic Performance since 1870*, in which he concluded that Brazil, with an average annual rate of 4.4%, had recorded the greatest growth among the ten representative economies (five from the OECD – the United States, Germany, Japan, France, and the United Kingdom; and five outside the OECD – URSS, China, India, Mexico, and Brazil). As pointed out, this was the era par excellence of immigration, which decisively contributed also to urbanization, industrialization, and the country's modernization.

Complementing the focus on personalities adopted in the *Brazilian Diplomatic Thinking* volume, this Introduction has highlighted the main lineaments, the large sets, and the trends that traversed and unified ministerial and presidential administrations. This does not mean that the Republic's initial cycle was a homogeneous, seamless period, a placid, tranquil river without rapids, whirlpools, or stagnant waters.

Rather, the opposite is true. Except for the few years that coincided with Rodrigues Alves's four-year term and Afonso Pena's two years in office, not incidentally the highpoint of the First Republic and of Rio Branco's diplomacy, what preceded and what followed that golden age was far from creating conditions conducive to a prestigious foreign policy.

From the proclamation of the Republic coup to the 1898 *funding loan*, a succession of disasters demoralized the country. The extremely high inflation of the *Encilhamento* episode, the Navy Revolt, the Federalist Revolution in the South, summary decapitations and executions, the Canudos Rebellion, and the permanent agitation at the Military School and at the barracks gave the impression that a new, unstable, South American "*republiqueta*" had replaced the majesty and dignity of the Empire.

Interestingly enough, the first three successful events that in some way helped legitimize the unruly new Republic were due to foreign policy: Rio Branco's victories at the Palmas (1895) and the Amapá (1900) arbitrations and the satisfactory solution achieved with the restitution of the Trindade Island, which the British had abusively occupied.

The men that headed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the turbulent years of the early Republican regime did not particularly distinguish themselves. As the Baron of Rio Branco said in a letter written when he was invited to assume that position, "nearly all the ministers became temporary employees at the Secretariat and go there daily to chat and sign papers. All the work remains concentrated in the hands of the Viscount of Cabo Frio, who has been the *de facto* Minister for many years."

There is a slight exaggeration to this: Rio Branco did not like some of the Ministers, such as Dionísio Cerqueira and Olinto de Magalhães, for instance. Later, he would scratch his friend Carlos de Carvalho's name from the list of those that "did not enjoy tedious work." There is no denying, though, that between 1891 and 1894, the chiefs of diplomacy were seven Ministers whose names one can hardly remember (Who knows who were Leite Pereira, Oliveira Freire, João Filipe Pereira, or Alexandre Cassiano do Nascimento?). Even Olinto de Magalhães, who remained in that position the entire Campos Sales's presidential term, came away irreversibly scratched from the first stirrings of the Acre conflict, owing to his inability to realize the seriousness of the challenge and to his ineptitude in wishing to apply to it a solution of a merely legal formalism.

Rio Branco was fortunate in working in a considerably more favorable time, not only in terms of duration (from December 1902 through February 1912) but also in terms of content, the international quality of the *Belle Époque* twilight, as well as,

internally, the fleeting parenthesis of prosperity and civil peace. He was fortunate even to die when the situation irremediably deteriorated in both Brazil and the world. As Carlos de Laet remarked, the *Revolta da Chibata* (the Whip Revolt) and the threat of bombardment of the Guanabara Bay by the insurgent vessels deeply shook him, showing him how far we were from the ideal of a strong, stable country capable of projecting its prestige in the world. The armed interventions in the States (euphemistically called in the Hermes da Fonseca presidency's "State salvations"), and the bombardment of Bahia killed his last illusions.

On the external front, the year of his death coincided with the Balkan wars, a sort of intimation of World War I, bringing closer the fateful day when the lights that had illumined his life would be extinguished one by one, paraphrasing Lord Grey's famous phrase at the outbreak of the Great War. The war obviously narrowed even further the potential room for the diplomatic action of a country without military power, which participated in the conflict only at the end and in a merely symbolic manner. As long as the battles went on in Europe, even the Inter-American system conferences were suspended. Brazil made good business deals and exported much, but as it happened more than once under similar circumstances, it did not take long for the trade balance and the strong currency to vanish once the situation went back to normal.

The crisis of the Old Republic's political system, which had been long under way, accelerated and hastened toward its fateful outcome. Artur Bernardes's four years went by in a nearly permanent state of siege, as had happened to a goodly portion of the Hermes da Fonseca government. The internal problems absorbed all the available energies, leaving very little for the international front.

An emblematic example of the creative and turbulent character of the 1920s was the year of 1922, the Independence's

centennial, as well as the year of the São Paulo Modern Art Week, the foundation of the Communist Party, the introduction of the income tax, and the irruption onto the scene of *Tenentismo* [the Army Lieutenant's frequent and rebellious interventions in political life] with the Revolt of the Copacabana Fort's 18. Two years later, it would be the turn of the São Paulo Revolution, of minor movements in several States, particularly in Rio Grande do Sul, and the formation of the Miguel Costa-Prestes Column, that would cover thousands of kilometers in the Brazilian hinterland, fighting Government's troops all along during several years, before seeking asylum in Bolivia.

The coffee-related problems aggravated and so did the difficulties in securing loans to maintain prices, owing to the New York Stock Exchange collapse. Prices plunged to a third of the original, and the export losses brutally affected foreign trade, which depended on coffee for more than 70 percent of foreign sales.

Of the six ministers after Rio Branco and before the 1930 Revolution, two (Nilo Peçanha and Domício da Gama) remained in office only few months. Of the others, four (Lauro Müller, Azevedo Marques, Felix Pacheco, and Otávio Mangabeira) it could never be said that their accomplishments were in any way comparable to the great Rio Branco's. They lacked the requisite qualities and even if they had had them, the indispensable external and internal conditions were lacking.

I once wrote, half-jokingly, that the ministers that succeeded Rio Branco (not only the ones cited above) often gave the impression of being comparable to Portuguese writer Latino Coelho: "a style in search of a subject!" Leaving aside the exaggeration or injustice, what I meant was that Rio Branco practically exhausted the entire realizable potential of diplomatic initiatives within the

reach of Brazil's power at the time. After the definitive settlement of borders with all the neighboring countries, the "Unwritten Alliance" with the United States, and the approximation with the Latin Americans, what else was there to be done that he had not done?

Some, such as Lauro Müller, attempted to begin where Rio Branco had failed: the ABC Pact or the qualitative change in relations with the Argentines, the "permanent rivals." As seen, none of the attempts succeeded. Artur Bernardes, Felix Pacheco, and Afrânio de Melo Franco thought they could triumph where Rio Branco had met with defeat: gaining admission into the "circle of the great international friendships," or Brazil's recognition as a permanent member of the Council of the League. Once again, it was appropriate to apply to these unsuccessful initiatives what Joaquim Nabuco wrote in his *Diary a propos Rui Barbosa's* unsuccessful campaign in The Hague:

*One does not become tall by jumping. We cannot seem tall, unless we become tall. Japan did not need to ask to be recognized as a great power after it demonstrated that it was one. (25 August 1907)*

Nabuco's argument is tantamount to criticism of diplomatic voluntarism. In somewhat more expressive terms, this is what I often heard from the late Minister Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro: "Brazil is a country with global interests, but its power resources are limited." Power limitation should be understood in a broad sense: the power not only to intervene decisively; it covers also the level of economic, scientific, cultural, and technologic development, as well as the degree of technical cooperation capable of imparting density to relations other than in a merely formalistic manner, from foreign ministry to foreign ministry.

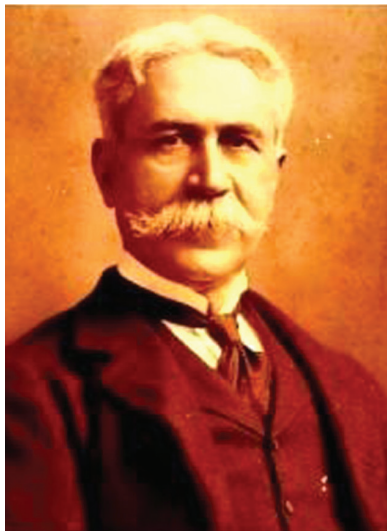
The achievement of such conditions obviously results from a development process. In a speech at the Third Latin American Scientific Congress, held in 1905, the Baron of Rio Branco said:

*It is essential that before half a century, at least four or five of the major Latin American nations, through noble emulation, may, similarly to our great, beloved sister to the North, compete in resources with the most powerful States in the world.*

After the optimist deadline expired, Delgado de Carvalho remarked: “Fifty years since those words, it is still worth quoting them [...], as they elicit meditation.” The First Republic ceased to exist more than eighty years ago and one century is past since Rio Branco’s words. Limitations may be less serious today than those confronted by Brazilian foreign policy then, or rather, they are different. However, it is still worth studying and valuing the legacy of the diplomats of that time, and not lose sight of the warnings of Joaquim Nabuco and Rio Branco.







## JOAQUIM NABUCO

Son of the Senator and State Councilor José Thomaz Nabuco de Araújo and Ana Benigna de Sá Barreto, he was born on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1849, in Recife. He studied at Pedro II School (1860-1865), in São Paulo (1866-1869) and Recife (1869-1870) Law Schools. He was an Attaché of the Brazilian Legation to the United States (1876-1878) and England (1878), a correspondent for *Jornal do Commercio* (1881-1884) in London, Deputy-General from Pernambuco (1879-1880; 1885; 1887-8) and one of the leaders of the campaign for the abolition of slavery in Brazil. In 1889, he married Evelina Torres Soares Ribeiro, with whom he had five children. With the fall of the Empire, he wrote pamphlets criticizing the Republic and went into self-exile in London (1890-1892). Back in Brazil, he participated in the organization of the Monarchist Party (1896) and of the Brazilian Academy of Letters (1897), of which he became Secretary General. In 1899, he returned to Europe on a diplomatic mission. He directed the Brazilian legation in London (1900-1905) and the recently created

Brazilian Embassy in Washington (1905-1910). He chaired the Third Pan-American Conference in Rio de Janeiro (1906). He made conferences throughout the United States (1906-1909), received *doctor honoris causa* titles from the Universities of Columbia (1906) and Yale (1908). He wrote newspaper articles, manifestos, poetry and books, among which stand out: *O Abolicionismo* (1883); *Balmaceda* (1895); *A Intervenção Estrangeira Durante a Revolta de 1893* (1896); *Um Estadista do Império: Nabuco de Araújo, Sua Vida, Suas Opiniões, Sua Época* (1898-1899), *Minha Formação* (1900), *Escritos e Discursos Literários* (1901). He died in Washington, on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1910.

## JOAQUIM NABUCO: AN AMERICANIST DIPLOMAT

*Angela Alonso*<sup>1</sup>

Joaquim Nabuco, the diplomat, cannot be separated from Joaquim Nabuco, the aristocrat. It is as frequent as it is dangerous in the analysis of the trajectory of the individuals that stand out to resort to the argument of the “vocation”, the “talent” or the “genius”. As Norbert Elias demonstrates in his biography of Mozart, even the exceptional individual arises from a socio-political context and from social interaction networks. Taking that angle to deal with Nabuco’s diplomatic trajectory, first of all it is necessary to understand the social configuration that made it possible for this individual to ascend to the positions to which he ascended. Nabuco was not a *self-made-man*. Rather, to use the term dear to Pierre Bourdieu, he was an “heir”.

Being the son of an Empire statesman, born in Pernambuco, in 1849, he attended the traditional Law School, which he left in 1870, taking shortly after that an equally traditional trip to Europe

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1 This text uses materials and arguments included in my book *Joaquim Nabuco: os Salões e as Ruas*, Companhia das Letras, 2007, mainly the last chapter, and my article *L’Americaniste Dépassé* in Cunha, Diogo (Ed). *Intelectuels et Politique au Brésil-19ème Siècle* (In the printing press).

for education. His first contact with diplomacy was in that condition as a member of the social elite, by means of the aristocratic salons. England dazzled him and, in it, the behavior and relations of the Brazilian Minister in London, the Baron of Penedo, in whose house he met the local political and intellectual elite (NABUCO, 1900, p. 121ff).

It was not in that so admired England that Nabuco debuted in diplomacy. His social position, the son of the political leader José Thomaz Nabuco de Araújo, gave him access to the double career (since neither of them was autonomous in the Empire) of diplomat and politician. There was a hierarchy between both, with the diplomatic posts being waiting places for political posts. Both Nabuco's social and personal assessment was that the diplomatic position had less prestige and power than that of politics, which was what he always and firstly craved.

However, Nabuco was the son of a Liberal and he came to adulthood when the Conservative Party was ruling. Opponents occupied the political offices, filled by indication. The only thing left to do was to plead a post in diplomacy, manipulating the relations in the Court society. Nabuco sought, by means of his father, a position at Penedo's shade. However, many other members of the social elite, equally rejected from political office, advanced similar pleas, which made diplomatic positions extremely disputed. Nabuco did not achieve his job at the Legation in London, but became Attaché at the legation of the United States. From 1876 to 1878, he lived there, in his first job. With the tolerance of the Brazilian Minister, Antonio Pedro de Carvalho Borges, he eventually went to live in New York, from where he sent his dispatches.

This first American experience was not among the most striking ones. His talents did not blossom, he lived lethargically and his enthusiasm was low. His fascination for the aristocratic society did not find a place to expand in the American bourgeois

society. He lived in the new world wanting to migrate to the old one. The opportunity came when a co-worker from the Legation told him about a position in England, thanks to his own ascension to the rank of secretary (Letter from C. A. Viana de Lima to Joaquim Nabuco, August 16, 1877 CI-Fundaj).<sup>2</sup> Always by influence of his father, Nabuco tried to make the transference. However, none other than the son of the Baron of Penedo was one of the candidates. (Letter from the Baron of Penedo to Joaquim Nabuco, 05/16/1877 CI-Fundaj). The latter got the post.

Only with the change from the Conservative to the Liberal government, in 1878, when there was a great change of seats, did the father's political influence fulfill the son's dream: Joaquim Nabuco became a Brazilian diplomat in London. An ephemeral experience, which led him to believe in the superiority of European civilization.

Nabuco was not a diplomat thanks to a vocational call, he was rather compelled to be a diplomat by necessity. Diplomacy sounded to him like a provisional position. His personal ambition, as it was socially expected from the son of a statesman of the Empire, was for him to succeed his father in politics. That is what he did when Nabuco de Araújo's death made him go back to Brazil in time to compete in the legislative elections and make his debut in Parliament in 1879. Politics stole Nabuco from diplomacy.

## INTERREGNUM

In the 1880's, Nabuco stood out as leader of the campaign for the abolition of slavery. He plunged into politics, getting involved

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<sup>2</sup> CI refers to the unpublished letters of Joaquim Nabuco stored at the archive of the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation – Fundaj, in Recife.

with the cause both intellectually and emotionally. The career as an oppositionist was full of comings and goings. During the decade, he invariably ran both into political and financial trouble. His alliance with abolitionists of civil society and his challenge to established political leaders also cost him the job of Attaché. The problem was that Nabuco only obtained a license from the post in England, expecting to come back, in one of the frequent plot twists of the party in power during the Second Empire. However, political independence charged its price, and he was forced to resign the post in 1879. The consequence was that, not being re-elected in 1881, he ended up without any post, without any partisan support and without any proper income to continue in politics.

The Baron of Penedo helped him in his plight. Guiding in extensive and powerful political and financial networks, the Baron arranged for him to be the correspondent of *Jornal do Commercio* in London. As such, Nabuco lived in England for the next two years. That was a time of learning. Immediately useful was the socialization in the forms of action and the pamphleting of the successful *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society*, which Nabuco used in the abolitionist campaign when he returned to Brazil. Another learning only disclosed its full dividends in the long run. Nabuco helped Penedo to head the Brazilian legation in London where he learned from him. Penedo represented for Nabuco the model of a kind of diplomacy based on the use of the aristocratic training – elegance, etiquette, erudition and self-control – plus a mannerism – the “charm”, the personal magnetism – for the cultivation of relationships within the social elite. A diplomacy based on sociability, which could be called *social diplomacy*. Nabuco put it into practice two decades later, when he reached the same, coveted post of Brazilian Minister in London, but in the 1880’s he had already understood and internalized the basic features and traits of the role. His refined

Court education and his presence as a tall and showy man paved the way for the domain and the exhaustive use of the arts of courtesy – visits, cards, *soirees*, dinners, etc. – for the sake of diplomacy. He became a master of establishing, cultivating and maintaining multiple and various personal relation networks throughout several decades – with well-to-do families, politicians, journalists, scholars and businessmen. The latter case was due to the consulting that he obtained for companies with business in Brazil and to the demands of his column at the *Jornal do Commercio*, which included the coverage of foreign economics and policy.

Thus, although he did not have any diplomatic post, Nabuco's residence in London in the 1880's yielded dividends that became profitable for the diplomat in the future. On the one hand, the knowledge of foreign policy and economic matters, of which Nabuco was previously not even aware of, nor was he interested in them. On the other hand, getting along with Penedo made him improve himself in the requirements of social diplomacy: to speak well, to host well, to dress well, to write well and his unparalleled ability to captivate others.

In the short run, Nabuco used those skills in the campaign for the abolition of slavery. Between 1884, when he returned to Brazil, and 1888, when the end of slavery was approved in Brazil, Nabuco was a politician of body and soul. He wrote campaign pieces, his classic libel *O Abolicionismo* (1883) – which points to slavery as being the damaging roots of Brazilian society, economy and politics –, newspaper articles and pamphlets. He made important election campaigns and made memorable speeches in Parliament, obtaining huge public support. The combined successes in the public space and in Parliament gave him an aura, with which Nabuco entered into the national imagery: the Knight in shining armor of abolition, who had been away from diplomacy.

## ANTI-AMERICANISM

By the end of the abolitionist campaign, when much of their coreligionists continued on the sister campaign, the Republican one, Nabuco isolated himself in a small group of monarchists, who envisioned the possibility of continuing with the social reforms under the monarchy. When the Republic imposed itself in 1889, many monarchists accepted it as a *fait accompli*. Nabuco was among those who resisted the new regime. That condition of opponent kept him away from public service for a decade, from both State policy and diplomacy. However, during that period he issued opinions on foreign policy in the pamphlets and books he wrote.

In the early years of the new regime, Nabuco wrote several texts defending the old regime and attacking the Republic, in which he compared Brazil to the other countries of the continent. Above all, he denounced the Republican emulation of the American institutions and equated the new Brazilian regime, for its faults, to Spanish America. That anti-Americanism appears in *Por Que Continuo a Ser Monarquista*, an open letter to Fernando Mendes, director of the *Diário do Comércio*, of September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1890, attacking Spanish America, that appears associated with a mischievous pair, that is, the action of “caudilhismo” and military dictatorship: “the Republic, in Latin American countries, is a government in which it is essential to give up freedom to obtain order” (NABUCO, 1890b, p. 14). In *Agradecimento aos Pernambucanos*, in the following year, anti-Americanism becomes more general and clearer, as American “plagiarism” (NABUCO, 1891, p. 15), in relation to the United States and as a negative view of South America: “I regret the suicidal attitude of the current generation, dragged by a verbal hallucination, that of a word *Republic*, discredited before the world when it appears together with the adjective *South-American*”



(NABUCO, 1891, p. 4, emphasis by the author). Nabuco insisted on that key during Floriano Peixoto's administration (1891-1894), denouncing that Brazil had become a victim of "caudillos", in the manner of the "South American forms of oppression and mismanagement" (NABUCO, 1895, p. 3), which he also went on to name as "Latin America" (NABUCO, 1893, p. 96).

During the Navy Revolt (1893-1894), Nabuco hopes to restore the monarchy and wrote against Americanism in newspaper articles, collected in two volumes: *Balmaceda*, in 1895, and *A Intervenção Estrangeira Durante a Revolta*, in 1896.<sup>3</sup> The pretext for the first book was to review *José Manuel Balmaceda: Balmaceda, Su Gobierno y la Revolución* of 1891, a work by Julio Bañados Espinosa, which narrated the Chilean crisis that culminated in the suicide of the President of the Republic. In this book, Nabuco traced a series of parallels between the Brazilian and the Chilean situation, with the latter mobilized to illuminate the former, as in the "Post-Scriptum – A Questão da América Latina". The book operates with antithetical pairs: Monarchy and Republic, civilization and barbarism, settled and *parvenus* (newly wealthy people), which resulted in the parallel between both Presidents, Balmaceda in Chile and Floriano in Brazil, both of whom were leaders of the "assault of the mob to the positions defended by the ancient society" (NABUCO, 1895, p. 126; 127; 15).

In these writings, the negative assessment also included the model of the Brazilian Republican, the United States. Nabuco saw in the Americans the consubstantiation of values and lifestyle at odds with his customs and values as an aristocrat: the United States was supposedly a bourgeois and capitalist society, without the refinement of the European Courts, which lacked politeness,

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3 For further analysis of both books, see ALONSO, 2009.

refinement, and high culture. Nabuco was against “Monroism”, which he defended in the following decade, because:

*In our countries, where the nation stands at permanent minor age, the freedoms [...] are protected only by certain principles, by some traditions [...] Institutions [...] such as the American ones...do not adapt to those countries [...] where the law is fragile (NABUCO, 1895, p. 36-37).*

“Latin America” would be a peculiar cultural complex. Therefore, it cannot emulate the United States without artificialism. To do so would mean to transplant political institutions inadequate to the local reality. Instead, he defended the restoration of the liberal monarchy, with its social aristocracy (NABUCO, 1895, p. 142). A model that he recommended to the neighbors: “What South America needs is an extensive Moderator Power, a Power that exercises the function of arbitration between intransigent parties.” (NABUCO, 1895, p. 134-5).

His opinions about the United States stand out even more in *A Intervenção Estrangeira Durante a Revolta de 1893*. As the title says, the book takes the angle of diplomacy to deal with the conflict between rebels, partly monarchists, and the Republican legalists, during the Revolt of the Navy.<sup>4</sup> The thing is that the German, Portuguese, French, Italian, Dutch and American ships, docked at Guanabara Bay, eventually operate as arbiters of the domestic conflict. Nabuco was referring to all the countries involved, but his target was to point to the support of the Americans to the government of Floriano Peixoto as being decisive for the failure of the “Restorative Revolt” (NABUCO, 1896, p. 265). Nabuco appeared as fierce critic of the United States, which promoted an “unprecedented act”, from the point of view of International Law, of intervention in favor of the government and against

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4 About the uprising, see TOPIK, 1996.

the insurgents, when it sent warships that Floriano requested (NABUCO, 1896, p. 245).<sup>5</sup> Thus, the Americans would have acted “in relief of a South American despotism”, pretty much in accordance with their Monroe Doctrine, which Nabuco considered as being deleterious: “... the protection, the intervention, the help is always, in history, the first way in which the shadow of the protectorate is cast over an independent State” (NABUCO, 1896, p. 258).

Thus, in that early Republic, Nabuco presented himself as anti-Americanist. His association with Americanism, with the action of military “caudillos” (Latin America) or intervention (the United States) was in tune with the writings of other monarchists, such as Rodolfo Dantas, Eduardo Prado and the Baron of Rio Branco – even though the last one was in the diplomatic service under the Republican government. All of them were involved, either directly or indirectly, in the organization of a Monarchist Party, for which Nabuco wrote the manifesto, on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1896.

Thus, although Nabuco did not have any diplomatic post for almost the entire 1890’s, he systematically issued opinions about foreign policy. Brazil should stay the course given by the Empire, of solid friendship with Europe, independence in relation to the United States and critical detachment in relation to Spanish America.

## BACK TO DIPLOMACY

During the 1890’s, Nabuco made the policy that was within his reach, as one of the articulators of the Monarchist Party. However, Nabuco acknowledged that D. Pedro II’s death in

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5 And the “...hostile attitude of the United States stirred up in the fleet the fear that it was the beginning of the execution of a political plan, based on the official information given to the American legation that the purpose of the revolt was the restoration of the monarchy” (NABUCO, 1896, p. 230-1).

1891, and the outcome of the Revolt of the Navy, suppressed by Floriano Peixoto's administration in 1894, made the return to the monarchy unfeasible. At that time he retreated to literary subjects and to historiography, publishing two books that became classics, *Um Estadista do Império* (1897-9) and *Minha Formação* (1900). The crushing of both of his restoration hopes and of his personal finances, which was the result of terrible investment decisions, forced him to make peace with the new regime by the late 1890's. In that situation, the return to diplomacy again was not a choice, but as an imperative of circumstances.

The incorporation of a monarchist to the Republican public service can be explained by a peculiarity of the Republic regime setting, which, with scarce staff, kept men of monarchist belief in their diplomatic posts, such as the already mentioned case of the Baron of Rio Branco. Nabuco was re-incorporated to the diplomatic career thanks to his aristocratic background, which had provided him with the requested features – historical, political and literary erudition; the mastery of foreign languages, oratory, writing and etiquette. Thanks also to the social ties that, as an aristocrat, he cultivated as a value in itself. In 1899, when the president was Campos Sales, his former fellow at Parliament during Empire years Nabuco received from Olinto de Magalhães, Minister of Foreign Affairs, proposal to produce a document sustaining the Brazilian position on the dispute with Britain regarding the border with British Guyana. He replied,

*in a matter that was entirely national, as is the case of the claim of Brazilian territory against foreign intentions, it would actually be going against the tradition of the past that for years I try to gather and grow, for me to invoke a political dissent. (...) (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Olinto de Magalhães, March 05, 1899 CI-Fundaj).*

He was appointed on March 9<sup>th</sup>. On this mission, Nabuco worked within his circle of personal relations, which included the Brazilian Minister in England, Arthur Souza Correa, and the Baron of Rio Branco, whose reputation grew, thanks to successes in border disputes. Nabuco supposed that both Souza Correa and Rio Branco were involved with the matter of British Guyana. The problem had been going on since the expedition of the Royal Geographical Society in 1838, when the British declared that the Pirara region, which provided access to the Amazon basin, belonged to them. Brazil challenged that and, in 1842, the two countries signed a Treaty of Limits. The subject cooled until 1888, when a bilateral committee was established to study it and, in 1891, Lord Salisbury and Souza Correa started to negotiate. The diplomatic dispute became heated in 1895, when England invaded the Island of Trinidad. In 1897, Rio Branco prepared a memoir defending the watershed line, in the lowlands between the Rupunami and the Tacutu Rivers. In January 1899, it was decided that the matter should be solved by arbitration. That was when Nabuco came in, being in charge of providing the grounds for the Brazilian position. He, who admired England so much, returned to the public scene needing to go against the British.

The task forced Nabuco to make a professional conversion. Without any chance of a return to politics, for the first time, he looked to diplomacy as a profession and a career. At that time, he had to master new skills in order to rise in a new field.

In this field, Nabuco acted in two fronts. One of them was argumentative. The grounding of the Brazilian claim, to be presented to the arbiter, the Italian King, demanded him to write a memoir, compiling and commenting on abundant documentation, in order to support the central argument, *uti possidetis*. In this front, Nabuco also needed to develop coordination and command skills, in order to select and direct a team of assistants, who were experts

in the topics he was not very familiar with, such as geography and topography, and whom he recruited within the younger generation, whom he had met in the circuit of the Brazilian Academy of Letters (his refuge during Floriano's government): thus hiring Graça Aranha, his Secretary, Caldas Viana and Domicio da Gama.<sup>6</sup> The other front was to build a base of political support for the Brazilian position. Nabuco handled his social capital, by using the network of personal relationships that he already had in Europe and building new relations within the Italian elite, thus seeking support alliances for the arguments of his memoir.

The process was full of incidents. After gathering a team, he went to France, where he went to talk to Rio Branco, who until then was a sincere comrade. Then he went to England in search of documents, where the relationship with Souza Correa, another friend from his youth, was tense. Although he could not negotiate directly with the British, Nabuco made use of his social network and his renovated charisma, and this ostensible presence in the diplomatic means bothered Souza Correa. The relationship between them soured and Nabuco ended up leaving England. After all, he could work anywhere to produce a memoir. Therefore, not being able to stay in his favorite place, London, he settled in St. Germain-en-Laye, with his family.

Soon after that, he went back. Souza Correa died suddenly. Nabuco was nearby, and he had all the qualifications to succeed him. He mobilized his social network. The backstage tack with Tobias Monteiro, Minister of Finance, and Olinto de Magalhães, Minister of Foreign Affairs, worked. In July 1900, at 50 years old, he was elevated to Provisional Chief of the Brazilian Legation in England and, later, to holder of the Post.

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6 Later Raul Rio Branco, Aníbal Veloso Rabelo and the cartographer Henri Trope, in addition to a translator, a stenographer and a typist, worked with him.

There, in a far-reaching post, Nabuco actually made diplomatic policy in a broad and strategic sense, operating as the active representative of the Brazilian interests. He was also able to put into practice all the knowledge of the years in which the Baron of Penedo was the head of the Legation. Nabuco orchestrated his social diplomacy, aware of the importance of sociability to obtaining and maintaining political relations, organized dinners and banquets with prominent figures, events appealing to the press – reported in the *Daily News*, the *Express* and eventually in the *Times*. When he was not the host, he attended. Thus, he came close to powerful families, such as the Rothchilds, the official bankers of Brazil. Nabuco considered that an indispensable part of diplomacy was to impress and persuade. He always chatted a lot and with many people.

This profession of weaving relationships, organizing and attending ceremonies, was what he liked the most in the diplomatic career. In turn, he did not like the bureaucratic routine: “To administer is the most complicated of all professions” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Tobias Monteiro, December 25, 1900. In: Nabuco, org., 1949). In addition, the pressures for influence trafficking and the attempts to catch him making bargains irritated him (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, 1/1902). He even had to disprove in public, in 1901, a Brazilian whom he did not even know and who had tried to do business using his name. Such petty affairs made him tired from the post.

However, he was not thinking about resigning at the time of the election that led Rodrigues Alves to the Presidency in 1902. As often happens in such occasions, both posts and people were changed. The new president was a politician from the Empire. Nabuco knew him well, they had been classmates at Pedro II School. Nevertheless, Rodrigues Alves was a politician trained in the old Conservative Party, who surrounded himself with similar

people, starting with Rio Branco, the son of one of the Conservative leaders of the Second Empire. That similarity of origin, as Nabuco reminded Rio Branco<sup>7</sup>, in addition to his recent diplomatic successes, guided the choice of Rio Branco as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Before accepting, the Baron indicated Nabuco for the position (Lins, 1995:246), entirely aware of the low chances that his friend would be invited to be the Minister. Nabuco thought that the courtesy included a plan by the Baron to transfer him to Rome. He got bored: that post was less important than London and “here at least it was not understood why I was offered a lower position” (Letter of Joaquim Nabuco to Rio Branco, September 02, 1902. *In*: Nabuco, org., 1949). In addition, provisionally because Nabuco understood that Rio Branco wanted Rome to himself, if he did not like the ministry – so he was “very annoyed because I did not keep the place for him...” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Evelina Nabuco, November 22, 1902 CI-Fundaj).

The dissent turned into a fight, when they saw each other in Paris. Nabuco thought about resigning<sup>8</sup>. However, his only occupation was diplomacy, his personal capital had been Dona Evelina’s dowry, which was entirely lost in disastrous applications in the Buenos Aires Stock Exchange, in the early 1890’s. He needed the job, but remained in it uncomfortably, since Rio Branco took over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thus becoming his boss.

It was in this environment that Nabuco concluded his memoir about Guyana. He worked in a comprehensive and tireless

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7 “Unlike you, I couldn’t act in the ministry, since it is, as you say, *reformer*, (political, I mean). My entrance would require my full acceptance of the current constitutional regime, which I cannot do. I am not talking about the Republic, but of the way in which it is organized” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rio Branco, July 30, 1902 CP-Nabuco 1949).

8 “... Rio Branco and I had an almost acrimonious discussion ... about that matter of the Italian Legation, which he will not accept to see me resign. His attitude coerces me extraordinarily and if I could I would fire myself...” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco of the Evelina Nabuco, September 14, 1902 CI-Fundaj).



manner, with devotion and concentration only matched by his effort to write his father's biography. He relied on the help of assistants, but little of Rio Branco, despite his requests by letter. In February 1903, the work began to be disclosed. *Frontières du Brésil et de la Guyane Anglaise. Le Droit du Brésil*, the first memoir, contained five volumes between main text and attachments. The reply to the British arguments was published in three volumes in August of the same year, under the title *La Prétention Anglaise; Notes Sur la Partie Historique du Premier Mémoire Anglais; La Preuve Cartographique*. In February 1904, there was the publication of the last part, the four volumes of the Rejoinder: *La Construction des Mémoires Anglais; Histoire de la Zone Contestée Selon le Contre-Mémoire Anglais; Reproduction des Documents Anglais Suivis de Brèves Observations; Exposé Final*. All the work was based on the same arguments, especially in the doctrine of *uti possidetis*, already used in the Second Empire and mobilized by Rio Branco in previous disputes. Nabuco tried to demonstrate that Brazil had priority over the disputed territory, for which he relied on documents such as records of travelers and international treaties, as well as of historical conjectures. The text was full of quotations, and was torrential, which was nothing like his own style or Rio Branco's.<sup>9</sup>

The memoirs went, along with their author, to Rome, since King Victor Emanuel, of Italy, was the arbiter of the dispute. There, Nabuco put into practice "my campaign": several social events, throughout 1904, by means of which he tried to persuade the Italian Court about the supremacy of the Brazilian arguments vis-à-vis the British. However, both the argument of *uti possidetis* and its social diplomacy failed. On June 14<sup>th</sup>, he received the opposite verdict. The Italian King defined that the territory in dispute should be divided based on the watershed, which gave three-fifths

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9 Álvaro Lins (1995) observed that Rio Branco's tactic was to produce drier and more objective petitions, which favored clarity and for the purpose of not fatiguing the judges.

to the British, which England had offered to Brazil in 1891. In addition, the British gained access to the Amazon basin.

Nabuco got depressed with the defeat, but he was consoled by the Brazilian press and by approximately 50 letters of support from old friends. Rio Branco signed none of them.

The defeat in the dispute with England weakened Nabuco politically. On the other hand, Rio Branco's prestige turned into popularity when he solved the conflict with Bolivia and the addition of Acre to Brazil. That was an unequal relationship, one was the boss, and the other was subordinate, one collected victories, and the other embittered a failure. The balance of power was swinging towards Rio Branco, who was able to have an influence on the permanence, or not, of Nabuco as Brazilian Foreign Minister in London. If he had to leave England, Nabuco preferred to go to Rome. He stayed in neither.<sup>10</sup> Rio Branco surprised him, naming him to a newly created position.

At that time, Rio Branco wanted to solidify the relationship with the United States and raised the Brazilian Legation to an Embassy. The Baron made a pragmatic decision (LINS, 1995, p. 315ff). Being a monarchist like Nabuco, he admired Europe, but he followed, vigilant, the development of the continent's rich cousin. The Republicans not only looked at the United States, but they also increased business with them. Salvador de Mendonça, the first Republican to head the Brazilian Legation in Washington, put into practice political and economic cooperation agreements between both countries.<sup>11</sup> Subsequent heads of the Legation, Assis Brasil and Alfredo Gomes Ferreira maintained that approach policy. When it was time to nominate for the position, Rio Branco weighed that

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10 Rio Branco appointed Régis de Oliveira to London.

11 That was the case of his commercial agreement of liberalization of trade for certain products, signed in 1891 and that remained in effect until 1895. On the other hand, as we have seen, the Americans supported Floriano Peixoto during the Revolt of the Navy.

the United States was already the biggest buyer of Brazilian coffee and rubber and, in addition, Mexico had exchanged Ambassadors with Washington, and Argentina planned to do that, and that it was inconvenient for Brazil to do so. A greater rapprochement with the United States would also make it easier to protect the national territory, if the European imperialism advanced towards South America. There were also disadvantages, since with the “Roosevelt corollary” the United States became guardians of the continent, ready to intervene in domestic spheres if that was the case, of which Venezuela, Dominican Republic, and Cuba, among others, were aware. The economic and military superiority of the Americans, however, did not leave many alternatives. A negotiated Alliance was the best alternative available. This range of reasons placed within Rio Branco’s sight the consolidation of what Bradford Burns (1966) coined an “unwritten alliance”, in which Brazil was willing to open itself for a preferential bilateral collaboration with the United States. The signaling was to elevate the legation in Washington to an Embassy.

The national press – *O País*, *Gazeta de Notícias*, *Jornal do Comércio*, applauded his decision. On the contrary, for the incumbent it was “an earthquake” (Letter from Nabuco to Evelina June 19, 1904 CI-Fundaj). In 1905, Nabuco was named grudgingly. He did not achieve anything in his attempts to find another position, and he only left because he believed it was provisional, until he reached a better place. He never thought that he would die in Washington.

#### PAN-AMERICANIST AMBASSADOR

While he still served in England, Nabuco gradually changed his mind concerning the international scene. His unlimited

youthful admiration for the British was declining, partly because of the English expansionism in Africa and Asia, but also because of the disappointment produced by the diplomatic clash about British Guyana. Moreover, as head of Legation in London, his arrogance in face of Spanish America increased again, when he saw Brazil compared to the rest of South America. Of all people, he, who had criticized Americanism so much from an aristocratic point of view in the 1890's, saw himself victimized by the British aristocratism: he noticed that the South American Chancellors were not invited to the English Royal House, unlike what happened with the Europeans. That sum of factors withered both his Europeanism and his anti-Americanism. Nabuco was somewhat disillusioned with the old aristocratic splendor of the British Empire and began to pay attention to the rising star in the sky of the nations, the United States.

Although annoyed, and always defining himself as interim in the post, he took over the Embassy in Washington, putting all his skills into practice. He had the immediate mercy of the press<sup>12</sup> and of local politicians in the United States, which was so hard to obtain in England. The warm welcome made him consider a longer stay, "If I see a) that I can serve and b) if the government provides me the means, I will stay until I can resign" (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, June 22, 1905). As in his first time in Washington, he went on a journey, this time from coast to coast, in order to get to know the environment in which he would perform. Gradually, he found advantages in the new post.

As an Ambassador, he operated in his two already common fronts. On the one hand, he used social diplomacy. In that sphere, he was magnificent. His aristocratic manners, his courtesy, his elegance,

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12 His speech at the ceremony of credentials handover, when the Brazilian Embassy was installed, was covered by the *Evening Mail*, the *New York Times* and the *Tribune*, from Chicago.

which made him, during his entire life, an expert in personal relations, had the best effects in the American environment. He opened a salon, offered large dinners and pompous events that attracted attention (from the *Evening Mail* and the *New York Times*, for example). He used Penedo's lesson abundantly: the salons as a space for political tack. He cultivated friendships with diplomats from all over and built a special relationship with President Theodore Roosevelt and especially with the Secretary of State Elihu Root (Nabuco Diaries, 12/1905; June 11, 1906ff). Nabuco won prestige due to his manners and he never thought about taking on the local bourgeois lifestyle, with which he never sympathized, but, to be better accepted in the American society, he improved his own style, since "Here it is necessary to be American as in Rome, a Roman" (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Evelina Nabuco, May 22, 1905 CI-Fundaj). This "being American" to Nabuco meant a complete overhaul of his anti-Americanism.

His other front of action as Ambassador was exactly the diffusion of a rhetoric that he himself named "Pan-Americanism". Nabuco, the Anti-American monarchist of the 1890's, became an emphatic Americanist. His goal was to narrow the relationship between Brazil and the United States and make Brazil rise to the leadership of South American countries. Since his first speech in the new post, at the time of the official opening of the Brazilian Embassy in Washington, on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1905, he revealed this new and even surprising stance to one who had been raised in fervent admiration for the European civilization. It was because now his assessment of the international scene was the expansion of imperialism, which made it urgent for Brazil to align itself with a strong ally: "Our choice is between Monroism and the European recolonization". While as a monarchist intellectual he had preferred the political proximity with Europe, as Ambassador of the Republic he chose the other option: "I speak the Monroist

language” (Letter from Nabuco to Graça Aranha, December 17, 1905. *In*: Nabuco, org., 1949).

His Americanism was in defense of bilateral economic, fiscal and political agreements. He always talked about “Pan-Americanism”. The word was in vogue since the conferences that grouped countries of the continent, which began in the nineteenth century (ARDAO, 1986, p. 157ff). Nabuco adopted it, but used it less to emphasize the continental integration than to denote the Alliance between Brazil and the United States. His “American policy” was “towards a *perfect intelligence* with this country [the United States]” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Afonso Pena, December 02, 1905, CP-Nabuco, 1949, emphasis by Nabuco). It is that, besides considering a superiority by the United States, Nabuco saw another one in Brazil: the Empire would have built a civilization, in politics, economics and manners, above the level of the Spanish former colonies (Cf. ALONSO, 2010).

The oratory skills of the times of abolitionist campaign were revived: the same passion, a new cause. Nabuco faced Pan-Americanism as an opinion movement in the manner of abolitionism. The strategy was the same: campaign journeys to “shape the opinion”. (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha February 15, 1906 CP - Nabuco, 1949). The difference is that now he had to convince the Americans instead of the Brazilians, hence the comparison between both campaigns, reliving in the American memory its own icon in this area: in a speech in Michigan he compared the present Monroism to Lincoln’s abolitionism (NABUCO, 1906c:02).

The resonance, however, was very different from the one that he had found during the abolitionist campaign. When he was young, while much of his generation ardently admired the United States, Nabuco admired the European civilization. When

he finally turned to the Americans, many of his companions of the same generation had changed their reference. In the beginning of the Republic Brazil had undergone an emphatic Americanism, taking the United States as a mirror. At the turn of the century, Americanism changed its tone to point the community towards the former colonies of Spanish America (PREUSS, 2011). A Latin-Americanism that sought the commonality with neighbors based on cultural and even racial basis (Anglo-Saxons and Iberians) and moved away from the Americans, considered as being imperialists (MORSE, 1988). Members of the generation immediately subsequent to Nabuco who were also in the diplomatic service, such as Manuel de Oliveira Lima<sup>13</sup> and Manuel Bonfim<sup>14</sup>, advocated that kind of alignment. Both of them criticized in an acute and public manner the American “imperialism”, according to the former, or its “parasitism”, as the latter named, in relation to Latin American economy, politics and culture. Such Latin-Americanism could jeopardize the rapprochement that Nabuco tried to operate between the United States and Brazil and that could strengthen another path, namely the ABC Alliance (Argentina, Brazil, and Chile).

For that reason, Nabuco asked Rio Branco for an explicit manifestation in favor of his position and to the detriment of the other<sup>15</sup>: “Never, in my opinion, a Brazilian was so much in charge of the destiny of our country as you are in face of the two paths you can take: the American and the other, which I do not know

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13 Oliveira Lima, Minister in Caracas, adopted an extreme Latin-Americanist position, advising in this sense his friend Rio Branco (Oliveira Lima, 1907, 78-9; 44).

14 Manuel Bonfim wrote along that line in *América Latina: Males de Origem*, a book from 1905, in which he addressed the Americans without any issues, as being parasites of Latin America.

15 He asked him to warn Manuel Bonfim: “You can evaluate the damage that this defacement of everything that is ours, made by a Brazilian “educator”, can do to our reputation among the illustrated classes of the country” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to the Baron of Rio Branco, January 18, 1908, CP-Nabuco, 1949).

how to name, Latin American, independent or lonely” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rio Branco, December 19, 1905 - CP Nabuco, 1949). However, Rio Branco was not an Americanist in the same way as Nabuco. At the same time in which he created the Embassy in the United States, he opened another one in the Vatican and smaller representations almost in the entire American continent – except for Haiti and Santo Domingo. He also did not close the doors to Latin-Americanism and the ABC Alliance. Thus, he did not have an exclusive tendency towards the United States, as Nabuco asked him to have. Instead, he sought to keep the line of the Second Empire, a discourse of independence and selective alliances with the United States (cf. BUENO, 2003). There were varying degrees of Americanism, the more moderate one by Rio Branco and the more emphatic one by Nabuco.

This was not the only divergence between Nabuco and Rio Branco. They diverged on several minor issues until they disagreed on a major one. It was in November 1905. A German vessel, the Panther, was singled out as having invaded a Brazilian port. In times of fear of expansion of German imperialism over Brazil, the episode generated strong reaction from the Brazilian government. Rio Branco asked Nabuco to talk to American newspapers to support the Brazilian position, but he did not instruct him to ask for Washington’s support. Nabuco did this for himself, even though informally, when he reported the facts to Root, which, in turn, called the German Ambassador in the United States. The news raced in the Brazilian press and raised protests in Parliament. Then the Minister ordered him to apologize somehow. Nabuco was offended, “because they want to turn me into a scapegoat” (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, January 12, 1906). The case soon fizzled out, since Germany apologized to Brazil, but the already weakening Nabuco-Rio Branco relationship suffered another blow because of it.



## POLITICAL PAN-AMERICANISM

The emphatic Americanism of Nabuco was opposed in Brazil. All the difficulties to turn his project of alignment with the United States into a policy proved themselves in two episodes: the Pan-American Conference in Brazil, in 1906, and The Hague Conference in 1907. In these events a gradient was established, made up of three differential diplomatic positions: 1) that of Nabuco, who, being the Ambassador in Washington, endorsed that the axis of Brazilian diplomacy should be the alignment with the United States; 2) that of Oliveira Lima, for example, of preferred alliances in South America, a Latin-Americanism; and 3) that of Rio Branco, who was trying to balance these poles and not to move Brazil away from Europe.

In the Pan-American case, the very fact of hosting the Conference in Brazil already had Nabuco's touch. His proximity to Root was profitable within the Bureau of the American Republics, a Forum that organized Pan-American Conferences aimed at advancing cooperation and non-aggression agreements, with rotating seats. After Washington (1889) and Mexico (1902), Venezuela had been a candidate to host the third one in 1906. However, Nabuco thought that taking the Conference to Brazil would emphasize the importance of the country as compared to the other Latin American countries. He obtained backing from Costa Rica and Chile. For Root it was not bad business, especially in the face of Nabuco's Pan Americanism and of the far less close relations with Venezuela. Nabuco was bubbly when he achieved his goal: "I want to turn the Congress into a great success and the visit of the Secretary of State into a major event" (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, December 12, 1906).

The choice of Brazil, however, did not blow Brazilian politicians and diplomats away, as he expected. It was time for a

new presidential change and each of them was concerned about ensuring their own space in the new government. Nabuco realized he had to do the same. He asked Afonso Pena, who had been elected, for support for his Americanist policy, otherwise, “maybe it would be best not to have in here such a declared Monroist as I am...” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Afonso Pena, December 02, 1905, CP Nabuco, 1949). In a draft letter in his diary, he was even more explicit: “If the American policy is not settled there with a visit by Mr. Root, I will feel uncomfortable in Washington” (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, December 17, 1905).

In the preparation of the Conference, scheduled for July 1906, Nabuco defined the program, in agreements with both Root and Brazil – Rio Branco, both Presidents, the new one and the one who was leaving, Rodrigues Alves – and consultations with the participating countries. His goal was to form a bloc that included, in addition to Brazil and the United States, the participation of Mexico, Chile and Costa Rica. On the other hand, he preferred to keep away from Argentina’s Latin-Americanism, whose Chancellor, Luís Maria Drago, wanted to discuss what became known as the Drago Doctrine, to ensure non-intervention in countries for debt recovery. Nabuco, who was already at loggerheads with Oliveira Lima because of his friend’s poignant Latin-Americanism, asked Rio Branco to transfer the debate about the Drago Doctrine to The Hague. “A general agreement of all American Nations is even more impossible than among the European ones” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to the Baron of Rio Branco, March 10, 1906 CI-Fundaj). Rio Branco agreed with this point.

In order to compensate for the problems with the program, Nabuco strived for the social side of the event, in which he always did well. He led the decorations, lodgings, parallel programming of dinners, guest list, always keeping the media abreast of everything, so that it reported best. To host, for the first time, the United

States Secretary of State in Brazil was a high honor that Nabuco promoted as much as he could, which enchanted the American: "... President [Roosevelt] told me that if I had not come to Washington, Mr. Root would not have gone to Brazil, because his solution to go, came as a result of the impression I made on him." (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, January 29, 1906). The visit itself was a victory of his Americanism.

However, Brazil did not seem to share the same joy. He wrote to Rio Branco, concerned about the "lack of Monroist warmth within the government and the country" while hosting Root (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, December 21, 1905). Even the condition about which he was certain at first, that he would be the Chairman of the Conference, was only accepted with some hesitation. Nabuco longed for demonstrations of prestige for himself and for his policy of preferential approach with the United States. Rio Branco was evasive because he had not the same conviction as Nabuco about said approach. Both the Latin-Americanist voices and the reservation in relation to American foreign policy started to rise in the country. Thus, Rio Branco preferred to be cautious and his Americanism was much more moderate than Nabuco's. The fault of that was the anti-imperialist tendency, whose most furious and effective representative was Oliveira Lima, since, in addition to the diplomatic position in Venezuela, he wrote in the newspaper, *O Estado de S. Paulo*. His articles – which were collected and published the following year in *Panamericanism (Monroe, Bolivar, Roosevelt)*, defended the South American unit and the refusal of the "imperialist" protectorate of the United States (OLIVEIRA LIMA, 1907, p. 78-9; 44).

Nabuco had asked Rio Branco for measures to moderate Oliveira Lima's tone and he wrote to his, until then, personal friend, "You seem interested in the failure of the Conference, take the side of Venezuela, condemn those who assist me (...)" (Letter

from Joaquim Nabuco to Oliveira Lima, March 01, 1906. *In: Nabuco, org., 1949*). As explosive as usual, Oliveira Lima reacted in a violent manner, as Nabuco told Graça Aranha "... that my attitude of excessive Americanism was very badly seen by everyone in Latin America, in Brazil and in the government itself; that he was admired because I was angry not at Rio Branco who spoke behind my back, etc., etc." (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha, April 02, 1906. *In: Nabuco, org., 1949*). For all those reasons, when he embarked to Brazil, Nabuco feared a shipwreck, "both personally and regarding Mr. Root and the Conference" (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Evelina Nabuco, June 19, 1906 CI-Fundaj).

The Conference was not the disaster that he had foreseen, but it was not the reiteration of Pan-Americanism that he had longed for either. The event, which lasted one month, started on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1906, under the Chairmanship of Nabuco and the presence of representatives from 19 countries – Venezuela and Haiti boycotted. The press covered everything, a social success. In his speech on July 19<sup>th</sup>, at the Casino Fluminense, he tried to lighten the mood, backing his Pan-Americanism in the Brazilian tradition and calming those who accused him of American imperialism: "there is *no American danger!*", he said. However, politicians reacted with less enthusiasm than he expected. Rio Branco was one of the Presidents of Honor of the Conference – the other one being Root – and he disappointed Nabuco in both his speeches. In face of the rising Latin Americanism, on the one hand, and the possibility to narrow the alliances with the United States, on the other hand, Rio Branco preferred to show balance. Although he pointed to the link with the United States, he did not let it overshadow the ties with the nations of the old world (LINS, 1995, p. 336ff).

Thus, even without a peremptory Pan-Americanist statement by the Brazilian government, Nabuco had a magnificent event, crowned with a symbolic gesture: the building where the

event took place was named “Monroe Palace”. The practical result, however, was meager. Because of mutual vetoes of the several countries, part of the agenda did not advance. Few resolutions were approved: the indication of reorganization of the Bureau of the American Republics; the establishment of a committee to debate codes of International Law among American countries; the exchange of information on natural resources; the incentive to the continental trade; ideas about a Pan American Railway and a new event to discuss only matters concerning the coffee economy.<sup>16</sup> After the Conference, Nabuco received multiple and varied honors in Rio, in Minas Gerais, Recife, Salvador. He was still an icon, capable of arousing the love of crowds, but they still considered him a star of the old abolitionist campaign, scarcely interested in the new, Pan-Americanist one.

The blockbuster and the presence in Brazil when Afonso Pena’s Ministry was being organized, which welcomed Nabuco warmly, stimulated speculations that he could become Minister (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Evelina Nabuco, August 10; August 16, 1906 CI-Fundaj). A Letter from the President himself gave rise to that: “For any reason, I would do without your cooperation during my Government, at the post in which you judge that you can serve our fatherland best” (Letter from Afonso Pena to Joaquim Nabuco, August 30, 1906 CI-Fundaj). Nabuco supposed that “Rio Branco’s reign” was about to end – “I fear that he might be his own successor” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha, in December 17, 1905. *In*: Nabuco, org., 1949) – and that his own reign might be about to start. Nabuco, however, witnessed Rio Branco being led back to Office and his own reconfirmation as Ambassador in Washington.

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16 Beyond that, “The conference, in terms of concrete policy development, was of little importance” (DENNISON, 2006, p. 169).

When he went back to Washington, he saw himself more or less as he was before the journey to Brazil. His relationship with the American government remained excellent, mainly the partnership with Root in the reorganization of the Bureau of the American Republics, which was renamed the “Pan-American Union” – and that became, much later, the Organization of American States. With Rio Branco, in turn, the relationship did not change. Nabuco asked him to reciprocate the visit of the American Secretary of State to Brazil, with Rio Branco himself going to Washington, which the Baron did not do. That state of fraying of relations defined the profile of the Brazilian delegation in the Second Peace Conference of The Hague, scheduled for June of the following year.

In the preparation for the new Conference, Nabuco thought it was natural that, since he had chaired the Pan-American Conference, he would be in charge of heading the Brazilian delegation,<sup>17</sup> especially because there were items in one Conference agenda that reappeared in the other, such as the Drago Doctrine. However, Rio Branco appointed Rui Barbosa. Nabuco would be part of the delegation, but without command. He felt neglected: “... I cannot go to The Hague as second and he [Rui Barbosa] can only go as first.... No nation sent an Ambassador to the Hague at the First Conference as a second delegate” (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, February 28, 1907). The solution he found was asking for sick leave. Later, he accepted a compromise solution: his appointment in an “extraordinary mission in Europe,” preparing for the Brazilian participation in The Hague – which he later tried to back out of. The fact is that he left towards Europe in an undefined position and, once he was there, he tried to coordinate preparations for The Hague.

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17 “Be aware that I will be appointed to the Hague” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Evelina Nabuco, June 25, 1906 CP-Nabuco 1949).

His relationship with Rui Barbosa was full of difficulties. They had known each other for more than three decades, they were militants together in the Liberal Party and in the abolitionist campaign, but they had moved away from each other since the Republican coup. Nabuco tried a personal approach. He sent him *Notas Confidenciais*, in which he mapped the diplomats who might participate in the Hague and their possible strategies – since “you are not a career diplomat” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rui Barbosa, July 13, 1907), (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rui Barbosa June 13, 1907. *In*: Alencar & Santos, 1999). It took a long time before they chatted in person and, when that happened, he conveyed to Rui, “the American government has great interest that the Second Conference in The Hague lead to some progress of International Law with regard to the limitation of the use of force to charge pecuniary claims among nations” (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, July 21, 1907). This item, the right for capture at high-sea in wars and the organization of a Permanent Court of Arbitration, were under discussion. Nabuco wanted to influence the formulation of the Brazilian position on such matters, but Rui did not give him space. He rarely answered his letters – “Send me something that concerns you at the Conference, so I do not get to know what is of interest to me only by the newspapers” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rui Barbosa June 29, 1907. *In*: Nabuco, org., 1949). Thrown out of the center of decisions, Nabuco withdrew in the medicinal waters of Vittel. He was already thinking about retirement (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, June 25, 1907).

That was why in The Hague Conference, both information and opinions by Nabuco had relatively low weight in the definition of the Brazilian strategy, which was centralized in the hands of Rio Branco and Rui Barbosa. Contrary to the sincere approach with the United States, which Nabuco advocated, Rui and Rio Branco led the negotiation in the opposite direction. This also had to do

with the stance of the Americans who also did not demonstrate to Brazil the deference that Nabuco expected in the organization of the Council of Nations that was discussed at the time. They lined up with Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, England, Italy, Japan and Russia, claiming permanent seats for this main group, while the other countries would have temporary mandates. In the face of this, Rio Branco instructed Barbosa (LINS, 1995) to block on behalf of Latin America. In letters from the period, it can be seen that if Nabuco had been the Brazilian delegate, he would have tried to act in another direction, that is, he would accept the deal suggested by the American Ambassador to elevate Brazil to the category of countries with a permanent seat at the Court. The rhetoric of Barbosa was that of the equality of all nations, but his group of supporters were the delegates from Latin America. In that sense, the Brazilian stance ultimately appeared to be closer to Latin-Americanism. Nabuco knew that the privileged relationship of Brazil with the United States would thus be jeopardized, without taking into consideration the principles of *realpolitik*. The demand for equality among the nations, however good as a principle, would have no effectiveness at all – “we cannot impose it on the world” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha, September 02, 1907 CP. *In*: Nabuco, 1949) since the economic and military inequality among the countries was a fact. In addition, before him, Nabuco preferred to align Brazil with those that were above it in this hierarchy, than to let it be levelled down. At some moment that direction was taken into consideration, but Rui Barbosa preferred other allies on the top floor, such as Japan and Germany. The Rui Barbosa-Rio Branco strategy was, in coalition with Latin America, not to sign the Convention. Barbosa left the conference praised as “Eagle of the Hague”, but the United States came out, at least temporarily, of the portfolio of preferred allies. According to Nabuco, Rio Branco “took advantage of the Hague to carry out



South American politics, popularity and national legend” (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, October 10, 1907), while Rui Barbosa “undid everything I had achieved” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Evelina Nabuco, September 30, 1907 CI-Fundaj),<sup>18</sup> in the bilateral relation between Brazil and the United States.

Thus, Nabuco’s position was minoritarian both in the Pan-American Conference, when he did not obtain from Rio Branco the peremptory statement in favor of the alliance with the United States, and in The Hague, where he could not be the Brazilian delegate, nor could he influence decisively on the position of the Brazilian government.

Back in Washington, Nabuco tried to correct the damage caused to the so well constructed approach with Root. He did damage control. He tried to convince Barbosa to go to the United States, in a friendship gesture between both countries (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rui Barbosa, October 22, 1907). Barbosa refused. He tried support from other Brazilian authorities to his Pan-Americanism, he insisted, “we cannot hesitate between the United States and Spanish America” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Alexandre Barbosa July 07, 1907, Nabuco, 1949). Nabuco considered that the pendulum was swinging to the latter: the alignment in the Hague strengthened Latin Americanists and advocates of the ABC Alliance, of Brazil with Argentina and Chile, which seemed to him as a change of the axis of the Brazilian foreign policy, in the opposite direction to that in which he worked. That was why he seriously considered leaving his post: “...start thinking about replacing me, if our foreign policy undergoes this transformation to change its security axis from the United States to the Plata River” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rio Branco, January 18, 1908).

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18 “I would prefer a thousand times not to have gone to the Hague than leaving there with our intelligence shaken by the United States...” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha, September, 02, 1907, CP-Nabuco, 1949).

However, the ABC Alliance did not advance because of a disagreement between Argentina and Brazil, caused by the Argentinean Minister Zeballos. Not even in that case the United States was rehabilitated as the preferred friend, as Nabuco would have liked. It is because Root tried to calm down the tempers between Brazil and Argentina, and Rio Branco considered that gesture interventionism, another proof that the Pan-Americanist strategy would not be as profitable as Nabuco supposed it would be (Diary of Joaquim Nabuco, December 08, 1908). Also in the economic sphere, in 1909, the US Congress threatened to tax the Brazilian coffee in the United States. In this occasion Nabuco worked together with Rio Branco, always mobilizing Root and his replacement as Secretary of State, Philander Chase Knox, as American diplomats, members of Parliament and tradesmen. He won support, until he finally obtained the most important one, that of the president himself, who was now William Taft. The result was free entrance into the American market for Brazilian coffee, as well as cocoa, rubber and animal skins (DENNISON, 2006, p. 187).

Events like this made Nabuco somewhat less optimistic about the success of his emphatic Americanism. He was concerned about the growth of imperialism, suspecting that it would end, as it actually did, in a World War. For that reason, in the last few years of his life, he tried hard to avoid disputes proper to the continent, playing a decisive role, still in 1909, on a diplomatic incident between Chile and the United States – the Alsop Matter – for which he negotiated the solution by means of the appointment of an arbitrator. The episode, in which Rio Branco supported him, renewed Nabuco's prestige within the United States. Nevertheless, there was no longer any space for the privileged relations that he had planned when he took over the Embassy in 1905. Rio Branco did not provide him with the decisive support and the full autonomy that he desired so much – “He had wanted a

robot” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha, December 01, 1908. *In: Nabuco, org., 1949*). Nabuco complained about the difficulties to work because of the friction in their relationship:

*He [Rio Branco] should start thinking about replacing me. In addition to our different orientation (he trusts Germany, France, England, Chile, and Argentina, and I do not know who else, while I only trust the United States), I am tired and disappointed with my mission here without full agreement with him. (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Hilário de Gouvea, January 19, 1909. In: Nabuco, org., 1949).*

Nabuco wanted to migrate to another post and live out the end of his life – already seriously ill from Polycythemia, which, killed him the following year – in the Vatican. Rio Branco denied the transfer.

## CULTURAL PAN-AMERICANISM

The last few years of Nabuco were of loss of influence. Unable to set the dominant line of the Brazilian foreign policy, stuck in the United States, without being able to make the Americanist policy, as he would like to have done, aging and ill, he waited for his retirement or for the change of Minister. Despite yet another change of President, Rio Branco remained. Therefore, if the definition of the political line of the Brazilian diplomacy was not within his reach, he supposed that what he could do was cultural diplomacy.

That was when he started shining again, in a Pan-Americanist campaign, with which he went to clubs and several American universities. He rescued his youth strategy that was so successful

in the abolitionist campaign, when he had tried to persuade the public opinion, when he considered the government refractory to changes. As an old man, he considered doing the same thing with Pan-Americanism, that is, to persuade the American public of the benefits of a preferred alliance with Brazil, using his attributes, his intelligence, his erudition and his charisma.

In the brief improvised writings, which he produced while he was at his post in Washington, mainly in the last three years, after which he migrated to a cultural Pan-Americanism, he underlined Brazilian cultural specificity in terms of language, culture and political tradition as compared to other Latin American countries. He spread those ideas in conferences in American universities. His Pan-Americanism appeared more multipurpose, unifying the Americas. At Yale University, in 1908, before Hispanics, he lectured “on behalf of Latin America” (NABUCO, 1909, p. 166). In two events of 1909, in the tribute to the sculptor Saint Gaudens and at the inauguration of the new building of the Bureau of the American Republics, he emphasized the unity of the Americas, “we are all sons of Columbus [...], all sons of Washington [...]”. The same sentence had appeared two years earlier, in a speech at the Liberal Club of Buffalo, New York: “(...) we, the peoples of all America are as much the children of Washington as we are the children of Columbus [...] [sharing a] common inheritance and the hope of a common destiny” (NABUCO, 1907, p. 8).

Unity under leadership – not imperialism. He said at the University of Chicago, in August 1908,

*with your high civilization, you can do no wrong to any nation. Intimate contact with you will, therefore, under whatever conditions, bring only good and progress to the other part. The only certain effect I can see of a permanent*

*and intimate intercourse of Latin America with you is a slow Americanization (NABUCO, 1908c, p. 3).*

The defense of the American positions was made explicit at the ceremony of restoration of the national government in Cuba in the following year: “[...] the [North American] intervention had no other purpose than to establish the independence of this people on an unshakable base [...]” (NABUCO, 1909, p. 1). In “The Share of America in Civilization”, prepared for the University of Wisconsin, he ascribed the continental peace to the Monroe Doctrine (NABUCO, 1909, p. 4).

Nabuco spoke to the university audience or to an educated audience in general, insisting that Brazil should be singled out from the other nations of “Latin America”. Even when dealing with topics without direct relation to diplomacy, that is what he conveyed: “By drawing attention to the greatness of Camões and the *Lusiadas*, I seek to show to the Americans that our language is not a dialect of Spanish” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rui Barbosa April 11, 1908, CP Alencar & Santos, 1999). Language, culture, political tradition, everything that made Brazil different from Latin America and brought it closer to the United States.

Such speeches reignited Nabuco’s fascination by and over the crowd. He was always much appreciated. His Cultural Pan-Americanism, however, did not affect the direction of the Brazilian diplomatic policy. Less than two months before he died in Washington, Nabuco foresaw that few people like him, who were in favor of the privileged relationship with the United States, would attend the Fourth Pan-American Conference, to be held in Buenos Aires in 1910, while many Latin Americanists would attend (Diaries of Joaquim Nabuco, December 02, 1909). The thesis of the preferred approach with the United States was not very welcome in Brazil.

In January 1910, illness won the battle against him. He was 60 years old. However, Nabuco did not completely disappear, the effects of his five-year term as an Ambassador were clear. His funeral services provided the measure of magnificence of the figure. The American President, William Taft, the Secretary of State Philander Knox, accompanied him, along with members of Parliament, members of the Supreme Court, diplomats in a solemn funeral service with State honors, repeated when his body arrived in May, in Rio de Janeiro. There, the Baron of Rio Branco, always a Minister, was in charge of greeting him. His wake took place in the building of his apotheosis during the Third Pan-American Conference, which he himself had named Monroe Palace. However, in the extensive tributes that he received, he was remembered more as a leading abolitionist and monarchist intellectual than as a Pan-Americanist diplomat. Nabuco was celebrated as *Primus Inter Pares*, the creature of a network of social relations, the monarchical aristocratic society, and of a socio-political context of the late nineteenth century. A world that, like him, no longer existed.

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**JOSÉ MARIA DA SILVA  
PARANHOS JÚNIOR\***

José Maria da Silva Paranhos Júnior was born in Rio de Janeiro on 20 April 1845, the son of the Viscount of Rio Branco, a prominent Conservative Party politician and chief of the longest lasting government of the Second Empire. After finishing secondary school at the Dom Pedro II Lyceum, he attended Law School in São Paulo almost until graduation and, for the last year, he transferred to the Recife Law School, as it was the custom at the time. The beginnings of his public career were difficult, as he failed to continue in any of the professions he tried, as history teacher, public prosecutor, and deputy for the Mato Grosso Province in two legislatures.

After a romantic liaison with French-Belgian actress Marie Philomène Stevens, from which was born Raul, his first son, he decided, for personal and family reasons, to become Brazil's Consul

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\* Translated by João Moreira Coelho.

General in Liverpool, considered then as one of the Crown's most profitable employments (1876). He remained in Europe until late in 1906, a total of 26 years, most of them in Liverpool. In the latter part of this period, he discharged functions at the Brazilian immigration services in Paris and, for a short time, in Berlin, as Brazilian Minister.

He took advantage of his prolonged voluntary exile to devote himself to studying diplomatic and military history, colonial geography, and maps and documents in files about Brazil and its neighbors, amassing exceptional knowledge in these areas, an expert's scholarship, and utmost competence. During those years he wrote several circumstantial works, nearly all commissioned for special events. These include abundant, detailed comments on Ludwig Schneider's *History of the Triple Alliance War*, whose translation and publication were commissioned by the War Ministry; *Efemérides Brasileiras*, written for *O Jornal do Brasil*; a substantial part of the entry about Brazil in Levasseur's *Grande Encyclopédie*, prepared to mark the occasion of the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition; the masterly *Esquisse de l'Histoire du Brésil*, included in the informative book *Le Brésil ; Emperor D. Pedro's biography*, signed by Rabin Benjamin Mossé but certainly written entirely by him; as well as numerous articles for *O Jornal do Comércio*, *A Nação*, and other newspapers.

Although he had been bestowed the title of Baron of Rio Branco in 1888, at the twilight of the monarchy, paradoxically it was the Republic, in its Floriano Peixoto's stage, that gave this stalwart monarchist the opportunity to emerge from obscurity, appointing him the main advocate of Brazilian interests on the arbitration issue against Argentina, submitted to United States President Grover Cleveland, regarding the territory of Palmas (sometimes improperly called Missions), in the country's Southwest. His complete, undisputed victory in the award handed

down in 1895 turned him, overnight, into a celebrity known and admired throughout Brazil, making him indispensable as a lawyer in another dispute, namely, the arbitration entrusted to the President of the Swiss Confederation, regarding the border dispute between Brazil (Amapá) and the French possession of Guyana. Once again, the resounding success in securing for the country the entire disputed territory consolidated the myth that he was invincible (1900).

Two years later, President Rodrigues Alves appointed him his Foreign Minister, a position he assumed in December 1902. He would retain this position during Rodrigues Alves' entire four-year term in office, as well as during the terms of his successors Afonso Pena, Nilo Peçanha, and Hermes da Fonseca. He died in office, on 10 February 1912.

Rio Branco had become a figure almost more indispensable than the chiefs of government, owing to the victories he had won in respect of virtually all the diplomatic problems with which he dealt and which were not few or simple. Right after taking office, he had to tackle the First Republic's most serious diplomatic crisis: the rebellion against the Bolivian sovereignty by the Acre territory's Brazilian settlers, under Plácido de Castro's leadership. Through painstaking efforts, he managed to prevent the conflict from degenerating into open war between Brazil and Bolivia. He succeeded in incorporating Acre to the Brazilian territory after negotiations and concessions, both financial and territorial, which culminated in the signing of the Treaty of Petropolis (1902).

After that episode, he devoted himself to definitively solving, always through direct negotiations and arbitrations, all the remaining border issues. In addition to his personal contribution to the solution of border divergences with Argentina (1895), France (1900), and Bolivia (1903), his systematic endeavor led to

the treaties with Ecuador (1904); Peru, first provisionally (1904), then definitively (1909); the arbitral award against Great Britain on British Guyana (1904); the protocol with Venezuela (1905); the agreement with The Netherlands on Suriname (1906); with Colombia (1907); and the rectification treaty with Uruguay (1909).

Very soon he became aware of the United States' emergence as a world power and established in Washington the first Brazilian Embassy (1905), appointing as Ambassador Joaquim Nabuco, undoubtedly national diplomacy's most brilliant and illustrious figure. Just as he claimed that he had "drawn the map of Brazil," he maintained that, with that decision, he had "shifted the Brazilian diplomatic axis from London to Washington." With the United States, he established what North American historian E. Bradford Burns would call "the Unwritten Alliance." This was a pragmatic arrangement whereby Brazil supported American diplomatic decisions in the context of the incipient Pan-Americanism, in Panama, the Caribbean, and Central America, in exchange for Washington's support on issues related to Hispanic-American neighbor countries and in possible problems with three European countries, two of which, namely, France and Great Britain, were at the apex of the aggressive phase of imperialism and expansion.

He endeavored to improve Brazil's relations with Latin countries, particularly with South America's. He pioneered the proposal of the so-called A.B.C. Pact, namely, the Argentina-Brazil-Chile Pact, which would be signed only after his death (1915)." Notwithstanding the serious Cable no. 9 incident with Argentina, when the Argentine Foreign Minister was his rival and adversary Estanislao Zeballos, he continued to endeavor to dispel the reservations and mistrust engendered by the Brazilian plan to modernize its War Navy. He achieved popularity and high prestige in most countries of the Continent. He secured for Brazil the appointment of Latin America's first Cardinal, and

showed firmness and discernment in the serious conflict with Germany over the excesses of the commander of the German gunboat *Panther* in the country's South. With the same firmness and discernment, he acted in perfect harmony with Rui Barbosa, the Brazilian delegate to the Second Hague International Peace Conference (1907), in refusing to agree to Brazil's classification different from equality with the other powers.

No other diplomat or Foreign Minister, either before or after him, achieved comparable diplomatic victories or earned the widespread admiration that made him Brazil's most popular man of his time. At his death, the *A Noite* newspaper summed up the country's feeling in the banner headline "Rio Branco's death is a national catastrophe." Because of his diplomatic and modernization work at the head of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, he was officially named the Patron of Brazilian Diplomacy, and his birthdate is celebrated in Brazil as Diplomat's Day.





JOSÉ MARIA DA SILVA PARANHOS JÚNIOR, THE  
BARON OF RIO BRANCO: THE FOUNDING  
OF THE REPUBLIC'S FOREIGN POLICY\*

*Rubens Ricupero*

The exceptional position the Baron of Rio Branco tends to occupy in any study about Brazilian diplomacy is due not so much to the long, uninterrupted length of the timespan he spent at the helm of Brazil's foreign relations. Rather, the rare nature of the historical and spiritual time in which he was active and his unique personal qualities combined to allow him to perform an undertaking his successors could hardly match.

There prevailed then an uncommon coincidence of internal peace and prosperity with a fleeting moment of international belief in arbitration, negotiation, and juridical solution of conflicts. A seemingly unprecedented opportunity since the Treaty of Madrid (1750) opened for meeting the challenge of territorial consolidation, thereby creating conditions that made possible the propelling forward of a more constructive foreign policy toward Brazil's neighbors.

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\* Translated by João Moreira Coelho.

Borders are normally established at one time, and then remain unchanged. No other diplomatic accomplishment is so concrete and so valued in the public's eyes. It has thus tended to overshadow other less tangible diplomatic contributions of the Baron, such as conceiving and implementing what was perhaps the first intellectual design capable of encompassing the entire universe of Brazil's international relations, and organizing its various facets into a whole, coherent system.

Rio Branco's thinking on this subject and on foreign policy in general is not explicitly expressed in his intellectual work. As a historian, he was above all a scholar intent on faithfully reconstructing events, rarely displaying in his writings a leaning toward theorizing and abstractions. What we might call the *Rio Branco foreign policy paradigm* has to be culled particularly from his texts focused on action: speeches, lectures, articles, interviews, explanatory statements, orders, memoirs on borders, and letters.

Before his administration, foreign relations were approached from a segmented, fragmentary perspective. In the view of the Empire's statesmen and diplomats, the focus of attention remained centered, as in colonial times, on the circle of the La Plata River basin countries, namely, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay. This was the setting of our "great game" of rivalry with Buenos Aires, of fears that the Viceroyalty of the Rio de La Plata might be restored under Buenos Aires's hegemony. That was the scene of Brazil's only, frustrated attempts to enlist the might of the great European powers, English or French, to help further its designs against Rosas.

Except for that, the different areas of relations with the world remained separate and isolated. It was with Rio Branco that foreign policy metamorphosed into a twofold movement of universalization and integration.

For one thing, Brazilian foreign relations became globalized, transcending its early limitation to the La Plata region, as it was well put in an article in *Jornal do Comércio* (12 May 1906), written by Minister Rio Branco under the J. Penn penname, titled *Brasil, os Estados Unidos e Monroísmo* [Brazil, the United States, and Monroism]:

*Our intervention in the La Plata River basin has long ceased. Brazil has nothing else to do with the neighbor countries' internal life [...]. Its political interest lies elsewhere. Having lost interest for the South American countries' sterile rivalries [...], Brazil has resolutely stepped into the realm of great international friendships to which it is entitled by its culture's aspiration, the prestige of its territorial magnitude, and the strength of its population. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 491. (Emphasis added)*

As it took flight from the La Plata River to the heights of the “great international friendships,” diplomacy began to link its various action scenarios and to structure them into a whole in which the different elements could interact with each other. The three main axles on which the paradigm structure hinged were the territorial policy, the asymmetrical relationship with the great powers, and the relatively symmetrical relations with the South American neighbors.

## TERRITORIAL POLICY

Rio Branco's realistic pragmatism led him to approach each border problem in its specificity, without letting himself be bound by absolute principles. As he faced the first and greatest challenge –

the Acre issue, 1903 – he did not hesitate to break (his own words) with the Brazilian Government’s unchanging interpretation over thirty-five years under the Empire and the Republic. In his last action pertaining to border issues, the rectification of the border with Uruguay (1909), he took the initiative of discarding the taboo that favored Brazil: the perpetual status of border treaties and “perfect” juridical acts.

The variety of case-by-case approaches is not incompatible with some general tendencies, though. The *first* lies in the *methodologic criterion* of preferring negotiation to other means of solution. As regards, for instance, the “disguised conquest” that might have occurred in Acre, if the incorporation of the territory dominated by the insurgents had been accepted, without negotiating some kind of compensation to Bolivia. In this case, there would have occurred the adoption of a “procedure contrary to the loyalty the Brazilian government never ceased to maintain [...] toward other nations [...], embarking on a dangerous adventure, unprecedented in our diplomatic history.” [RIO BRANCO, 2012.]

The stance Rio Branco assumed quite early in his ministry resurfaces later, as he writes about the dispute between Chile and Peru: “It is more prudent to compromise than to go into war. Recourse to war is always disgraceful [...]. It was by compromising with our neighbors that we have put an end to all our border issues.” (Dispatches to the Legations in Santiago and Buenos Aires. *In*: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 683.)

His preference for negotiation was tempered by a practical sense of reality. He rejected Peru’s intention of transforming Brazil’s negotiation with Bolivia in respect of Acre into a tripartite process. Neither did he deem viable the formula put forth by Uruguay and Colombia about a collective border negotiation, assembling on the camp opposite to Brazil’s all the Hispanic heirs of

the San Ildelfonso Treaty. Regarding the first proposal, he recalled that the past attempt of a collective negotiation of Paraguay's borders with the Triple Alliance members caused tensions that nearly led to a new conflict between Brazil and Argentina.

Despite personal victories in arbitrations against Argentina (Palmas) and France (Amapá) and the more than thirty similar agreements he signed, he never again resorted to this method after the disappointment in the case of the border with British Guyana, entrusted to the arbitration of the King of Italy. In an unsigned article, he wrote:

*Arbitration is not always effective. The cause may be magnificent, the lawyer unrivaled, and yet, as in this case, the award may be unfavorable. [...] We should resort to [arbitration] only if reaching a direct agreement with the opposite party is definitely impossible. [Newspapers clippings. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 402.]*

As he made clear in the instructions to Joaquim Nabuco in Washington, regarding the preparation of the Third International American Conference to be held in Rio de Janeiro (1906), he rejected “unconditional arbitration on any issues that might arise.” Neither did he accept “a previously designated arbitrator to solve all questions that might arise,” as “an arbitrator that is appropriate today may not be so afterwards.” His recommendation was that “each case requires a special compromise and the choice of an arbitrator” [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington, 10 March 1906. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 758] and this choice should be made with unstinting attention to the tiniest personal and national peculiarities. In his view, equal or greater care should be taken in precisely defining the object of the dispute and in minutely circumscribing and restricting the arbitrator's margin of discretion.

Just as Nabuco, he was convinced that the principles applied to Africa's partition by the European imperialist powers gathered at the Berlin Congress (1880) placed at serious risk the integrity of the scarcely populated Brazilian Amazon. Except for what he called "men of the old school," he distrusted European arbitrators influenced by that approach. He preferred North-American arbitrators (his first major victory – Palmas – was owed to President Cleveland).

For even stronger reasons, he suspected Latin American jurists: "For solving issues between South American nations, arbitrators selected in North America and in Europe offer more assurance of impartiality." He writes further:

*With Hispanic American arbitrators we would be always at a disadvantage [...] We have territorial issues with Peru and Colombia, as well as river navigation issues [...] We have consistently asserted the nullity of the preliminary, or provisional 1777 Border Treaty. All our neighbors, as Colombia and Peru, claim it is valid. Thus, they could not be accepted as judges by Brazil. [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington, 10 March 1906. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 759.]*

The *second* characteristic of his policy was the refusal to accept the validity of the colonial agreements annulled by wars or incompletely implemented, save as a secondary, auxiliary element in the lack of clear identification of concrete settlement. This conviction bothered the Hispanic neighbors, for whom the sole legitimate basis for the borders between the successors of Portugal and Spain was the San Ildelfonso Treaty (1777), a juridical expression of the apogee of Spanish military power in South America.

The rejection of San Ildelfonso was complemented by the *third*, decisive principle of the Baron's territorial policy: the *utis*

*possidetis (de facto)*, i.e., the actual occupation, with or without titles. In the memorandum in defense of Brazil's right before the arbitrator on the Palmas issue, these *two substantive criteria* are categorically expressed:

*The Brazilian government has consistently asserted that the uti possidetis at the time of independence [...] and the 1777 Treaty provisions that are not contrary to the uti possidetis are the only foundation that should support the border agreements between Brazil and the adjoining States of Spanish origin. [RIO BRANCO, 2012, vol. I, p. 63.]*

Armed with these principles and alerted by the seriousness of the Acre crisis, Rio Branco succeeded in definitively solving all the pending border issues with its neighbors. At one point, he said to Argentine Diplomat Ramón J. Carcano that he had “drawn the map of Brazil.” He did indeed define its territorial profile in relation to the external physical context, employing solely direct negotiation or arbitration. To this end, he resorted to legitimate power means; in no case, there was unilateral imposition by force.

The statement to Carcano and “territory is power,” another expression attributed to him, point to his understanding that although it may not be equal to power, territory is a precondition of power. Thus, as he drew the borders within which sovereignty would be exercised, and in doing it by consensus, without traumas, the Minister felt that he was creating the conditions under which Brazil could practice a foreign policy to deal, in the first place, with asymmetrical power relations.

## ASYMMETRICAL POWER RELATIONS

Nearly all border issues formed part of the axle on which hinged relations with countries from which we did not feel

distanced by insuperable power inequality. All of us belonged in the same category and could thus play the same game. In this area of relative symmetry or equality, Rio Branco knew how to use with moderation the limited power at his disposal. Questions inherited from the past had to be solved with methods and concepts formulated in the nineteenth century.

The Minister's creative and innovative capacity would find its best expression in a different domain: in reacting to an early twentieth century problem that opened a door of opportunity. He had now to learn how to deal with the powers from which we were separated by such power differential that we could not think of playing the same game with them or acting in the same category. Brazil was the only South American country that shared borders with three European powers, two of which were consummate examples of the aggressive imperialism of the time: the United Kingdom, which took advantage of the confusion of the early days of the Republic to occupy the Trindade Island; and France, with which we had had the bloody Calçoene incidents in Amapá.

During the transition from Colony to Independence, the British preponderance had imposed on us the 1810 "unequal treaties," later reinstated as the price for Britain's mediation in favor of the recognition of the newly independent country. The special jurisdiction of the "Conservative Judge from the English nation," the trade preferences, the inhibiting interference in the Luso-Brazilian operations in Uruguay, and the violence employed in repressing the slave trade gradually coalesced to eliminate British political influence, leading finally to the breaking of relations in the Christie Affair (1863).

Although it had lost the capacity to weigh decisively on Rio de Janeiro's diplomatic decisions, London remained the country's main financial, commercial, and investment attraction center. In



this international scenario still bearing the imprint of the Victorian apogee and now darkened by the threatening rise of the Kaiser's Germany, Rio Branco would be one of the first contemporaries to realize that a new power was beginning to assert itself. As he would write in a dispatch to Washington: "[...] there used to be great powers only in Europe; today they are the first to recognize that there is in the New World a new, powerful nation which they must take into account." [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington, 1905. *In*: LINS, vol. 2, p. 496.]

That dispatch is from 1905, a time that for American diplomatic historians coincide with two events heralding the beginning of the United States' global engagement, transcending hemispheric limits. The first was the mediation imposed by President Theodore Roosevelt to end the Russian-Japanese war. The second was North American participation in the Algeciras Conference after the Agadir incident between France and Germany over Morocco.

The emergence of a great power that began to cast an obstructing shadow over the continent was a new, impossible to be ignored fact. In the past, European powers, entangled in their endless power game, had little effect on South American diplomacy across the Atlantic. A new power was now emerging alongside them, whose gravitational force was increasingly making itself felt. Refusal to recognize reality would mean granting an advantage to potential adversaries. As Rio Branco had remarked in the mentioned article *O Brasil, os Estados Unidos e Monroísmo*, "Washington has always been the main center of intrigues and requests for intervention against Brazil on the part of some of our neighbors, permanent rivals or occasional adversaries."

Other than the *permanent rivals* (the Argentines, obviously), or the *occasional adversaries* (Peruvians, Bolivians), he was concerned over the Europeans' threat. The example of Cleveland's

interference in favor of arbitration between the United Kingdom and Venezuela had convinced him that fear of an American reaction had been the major factor that had prevented France from occupying Amapá. At the time of the negotiation that subjected to arbitration the issue with Paris, Rio Branco wrote to the Secretariat of State:

*I believe [...] that what keeps the French Government under restraint is fear of complications with the United States [...] and England, and perhaps also the suspicion that we may already have some secret intelligence with the governments of these two great Powers. (Emphasis added)*

His advice was thus “to arouse the interest of the United States in the French Guyana issue.” [RIO BRANCO. *In*: JORGE, 2012, p. 93-94.]

Echoing the old Portuguese heritage of a diplomacy conscious of military weakness and consequently in need of a powerful ally, those words preannounced the search for what Bradford Burns called “the unwritten alliance with the United States.” This expectation would become reality particularly at two decisive moments: the establishment of the Embassy in Washington, and the holding of the Third Inter-American Conference in Rio de Janeiro.

The establishment of the Embassy in Washington was due solely to Rio Branco’s initiative; Joaquim Nabuco himself, who was chosen to be the Ambassador, thought it was premature. In 1905, when that decision was made, there were few embassies, which were considered a great powers’ privilege. There were only seven missions of that level in Washington (the six major European powers’ and the neighboring Mexico’s). There was none in Rio de Janeiro. The raising of a legation to Embassy was not a unilateral

decision; it required prior negotiation between the interested governments.

Through this diplomatic gesture's symbolism, the decision thus signaled a shift of emphasis in Brazilian-American relations. Conscious of the importance of such a measure, the Baron explicitly declared that he had moved the center of Brazilian diplomacy from London to Washington. The following year, thanks to Nabuco's efforts, Rio de Janeiro hosted the Third Inter-American Conference, attended by Secretary of State Elihu Root, a rare occurrence at the time. A tacit alliance thus took shape, under which each party was ready to render mutual support to further its own interests.

Much calculation went into such approach, as this could be seen as the paradigm's "pragmatic component". Brazil could offer the United States advantages it would not be able to offer the European powers: diplomatic support on the continent to further Washington's hemispheric interests in respect of Mexico, Panama, the rest of Central America, and the Caribbean, and cooperation in securing greater acceptance of the Monroe Doctrine by the Latin American countries.

In return, it expected support from the Americans concerning the Europeans in any border or political difficulties that might arise, as in the case of Germany's *Panther* gunboat. Moreover, if it could not count on the United States' active commitment, it could at least rely on its benevolent neutrality toward Brazil's border problems with its neighbors, as it actually happened regarding the Acre negotiations with the *Bolivian Syndicate* and Bolivia, and, later, with Peru.

What was fundamental was not that an alliance in strict sense should exist between the two countries, with a military component (as it would actually happen much later, during World War II). The

relation's true nature found a perfect definition in one of Root's Rio de Janeiro speeches: "Let the United States of America and the United States of Brazil join hands not in formal, written alliance treaties, but in their peoples' universal empathy, confidence, and esteem."<sup>1</sup> What mattered above all was a widespread perception in international circles that Brazil, more than any other Latin American country, had managed to establish close ties to the United States.

Nabuco had a similar opinion when he expressed his expectation by saying that approximation with Washington was equivalent to "the greatest army and the greatest navy – an army and a navy we could never have."<sup>2</sup> Writing that France's hesitation regarding Amapá was due to the "suspicion of a secret intelligence" between Brazil and the United States (as mentioned), the Baron hinted at the same phenomenon: the importance of perception and of image, two ingredients of diplomatic prestige, which in turn were a significant component of power.

Far from being a voluntarist gesture motivated exclusively by political considerations, the decision to intensify relations with the United States reflected the change that was taking place in the economic relationship. The shifting of the diplomatic front followed the economy, which moved increasingly toward North America, in the hope that it would once again move toward the Pacific in our days.

In Minister Rio Branco's time, the North American market purchased more than half of the Brazilian coffee, sixty-percent of our rubber, and most of our cocoa. When our Embassy opened in Washington, Brazil ranked as the United States' sixth trade partner, after England, Germany, France, Canada, and Cuba.

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1 Cit. in Burns, 1966, p. 164.

2 Nabuco's view was expressed in a letter transcribed by COSTA, 1968, p.107.

At one point, we were the United States' third supplier. The year of the Baron's death (1912), the North American market absorbed no less than thirty-six percent of our exports.

Thanks to this privileged circumstance, wheat and other American products enjoyed a 20-percent tariff reduction, the same granted by Washington to Brazilian coffee. When Argentina applied for a similar treatment in 1907, Rio Branco denied the request, alleging that the Argentines bought only 120,000 bags of coffee, as compared with the 6.1 million bags imported by the American market. In a dispatch to Buenos Aires, he argued:

*It is not enough for a country to lift rights on coffee for us to feel obligated to treat it on the same footing as the United States. Such a country should buy coffee from us in a quantity at least close to the quantity bought by the United States. [Dispatch to the Legation in Buenos Aires. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 586]*

The Brazilian reply confirms that trade considerations had already a significant weight on the approximation to the Americans. At the same time, it showed how different was the approach to relations of relative equality or symmetry at a time when Latin American economic integration was not even a dream.

## RELATIONS OF RELATIVE EQUALITY OR SYMMETRY

The dispatch continues:

*We are and want to remain good friends with Argentina, but trade issues are not friendship issues and, as regards our exports, Argentina is far from being what the United States are today. It is not up to Brazil to grant compensation to a weak buyer, which Argentina is for us; it is up to Argentina*

*to grant compensation to the great purchaser of Argentine products, which Brazil is. [Dispatch to the Legation in Buenos Aires. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 587.]*

It never crossed the mind of statesmen then to grant preferences or advantages based on Latin American territorial proximity or common identity. In line with relative power equality, strict reciprocity was required. This was so particularly in dealing with *permanent rivals*.

Strictly speaking, Brazil's relative symmetry or equality of power applied only to Argentina, which was experiencing an uninterrupted surge of wealth, prosperity, stability, and world prestige since the inception of the "cows and wheat" era, around 1880. After that transformation, the correlation of forces between the two was somewhat inverted. The turbulent Brazil of the Republic's beginnings, convulsed by civil conflicts, affected by the speculative and inflationary movement known as *Encilhamento*, and the debt crisis, seemed to subside. At least until Rodrigues Alves's term as President, together with the following quadrennial, inaugurated the New Republic's best period.

Already by 1882, when he was Consul in Liverpool, Rio Branco felt disturbed by the neglect suffered by the Army and the Navy after the Paraguayan War. In his letters, he complained that, differently from Argentina, Brazil no longer had an effective army, squadrons, or torpedoes. Later, as Minister, his efforts in favor of Army modernization and particularly the Fleet's renewal would help intensify the tensions and mistrust with Buenos Aires.

Defending himself against charges that he was a militarist and arms race promoter, he said in a speech at the Military Club (15 October 1911):

*I have never been a proponent or an instigator of mighty armaments [...]. I have limited myself to point out the*

*need for, after twenty years' neglect, seriously reorganizing national defense, following the example of some neighbor countries that have, in a short time, managed to equip themselves with defense and attack elements far superior to ours. [In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 774.]*

His use of the “neighbors” plural would not deceive his audience: the reference to Argentina was obvious.

The background of rivalries, of lack of trust and of empathy, coupled with border issues still a-brewing helps one to understand the predominantly problematic character of relations with neighbors early in Rio Branco's administration. He had inherited the emotional, stereotyped residue of centuries of antagonism. He wrote in a dispatch to the Embassy in Washington:

*[...] Your Excellency does not ignore that there are in Spanish America old ill feelings against the United States and Brazil, which only time perhaps might dispel. Truly, such ill feelings against Brazil are not to be encountered only in Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, and Central America. [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 524.]*

What is curious about this text is that it identifies Brazil and the United States as common targets of Hispanic antipathy, a feeling hard to imagine today. More significant, though, is that at that precise moment (the dispatch dealt with the preparation for Secretary of State Root's visit to Rio de Janeiro), the Minister was attempting to convince Washington to extend that visit to Montevideo, Buenos Aires, and Santiago. This, he insisted: “...will dispel jealousies and ill feelings. The best way to secure the Hispanic Americans' cooperation is by boosting their self-esteem, and this would but become a powerful nation such as America.” [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 521.]

It should be noted that early in the twentieth century and in Rio Branco's administration, the panorama of neighbor relations still deserved the following description in the just mentioned main dispatch of instructions to Washington:

*A look at the map shows that we are neighbors to many countries, but neighbors in America's fashion, as Count Aranda said in the eighteenth century, "people separated from each other by vast deserts." It was only through Europe and the United States that we communicated with some of our neighbors. As regards Brazil, we can exert our influence and offer our friendship's good offices with a degree of effectiveness only in respect of Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay, while attempting to operate in line with Argentina and Chile. [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 769.]*

Save for border issues, it was thus openly admitted that our relations with most neighbors was superficial, lacking the substance of trade, economic connections, cooperation, and cultural exchange. The filling of this void had to wait for decades to begin; and what is surprising is that Rio Branco, soon after the border issues were solved, began to attempt constructing a more solid political cooperation structure. When he said to Carcano that he had drawn the map of Brazil, the Baron added: "My program now is to contribute to union and friendship among the South American countries." [In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 681.]

The boldest expression this program achieved was in the 1909 "Treaty of Cordial Political Intelligence and Arbitration between the United States of Brazil, the Republic of Argentina, and the Republic of Chile," drafted by Rio Branco himself. The treaty's focus was Art. 1, whereby the parties undertook to seek "to act always in agreement with each other in respect of all issues pertaining to their common



interests and aspirations and of those *that are conducive to ensuring peace and fostering South America's progress*. (Italics added)

The aim was thus the establishment in the Southern Cone subsystem of a regional equivalent to the Great Powers' Concert of Europe. It was nothing as ambitious as UNASUR would be in our time. "A general agreement of all American nations is more impossible than among European nations," the Baron remarked in the same dispatch. In America, the viability of such agreement would depend on circumscribing its composition to the countries with greater power, namely, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and Argentina. "Should many become parties to it, we would be outweighed by their numbers whenever any resolution had to be adopted." [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington. *In*: LINS, 1945.]

Despite the realistic circumscribing of the understanding to the three major powers of the Southern Continent, the proposal proved premature. Argentina justified its reticence by arguing that the arrangement would arouse Peru's mistrust and, significantly, it might elicit negative reactions from the United States. Taken up again three years after the Baron's death, the project would lead to the Treaty's signing in Buenos Aires (May 1915), but the idea proved unfeasible once again, as only Brazil ratified it.

In the Baron's view, the wish to oppose to the United States a general alliance of a hostile nature was but a chimera. As he wrote to Nabuco,

*The much talked about league of Hispanic-American Republics to counter the United States is an unfeasible idea, owing to the impossibility of accord among people generally separated from each other. It is even ridiculous, given the known weakness and lack of resources of nearly all of them. [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 502.]*

Given this incontestable truth, there were only two possibilities of introducing some counterweight to the power concentration in the United States: subregional arrangements, such as the ABC Pact, or the multilateralization of the Monroe Doctrine. The Treaty's failure frustrated one of the designs for somehow counterbalancing the excessive American power with the establishment of an axis of South America's most influential countries.

At about the same time, Brazil had attempted the multilateralization of the Monroe Doctrine, to free it from its character as a unilateral Washington policy and introduce into its application an element of joint control and oversight by the ensemble of the Hemisphere countries. Faced with scarce receptivity on the part of Argentina, Chile, and other Latin Americans, he was forced to give up the initiative at the Fourth Inter-American Conference (Buenos Aires, 1909).

An indication of the difficulty in building consensus among the Latin American governments of that time was the fact that two of the Baron's rare failures occurred precisely in this regard. Nevertheless, he deserves the undeniable merit of having tried to harmonize Brazil's relations with Latin American countries and its preferential relations with the United States.

To critical eyes, some Brazilian foreign policy decisions left the impression of subordinating its relations with Latin America to its preference for Washington." To this category certainly belong the prompt recognition of Panama, the approval of the Roosevelt Corollary of the Monroe Doctrine and of the intervention in Cuba (1906), the rejection of the Drago Doctrine on the forceful collection of international debts, and the silence regarding the American army's intimidating maneuvers on the Mexican border (1911).

This notwithstanding, the Baron did not see any irreconcilable incompatibility between Brazil's close friendship with the United States and increasingly better ties to its own neighbors. Being an idealist, saw himself as capable of serving as a bridge to approximate and harmonize North American and Hispanic-American policy. To this end, Pan-Americanism might be an instrument for "replacing unfounded mistrust and resentment with growing friendship among all the American peoples." [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington.] It would not be long, though, before he found out the limits of the pro-United States paradigm.

#### LIMITS OF THE PRO-UNITED STATES PARADIGM

Despite the sincerity of Brazil's wish to "be able to agree with the United States on everything," [Telegram with instructions to Rui Barbosa. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 565.] the Second Hague Peace Conference (1907) would expose the insuperable limits of the orientation and the existence of possible alternatives. Headed by Rui Barbosa, the Brazilian delegation ended up by voting contrary to the American delegation on three of the four major issues that divided the Conference, thereby baring the lack of substance to the charge of automatic alignment raised against Rio Branco's policy in relation to the USA. The divergences stemmed from Brazil's aspiration for recognition as a prominent international power, denied by the classification criteria of the time. To the Baron's disappointment, the North American delegation, now far from Pan-Americanism forums, voted with Europe's great powers.

Once the various attempts at securing for the country a more prestigious position were exhausted, the Minister moved toward finally supporting the principle of strict juridical equality of States,

a position maintained from the beginning by Rui Barbosa, to whom he telegraphed:

*The Latin American countries have been treated [...] with flagrant injustice. It is possible that some will resign themselves to signing conventions under which they are ranked as third, fourth, or fifth category countries, and acknowledge themselves as such. Brazil cannot be one of them [...] Now, when we can no longer hide our divergence, we must openly defend our rights and the rights of the other American nations. [Telegram with instructions to Rui Barbosa. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 565.]*

The shock caused by the United States' stance led Brazil to assume at the Conference the leadership of the group committed to juridical equality, consisting of the Latin Americans and the European countries of minor stature. In his *The Unwritten Alliance* (1966, p. 126), American historian Bradford Burns remarks that “[...] this alternative to cooperation with the United States was not unpleasant to Rio Branco, who aspired to make Brazil a leader in Latin America.”

The episode did not entail major practical consequences, nor was it capable of changing the relationship to Washington. However, it served to dispel the delusion of being able to rely always on the United States' assistance for raising Brazil to the *circle of great international friendships* to which it felt entitled.

The realization that already at that time American priority served power considerations, would be expressed by Rio Branco in the following dispatch to Nabuco:

*The truth [...] is that (the head and members of the American delegation) consistently sought to work according to the great European powers, without attaching the least importance to Brazil and the other American nations,*

*thereby going against the Pan-American policy followed by the United States government [...]. [Dispatch to the Embassy in Washington. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 569.]*

In the future, the paradigm's successors and heirs would not always bear that lesson in mind.

More than one hundred years have elapsed since then. Two World Wars, Nazi-Fascism, the Russian Revolution, Communism, the Cold War, the League of Nations, the United Nations Organization, and mass destruction weapons have drastically changed international relations and destroyed forever Rio Branco's world. However, nothing of this obliterates the feeling that many of the dilemmas the Minister grappled with in his thinking and action do reappear under other guises.

In Brazil's pursuit of a central role at the hub of world decisions – a permanent seat on the League's Council or on the UN Security Council –, the adoption of an Independent Foreign Policy to replace the dated preferential paradigm vis-à-vis the United States, the engagement in ever more comprehensive forums with the BRICS, Africa, and the Middle East, and the option for Mercosur and Southern America, each stage evokes one of the challenges of a century ago. Underlying these issues, runs a deeper conditioning one might call a dialectic tension between aspirations and capabilities.

#### A DIALECTICAL TENSION BETWEEN ASPIRATIONS AND CAPABILITIES

Speaking at the Third Latin American Scientific Congress, held in Rio de Janeiro (1905), Rio Branco alluded to one of his consistent concerns, namely, the security of the Continent, which

might perhaps be thought by some others as less “well occupied.” To ensure security,

*he thought it essential that, before the mid-century, four or five at least of Latin America’s major nations, nobly imitating our great and loved Northern sister, should be able to compete in resources with the most powerful States in the world. [CARVALHO, 1998, p. 240-250.]*

Delgado de Carvalho (1998, p. 250), who recalled this saying when the deadline for such transformation expired, remarked, with a tinge of melancholy, that “Fifty years after those words were pronounced, it is worth quoting the phrase [...], which elicits meditation.” Even more reason we have to repeat that comment now that nearly one hundred eight years have elapsed, punctuated by relapses after illusory spurts of progress.

Although he underestimated the time needed for catching up with the developed countries, Rio Branco never shared the recent delusions about how much we still had to go to achieve power in the conventional sense. In another statement, he speculated: “When through years – *many years* – of work [our nations] have finally equaled *in power and wealth* our great sister to the North and the most developed nations of Europe [...]” [*In*: CARVALHO, 1998, p. 250] (Italics added).

Nabuco expressed this in his Diary<sup>3</sup> in somewhat prosaic terms: “One does not become great by big jumps. We cannot seem great, save by being so. Japan did not need to ask to be recognized as a great power; it just proved that it was such.”

The Baron was not spared from fleeting moments of annoyance. Luckily, though, the best part of his administration coincided with Rodrigues Alves’s and Afonso Pena’s two

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3 Volume II, p. 408, 25 August 1907 entry.

presidential terms, the First Republic's high point. However, in the later part of his years, the government was under the shadow of the *Revolta da Chibata* [the Whip Revolt] and Bahia's bombardment, the beginning of a prolonged agony that intensified under Hermes da Fonseca's presidency and ended only with the 1930 Revolution.

Aware of the inherited, recurring weakness despite progress and achievements, he understood that these circumstances required another type of approach to power other than the conventional. In a letter to Minister Carlos de Carvalho at the close of the nineteenth century, before the Amapá arbitration, he anticipated: "Persuasion means are in my view the only ones for succeeding in delicate negotiations such as these employed by Brazil, which as yet does not have sufficient force to impose its will on a great military power." [Letter to Carlos de Carvalho, 23 July 1986. *In*: VIANA FILHO, 1959, p. 234]. Based on this observation, he would first try to overcome the gap between aspirations and capabilities, resorting to power varieties that, differently from "force to impose one's will," were and are at our disposal and which we now call mild or soft power.

#### MILD, OR SOFT POWER AND INTELLIGENT, OR KNOWLEDGE POWER

The kind of power referred to by the Baron is "hard power," the capacity to exert military or economic coercion, whereas "persuasion means" are mild, or "soft power," in current terminology. To this should be added "smart" or "clever power," the intelligent power born of intelligence, knowledge, and the capacity to persuade with arguments drawn from history, geography, and the general culture. Hard, soft, intelligent – all

of these are modalities of the same reality, namely, power, which cannot be restricted to force and coercion alone. Harvard Professor Joseph Nye, who popularized these expressions, admits having been inspired by the concepts of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who clearly showed that hegemony might be derived other than from coercive force, but from moral and intellectual leadership.

Long before the modern power doctrines emerged, Rio Branco already intuitively understood them and anticipated them in practice. The program-letter he wrote from Berlin as he was invited to be Minister of Foreign Relations (7 August 1902), showed his understanding that a ministry of foreign relations should be an institution based on knowledge:

*The Archive section [...] should be reestablished, as it is the arsenal where the Minister and intelligent, qualified employees will find combat and discussion weapons. It is necessary to establish a library and a geographical section under the Archive Department, as in France, England, Germany, and the United States. [Letter to Frederico de Abranches, 7 August 1902. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, pp. 748-749.]*

He thus outlined a program he himself had followed during his career, as he accumulated the extraordinary scholarship in the colonial history and geography of the Americas, in cartography, old books and archive papers, a wealth of expert knowledge to which was owed a considerable part of his successes, particularly in the Palmas and Amapá arbitrations. After his death, his entire collection, accumulated in a lifetime, of more than six thousand books, some of them extremely rare, geographic charts and documents, furniture, pictures, and ornaments was purchased by Itamaraty for 350 *contos de reis* that the family impatiently waited for the government to pay, which was done only seven years later.



On essentially political issues, such as Acre's, when erudition played only a complementary role, he showed remarkable skill in the dosage of the wide range of legitimate power means, including the preventive occupation of the territory in view of the threat of a Bolivian repressive expedition. He resorted to Brazil's limited economic power to purchase, through indemnity for the *Bolivian Syndicate's* desistance and compensation for the Bolivian government. He also placated the latter by ceding a small portion of Brazilian territory to maintain the appearance of a tradeoff and not only of a territorial purchase. He reinforced the attractiveness of the transaction by ensuring free navigation on Brazilian rivers and access to our ports.

The Acre conflict marked the moment when Brazil came closest to war against a neighbor, interrupting a tradition that began in 1870 with the end of the Paraguayan War and that has lasted for more than 147 years now (in 2017). The problem that totally absorbed the Baron's first months as Minister left a definitive mark on him, determining both his concentration on border issues and his determination to solve all conflicts by peaceful means. In the Explanatory Statement to the Treaty of Petropolis, he indicates his preference for transaction, as he liked to call it, or negotiations, in a trenchant formula: "Arrangements whereby no interested party loses, and even better, those whereby all parties gain, are always the best." [RIO BRANCO, 2012]. In the same text, he asserts: "the greatest advantages of the territorial acquisition under this treaty are not material. *The moral and political advantages are infinitely superior.*" [RIO BRANCO, 2012] (Italics added). His conviction is explicit and conscious that the ethical values should orient diplomatic action, a decisive element in the idealized construction of a peaceful Brazil, adept of International Law and moderation.

## A PEACEFUL BRAZIL, ADEPT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND MODERATION

More than anybody, Rio Branco contributed to giving birth to the concept of a country loyal to Peace and to International Law, not by imposition of circumstances, but by a sort of spontaneous manifestation of the innermost essence of the national character. Shortly before his death, he asserted, in a speech at the Military Club, October 1911:

*Our entire life [...] attests to the Brazilian government's moderation and peaceful feelings in perfect consonance with the nation's nature and will. For a long time we were, incontestably, the foremost military power in South America, without this force superiority on both land and at sea representing a danger for our neighbors. [In: LINS, 1945, p. 774.] (Emphasis added)*

One must reread history, if not with an apologetic, at least with a benevolent disposition, to be able to say, as the Baron did, "We started wars abroad only if provoked or if our territory was invaded." [In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 685-686] This statement springs from the same intention of indirectly justifying the La Plata region interventions of the article cited earlier. In it, after asserting that our intervention in the Plata region had finished, he added that Brazil no longer had anything more to do with those nations' internal affairs, as he was "convinced that freedom and international independence there will not suffer any violent disruption."<sup>4</sup>

Resuming the argument of constitutional condemnation used eight years earlier at the Military Club, *a propos* the Acre case,

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<sup>4</sup> O Brasil, os Estados Unidos e Monroísmo, article published under the pen name J. Penn in *Jornal do Comércio*, 15 May 1900. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 491.

he proceeds: “[...] we shall never engage in conquest wars. Much less could we entertain aggression plans, now that our political Constitution expressly forbids conquest [...]” [In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 774.] The constitutional imperative, however, traduces something innate and deeper, as can be subsumed under the speech at the Historical Institute (1909). In it, the Baron explains the unilateral decision to rectify the Lagoa Mirim and the Jaguarão borders in favor of Uruguay, without accepting the compensations proffered: “Should we today want to correct part of our southern border to the benefit of a friendly neighbor country, this would be principally because this testimony of our love for Law *becomes Brazil and is an action worthy of the Brazilian people.*” [In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, pp. 674-675.] (Italics added)

Love for International Law, generosity, and moderation could thus be taken as attributes of a certain idea of Brazil and of Brazilians. As such, these qualities are timeless, practically independent from circumstances. Even if some day “some Latin American countries should fall prey to the madness of hegemonies or to the delirium of greatness through prepotency” [a veiled allusion to the Argentines?],

*I am convinced that the future Brazil will unwaveringly continue to trust above all the force of Law and, as today, by its prudence, disinterestedness, and love of justice, to win the consideration and affection of all neighbor peoples, in whose internal life it will abstain from interfering. [Speech at the Military Club, 15 October 1991. In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 774.]*

All the quotes are culled from speeches, lectures, articles, explanatory statements, and documents aimed at explaining and “selling” foreign policy. In this sense, they form part of a systematic effort to shape what could be considered a “foreign

policy ideology.” Ideology is taken here in the sense of a set of supposedly objective values and standards, which nevertheless mask or cover up interests. Thus, it would not be difficult to criticize or “deconstruct” the arguments, unveiling their hidden objectives.

Despite assuming that the intellectual construction of the Baron’s diplomatic set of beliefs falls into this ideology category, one must admit that the choice of International Law, moderation, and negotiation instead of their alternatives as content of the ideological construction, is not indifferent. There is indeed in other countries no lack of similar ideologies, which emphasized the idea of “greatness,” with strong reverberations of past military glory. Or the “manifest destiny,” race superiority in need of vital space, or the expansion of the Slavic, Orthodox empire, as well as numerous other more or less aggressive expressions. By choosing more specifically “diplomatic” aspirations to distinguish Brazilian diplomacy, Rio Branco deserved being pointed out by Gilberto Freyre as being responsible for Itamaraty’s transformation into a system of organization and definition of superiorly national values.

#### A SYSTEM OF ORGANIZATION AND DEFINITION OF SUPERIORLY NATIONAL VALUES

Freyre’s statement is taken from his *Ordem e Progresso*, in a passage describing

*the idealization of Itamaraty under Rio Branco’s direction as a supreme body of radiation and assertion of Brazil’s prestige on the continent in particular and abroad in general [...]. Itamaraty, which in the Baron’s time was also a sort of Ministry of Education and Culture, helping attract*

*to Rio de Janeiro prominent European intellectuals, artists, and renowned medical doctors; and an Information and Propaganda Ministry as well [...]. [In: FREYRE, 1959, 1<sup>st</sup> tome, p. CXLVI.]*

Freyre notes that the Minister was interested even in the establishment of schools by French nuns for the improvement of women's education. He could add that his influence was felt in the most diverse sectors, beginning with the Armed Forces' modernization. Freyre concludes that under the Baron's direction Itamaraty ceased to be a merely diplomatic institution to become a system of organization and definition of *superiorly national values*: a system on which he *imprinted his image as super protector of a homeland* in need of being respected by Europeans and Anglo-Saxons for increasingly asserting its prestige." [In: FREYRE, 1st tome, p. CLI.] (Italics added)

These *superiorly national values* are not made explicit. A plausible interpretation would suggest that Rio Branco had no delusion about the "real country" of economic backwardness, the Vaccine Revolt, illiteracy above 80 percent. There could be no delusion, as the real country insisted on intruding on the idealized picture. Carlos de Laet noted that the *Revolta da Chibata* [Whip Revolt] led by the sailor João Cândido had been for the Baron "a tremendous shock. He had dreamed of a strong Brazil, capable, owing to its union [...] to dominate the destiny of this southern portion of the Continent." At the sight of the threatened bay, "he might have realized how far we were from his ideal [...]." [In: LINS, 1945, vol. 2, p. 691.]

Thus, it was not enough to sell abroad Brazil's idealized picture in conflict with facts and events. It was necessary to transform reality itself to approximate it to the ideal model, by endeavoring to organize and define *superiorly national values*.

These values clearly coincided with those the Baron inherited from the Second Empire: juridical liberalism, moderate conservatism “to put an end to agitations and anarchy and ensure, above all, national unity.” [Letter to Joaquim Nabuco, 30 August 1902. In: VIANA FILHO, p. 317.] The letter spoke of a development Project, as he explained:

*The Brazilian nation aspires to achieving greatness through fecund works of peace, with its own resources, within the borders where the language of its ancestors is spoken; and it wants to be strong among great, strong neighbors to the honor of all of us and the security of our continent [...]. [Speech at the American Scientific Congress. In: CARVALHO, 1998, pp. 240-250.]*

These values appealed to the best in the public’s civic and moral consciousness. In addition to their intrinsic ethical quality, they were confirmed and reinforced by the Baron’s diplomatic successes. The victories won in arbitrations, in the Acre question and in other border negotiations, in the *Panther* incident, in the case of Cable no. 9 with Argentina, somehow helped legitimate the Republic of the high inflation and acute economic crises, the rebellion of Canudos, and the Federalist Revolt. They restored the self-esteem of Brazilians, humiliated as they were by the follies and divergences of governments that seemed intent on making the country into another Latin American banana republic.

It is thus not surprising that contemporaries identified with the Minister and saw in him the personification of the ideal country, as Argentine diplomat José María Cantilo (1935) noted when he wrote: “Rio Branco enjoyed an extraordinary popularity. *He was Brazil.*” (Italics added)

A significant portion of this popularity was due to the role he had played “as definer of superiorly national values.” Among

us, it was not obviously credible to create a “republican ideal” as did Jefferson and Lincoln for the United States or as the 1789 Revolution did for France. Neither was it possible to compensate the lack of political ideal with an extraordinary demonstration of material progress.

Into this moral and political void, the Baron brought a set of principles and values that made of foreign policy the only domain in which Brazil reaped undeniable success, ratified not only by the consistently concrete, tangible results on our borders but also by the prestige and respect enjoyed abroad. A virtual consensual unanimity surrounded diplomacy, facilitated by the Minister's care in staying away from the temptation of internal or party politics and their inevitable divisions.

As he explained, he preferred to devote himself solely to foreign relations, because “by occupying myself [...] with incontestably national affairs or causes, I would feel stronger and could expect to deserve the enthusiastic support of all my fellow citizens.” [Rio Branco's speech on 20 April 1909. [In: VIANA FILHO, 1959, p. 409-410.] On another occasion, he was more explicit in justifying why he had refused to run for President:

*As a candidate or President, I would throw myself into the waves of militant politics and involve myself in the maelstrom of all the human passions and interests. I would be discussed, attacked, diminished, stripped of authority by the clash of fierce ambitions, and, as President, I would lack the strength I now have as Minister to direct foreign relations. [In: VIANA FILHO, 1959, p. 418.] (Emphasis added)*

It is perhaps in these factors – consistent success, distance from parties and factions, and the system of values – that an explanation should be sought for the prolonged valorization of

the diplomatic tradition by Brazilian society. Differently from what can happen in many countries, in Brazil past glory is more often associated with diplomacy than with military feats or achievements in other sectors.

Much is now dated in Rio Branco's paradigm, beginning with the preferential approximation to the United States. However, the system of ethical and political values it expressed has earned the highest acclaim that could be desired for an intellectual design: from innovation, it became commonplace.

The concept of a non-expansionist Brazil, satisfied with its territory, trusting in International Law, in negotiated solutions, and in nonintervention, has become so ingrained in the Brazilian diplomatic discourse that it has become timeless, as if it had always existed. The Baron's consolidation of the national foreign ideal content in terms of objectives and methods has been internalized so deeply and thoroughly that it would be impossible to imagine Brazil with a different international personality.

Although not everything in this frame of ideals has become reality to date, the program outlined more than a century ago already pointed the way to arrive at that destination. By setting as target "the circle of great international friendships" to which Brazil was entitled, Rio Branco put forth as reasons for this right the prestige of territorial magnitude and the strength of population, two factors already existing at the time. He did not allude to military power, a significant omission in a man with a passion for military history, nor did he refer to economic vigor.

The mention of the territory and the population was preceded by a curious expression, namely, "aspiration to culture." Not to culture itself, which Brazil could not invoke at a time when more than eighty percent of the population was illiterate. Less than an existing element, it was a question of "becoming,"



something that recalls Antonio Candido, who described in his *Formação da Literatura Brasileira* [Genesis and Development of Brazilian Literature] (1954, vol. 1, p. 27) as “a history of Brazilians and their desire to have a literature.”

Equally inspired, one might also say that the paradigm inherited from the republican diplomacy's founder is not so much a repository of things experienced, a museum of past trophies, but a challenge addressed to today's Brazilians to strive toward a foreign policy in the measure of the qualities dreamed by the Baron of Rio Branco.

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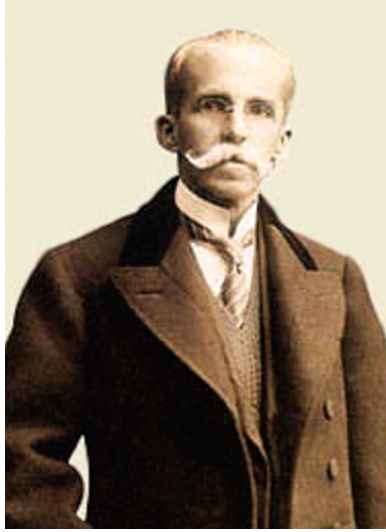
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**RUI BARBOSA**

Rui Barbosa de Oliveira was one of the organizers of the Republic, acting in defense of the Union and in promotion of individual rights and guarantees. His brief and controversial administration as the first Minister of Finance of the new regime is known for its modernization and economic reforms. Rui Barbosa served as both a representative in the Chamber of Deputies and as a senator; he was also twice an official candidate for the presidency of the Republic. In addition to his political career, Barbosa distinguished himself as a journalist as well as a lawyer. He was also a diplomat, having served as a delegate to the Second International Peace Conference at The Hague (1907), where he distinguished himself with a defense of the principle of the equality of sovereign States. Later, Barbosa played a key role in the entrance of Brazil into World War I.

Rui Barbosa was born in Salvador, Bahia, on November 5, 1849, the son of João José Barbosa de Oliveira and Maria Adélia

Barbosa de Oliveira. After his early years of schooling in his native province, Rui, as he was universally known, graduated from the Law School of São Paulo (Largo de São Francisco) where he was a classmate of Afonso Pena, Rio Branco, Rodrigues Alves, and Joaquim Nabuco.

Rui Barbosa began his public life while still in the academic world; he participated in debates calling for the abolition of slavery during his Law school years. Returning to his native Bahia after earning his Law degree in 1870, he began his professional life as a lawyer and journalist.

## THE ROOT OF THE MATTER – RUI BARBOSA: BRAZIL IN THE WORLD

*Carlos Henrique Cardim*

*The question arose at the Second Peace Conference at The Hague in 1907, motivated by the American proposal to create an International Court of Arbitration with an inherent inequality among nations. It was one of those major political problems that appear from time to time, to test the courage and challenge the judgment of mankind. The emergence of such a vital political issue rarely happens so suddenly and with such clarity. One year, or perhaps even one generation, would not be enough to resolve it without the hindrance of collateral issues; as it goes to the root of the matter, it is of interest to the most basic principles that rule human actions. The essence of the question was this: Should Force or the Rule of Law be the dominant factor in the conduct of man?*

William T. Stead, in: *O Brasil na Haia*, Rio de Janeiro, Imprensa Nacional, 1925.

### RUI BARBOSA AND DOMESTIC POLICY

In 1878, when he was 29 years old, Rui Barbosa was elected to serve as a General Representative from his native province of Bahia in the Chamber of Deputies of the federal legislature, and he moved to Rio de Janeiro, to participate in the politics of the then

Brazilian Empire. Rui was reelected in 1881, and he remained in the Chamber of Deputies until he lost the election of 1884.

Between 1878 and 1889, Rui Barbosa worked on issues related to education, producing important opinions on the methodology of teaching, and presenting a proposal for a reform of the educational system, which he considered a decisive factor for real progress in the country. Barbosa advocated the establishment of private colleges, the encouragement of industrial and technical education, and the access of women to higher education. In addition to fighting slavery, he promoted a reform of the monarchy as well as the idea of a federation, to meet the demands of decentralization.

Two days before the fall of the monarchy, Rui Barbosa wrote articles that criticized the decadent regime. These articles caught the attention of republican leaders, and immediately after the Proclamation of the Republic, on November 15, 1889, Barbosa was invited to occupy the Ministry of Finance. He was also second-in-command of the Provisional government until 1890.

Rui Barbosa advocated the separation of church and state, and due to his great knowledge of the American political system, he became one of the references on the inner workings of republican institutions.

Throughout his life, Barbosa was a systematic scholar of the huge variety of subject matters that interested him. He devoted much of his time to reading works in their original forms. In this manner, when the Republic emerged, he was one of the few scholars and politicians in Brazil who had mastered the English language and literature, as well as the Anglo-Saxon legal system. He was particularly interested in legal matters related to the United States, which at the time was the model for the emergent Brazilian Republic.

Rui Barbosa took over the Ministry of Finance in 1889 with a program to encourage industrialization, diversification of the economy, and the expansion of economic activity in the country. As San Tiago Dantas pointed out in his remarkable essay, *Rui Barbosa e a Renovação da Sociedade*, Rui understood the longings for progress and protection of the rights of the rising middle classes. Among his goals was a recovery of the agrarian structure of the Empire, which at the time was based almost exclusively on the export of coffee. His greatest goal, however, was to transform Brazil into an industrial nation.

Rampant speculation in the stock market that caused an inflationary outbreak, followed by bankruptcies, many of which were fraudulent, marked Barbosa's period as the Finance Minister, November 15, 1889 to January 21, 1891. However, although this episode – historically known as the *encilhamento* – occurred during Barbosa's administration as Minister, it had actually originated during the term of the previous government. In recent decades a scholarly reassessment of Barbosa's pioneering attempts to modernize and industrialize the Brazilian economy, sees those efforts in a more positive light.

Within the legal arena, Rui Barbosa participated in the drafting of the first Republican Constitution (1891). The "Committee of Five," headed by Saldanha Marinho, had established both a presidential and federalist form of government. Barbosa, drawing on his knowledge of other constitutions, introduced controls on the Executive and Legislative branches by the Judiciary branch. In addition, he recommended giving the newly created Federal Supreme Court control over the constitutionality of laws and, to guard against abuses of power, he added the right of habeas corpus to the document. Barbosa, thereby, made the Federal Supreme Court the guardian of both the overall Constitution and an individual's rights and freedoms.

On April 18, 1892, Rui Barbosa submitted to the Federal Supreme Court, the first request for habeas corpus due to a political matter, to benefit opposition members arrested by President Floriano Peixoto's administration.

As a result of his campaign in favor of the victims of "Floriano's dictatorship"— during the term of Brazil's second president, Floriano Peixoto (1891-1894) – Barbosa was accused of being one of the mentors of the "Revolt of the Navy" (1893). At risk of being arrested, he went into exile, first in Buenos Aires, and later in London. He returned from exile in 1895, during the administration of President Prudente de Moraes.

The high point of Rui Barbosa's trajectory in domestic politics was his presidential candidacy in 1910 against General Hermes da Fonseca. In that race, he took the opportunity to launch a "civil campaign," criticizing not only militarism, but also the political process led by the oligarchies. Barbosa advocated constitutional changes, including the introduction of the secret ballot.

Defeated in the presidential election, Rui protested against alleged fraud, while he continued his political and journalistic activities, as well as his work as an attorney. He continued his focus on the protection of individual rights against the abuses of power, an example of which was his defense in the Senate of sailors arrested in the *Revolta da Chibata* [Revolt of the Lash], in 1910. In that case, after a protracted battle and trial, Brazilian sailors won the prohibition of whipping in the navy.

A multi-talented individual, Rui Barbosa was president of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, 1908-1919, and in 1914, he was elected president of the Institute of Lawyers of Brazil, a precursor of the Brazilian Bar Association.

The year 1918 saw Rui Barbosa's *Jubileu Cívico-Literário*, celebrating fifty years since his speech in homage of José Bonifácio,



the Younger, in 1868, that many say marked his entry onto the national and international stage. Again in 1918, at the unveiling of his bust at the National Library, Barbosa emphasized he saw his basic role as that of a “builder,” in which his “letters create words that overlay thoughts,” in order to “clarify opinions.”

Also in November 1918, with the death of President Rodrigues Alves, new elections were called, and Rui Barbosa, who was then 70 years old, submitted his name in candidacy, this time running against the establishment’s candidate, Epitácio Pessoa. In that election, his position of uncompromising defense of Constitutional Reform, however, greatly weakened his support within the political environment of the time.

A highlight of the 1919 campaign was Barbosa’s March 20 speech on the social and political situation in Brazil, in which he included the themes of inequality, relations between capital and labor and the backwardness of broad sectors of the Brazilian population, as expressed in the character, “Jeca Tatu,” created by Monteiro Lobato, which Barbosa quoted in the beginning of his lecture. Overall in that campaign, the themes he addressed in his platform: the building of workers’ housing; protections for the labor of minors; the limitation of hours in work days, especially on the night shift; equal pay for both genders; support for working mothers and for pregnant women, as well as maternity leave; compensation for accidents in the workplace; the legalization of agricultural labor; and pension insurance – were pioneering issues for the time.

That year, Rui lost another election, but he obtained great support in the state capitals, demonstrating the resonance his ideas found in an increasingly urban and progressive Brazil. Also, in 1919, Barbosa participated actively in the unsuccessful campaign of the opposition candidate, Paulo Fontes, for the

government of Bahia. He undertook long journeys through the hinterland of the state, which affected his health.

Despite his advancing age and weakened health, Barbosa continued his activities. In 1920, as patron of the graduates of the Law School of São Paulo, he wrote the famous “Prayer to the Young,” which was read by Prof. Reinaldo Porchat.

Rui also continued to act in national public life as a Senator. His main thesis at the time concerned the urgent need to reform the 1891 Constitution. Although President Arthur Bernardes invited him to be the Foreign Minister, a serious worsening of his health prevented him from accepting the invitation. Rui Barbosa died on March 1, 1923, at age 73.

#### RUI BARBOSA, DIPLOMATIC PROFILE

Rui Barbosa’s contributions to both the theory and the practice of Brazilian foreign policy relate mainly to eight themes and moments in his life:

1) His defense of equality among sovereign States at the Second International Peace Conference of The Hague, in 1907.

Brazil’s participation in the Second International Peace Conference at The Hague in 1907, headed by Rui Barbosa, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, marked the entrance of the country into international politics. Although Brazil had been invited to the First Conference, held in 1899, President Campos Sales had declined Russian Czar Nicholas II’s invitation to attend.

At the 1907 world conclave, which featured the presence of 44 sovereign states, Rui Barbosa played a significant role by going against a proposal made by the United States and supported by Germany that called for the creation of a Permanent Court

of Arbitration. The court would include 17 judges; eight would indeed be permanent, they would be indicated by the major powers, while the other nine would be appointed on a rotating basis by the remaining 36 nations. Rui Barbosa, with his speeches at the conference, and Foreign Minister Rio Branco, with his instructions to Brazilian diplomats and his liaisons among other Latin American foreign offices, developed an alternative proposal, opposed to the differentiated treatment of the less powerful nation states, which was based only on the criterion of power. The Latin American nations supported the Brazilian proposal, and, together, they were able to free the American proposal of its discriminatory content.

2) His critique of the old notion of neutrality, at a Conference in Buenos Aires, in 1916.

Rui Barbosa gave a lecture in Buenos Aires, in 1916, in which he criticized the then current notion of neutrality – understood, according to his vision, as passivity and inaction in the face of arbitrary and aggressive actions by any State. What was normal at that time was the establishment, by a decree published in the respective Official Gazette, of neutrality by countries not directly involved in a military conflict, leaving those Governments completely silent about the atrocities that took place, be they on the battlefield or outside of them. Rui rejected the notion of passive neutrality and proposed a new concept, based on an international responsibility of nations, all of which should be interested in conflicts occurring even far from their own territory. The motto of the new notion of passive neutrality became: Between justice and injustice, there cannot be omission.

3) His contribution to the debate on World War I and the change of the Brazilian position.

An even more important issue was that of the ideological debate between Anglophiles and Germanophiles in Brazil between 1914 and 1918. Rui Barbosa actively participated in that discussion when he harshly criticized the German policy and defended the entrance of Brazil into the war alongside the Allies. On October 27, 1917, President Venceslau Brás revoked the neutrality decree and recognized “the state of war, initiated by the German Empire against Brazil.”

4) Rui Barbosa, the first defender of Dreyfus.

In *O processo do capitão Dreyfus* [The Trial of Captain Dreyfus], an article published on January 7, 1895, Rui Barbosa was the first to defend the French officer of Jewish descent who had been falsely accused of treason for reasons of bias – as was demonstrated at the end of his trial. In this work, Barbosa even preceded Émile Zola by close to three years as Zola’s series of texts did not begin until December 1897.

In his autobiographical work *Souvenirs et Correspondance*, published by Dreyfus’ son in 1936, the famous French writer called Rui Barbosa: “The Great Brazilian Statesman” endowed with “a remarkable judgment and a great spirit of freedom.” Barbosa, however, did not receive much recognition for his work.

In the introduction of his book *Rui Barbosa – O Processo do Capitão Dreyfus*, Brazilian journalist, Alberto Dines, commented on the various literary and film biographies devoted to Dreyfus and Zola, contrasting them with the disparate way Barbosa’s contribution to the Dreyfus affair had been received. Dines lamented:

*Our forerunner of Zola, Rui Barbosa, did not have the same success [as the French writer], nor did the recent biographical*

*wave think of him in the same way. Things of Brazil; things of a minimalized Brazil, a country without nobility, unable to elevate lives for the pleasure of admiring them; cultivator of "tales" and anecdotes, nostalgic and perplexed; a wanderer in the world, unwilling to belong to it.*

The poor treatment of Rui Barbosa in this case exemplified the known bias of European and North American authors concerning countries, such as Brazil, that go against the *status quo* in international politics.

5) Naval rearmament.

Rui Barbosa gave high priority to naval power. He devoted three important articles to the subject: *Lição do Extremo Oriente* [Lesson of the Far East], in 1895, *A Lição das Esquadras* [The Lesson of the Fleet], in 1898, and *O Aumento das Esquadras* [The Rise of the Fleets], in 1900. Also, in a letter dated May 7, 1908, addressed to President Afonso Pena, whose government had ordered three battleships, Barbosa wrote:

*Upon my return to Brazil during the administration of Campos Sales, when I founded [the newspaper] "A Imprensa," I used every occasion, to show the urgency of the need to re-establish our Navy and equip our army – in organization, education and fitness – to make them the equal of those of our most powerful neighbors.*

The Brazilian Navy affirmed its ties to Rui Barbosa by placing in the Auditorium of the School of Naval Warfare, in Rio de Janeiro, a plaque with the following phrase from his article, *A Lição das Esquadras*: "The sea is the great siren. God placed it next to us, to roar, to preach; such that we should not sleep." And the statement continues: "... the races born by the sea cannot be shortsighted; to look upon its horizon is to see into the future. ... The sea is a source of strength and a school of foresight. All that

it shows are lessons; which we must not think of in a frivolous manner.”

6) “Two formidable volumes” [on Acre].

That was how the great jurist and historian, Clovis Bevilacqua, referred to the volumes in which Rui Barbosa advocated the right of the state of Amazonas to own northern Acre. Vicente Marota Rangel, a famous Brazilian internationalist, considers this work one of the highlights of Barbosa’s theoretical writings on international relations.

It was a precise work written on key concepts of the State. Concepts such as: territory; modalities for the acquisition and maintenance of territory; a definition of sovereignty and the exercise thereof, and more. Rui Barbosa devoted a chapter of his two volumes to a discussion of *uti possidetis*, including a history of the principle that came from Roman law, and which, as he understood, was the “key principle” of Brazilian diplomacy in the Empire and during the early years of the Republic.

7) Election to the Permanent Court of Justice, in 1921.

As Afonso Arinos, professor of history at the Instituto Rio Branco, emphasized in his book, *Um Estadista da República* [A Statesman of the Republic], (1955):

*When the first judges were chosen to be members of the Court, in 1921, Brazil, with Rui Barbosa, achieved a great victory. Forty-two countries had signed the Protocol regarding the Statute of the Court. Eighty-nine lawyers from all over the world were submitted as candidates to the election; among them were Rui Barbosa and Clovis Bevilacqua, a Brazilian jurist. Once the election took place, it was found that, of all elected candidates, Rui Barbosa had received the most votes: 38 out of a total of 42. The distinguished Brazilian, however, never managed to take a*

*seat on the court at The Hague due to his advanced age and deteriorating health.*

8) The issue of Acre, in 1903.

Gilberto Amado considers Acre one of the most serious diplomatic problems Brazil has ever faced. According to him: “the Treaty of Petrópolis [which decided the Acre issue in 1903] represented the highest moment of Brazilian intelligence applied to the service of the making of Brazil.” Foreign Minister Rio Branco, in the Explanatory Memorandum of the Treaty that he sent to the President of the Republic, emphasized that this was the question that demanded his greatest effort:

*I sincerely assure your Excellency that, for me, this work, in which I was lucky to collaborate under your Excellency's government, was the most valuable for me. Thanks to the decisive support which I was given, [and] judged with such kindness by our citizens, we were able to conclude it undoubtedly on much more favorable conditions.*

When he became Minister of Foreign Affairs, in 1902, The Baron of Rio Branco's priority was to resolve the issue of Acre. Considering the *de facto* situation, he only saw one solution: to make the territory – already inhabited by Brazilians – an actual part of Brazil, through acquisition. He was not optimistic about the possibility of achieving a favorable verdict on the issue in arbitration, because the Treaty of 1867 had been more beneficial to Bolivia than to Brazil.

As A. G. de Araújo Jorge, private Secretary of Rio Branco, narrates in the introductory essay to the *Obras Completas de Rio Branco* [Complete Works of Rio Branco]:

*On October 17, 1903, one month before the signing of the Treaty, Senator Rui Barbosa, who since July of*

*that year had been collaborating with the prestige and authority of his name in the negotiations as one of the Brazilian Plenipotentiaries, alongside Rio Branco and Assis Brasil, considered resigning from the delegation. It was repugnant to him to share the responsibility of concluding an agreement on concessions from Brazil to Bolivia, if it appeared extremely costly. At the same time, he did not wish to be an obstacle to the peaceful settlement of a dispute – scruples which his companions did not share – that threatened to perpetuate with imminent danger the domestic order and, perhaps, American peace.*

Araújo Jorge transcribed, in the aforementioned work, the two letters exchanged between Rui Barbosa and Rio Branco on the Acre issue; letters which also reveal the degree of friendship and mutual admiration between the two men. These letters are important documents not only due to the dispute between Brazil and Bolivia concerning Acre, but also for demonstrating two distinct yet not antagonistic styles to deal with international matters. Patience with a degree of optimism marked Rio Branco's letters, while Barbosa's tone was much more dramatic and full of pessimism. Both men, however, shared common traits: patriotism and a sincerity to uphold the public interest of Brazil.

In the end, the resolution of the Acre issue demonstrated that Rio Branco's strategy was the correct one, as Rui Barbosa's pessimistic hypotheses did not prove to be true.



BRAZIL'S ENTRANCE INTO INTERNATIONAL POLITICS:  
RUI BARBOSA AT THE HAGUE

*I saw all the nations of the world assembled, and I have  
learned not to be ashamed of mine.*

Rui Barbosa

In an article on relations between Argentina and Brazil published on September 26, 1908, in the *Jornal do Commercio*, Rio Branco advised, in a clear and pioneering manner, that Brazil's foreign policy should evolve away from the ancient and narrow continentalism in which it found itself. Utilizing the country's relations with Argentina as an example, the Foreign Minister said that the policy had been dominated by an archaic heritage of Luso-Spanish origin, and that what was required was a move towards a global relationship, exemplified by the growing rapprochement between the two countries. He further emphasized that Brazil's foreign agenda was severely outdated, placing it in a strong imbalance with its potentialities and possibilities. In the same text, however, Rio Branco said the country was emerging from this negative situation and beginning to have a decisive projection on the international stage. The following two excerpts from that article demonstrate his belief in that emergence:

*We live today [1908] outside the reality of current international politics, in the midst of an illusion, to which we became accustomed due to our past...*

*...Brazil entered decisively into the sphere of great international alliances, to which it is entitled by the aspiration of its culture, by the prestige of its territorial greatness, and by the strength of its population.*

## RUI BARBOSA, LEADING PLAYER OF CHANGE

Foreign Minister Rio Branco's new perspective became a reality for the first time with Rui Barbosa's thoughts and actions at the Second International Peace Conference at The Hague in 1907. It was at that conclave Brazil first entered international politics as a world player, claiming rights and duties to decide and act on global issues. The partnership between Rio Branco and Rui Barbosa inaugurated a new stage of Brazilian diplomacy, and marked the beginning of a new paradigm for the country's insertion into the international arena.

The new general sense of Brazilian foreign policy was established with Rui Barbosa's participation in the assembly at The Hague. Brazilian foreign relations, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, focused exclusively on regional issues, with an emphasis on themes from the Plata basin. When Rui Barbosa advocated the principle of the equality of States, at The Hague Conference, however, he put Brazil's foreign policy on another axis and opened it to a broader view. He criticized the international system in force at the time, while acknowledging he was also in charge of reforming it. His criticism was from one who recognized that as a member of the greater community, he could not stay silent. On the contrary, he generously offered his contributions, while clearly recognizing the inequities of the then current system.

## THE HAGUE INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCES

The themes of the Hague International Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907 were, basically, twofold: the control of the arms race and the laws of war. Both subjects had global dimensions, and both had powerful contents that put forward reforms of the international system's organization.

The Campos Sales administration made a foreign policy mistake when it refused Russian Czar Nicholas II's invitation to participate in the 1899 meeting. Had President Sales accepted, Brazil, alongside Mexico, would have been the only Latin American representatives at that conference. Brazil had its entrance into international politics delayed by almost a decade.

The First Conference took place at The Hague from May 18 to July 29, 1899. Twenty-six countries attended: 20 from Europe, four from Asia; plus the United States, and Mexico, represented the Americas.

Referring to his country's participation at The Hague Conference of 1907, Brazilian diplomat and historian, Oliveira Lima, said:

*[In 1907] it was no surprise that the Brazilian government did not repeat the diplomatic mistake of 1899 – and refuse to attend the Assembly – which was honorable for so many reasons. [In 1899] we refused the invitation – offered only to Brazil in South America – because we were facing crises that were very well known, and Brazil needed to re-establish its forces. ... In any case, what I expect is that what happened [to me] in Paris this year will not happen again. There, I spent my time every day going to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to handle old papers. Once as we took the stairs together, the very kind director of the historical section commented on paintings depicting several congresses and celebrated participants. When he pointed to the huge painting of the 1899 Hague Conference, he said, “Search for the Brazilian delegates.” I hypocritically stared at the screen and answered him with as much diplomacy that my 15-year career allowed me: “They hadn’t yet arrived,” I said.*

RUI BARBOSA, A DELEGATE AT THE HAGUE: A DEFENSE OF  
THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY OF NATIONS AND A CRITICISM  
OF THE PRINCIPLE OF A HIERARCHY OF SOVEREIGNTY

Rui Barbosa led the Brazilian delegation to the Second International Peace Conference, held at The Hague from June 15 to October 18, 1907, a conference, which, as Ambassador Rubens Ferreira de Mello has described: “by the results obtained and the number of countries in attendance (44), stands out as one that most contributed to the development of contemporary international law.”

The agenda of this second international conference at The Hague was very specific in terms of diplomatic and military matters, and as with the first meeting, the word “Peace” was included in the title of the conclave. Without neglecting the formal dimension of the major theme of the meeting, Rui Barbosa had success in several areas concerned with technical and complicated issues. He also drew attention to the fundamental ideological issues related to the mindsets of the great powers and their discrimination against weaker and smaller states.

As Rui himself later described the Conference’s environment: “Freedom was not welcome there; it had been taken over by a distant, unknown and defenseless authority that was unable to equitably intervene in debates concerned with the main matters of peoples’ rights.”

The diplomatic environment in which Rui Barbosa worked in the 1907 conference at The Hague was also contaminated by the rigidity of the postures of the major powers. This, according to French diplomatic historian, Pierre Renouvin, made it impossible to work towards an agreement on the issue of disarmament. The delegations considered that the “special cases” were very different, thereby making it impossible for the governments to agree on the

idea of a binding arbitration that would be regulated by a general formula and settle matters related to honor and “vital interests.”

Rui Barbosa brought with him to the magnificent and strict environment of The Hague Peace Conference of 1907, his wide experience of more than two decades in both houses of the Brazilian national legislature – the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate – as well as his many years as an attorney.

## RUI BARBOSA’S PERFORMANCE AT THE HAGUE CONFERENCE

Two key moments serve to highlight the diplomatic skills of Rui Barbosa at the Second Hague Peace Conference: an incident with the Russian delegate, Fyodor Fyodorovich Martens; and the matter of the creation of a Permanent International Court of Arbitration. These skills were clearly displayed when he defended the validity of democratic principles for international order.

## THE MARTENS INCIDENT

In the preface of his book, *Obras Completas de Rui Barbosa* [Complete Works of Rui Barbosa], Ambassador Hildebrando Accioly presented the following remarks concerning the Martens Incident at the Second Peace Conference at The Hague in 1907:

*It was still in the first stages of the Conference that it seems some concealed antipathy was directed at him [Rui Barbosa]. When he was before one of the committees, the following incident took place; later, it was widely talked about. Rui had just made a magnificent speech on the issue*

*of the transformation of merchant ships into warships, during which he had made some incursions into the sphere of politics. At that point, the President of the Committee, Mr. Martens, the Russian delegate, noted that politics should be excluded from the deliberations of the Committee, because the Conference did not have jurisdiction over political matters.*

*Those remarks seemed to our first delegate to be censorship directed at him, and he felt, he had to reply. He did so immediately, in a famous impromptu statement, to show that such a reprimand – if this had actually been the intent of Mr. Martens – was not fair.*

*Rui exuberantly stated, that if the delegates were strictly forbidden to deal with politics, the very use of the word should be prevented because – as he said – “politics is the atmosphere of the States; politics is within the realm of International Law.” He added that politics is in the deliberations, in the reciprocal concessions, in the compromises, that it was always politics that inspired either the acts or the actions of countries and governments.*

Given the significance of the so-called “Martens Incident,” it is worth mentioning that the full testimony of one of the members of the Brazilian delegation at The Hague, Rodrigo Otávio, is the primary source of this striking incident in Rui Barbosa’s diplomatic performance. As Rodrigo Otávio narrates in his remarkable book *Minhas Memórias dos Outros* [My Memories of Others]:

*On that day, the weighty matter of the transformation of merchant ships into warships was discussed, and Rui Barbosa made one of his memorable speeches about the issue.*

*Once the Brazilian delegate had finished, President Martens, surly and coarse, stated that “the speech would be printed and inserted in the minutes of the work.” He added, however, that politics should be excluded from the Committee because politics was not within its jurisdiction. Mr. Martens, in his bitterness, did not consider Rui Barbosa’s statement to be a speech, but rather he felt it was an emotional statement, and it was in that way he referred to Rui in his retort.*

*General applause greeted this impertinent observation made by the president of the committee. [...] The incident made the entire Assembly alert, and then there was a deep silence. Breaking the silence, Rui Barbosa stood up and asked permission to speak. It was as if an irrepressible force had propelled him.*

*I was in the room, sitting on a bench leaning against the wall. I also stood up, and that was one of the most thrilling moments of my life. I felt that a great event was about to happen, and it was Brazil’s name, Brazil’s prestige, and Brazil’s honor that were at stake. In a tense moment, everyone expecting a scandal, or at least a loud discussion, turned to the speaker [Barbosa], who as Honorary President of the First Commission had a seat at the main table, on the right side of the President [Martens], a circumstance that gave him an even greater spotlight.*

*For his part, Martens put on an ugly face and was nervous from the beginning.*

*Rui – starting with a faint voice, which he later raised and it became clear – began to deliver his speech, which was, indeed, the most remarkable speech the Conference heard.*

*The incident gave [Rui Barbosa] his greatest moment of intellectual glow.*

*Induced by the occasion, this impromptu speech, given in a foreign language, in an Assembly in which all speeches were read, amazed the audience. Rui faced the President of the Commission and let it be known to the representative of the autocratic Russia that he had matured in parliamentary life. He further stated that he came to that Conference from the Presidency of the Senate of his country, where the Parliamentary institutions already had 60 years of regular practice, so he probably knew how to behave in such an Assembly. He noted that the words used by the President sounded like a censorship of his speech, made in a way that he could not ignore without an immediate response. And he proceeded, eloquently, showing with the most accurate and convincing arguments, that the observation was inappropriate. In his speech he said:*

Pour sûr la politique n'est pas de notre ressort. Nous ne pouvons faire de la politique. La politique n'est pas l'objet de notre programme. Mais est-ce que nous pourrions le remplir si nous nous croyons obligés de mettre une muraille entre nous et la politique, entendue, comme il faut l'entendre ici dans le sens général, dans le sens supérieur, dans le sens neutre du vocable? Non, Messieurs.

Nous n'avons pas oublié que Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie, dans son acte de convocation de la Conférence de la Paix, a éloigné nettement de notre programme les questions politiques. Mais cette défense évidemment ne visait que la politique militante, La politique



d'action, et de combat, celle qui trouble, qui agite, qui sépare les peuples dans leurs rapports internes et dans leurs rapports internationaux, jamais la politique envisagé comme science, la politique étudiée comme histoire, la politique exploré comme règle morale. Car, du moment qu'il s'agit de faire des lois, domestiques ou internationales, pour les nations, il faut tout d'abord examiner, en ce qui regarde chaque projet, la possibilité, la nécessité, l'utilité de mesure en face de la tradition, de l'état actuel des sentiments, des idées, des intérêts qui animent les peuples, qui régissent les gouvernements. Et bien: est-ce que ce n'est pas de la politique tout ça?

La politique dans le sens le plus vulgaire du mot, celle-ci, personne ne le conteste, celle-ci nous est absolument interdite. Nous n'avons rien à voir avec les affaires intérieures des Etats, ou, dans les affaires internationales, avec les querelles qui divisent les nations, les litiges d'amour propre, d'ambition ou d'honneurs, les questions d'influence, d'équilibre ou de prédominance, celles qui mènent au conflit et à la guerre. Voici la politique interdite.

Mais dans l'autre, dans la grande acception du terme, la plus haute et pas a moins pratique, des intérêts suprêmes des nations les unes envers les autres, est-ce que la politique nous pourrait être défendue? Non, Messieurs.<sup>1</sup>

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1 For sure, politics is not our responsibility. We cannot do politics. Politics is not the focus of our program. But can we fully do our work if we believe we have to put a wall between us and politics? Politics understood as it should be understood, in the general sense, in the higher sense, in the neutral sense of the term?

We have not forgotten that His Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, in his act of convening this Peace Conference, clearly removed political issues from our program. But this preventative measure obviously referred only to militant politics, political actions and combat, that which would create disorder and agitation, separating peoples in their internal relations; politics never envisioned as a

*And using that same tone he went on, increasingly confident.*

*The impression that such an impromptu speech left on the audience was great. Rui, from the start of the conference, had come to show the world who he was. The Assembly, however, did not want to know, and it [initially] did not listen. The Martens Incident, which aroused the Assembly's curiosity, made them pay attention to the speech of the Brazilian delegate. And Rui Barbosa, who was small, modest, and almost shy in attitude, grew on the audience. With firmness, confidence and eloquence, he gave a magnificent speech. After the incident, he continued growing in such a way that he gained the admiration of his peers.*

*Rui finished his speech and sat down. Martens did not comment, but he was visibly disheartened; he established the agenda for the next day and adjourned the session. Then in the buffet room, to which everyone went after the incident, Martens approached Rui and talked to him for a few moments. Considering the authoritarian personality of the old Russian jurist, it was the crowning achievement of Rui Barbosa's prestige. He had pulled off a coup and become a conqueror on that memorable day.*

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science, politics studied as history, as moral law. From the moment we as nations make laws, domestic or international, we must first consider in regard to each project, the possibility, the necessity, the usefulness of the measure in the face of tradition, of the current state of feelings, ideas and interests that animate the people that govern governments. Well, is this not politics?

Politics in its most vulgar sense is personal disputes, and it is absolutely forbidden here. We have nothing to do with the internal affairs of States or in international affairs, with quarrels that divide nations, in self-interested disputes, in ambition or honors, in issues of influence of balance or predominance, those that lead to conflict and war. These are the forbidden politics.

But in the other, the larger sense of the term, the highest and not the lowest practice, the supreme interests of nations towards each other, is that the type of politics we could defend? No, gentlemen?

## THE CREATION OF A PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION

The delegations of the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom presented a complete plan for the creation of a High Court of Arbitration. According to Ambassador Hildebrando Accioly, a Brazilian jurist and diplomat, this plan proposed a new court made up of 17 judges, nine of which would be appointed by the eight great powers of the time plus the Netherlands (certainly as a tribute to the country hosting the conference). The other eight judges would be appointed by eight groups of nations, one of which consisted of the 10 South American republics. The imbalance was stark, and Brazil's delegation was opposed to the proposal.

Rui Barbosa suggested to Rio Branco that the Brazilian Foreign Minister negotiate changes to the proposal with the American Secretary of State, Elihu Root, as the plan was clearly oriented towards an unequal and degrading treatment of smaller nations. The head of American diplomacy, according to Accioly, proposed that Brazil – either for itself or because of its prestige on the American continent – should have the right to have its own arbitrator on the court. Despite this offer, however, neither Rio Branco nor Rui Barbosa was fully satisfied. Although the former was willing to accept a transactional solution if it did not harm or offend Brazil, Barbosa insisted on maintaining as paramount the principle of the equality of sovereign States. The situation was not auspicious for us as the delegations from the major powers did not change their points of view. In that context, Rio Branco, with the support of Rui Barbosa, decided that we should make a firm official statement before the Conference, to make it clear that we would not relinquish the principle as it was important not only to Brazil, but also to the other Latin American republics.

In the statement made at the session on August 20, Rui Barbosa emphasized that the rotation system designed for

the International Arbitration Court structure “would be a proclamation of disparity between national sovereignties,” and on that occasion, he submitted to the Assembly, the Brazilian government’s proposal.

### THE BRAZILIAN PROPOSAL

The final proposal, developed by agreement between Foreign Minister Rio Branco and Chief Delegate Rui Barbosa, was preceded by several drafts that emphasized the following main arguments:

- “To set an arbitrary number of judges for the Permanent Court of Arbitration according to certain *a priori* ideas that assumed an extension of this number, which would then attempt to ensure that all the States would be represented, is to subvert the necessary and inevitable issues of the matter.”
- “To disrupt the natural terms of the problem in this way is to assign arbitrarily to the different States unequal representations on the international court.”
- “In the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes signed at The Hague, June 29, 1899, the signatory powers – including the European, North American, Mexican, Chinese, and Japanese delegates – agreed that the contracting States, regardless of their importance, would all have equal representation on the Permanent Court of Arbitration.”
- It is a fallacy to consider that a right is equal for everyone who holds it, as “for some [it] is limited to fairly brief periods; while others have the privilege of its continuous exercise.”

- “The establishment by contractual stipulation of sovereignty categories that humiliate some and benefit others undermines the foundation of the existence of everyone, and proclaims – through a strange logic – the legal predominance of might over right.”

The Brazilian Proposal for the new Permanent Court of Arbitration was modelled on the following items:

- I. Each State shall designate to the Permanent Court of Arbitration, under the conditions stipulated in the Convention of 1899, one person able to serve respectably as a member of that institution as an arbitrator.

The State shall also have the right to designate a deputy.

Two or more States may agree upon the designation of a common representative on the Court.

The same person could be designated by two different States.

The signatory States shall choose their representatives on the new court from those who are part of the existing Court.

- II. Once the new court is designated, the current court shall cease to exist.
- III. The persons designated shall serve for nine years and cannot be displaced except in situations in which, according to the legislation of each country, permanent magistrates lose their office.
- IV. A State may exercise its right of appointment only by engaging to pay the honorarium of the judge that it is to designate, and by making a deposit every year in advance and on the terms established by the Convention.

- V. In order for the court to decide a case in plenary session, at least a quarter of the members designated must be present. To ensure this possibility, the members designated shall be divided into three groups according to the alphabetical order of the Convention's signatures. The judges included in each of these groups shall sit in rotation for three years, during which time they shall be obliged to fix residence at a location from which they can arrive at The Hague within twenty-four hours of the first telegraphic summons. However, all members of the court have the right, if they wish, of always being part of the plenary sessions, even if they do not belong to the specific group summoned.
- VI. The parties in conflict are free to submit their dispute either to the full court or to choose from the court the number of judges upon which they have agreed to settle their differences.
- VII. The court will be convened in plenary session, whenever it is necessary to settle disputes in which the resolution has been entrusted to it by the parties; or whenever a matter is submitted to them by a smaller number of arbitrators, if the latter appeal to the full court, to settle an issue arising among them during the case proceedings.
- VIII. In order to complete the organization of the court on these bases, everything in the provisions of the draft written by England, Germany, and the United States that is consistent therewith and seems proper to adopt shall be adopted.

In defense of the Brazilian Proposal, Rui Barbosa sought to undo several misunderstandings, especially the criticism of the American delegate Joseph Choate, according to which he [Barbosa]

“was resolved to consider no other proposal except the Brazilian one.”

Barbosa responded to the American delegate as follows:

*I do not attach an absolute importance to the Brazilian proposal. That has never been my intention. The proof of this is that in the meeting of August 20, I submitted the proposal under the title: “Provisional suggestions for use in the discussion on the creation of a permanent court.” What I consider important in that proposal relates to its main principles; that is what inspires it.*

*In our proposal, we find three essential ideas. First, the idea that constitutes its foundation, in other words, the substance: the principle of the equality of States. Second is the right of each State to designate a member of the court, which we regard as the only means of possibly establishing the principle [of States’ equality]. And finally, we consider inseparable from arbitration, the rule that assures sovereign States in dispute the right to choose their own judges for any arbitral court.*

In the sphere of controversy, Rui Barbosa felt very comfortable, and did not miss a single opportunity to rebut criticism or negative insinuations regarding the Brazilian proposal. Despite the vehemence of some of his speeches, Rui, as William T. Stead points out, “was cool, calm and undisturbed at the tribune. His speeches made a vigorous appeal to reason, a dialectic that required an intelligent audience, but through all his fierce argument, one can sense the passion of the repressed burning flame.”

Rui repeated himself in order to clarify misunderstandings, to counter what he considered to be the major argument – and

actually the only argument – used so far against the Brazilian proposal:

*[...] in defending their system of great nations – those largest in geographic area, in population, in wealth and in culture – they allege that the larger States will be judged before a court in which their representatives' votes would weigh as much as the minimal States' votes [...]. But that argument is in itself inaccurate. [...] in the Brazilian proposal, there is no such thing. The judges appointed by the small States, as those appointed by the large States, do have the right to sit permanently on the court; but they will exercise the function of judges only of those States, great or small, that freely chose them. The Brazilian proposal establishes in its Article VI that: "The parties in dispute are free either to submit their controversy to the full court or to choose from the court the number of judges that they agree upon to settle their differences." Therefore, the large States will never run the risk of being subjected, against their will, to judges appointed by the small States or to any other judge in whom they may not rely. It is the States themselves who will choose all the judges of the court – whoever pleases them – creating for the settlement of each case a tribunal of three, five or seven members entirely at the convenience of the parties.*

Rui Barbosa deepened the discussions about the different possibilities of structure for the new Court of Arbitration, and emphasized, once again, three basic points of the Brazilian proposal, namely:

*1. The proposed institution is not necessary, as the existing court, if improved, will meet all the needs of arbitration.*



*2. If a new court is created, it has to be based on the principle of the equality of States, and the principle has to be strictly followed.*

*3. For this principle of the equality of States to succeed in a fully satisfactory manner, the only possible solution is the direct and equal participation of all the States on the court, thereby ensuring to each the designation of a judge, in accordance with the plan adopted by the Brazilian proposal.*

Rui pointed repeatedly, to Article VI of the Brazilian proposal that gave the parties in dispute the right to choose their judges. Furthermore, this right fulfilled a role of great importance in the arbitration system: it conciliated the existence of a court of forty-five members, imposed by the principle of the juridical equality of sovereign States, with the essential need for strict justice to have each case decided by a small number of judges. This is something we must never lose sight of in our assessment of the two systems.

After long and thorough debates, the conclave at The Hague finally approved a cold and formal suggestion made by a British delegate, Lord Edward Fry, according to which “The Conference recommends to the signatory States the adoption of the project voted for the creation of a Court of Arbitral Justice, and the entry into force as soon as an agreement has been reached respecting the selection of the judges and the constitution of the Court [...]”.

When Rui Barbosa withdrew the Brazilian proposal, he emphasized that:

*Its essential purpose was to make the principle of the equality of States practical, to concretely define it versus the principle of a hierarchy of sovereignties through a rotation system adopted in the Anglo-German-American proposal [...] Thus, from the moment the proposal prevailed*

*in its fundamental form, and also from the moment we did not present it with the intention of creating a new court – of which we neither recognized the necessity nor the utility – or with the intention of opposing principles contrary to our own, we had no interest whatsoever that our proposal should be discussed and put to a vote. We had succeeded in attaining all that we sought.*

## THE LAST SPEECH AT THE HAGUE: FAREWELL IN GREAT STYLE

In his last speech on the new Permanent Court of Arbitration, Rui Barbosa emphasized that the Brazilian government considered implicit in its vote,

*[...] recognition of the principle of the equality of sovereign States and, as a consequence, the absolute exclusion in any future negotiation concerning the constitution of a new court of arbitration, either through a system of periodicity via the rotation of judges, or through a system that establishes the election of the judges by foreign electors.*

While acknowledging that perhaps it would have been better “to keep quiet; to leave them with a good impression,” Barbosa continued, explaining the reason for his persistence in defense of the equality of sovereign States in the debate on the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

*We persisted because along with the absolute necessity of preserving this right, we were determined to preserve other rights as essential and as inalienable as the previous: the judicial right to international arbitration, and the inherent right of each party to choose its own judges.*

And he added that:

*I have been told that it may have been wiser to wait, and make our proposal at the next conference, as they did not want this here. Why are we in such great haste? My responses are multiple:*

*The haste arises from a tendency whose dangerous nature I have already highlighted, concerning the caution which presided over the Conference of 1899, replacing arbitration, a form of justice for sovereign States, with a power that was never before considered in international affairs – except perhaps in the idle daydreams of utopia.*

*The peril of this adulteration of arbitration, of this seductive yet dangerous illusion, was foreseen and reported in 1899 at the First Conference, by a voice that succeeded in making a prediction for the Second Conference: that of our illustrious President, Mr. Leon Bourgeois [Prime Minister of France, 1895-1896, and French delegate at 1899 and 1907 Peace Conferences].*

Once again, Rui Barbosa used the treasured diplomatic and political resource of evoking the historical background of an argument in favor of his thesis. Thus he used an excerpt from a speech made by Bourgeois, when the honorable French statesman launched, on July 9, 1899, the works of the Third Commission:

*It is in the same spirit of great prudence and with the same respect for the national sentiment that the principle of judges' tenure has not been included in either draft. It is impossible in fact to not recognize the difficulty in the world's current political condition of setting up a tribunal in advance that would be composed of a set number of judges, representing the different countries, and seated*

*permanently, to try a succession of cases. This tribunal would, in fact, offer the parties, not arbitrators but judges in the private law sense – respectively chosen by them and vested with a sort of personal warrant of office by an expression of national confidence. This tribunal would include judges, not arbitrators, respectively elected by the parties themselves. From a general perspective, a permanent court, however impartial the members might be, would run the risk of being characterized as a specific State's representative. And the Governments, believing that the court was subject to political influence or to currents of opinion, would not agree to attend to it as a jurisdiction, as an entirely disinterested court.*

Accordingly, Barbosa, used the best dialectic technique of crudely exposing the ideas of an adversary – even showing that he or she was absurd, in order to vigorously defend his own position – as he quoted an excerpt from *The Times* newspaper's editorial of September 21, 1907, which said:

*The fate of the creation of a new arbitral court makes it possible to determine the incapacity of the small States regarding political practice. They have insisted that each State, no matter what its material, moral and intellectual condition might be, should have an equal representation on the tribunal. Knowledge, character, experience and armed force, all these mean nothing in the opinion of these uncompromising doctrinaires. Haiti and the Dominican Republic, Salvador and Venezuela, Persia and China, all these are sovereign States. Therefore, so they reason, it will be necessary that each enjoy the same rights as Great Britain. France, Germany and the United States, in the settlement of the most subtle controversies of law and*

*issues of fact between the greatest and the most enlightened States of Europe. Such assumptions make their argument irrefutable, and these assumptions are the skeleton of the Conference itself. From a juridical and diplomatic point of view the argument is perfect, but unfortunately, there is no sense to their conclusion. No other example can be given to blatantly expose the flimsy structure of the Conference. Hence, in view of the fact that the great powers are not at all disposed to place over them as their judges, the most corrupt and the most backward States of Asia and of South America, we shall not yet have the arbitral court.*

Rui skillfully chose the text that reflected with harsh clarity the ideology of the great powers, in their discriminatory and arrogant views. Two viewpoints of international politics are clear: the *real politik* and the idealistic ones. It is a head-on attack on the doctrine of power, as a source of wisdom and common sense.

In order to support his thesis of the equality of sovereignties, Rui Barbosa, as an idealist, transferred to the international sphere the ideal political model for national context, and he wished to apply to it identical values and mechanisms of the domestic practice of liberal democracy. When he continued his farewell speech at The Hague, he stated the following to defend the identical logic of domestic and the foreign policies:

*Certainly, there are cultural, moral, wealth and power diversities between States and between individuals. However, does this fact create any difference whatsoever regarding essential rights? Civil rights are the same for every man. Political rights are the same for all citizens. In the election of the august sovereign Parliament of Great Britain, Lord Kelvin and Mr. John Morley have the same vote as the ordinary workman dulled by labor and poverty.*

*Is the intellectual and moral capacity of this laboring man, who has been degraded by suffering and distress, equal to that of the statesman or of the scholar? The fact is that sovereignty is the elementary right par excellence of organized and independent States. Sovereignty means equality. In principle and in practice sovereignty is absolute. It does not brook ranking, but the jurisdictional distribution of right is a branch of sovereignty. Hence, if between the States there is to be a common organ of justice, all the States must have equal representation on it.*

Once again, Rui Barbosa also attacked the so-called material criteria (maritime trade, naval capacity) used to rank countries. He showed that even in that apparently objective field, there is blatant unfairness, as he had already expressed in the debate on the International Prize Court, which was the result of a discriminatory perception by the major powers. To close his arguments, he asked: “Now, if this has been the experience in that field – where to be quite fair in our criticism, there would be no need to make use of anything but our eyes – what would be the result if we were to rank the weaker nations according to the vague and elastic criteria of intelligence, morals, and culture?”

Another interesting topic in Rui’s final speech at The Hague is the one in which he responded to an article published in a newspaper – “some transatlantic gazette” – in which it was stated that the major powers never involved the arbitration of countries such as Brazil, Haiti and Guatemala in their disputes. The Brazilian Delegate showed in that respect, that he was aware of everything that happened, both inside and outside of the Conference, and that he was also aware of the importance of the media to the operation of diplomacy in creating hostile or favorable environments. In his rebuttal of the claim, he once again, used the historical background

of the case and demonstrated his knowledge of the history of national foreign policy.

Regarding the aforementioned article, he said the following:

*To allow such arguments against Brazil one must have lost sight of the history of international relations in the last quarter of the 19th century. If it were not for this disregard, one might have realized that of all the countries in Latin America, Brazil is the only one to which the great powers, especially the United States, have gone to select arbitrators. In the most famous of arbitrations, the Alabama affair between the United States and Great Britain, the treaty signed by the two parties in Washington on May 8, 1871, spawned the Geneva Court, in which one of the arbitrators was a Brazilian diplomat, the Viscount of Itajubá. In the Franco-American Court of Washington, established to settle the claims of the two powers in dispute, in accordance with the Convention of January 15, 1880, the presidency of that Court consulted Brazil, with one of our diplomatic representatives, the Baron of Arinos. Finally, the four joint arbitration commissions that operated from 1884 to 1888 in Santiago, Chile – to adjudicate the claims of England, France, Germany and Italy against the American State – were successively chaired by three Brazilian counselors, Lopes Netto, Lafayette Pereira, and Aguiar de Andrade. [...] In 1870, 1871, and 1880, and from 1884 to 1888, Germany and Italy have called upon Brazil as arbitrators, each of them once, and France, England and the United States, each of them twice. This is a distinction that was conferred upon no other American State, except the United States.*

Barbosa finished his argument by ironically asking:

*But lo and behold, today they would scoff at the nations of South America, at our expense, by representing as a great absurdity the possibility that a great power might accept arbitration on the part of Brazil. Who is laughing now?*

He ended by lashing out at the corruption label that The Times intended to impose on the countries of Asia and South America:

*Nor is it true that if the nations have not been provided with another arbitral court, the blame for this must be laid at Asia's or South America's door, where ignorance and corruption reside. No, that is not the case at all. The facts are an overwhelming testimony against this fabrication.*

When he previously assessed the results of The Hague Conference, Rui Barbosa held the great powers responsible for the failure to solve the problem of the creation of the new Court of Arbitration. In summary, concerning that dead end, he said:

*The great powers have offered two solutions to the problem. First, there is the Anglo-Franco-American proposal. However, all the great powers, including the two that collaborated with the United States – that is to say Great Britain and Germany – have cut off their support in the subcommittee of eight and in the B Examination Committee. The United States itself, confronted by this unanimity, did not pursue its own proposal. Thus, the system of rotation, with the ranking of States, came to its end.*

The second solution was the setting up of the court by election. It was presented by the American delegation to Examination Committee 13, on September 18, and in that same meeting the proposal was discarded as it secured only five votes



against nine. Among those nine votes, apart from four States of secondary importance – Belgium, Brazil, Portugal and Romania – there were five great powers: Germany, Austria, Great Britain, Italy and Russia. Among the great powers, France alone supported the proposal of the United States, competing against the Netherlands, Greece and Persia.

Therefore, in the first case, it was the unanimity of the powers, and in the second, it was the unanimity minus only two votes that wrecked the American initiative in this matter.

As can be seen, Rui Barbosa demonstrated the level of disaggregation among the major players of the international scene who seek from the minor countries patterns of coherence, responsibility and rationality that they, themselves, are unable to practice. He made his case about this paradox with precise irony and numbers of votes.

#### BRAZIL'S STAND: "MODERATE AND CIRCUMSPECT, YET FIRM AND PROUD"

In a speech made on October 31, 1907, when the Brazilian colony in Paris paid tribute to him after the Conference had ended, Rui Barbosa summed up the meaning of his mission at The Hague in the following manner:

*Below the eight great powers that divide among themselves the control of the world, with regard to superiority among nations, no other State is greater than Brazil. Considering all of them, none among the secondary powers is greater than we are, and I believe none is as great as we are. Our diplomatic traditions put us, in certain respects, at a great level, side by side with governments who have arbitrated*

*major disputes between the major powers of the world. Our military weakness places us far away from these armed powers.*

*This situation, in its extreme delicacy should have its own language: moderate and circumspect, but steadfast and haughty when necessary. It was necessary to recognize that, and to talk naturally about it, safely, calmly, and with tenacity. It was not easy; but it was not impossible. An instinctive feeling of responsibility for this duty came over me, after I crossed over the demanding thresholds of Ridderzall [the main building in which the Hague Conference was held]. During the first steps, I was filled with terror. I do not know how to express the dismay, the sense of helplessness, of dread, of complete abandonment of my own self that I felt during the first days, when I sat in my chair, staring at the circle of greatness that surrounded me. It destroyed my spirit. Forgive me if I say, however, that from the opportunity to defend the honor of our office, I found strength, courage, and resoluteness. I do not know where it came from, but I saw myself standing up, with words on my lips, and I plotted the straight line of behavior that I maintained until the end, thank God, with invariable perseverance.*

### “THE NEW DISCOVERY OF AMERICA”

Twenty six countries attended the First Hague Peace Conference (1899): 20 of them were European; four Asian; and two American, the United States and Mexico. (Brazil had also been invited, but decided not to participate.) At the Second Hague Peace

Conference (1907), 44 countries attended: 21 were from Europe, four, again, from Asia, and now, 19 were from the Americas. As Brazilian delegate Rui Barbosa said, “It was the great international assembly in which all the sovereign and constituted States of the world gathered.”

In response to a speech of Dr. Virgílio de Leme, in Salvador, Bahia, on December 29, 1907, Rui Barbosa made an important assessment of the clash that occurred between South America and the United States at the recently completed Second Hague Peace Conference. The dispute concerned Washington’s proposal to establish a world Court of Justice, in which eight powers would have a permanent seat and the other nations of the world would have rotating seats. The proposal was abandoned by the United States, however, due to the negative reaction of other countries – especially other American countries. This negative reaction had been initiated by Brazil through the words of Rui Barbosa with a strong defense of the principle of equality among sovereign States. The expressive presence of South and Central American countries was not only quantitative, but it characterized a group of aware participants; nations with their own personalities; accountable and high-level players – such as Saenz Peña, of Argentina, and Augusto Matte Pérez, of Chile.

Rui pointed out that “the lesson learned from Hague’s drama” was that “close observers immediately saw, without question, a new discovery of America, a political discovery, the uncovering of the political weight of this new discovery, which until then was unknown in the international arena.”

In the same line of thought, James Brown Scott, one of the most brilliant of the American delegates, stated that the Second Hague Peace Conference represented “the advent of South America in the world.”

Brazilian writer, Euclides da Cunha, whom Rio Branco chose to greet Rui Barbosa on behalf of Itamaraty upon his return from the conclave at The Hague, emphasized that he saw in “Ambassador Rui Barbosa, not a delegate from Brazil, but rather, the Plenipotentiary of Latin America, ‘the Representative of the Continent’.” He noted, however, that “the role our delegate [Rui Barbosa] played cannot be ascribed only to his personal qualities. His appearance is as logical and geometrical as a parallelogram of forces.”

#### THE STRENGTH OF A NEW MENTALITY

In his 1949 book, *Rui Barbosa e o Código Civil*, San Tiago Dantas, who would later become the Foreign Minister of Brazil, wrote that the first decades of the Republic presented:

*a unique contrast between economic reality and ideas; between the country's material weakness and the strength with which a new mentality burst onto the scene. ... [And] through that contrast, to the delight of the observer, the intellectual life of the country rose to a previously-unattained level. It could be said that an entire generation – filtering the problems stirred up by European culture of its time – cast among us, within a decade, the foundations of a great movement of ideas, without setting common guidelines, but open to the historical and current reality of the country, as well as to universal issues.*

Rui Barbosa was a member of this generation; a generation which also prominently included Machado de Assis, Rio Branco, Joaquim Nabuco, Euclides da Cunha, Farias Brito, Silvio Romero, Eduardo Prado, Alberto Torres, Olavo Bilac, and Graça Aranha.

Rui Barbosa, who did not obtain all of the victories in domestic policy that he desired, found in international policy his big success in life: the victory of the democratic ideas he advocated at The Hague, proclaiming the equality of nations. A shrewd observation by German philosopher, Georg Hegel (1770 - 1831) on the importance of theory in political life can be applied to Rui Barbosa's performance at The Hague: "Every day I am more convinced that theoretical work represents more achievements in the world than practical work. Once the field of ideas is revolutionized, the current state of affairs no longer resists."

Even in the tumultuous state of affairs of the early decades of the Republic, people like Rio Branco and Rui Barbosa revolutionized the "field of ideas." The results emerged unexpectedly and rashly, but solidly. These new models of foreign policy – the paradigms of active and lofty participation in international politics, and the equality of nations – were rooted in courage and in republican institutional creation. They were the foreign policy models that Rio Branco and Rui Barbosa advocated at The Hague, in 1907.

## THE TWO PATRONS

Rio Branco, as diplomat and writer Gilberto Amado well defined, "was born a politician, an opener of roads, an initiator." For these reasons, and for making history, he is known as "The Patron of Brazilian Diplomacy."

Rui Barbosa, as journalist and Sociology professor, Alceu Amoroso Lima observed, "was the man whose dream was to turn Brazil, by force of law, into a global power. [...] He dreamed about Brazil in the world." In this manner, Rui Barbosa can be considered "The Patron of Brazilian Multilateral Diplomacy."

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**EUCLIDES DA CUNHA**

Euclides da Cunha was born in 1866, in the municipality of Cantagalo, Rio de Janeiro. He attended Military School in 1886, from where he was expelled two years later because of a protest against the Minister of War. The support to Republicanism and to Positivism marked his youth. He returned to Military School after the Proclamation of the Republic. Between 1892 and 1896, he worked as a military engineer. In 1896, he left the Army and started to work as a civil engineer in São Paulo. In 1897, he travelled to Bahia as a journalist for the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* in order to cover the Conflict of Canudos. His experience resulted in the publication, in 1902, of his masterpiece, *Os Sertões*. In 1903, he was elected a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. Between 1904 and 1909, he worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a consultant for the Baron of Rio Branco, and also headed the Brazilian Committee to Recognize the Purus River; it was under this duty that he travelled to the Amazon in 1905.

In 1906, he published the book *Peru versus Bolivia* and, in 1907, the collection of articles and essays *Contrastes e Confrontos*. He left Itamaraty to take on the Logic professorship at Colégio Pedro II. He died shortly after, in Rio de Janeiro, in August, 1909, after engaging in a shootout with his wife's lover, cadet Dilermando de Assis. The book *À Margem da História* was published, posthumously, in the same year.



## EUCLIDES DA CUNHA: THE SOUTH AMERICAN SCENE

*Kassius Diniz da Silva Pontes*

Euclides da Cunha was born in 1866, in the countryside of Rio de Janeiro state. Of humble birth, throughout his 43 years of life he carried out professional activities “under the State’s protective cloak”: he was member of the military, civil engineer, employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, for a short period of time, Logic teacher at the Pedro II School (VENTURA, 2003, p.33). His education at the Military School of Praia Vermelha, which he joined in 1886, happened in a context of great political instability – the movements supporting the slavery abolition and the establishment of a republican regimen were getting stronger – and under the influence of thinkers, such as Benjamin Constant, one of the main individuals responsible for spreading the positivist thought, especially among young officials of the Army. He graduated in Mathematics, Physical and Natural Sciences, and Military Engineering. His academic background in natural and exact sciences is clearly reflected on all his literary work.

After working as military and civil engineer in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, in 1897 Euclides traveled to cover the military campaign of Canudos, in Bahia, witnessing *in loco* the attempt of the republican regimen to suppress the rebellion of countrymen leaded by Antônio Conselheiro. The episode was described in his main work, *Os Sertões (Rebellion in the Backlands)*, published in 1902. The book rapidly turned him into a literary celebrity. However, he still faced financial difficulties and frustrations with his work as engineer. According to Francisco Venâncio Filho, “as the glory and fame of the author were high, the life of the man remained burdensome and harsh” (VENÂNCIO FILHO, 1995, p. 40). Disappointed with his job in the countryside of São Paulo, he decided to seek an occupation that could provide him with better life conditions. Supported by friends who appointed his name to the Baron of Rio Branco, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, he started working, as of 1904, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, quitting engineering for good.

In his five years at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Euclides da Cunha was a privileged observer of the main international issues of his time, specially the events that were taking place in South America. As an assistant to Rio Branco, he helped in the process of defining the Brazilian borders with Peru and Uruguay. Going beyond the occupation of cartographer (for which he was prepared due to his education at the Military School), he reflected on and developed theses on issues of broader interest to foreign policy, such as the mistrust of the neighboring countries regarding Brazil and the imperialist dispute for the occupation of economic areas in South America.

Euclides was also an advocate of greater physical integration among the countries of the region. Like Rio Branco, of whom he was a keen admirer, he had both realistic and pragmatic views of the power game in the region: it was crucial for Brazil to

define its borders with the neighboring countries by means of negotiation, seeking, at the same time, to beware of attempts of European intervention in the Americas. He recommended that industrialization and economic development were the main instruments of defense against the greed of foreign powers. True to his positivist convictions, he believed that the adoption of specific policies for the Amazon and the establishment of adequate infrastructure would be the only weapons that would be able to ensure Brazilian sovereignty over its extensive territory.

The purpose of this study is to outline the journey of Euclides in Itamaraty and to present his main texts on international politics. As a reflection of his own work, the focus will be placed on the South American political scenario of the early twentieth century. A better understanding of Euclides' thought requires, however, a brief, previous analysis of the conceptual and ideological outline that permeates his entire work, which will be the first step of our study. Next, we are going to recall the time he worked at Itamaraty, before we discuss the texts on South American politics, focusing on four main aspects: the consolidation of the Brazilian borders; the book *Peru versus Bolivia*; the analysis of the dispute between the United States and Germany for areas of influence in South America; and the analysis of three sparse articles, included in the book *À Margem da História*, about the South American physical integration, the Plata basin and the Pacific. At the end, we intend to sum up Euclides da Cunha's contribution to diplomatic thought. Despite the lack of a systematic approach, his writings on international politics accurately reflect many of the main concerns of the Brazilian government in the early twentieth century, clearly aligned with the view of the Baron of Rio Branco as far as the insertion of Brazil in the region and in the world were concerned.

## THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF EUCLIDES DA CUNHA

A better understanding of Euclides da Cunha's texts on international politics must be preceded by a brief review of the set of ideas that influenced him in the transition of the nineteenth to the twentieth century. Most of the students of the Military School of Praia Vermelha were middle class, in contrast with the Law Schools, responsible for teaching the children of the great landowners (SODRÉ, 1995, p. 16). It was in that environment characterized by the study of the exact sciences that Euclides became aware of Auguste Comte's Positivism, which was deeply inserted among the officers. Benjamin Constant presented to the young cadets – many of whom were from humble backgrounds – the “expositive syntheses and the philosophical formulations” of Comte, conquering several followers among the young cadets (VENTURA, 2003, p. 51). Euclides was, in that environment, enthusiastic about the proposals of social reformism, focusing on the change of political system and on the abolition of slavery.

An emblematic incident regarding his concern about the political system was the protest, where he was a protagonist, against the visit of the Minister of War of the Empire, Tomás Coelho, to the Military School, in 1888. During that authority's visit, Euclides threw his sword to the ground, in a political gesture clearly in favor of the Proclamation of the Republic. Consequently, he was expelled from the institution, to which he eventually came back only in the following year when the new political system was established. Throughout his life, Euclides remained true to the Republican principles and to the defense of democracy and social change, values that, in his opinion, were not observed in the years immediately after the fall of the monarchy.

It is during that same period that the writer began to collaborate with the press. In addition to his reformist ideology,

the articles published in the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo* – formerly called *A Província de São Paulo* – explicitly demonstrate his belief in the Positivist thought and the cult to the sciences. This scientism was even more central in *Os Sertões*, which, in order to write, Euclides would go deeper into the study of the so-called “exact” sciences, from Geology to Botany. In doing so, he began to absorb the popular ideas in the main currents of thought, using concepts of race, climate, evolution and civilization present in the work of authors such as Saint-Hilaire, Ludwig Gumpłowicz, Hippolyte Taine and Herbert Spencer. Despite the strong influence of scientific language in his works, the purpose of Euclides was not to write a merely descriptive study of the reality that he observed. By describing the reality of Canudos and of the life of the peasants, he eventually became, according to Gilberto Freyre, “a discloser of the Brazilian reality.” Unlike other thinkers imbued with a scientific mind, but without literary aspirations, his work also considered the interpretation of a part of Brazil still scarcely known at the time. For that reason, in his writings “the artistic virtues were more important than the scientific ones” (FREYRE, 1995, p. 30).

That conceptual framework was also reflected in Euclides’s work about international politics. Once again, there was the desire to explain the reality based on deterministic and evolutionist assumptions. The frequent resource of quoting foreign authors reflects a reality of the time: in the early twentieth century, the study of the sciences in Brazil was still rough. Its application to literary works was unprecedented. The fact that it eventually adhered to a “diffuse, not to say an arbitrary anthropological Darwinism” (LIMA, 2000, p. 35) is explained precisely by these characteristics of his thought, directed towards the revelation and interpretation, in a somewhat unusual literary style, of that Brazil far from the coastline, as well as by handling concepts that were typical of a thinker imbued with scientific ambitions who

lived during the transition period between the nineteenth and twentieth century.

More broadly, Euclides' thought reflected the concern of the Brazilian elite regarding the affirmation of the national identity and the race issue. It was sought, based on the European currents of thought aforementioned, to establish connections between the biological process of miscegenation and the historical process of nation building (SKIDMORE, 2012, p. 165). The abolition of slavery had occurred shortly before – in 1888, just 14 years before *Os Sertões* was published – and in the debate on racial themes the outright attempt to incorporate ideas designed by foreign authors into the Brazilian reality still prevailed. Euclides was not immune to such a process. He thought that the influence of determinism often resulted in a negative view of miscegenation, although his writings are permeated by contradictions: in many cases, Euclides also praised the strength and potential of the peasant, presenting him as the “core of nationality”.

When he talked about the South American political context, Euclides kept intact the desire to apply and conciliate science and literature. He often referred to ethnicity, to the climate or geography of the countries he talked about, as well the ambition to establish a cause and effect relationship between natural phenomena and the social and political ones. The articles published in *Contrastes e Confrontos*, *À Margem da História* and *Peru versus Bolívia* must be read from that specific point of view, taking into account the existing intellectual and cultural context of the time in which they were written.

## EUCLIDES DA CUNHA AND RIO BRANCO

The hiring of Euclides at Itamaraty, where he worked as a counselor to the Baron of Rio Branco between 1904 and 1909, was the result of uncertainties that characterized his life after the publication of *Os Sertões*, in 1902. After serving for a brief interregnum as an engineer in the state of São Paulo, in 1903 and early 1904, he found himself unemployed and he decided to abandon his occupation. At the same time, there was an increase of Peruvian demands for the negotiation of new bilateral borders, due to the addition of Acre to Brazil by means of the Treaty of Petropolis, signed with Bolivia in 1903. Peru had not participated in the negotiations between Brazil and Bolivia and it thought that it had been impaired by the agreement executed by its neighboring countries. In July 1904, the Brazilian and the Peruvian governments decided to initiate negotiations for the future execution of a Treaty of Limits. As a first step, it was decided on the establishment of a Mixed Committee to navigate the rivers Juruá and Purus and to get to know *in loco* the border region between both countries.

Euclides hoped that obtaining a position at Itamaraty would provide him with the necessary peace of mind to more easily pursue his intellectual goals. He rejected, however, the possibility of asking for favors to obtain a position in the public office. In a letter to his friend Luiz Cruls, he lamented, “in this land, both the request and the effort, two things that disgust me are necessary for everything” (GALVÃO; GALOTTI, 1997, p. 149).

By refusing to seek a position by himself, the appointment of Euclides depended on the action of close friends, who had good relationships with Rio Branco. Two of them – the critic José Veríssimo and the diplomat Domicio da Gama – played an especially relevant role in the intermediation of Euclides’ contact

with the minister. The Baron himself – who was always interested in maintaining an *entourage* of important intellectuals – eventually interviewed Euclides, deciding, then, to appoint him as head of the Brazilian Committee for the Recognition of Alto Purus, a position he held from 1904 to 1905. During that period, he travelled to the Amazon, providing him the opportunity, as we will see later, to write several texts about the region. Once the Committee's activities were over, Euclides returned to Rio de Janeiro and went on to be a cartographer, assisting the Baron of Rio Branco directly.

Euclides' role in Itamaraty was never officially created by law. Indications are that Rio Branco employed and paid him directly. The precarious nature of his occupation in the Ministry was a source of distresses for the writer, who remained with no defined professional direction. From 1906 until early 1909, he nurtured the ambition to take on other functions – among them, he considered positions on the Committee of Limits with Venezuela and in the Committee of the Madeira-Mamoré Railroad. It is believed that he even cherished the desire to be assigned to work abroad, an idea that supposedly was not supported by Rio Branco (VENÂNCIO FILHO, 2002, p. 228). Although he was unsatisfied with his situation, he ended up playing important roles in Itamaraty. In addition to the aforementioned role in negotiating the borders between Brazil and Peru, he wrote, at the request of Rio Branco, the book *Peru versus Bolivia*, and worked in the formulation of the Treaty with Uruguay that established the joint ownership over the Rivers Jaguarão and the Lagoa Mirim. The respect that he enjoyed in Itamaraty was shown, moreover, by the fact that he was chosen to make the greeting speech to Rui Barbosa upon his return from the II Peace Conference at The Hague in 1907 – when he praised the performance of the Brazilian representative against the “crushing of the majority of people in favor of four or five strong



and imperialist nations” (ARINOS FILHO, 2009, p. 35; CARDIM, p. 172-174).

The reasons for Rio Branco not appointing Euclides to a permanent position in Itamaraty are unclear. What we can notice from Euclides’s letters is that the Baron himself insisted that the writer, despite his distress, remained working in the institution. In a letter to the diplomat Oliveira Lima in November 1908 – when he had already worked for the Baron for 4 years –, he mentioned “the dangers of my position as a Commissioner *in-partibus*”. He also added, “It has already been 2 years of expectation and I am impressed with my own patience, although it can be explained by the own opposition expressed by the Baron of Rio Branco to my attempts of following a new direction”. Having continued to work in Itamaraty without any guarantee would turn him, in his own words, “into the last of the romantics” (GALVÃO; GALOTTI, 1997, p. 362 and 392).

The fact that he was not able to obtain a stable position in Itamaraty did not affect the admiration that Euclides had for Rio Branco. He often expressed his esteem for the minister at the time. In a letter to Domício da Gama, he pointed out that the Baron, with his “majestic kindness”, brought memories of “a golden age, an ancient one, or one which was over”, confessing that he came closer to him “always with unease and aware of the same respectful cult”. He also stated that it was inevitable not to consider him “a man superior to his time”. He also referred to the Baron as a “singular case of a great man properly appreciated by his contemporaries”, “the monopolizer of national charm” and “the only Man who gathers the rest of the hope of the country” (GALVÃO; GALOTTI, 1997, p. 335, 421 and 423). It is worth noting that Euclides, in his personal mail, was always thrifty in praising, in addition to being a notorious critic of the directions taken by the Republic and the posture of the public men of his time.

The duality of his relationship with Rio Branco is clear, characterized by the intellectual respect and the formality, given the position that the minister at the time had already achieved in the Brazilian political scenario. The Baron, in turn, already admired Euclides even before they worked together in Itamaraty, and even voted for him during the election to the Brazilian Academy of Letters in 1903 (VENÂNCIO FILHO, 1946, p. 15-16). It is also worth noting their background differences. Euclides was the son of a farm accountant in Rio de Janeiro's countryside and his mother died when he was 3 years old. Rio Branco, in turn, was the son of a political leader of the Empire and a diplomat who had lived for several years in Europe. What brought them close to one another was their common desire to work for the preservation of the territorial integrity and the taste for the study of historical and cartographical documents that could provide support to the Brazilian ambitions in its borders disputes with neighboring countries.

In his continuous struggle against professional dissatisfaction – which was a reflection of the “uncomfortable contradiction between the public facet of an established writer and the inglorious search for a job more focused on literary activity” (VENTURA, 2002, p. 76) –, Euclides eventually left Itamaraty in July 1909, when he was appointed professor of logic of the Colégio Pedro II, after a public examination marked by controversies. The writer came in second place in the examination, just behind the philosopher Farias Brito. In letters to friends, Euclides claimed that a disagreement arose between him and the Examination Board during his oral presentation. Even so, President Nilo Peçanha appointed him, supposedly due to the decisive meddling of the Baron of Rio Branco himself. The minister, in a letter to a distant relative of the President at the time, claimed to be making his moves to benefit his friend since he became aware of

a “scandalous conspiracy against him within the Congregation” and of the existence of other candidates’ “godfathers – or people of great influence, as people say” (ARINOS, 2009, p. 40). Euclides held the office for just a month, since he died in August 15, 1909, in a shootout with the cadet Dilermando de Assis, his wife’s lover.

## THE SOUTH AMERICAN POLICY OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC

### a) Establishing borders with Peru

Euclides – appointed head of the Brazilian Section of the Recognition of Alto Purus in August 1904 – prepared himself to travel to the Amazon. He had already written about the region even before he started to work in Itamaraty. In articles published in 1903 and 1904, which were later gathered in the book *Contrastes e Confrontos*, he embraced models of scientism – geographical determinism, evolutionism and social Darwinism – that had already been used in *Os Sertões*. Thus, considerations about the relation between climate and adaptability of men and the recurrent use of expressions such as “natural selection of the fittest” and “vital competition among the peoples” prevailed (BARRETO DE SANTANA, 2000, p. 904).

The article “Conflito Inevitável”, published on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1904 in the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, is a good example of that use of deterministic and evolutionist theses to elucidate problems regarding international policy. Referring to the invasions carried out by Peruvians in Acre in search of rubber, Euclides stated that such movement was “determined” by “physical laws that cannot be violated”. The correct understanding of the phenomenon should take into account the “unfavorable position” of Peru in the Andes. Limited to a “sterile coast” and detached, by the mountain range,

from its “broader and more exuberant portion”, the country could only try to seek an outlet to the Atlantic. Besides the geographical aspects, the article references to several racial matters. Euclides pointed out that Peru lacked “a predominant character”, “an incisive national feature” since a “large ethnographic gallery” characterized the country, which led to a “dissimilar miscegenation”: “from the pure Caucasian, to the retint Black, to the shred Asian and to the fallen Quechua” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 94). It is rather frequent to refer to race as the determining factor of the behavior of a people – in the case of neighboring countries, miscegenation and the lack of a single national trait could lead to disturbances and to a natural propensity to conflict.

Even when he argued against a possible conflict with Peru in the dispute for border territories, as he did in the article “Contra os Caucheiros”, Euclides used geographical and climatic theses. The physical traits of the region, permeated by an “inextricable maze of streams,” hampered the movement of regular troops. The climate, in turn, imposed on the soldiers a “difficult and painful” task. Thus, the defense of the Brazilian interests in the region was mainly a responsibility of the Brazilians who lived there: the “fearless peasants of the Northern States” (CUNHA, 1975, pp. 100-101). In the article “Entre o Madeira e o Javari”, Euclides referred to such ideas as “vital competition between the peoples” – an expression that was repeated in other texts – and to the “natural selection of the fittest” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 105).

Euclides’s contact with reality modified many of his initial perspectives. For this reason, his writings about the Amazon and the problems of the Brazilian border are specially complex, since *a priori* perspectives – highlighted by the use of concepts absorbed from the European thought and by readings he made before he travelled – and the *in loco* testimony of what was going on in the region coexisted side by side.

Although he was anxious to start his works, Euclides only travelled to Manaus in December 1904, four months after his appointment. In this capital, he came across various logistical problems, which led to successive delays in the departure of the expedition to navigate the Purus. Starting his journey in April 1905, the members of the Committee navigated the entire river, reaching its headwaters, and returned to Manaus in October of the same year. Euclides described a negative scenario of the support that the Committee received, mentioning, in a letter to José Veríssimo, that even the English Explorer William Chandless had been provided better conditions to carry out his work, whereas “we, Brazilians, with an official Commission, found indescribable obstacles” (GALVÃO; GALOTTI, 1997, p. 261-262).

The final report of the Recognition Committee was published in 1906 and the subhead was “Additional Notes by the Brazilian Commissioner”. Euclides commented, with more details, his impressions about the Amazon and as to the border problems with Peru. He criticized the delay in receiving instructions and discussed the Peruvian *caucheiros* – who explore a natural rubber (*caucho*), a non-renewable gum that imposes nomadism on its collectors – and the Brazilian rubber tappers, who are settled exploring the latex. The reference to those characteristics proved to be important to confirm the Brazilian claim over the territory of Acre: due to the nomadism of the *caucheiros*, it was difficult for Peru to prove the actual occupation of the disputed territory.

The negotiations of the Treaty of Limits with the neighboring country lasted for five years and it was only signed in 1909, less than a month after the death of Euclides. Due to the Brazilian persistence, the deal consecrated once again *uti possidetis de facto* as a principle for the definition of the bilateral borders. The work of the Joint Committee that navigated by the Purus River was the skeleton for the negotiation and identification of the border strip.

With regards to the region in dispute, 403,000 square kilometers were granted to Brazil and approximately 39,000 to Peru (LINS, 1996, p. 421). Some people consider that negotiation as a “huge victory” for Brazil, since it thwarted Peruvian aspirations to embody Acre and enforce the Treaty of San Ildefonso that could, in practice, redraw all the regional borders (CUETO; LERNER, 2012, p. 58).

It is important to emphasize that the report that Euclides produced after the exploration of the Purus went beyond the matter of the borderline itself. The writer seized the opportunity to report what he considered as “abandonment” of the Amazon and its people. His feeling that the virtual neglect of the region could go on representing a threat to Brazilian interests prevailed in the text. He even said that, without an actual occupation of the region, “the Amazon, sooner or later, will be naturally and irresistibly detached from Brazil” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 106). Arguments in that regard also were eventually developed in his book *À Margem da História*, a collection of sparse studies that was completed shortly before he died in 1909.

Taking as his motto the possibility of conflict between Brazil and Peru, in other articles Euclides advocated once again that the difficulties Brazil faced with the neighboring Republics resulted from a series of racial and geographical factors. In “Solidariedade Sul-Americana”, also published in the volume *Contrastes e Confrontos*, he insisted on evolutionist theses in order to explain the geopolitical scenery of the early twentieth century. In his opinion, the emperor figure enabled, until 1889, to distinguish Brazil from the “revolutionary and dispersive activity” that were characteristic of other South American countries. The change in the political system, however, harmfully equated Brazil, from a foreign perspective, to the clutter of Hispanic countries. He assessed that it would prevail, “in the South American people”,

a “reversed natural selection: the survival of the least fit, the retrograde evolution of the crippled, the total extinction regarding the fine qualities of character [...] and the rowdy victory of the weak over the misunderstood strong” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 108).

Euclides also emphasized the suspicions that neighboring countries nurtured regarding Brazil, despite Rio Branco’s efforts to maintain good relations and to solve occasional border conflicts exclusively by diplomatic means. Also in “Solidariedade Sul-Americana”, he considered that the Treaty of Petrópolis was the best certification of “the higher irradiation of our spirit” – in the sense that, even though Brazil already occupied *de facto* but not *de jure* the territory of Acre, it was willing to provide financial compensation to Bolivia – and drew attention to the Brazilian government’s efforts to avoid an armed conflict with Peru, which demonstrated interest in sacrificing “transient interests” in order to continue “ahead of the South American nations as the strongest, the most liberal and the most peaceful” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 109). The conclusion of the article was clearly pessimistic. In view of the neighboring countries’ misunderstanding with respect to Brazilian interest in maintaining good coexistence, we should accept, if necessary, “the fight with which we are threatened”. He ends by asserting that the South American solidarity – supposedly based on sharing the same political system and the interest in protecting itself from the “formidable competition from other people” – was nothing more than an “unachievable ideal”, with the single effect of keeping us tied to the traditional disorders of two or three hopelessly lost people” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 110).

### **b) Peru versus Bolivia**

Once his work as the head of the Brazilian Committee for the Recognition of the Purus River was concluded, Euclides returned to Rio de Janeiro in January 1906 and had no clear role in the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During this period, he worked as a cartographer and considered, as previously observed, being appointed for the team that would oversee the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré Railroad. The invitation to the post of controller of the construction was actually made, but Euclides later declined it due to objection from his family, mainly from his father. The possibility of eventually integrating the Committee of Borders with Venezuela did not come true either (VENTURA, 2003, p. 245).

It was in that context that Euclides published the book *Peru versus Bolivia*. The Baron of Rio Branco possibly requested the work's development which focuses on the border dispute between both neighbors. It was feared at the time that the dispute would affect Brazilian interests, especially the rights on the recently added territory of Acre. Peru wished to restore the boundaries that the Treaty of San Ildefonso had set in 1777, demanding that the border with Bolivia be determined by the midline between the Madeira and the Javari Rivers. Documents that referred to the Spanish colonization backed its claim. The President of Argentina arbitrated the process.

In the book, Euclides presented arguments in favor of the Bolivian expectation, since a Peruvian victory could lead to the rejection of the Treaty of Petrópolis. Not by chance, the Bolivian representative at the Court of Arbitration, Eleodoro Villazón, quickly translated the book into Spanish. In legal terms, Euclides pointed out that Peru could not invoke, to its benefit, texts that it had rejected by the time of its independence. Therefore, the Royal ballots and ordinances were "null and void, and often contradictory" (CUNHA, 1995, p. 811). Besides, the Treaty of San Ildefonso would only be an agreement prior to a Treaty of Limits between Portugal and Spain, which was never made since only



Portugal appointed members of the bilateral Commission for its negotiation.

Euclides emphasized that both Peru and Bolivia had concluded limit agreements with Brazil throughout the nineteenth century – in 1851 and 1867, respectively – in which the boundaries determined by the Treaty of San Ildefonso were not considered. The invocation of the Treaty in the early twentieth century represented a “somersault of a hundred years, which blatantly violated all historical continuity” (CUNHA, 1995, p. 811). The supposedly contradictory position of Peru – to use, as an independent country, documents from the colonial period – made Euclides nickname the country “the dreamy Republic of the Pacific” (CUNHA, 1995, p. 814).

The writer uses, once again, racial arguments to explain the differences between the South American Spanish and Portuguese colonization. The borders originally established in the Treaty of Tordesillas and the Treaty of Madrid were overcome by the trailblazer spirit of the Brazilian *bandeirantes*, while Spanish legislation “enclosed the colonists within the impassable circle of the districts”. For that reason, the Portuguese territorial expansion in South America configured the “triumph of one race over another” (CUNHA, 1995, p. 815-816).

When he analyzed specifically the boundaries between Peru and Bolivia, Euclides used historical documents and maps to support that already at the period of the Viceroyalty, the audience of Charcas – later Bolivia – occupied the territory that corresponded to Acre. Therefore, there was no reason to challenge the validity of the Treaty of Petrópolis. The separation between Bolivia and Peru was also supposedly dictated by two other factors: a geographical one, since the Andes established a natural boundary between both nations, and a geopolitical one, since the

creation of the audience of Charcas was a strategy of the Spanish Crown to meet the Portuguese expansion. Charcas even started to enjoy greater autonomy in relation to Lima and Buenos Aires – capitals of the viceroyalties of Peru and Plata, respectively. Thus, although Bolivia had not occupied *de facto* the territory of Acre, it would have the right of possession over the region, not Peru.

The arbitral decision of the President of Argentina Figueroa Alcorta was disclosed in July 1909 and it determined the division of the area in dispute between Peru and Bolivia. Although it partially upheld the Peruvian claims, the award did not harm Brazil at all.

The publication of *Peru versus Bolivia* eventually engaged Euclides in a controversy with the Foreign Minister of Argentina, Ernesto Zeballos, who saw Brazil as a rival country and openly advocated the Argentinean military strengthening, especially in the Navy. Besides, he was the director of the daily *La Prensa*, which was notorious for its anti-Brazilian stance (BUENO, 2003, p. 254). Zeballos was the Minister of Foreign Affairs between 1906 and 1908, and soon after he left Office, he disclosed an alleged telegram from Rio Branco to the diplomatic representations of Brazil in Montevideo, Lima, La Paz, Santiago and Washington, with instructions for them to carry out a campaign against Argentina. The allegations turned out to be false after the disclosure, in Brazil, of the original content of the dossier. Then, Zeballos claimed that he had obtained from Euclides – with whom he corresponded – “secret information” regarding Brazilian foreign policy. He even emphasized that he had received a copy of *Peru versus Bolivia*, which he saw as interference from Brazil on the possible decision to be made by the Argentine representative.

Euclides ordered that both letters he had received from Zeballos were published and he challenged the Argentinean interlocutor to do the same. The correspondences disclosed only

praise to the works *Os Sertões* and *Castro Alves e Seu Tempo* and do not even mention *Peru versus Bolivia*, although Euclides had actually sent him the book. In a letter to Zeballos, the Brazilian writer claimed to be surprised to see “our exclusively intellectual relations involved in the solitary campaign you are fighting with imaginary antagonists”(GALVÃO; GALOTTI, 1995, p. 387). Zeballos did not publish the correspondence he received from Euclides and merely sent a telegram regretting the “nuisance”. *Jornal do Commercio* emphasized that it was the only one in charge of paying, without any order from Rio Branco, for the printing of *Peru versus Bolivia* (TOCANTINS, 1968, p. 231).

As was previously highlighted, Euclides’s dissatisfaction with his work at Itamaraty characterized the period between 1906 and 1909. Still without a stable position and mainly playing the role of cartographer, his personal correspondence revealed constant frustration with his professional life and the desire to seek new positions outside Itamaraty. In a letter to his brother-in-law, he pointed out that he would not leave his job because the Baron treated him “cordially, and I do not take heart to mention to him that position’s inconvenience and also to demonstrate instability or lack of persistence”(GALVÃO; GALOTTI, 1997, p. 393-394).

Besides having worked on the definition of the borders with Peru and having published the book about the dispute between that country and Bolivia, Euclides also collaborated in the elaboration of the Treaty of Limits with Uruguay, shortly before he died in 1909. In this case his cartographic knowledge was important to provide support to Rio Branco’s goal to revisit, voluntarily, the border with the neighboring country. In the agreement, Brazil relented to Uruguay part of the *Mirim* Lake and of the *Jaguarão* River, under the condition that only vessels of both countries would sail in those waters and that none of the parties would militarize the region (ARINOS FILHO, 2009, p. 38-39; LINS, 1996, p. 427).

### c) The interimperialist dispute in South America

Euclides' pessimistic view of the ideal of South American fraternity helps us to understand better his analysis of the interimperialist dispute waged between the United States and Germany to increase their influence on the continent. In accordance with Rio Branco's policy, Brazil sought a closer relationship with the United States, in such a way as to ensure, pragmatically, its interests in South America. Euclides saw the greed of foreign powers over territories in the region because of the natural countries' industrial expansion in the Northern Hemisphere. In the article "Temores Vãos", he alludes to a supposed "collective stalking mania" which characterized South American nations, based on "fearing what is abroad" and the specters "of the German and the Yankee dangers". Beyond that, he states that the goal of North American imperialism was not the control of territories or the "crushing of weak nationalities", representing only the "irresistible course of an unparalleled industrial movement" and the

*extremely natural expansion of a country in which an enlightened individualism, overcoming the official initiative ... allowed the disencumbered unfolding of all the energies guaranteed by an unrivalled practicality, a broad sense of justice and even by a wonderful idealization of the highest targets of existence (CUNHA, 1975, p. 116).*

That point of view is a direct corollary of Euclides da Cunha's concern with the affirmation of the Brazilian nationality and with what he considered lack of foresight of the economic elite and of the ruling class with the promotion of development. It does not embody what at first glance might seem an uncritical admiration of the achievements of foreign powers, but what it understands as being the verification of an unquestionable factual reality:

that certain countries advance “in a triumphant and civilizing manner towards the future”, while the South American nations struggle to stabilize themselves in political terms and to advance in economic terms. Faithful to the hyperbolic style present in several periods of his work, he dealt ironically with the danger represented by imperialism to attack what, in his opinion, is the only “real” danger: the “Brazilian” one, characterized by the “loosening in the entire line of moral oversight”, by an “economic situation inexplicably dejected and tumbled over the largest and most fertile natural resources” and by the “breakdowns of the old virtues of work and perseverance”. He also assessed that part of the Brazilian crisis is due to the new political system and the “misunderstood federalism” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 119).

A similar consideration is present in the article “American Ideals”, which deals with the book of the same title, by the U.S. President at the time, Theodore Roosevelt. Although he considered the author a “mediocre stylist” and a pure “systematization of truisms”, he emphasized that the book “tells us everything that is useful”. While the South American Republics fear the imperialism of the Northern power, Roosevelt draws attention, instead, to the danger that the “South American anarchy” represents. Euclides makes it clear that he agrees with the criticism of the American ruler to the “depressing and dispersive localism” that characterized the federal system. Roosevelt’s reprimands to the disorder of the South American Republics made the book required reading for the Brazilian public servers, representing a warning. After all, the “absorption of Morocco or Egypt, or of any other incompetent race, is first and foremost a natural phenomenon” or “Darwinism roughly applied to the life of the nations” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 115).

In two other articles - “O Kaiser” and “A Arcádia da Alemanha” - Euclides discusses the German imperialism. In both texts, he is more critical than in the appreciation of American imperialism.

He claims that Germany “woke up late to the colonizing expansion”. Its “robust industrialism” imposed territorial expansion as a “living condition”. However, whereas the “best bits” were already in other hands, it devoted itself to “plunder the last remains of the fortune of the weak countries” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 36). In “Arcádia da Alemanha”, when he talked about the alleged plan of the European country to conquer Southern Brazil, he warned that “Germany cannot comply, so early, with such a large enterprise”. In addition to the intrinsic difficulties to the competition with other powers, the South American countries could rely on the protection offered by the Roosevelt corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, according to which the United States should play the role of “continental police”, with the purpose of ensuring that the countries of the American continent remained under its exclusive orbit of influence. The Roosevelt corollary, in addition to being a “political echo of the strictly commercial interests of the United States”, would have the effect of providing the South American countries “a long truce” from the greed of European countries. Even if the supposed conquest of territories in Southern Brazil actually took place, which at that period seemed unlikely, Euclides warned that the threat would last while Brazil limited itself to “behold ... our virgin coal fields, our iron mountains, our ranges of quartzite, our coastlines made golden by monazite sands and the stupendous channeled flood of our rivers...” (CUNHA, 1975, p. 40).

The analysis that Euclides made of the imperialist action had, as it can be observed, a realistic basis. The foreign greed did not necessarily represent a real danger at the time: the United States had no ambition to conquer territories in South America, but rather to exercise the role of gendarme; the Germans, who were late to enter the colonialist race, were unable to take on a more aggressive policy on the continent, due to the role played by the Roosevelt corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. Anyway, our

vulnerability resulted from what he called the “Brazilian danger”, characterized by political disorganization, the lack of economic planning and our “old metaphysical nonsense”. In that and in other respects Euclides’ thought is shown in full accordance with Rio Branco’s policy to establish strategic alliance with the United States (SEVCENKO, 1999, p. 142), especially with the purpose of ensuring the region’s stability, avoiding the greed of European countries and strengthening the Brazilian position in relation to occasional problems with neighboring countries.

#### **d) Physical integration in South America, the Plate River Basin and the Pacific**

In addition to the articles included in *Contrastes e Confrontos* and the book *Peru versus Bolívia*, Euclides da Cunha also dealt with international issues in three studies published in the posthumous *À Margem da História*. The first of them – *Viação Sul-Americana* – bore special relevance by proposing greater physical integration between South American countries. Unlike what we can infer from the pessimistic view that he had of the political association between Brazil and neighbor Republics, in that article Euclides proves to be favorable of the establishment of railroads to intensify the trade among the countries of the region and with the rest of the world.

For Euclides, the fact that Argentina had, in 1902, a more extensive railway network than Brazil confirmed “our economic subordinateness”. In his opinion, the Argentinean advance was a direct result obtained from the railways; the Brazilian situation led to the opposite phenomenon: “our railways are a result obtained, first of all, from our progress” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 115-116). In his effort to explain such a reality, once again he reaches for racial arguments. The Brazilian situation: the conquest of the territory that lies beyond the coastline depended on a specific type of man

– the bandeirante –, whereas in Argentina it was not necessary the “adapted races”, since the occupants of its territory changed hemisphere “without changing latitudes”. It was the “European culture stretching along the sea level” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 117).

Next, Euclides alludes to the opening of the first railway between two South American countries, La Quiaca, in Bolivia, and Buenos Aires. The rail allowed for a trip from Buenos Aires to Bolivia in two and a half days. As a result, he predicted that the Bolivian economy would fall “into the overwhelming orbit of the country that provides it with such relief” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 120). In addition, the connection between Bolivia and Argentina was to be the initial step towards a broader railway connection in South America, which could allow, in a few years, a trip from Lima to Buenos Aires in three days. Buenos Aires would become a “Spanish-American capital”, which could even facilitate the possible establishment of a political confederation involving Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. The most tangible threat to the interests of Argentina was the creation of the Panama Canal, since a significant part of the trade movement could shift to the North.

As a way to suppress what he envisioned as being a sort of Argentinean “railway imperialism”, Euclides then proposed the construction of the “Brazilian Northwest” railway, which would connect São Paulo to Bolivia. Starting from Santos, the railroad would cross Mato Grosso and Santa Cruz de la Sierra. From there, it could connect with the Argentinean and the Chilean railway network. The Brazilian railroad could make the Santos harbor the “native port of Bolivia”, since it was closer to Europe than the Buenos Aires one. Besides, it offered Brazil a connection to the Pacific (CUNHA, 2005, p. 135).



In the article “Martín García”, Euclides addressed the dispute between Argentina and Uruguay for the jurisdiction over the Plata region. As we have already noticed, the writer knew the geography of the area quite well, having worked for Itamaraty in the drafting of the Treaty of Limits between Brazil and Uruguay. The writer defended the shared jurisdiction of the Plate River Basin, challenging the Argentinean claims to stop the Brazilian control over the river. The excuse to analyze the issue was the review that he made of the book “Martín García y la Jurisdicción del Plata”, by Agustín de Vedia. Euclides began his analysis by dealing with the Island “Martín García” ownership issue, which was for a long time considered to have strategic importance for navigation in that region. The tiny island had even been claimed by Brazil in negotiations on the Cisplatine Province *status* carried out in the 1820s, in Rio de Janeiro. In Euclides’ narrative, Argentina – in order to keep governing Martín García – had resigned at that time to continue pleading to Brazil the addition of Uruguay. It was what he assessed as being “political color blindness” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 147). In addition, he believed that the ownership of the island would gradually lose its importance since the territory would tend to naturally “drown in the water”, disappearing in a few years.

The real dilemma that Argentina e Uruguay had to solve was the jurisdiction over the Plate River. Euclides saw Argentina’s ambition of exclusive domination of the area’s navigation as a “belated chimera” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 158); not only for its refusal to submit the dispute to arbitration, but also for contrasting with the previous stance of the Argentinean government itself – which in the mid-nineteenth century indicated as the dividing line of the river the halfway point of its current. Euclides invoked the “crepuscular government” of Juan Manuel Rosas, according to whom Argentina could not “*alegarse titulo alguno, siendo comunes*

*las águas*” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 159), and several documents and statements by Argentinean authorities – all of which were described by Agustín de Vedia in “extraordinary pages” – recognizing the Uruguayan jurisdiction over the waters of the Plate River. Quoting Domingos Sarmiento – to whom he referred as a “South American glory” –, Euclides referred to the need for all the countries of the area to make an agreement concerning the use of common waters. In the case of the Plate River that shared jurisdiction was always “a ground rule” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 161).

In the last article about international themes included in *À Margem da História* – “O Primado do Pacífico” – Euclides da Cunha discusses, regarding what might have been his most comprehensive analysis of the international geopolitics, about the growing role of Asia in the global economy. That phenomenon led the United States to shift towards the Pacific the “best of its national energies” since the East offered the best trade potential. That explained its “unique expansionism”, since the Asian countries were not only a source of stocks, but also a broad consumer market for manufactured products. The building of the Panama Canal was inserted in this logic of penetration in the East. The goal of the United States – that Euclides exemplifies with the Philippines situation, confirming the same viewpoint he had of the country’s “imperialism” in South America – was not colonization (in the sense of territories conquest) or tutelage, but that of “mercantile primacy”, to create bases that ensured the achievement of its commercial interests. The growing American influence could, however, generate conflicts, “an encounter between two worlds”. Euclides speculated what could occur in the East as a “clash between both opposing races [...], the initial struggle between the United States and Japan” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 170). The several islands in the South Pacific would be the setting for that clash, for which the Japanese “rejuvenation” contributed. The fact that the

American future depended on its “full hegemony” in the Pacific would eventually lead to a conflict that “no political or diplomatic arrangements, would be able to halt” (CUNHA, 2005, p. 173).

The three articles from *À Margem da História* have different natures, but confirm Euclides’ clear interest of Euclides in foreign policy. None of them was directly related to his work at the Brazilian Chancellery nor do they constitute an organic set of texts. They echo, however, several of the concerns that have marked Euclides’ considerations about international themes, including the physical integration of the continent, the rivalry with Argentina and the rise of the United States. *Viação Sul-Americana* had a constructive character and, as it was natural for an engineer, it presented objective suggestions for the establishment of a railway network connecting Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay and Argentina, under the excuse of avoiding the increasing dependence of neighboring countries on the Buenos Aires’ marina. It is worth mentioning that in the same book Euclides stood up for a proposal of similar integration in the Northern region, represented by the construction of a railroad between Brazil and Peru – the *Transacreana*. *Martín García*, in turn, defends the Uruguayan interests in the shared jurisdiction of the Plate Basin, challenging the Argentinean claim to dominate the area itself. In both cases, the fear is clear – in a consideration regarding the Brazilian government’s own concern – with respect to the rise of Argentina and its increasing ability to influence neighboring countries. In the article *O Primado do Pacífico*, in turn, Euclides reaches again for the analysis of the imperialist phenomenon and of American industrialism, a theme that he had already addressed, in shorter articles, in the book *Contrastes e Confrontos*, particularly focusing on its impact in South America.

## EUCLIDES' CONTRIBUTION TO BRAZILIAN DIPLOMATIC THOUGHT

Euclides worked for Itamaraty late in his life, from 1904 to 1909, but he was never appointed to a permanent position and his main focus was never the major international policy issues. Those issues are present in his work to the extent that they affect, either directly or indirectly, his considerations about the affirmation of Brazilian nationality, but they are not – perhaps except for the book *Peru versus Bolívia* – an autonomous *corpus* within his work. The primary motivation of the beginning of his collaboration with Rio Branco was the desire to travel to the Amazon and to write about the region. Therefore, international policy permeates his work with the development of his considerations on what he saw as the two main threats to Brazilian sovereignty: the mistrust of neighboring countries and the interimperialist dispute in South America.

Despite that subsidiary character in his intellectual production, the texts by Euclides on the foreign policy of the First Republic contain original formulations for the time and articulate a strategic view of what the presence of Brazil should represent in the South American scenery. Among his concerns was the need for effective measures to integrate the Amazon to Brazil and to promote economic development. That would be the only way to counteract the greed of foreign powers in territories and markets in South America. His pessimistic view regarding greater political approach among the South American countries was tempered by the defense of greater physical and economic integration, such as was originally articulated in his article *Viação Sul-Americana*, in which he called for the establishment of a railway network that would connect marinas on the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Euclides analyzed diverse international phenomena from the point of view of factors such as climate, geography and race, as a consequence of his intellectual training in the field of the natural and exact sciences. Therefore, we must place his work at the time when it was written – in which the definition of the Brazilian identity, including the issue of race, was a pending theme and, furthermore, take into account the unique and problematic interaction that exists, in his thought, between literature and science. In his position in the Brazilian Chancellery, Euclides was both an observer and a commentator, from a privileged position, of the international events of the first decade of the twentieth century, leaving as his legacy a series of texts that, in spite of his lack of organicity, reflect the main concerns of the Brazilian State at the time. Such concerns were the defense of sovereignty, the preservation of Brazilian territorial integrity through the negotiated settlement of border disputes and the articulation of a realistic and pragmatic view of the international scene of the time, marked by the demarcation of borders and the search for a strategic alliance with the United States. In the articulation of those ideas, he proved to be a faithful defender of Rio Branco's policy and of one of the Brazilian intellectuals that best represented the dilemma that was common to the "intelligentsia" of that time: to serve the State, seeking at the same time to maintain independence and consistency of thought.

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**MANOEL DE OLIVEIRA  
LIMA**

Manoel de Oliveira Lima was born in Recife, on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1867, the son of a Portuguese merchant. When he was 6 years old he moved with his family to Lisbon, where he studied at a school of French Lazarists and graduated at the College of Language and Literature. The Portuguese scholars of the late nineteenth century influenced him and from a very young age, he began his journalistic activity and historiographical research. He returned to the home country for the first time in 1890, when he entered the diplomatic service as Attaché of the Legation in Lisbon. He served as Secretary of the Legation in Berlin, Washington and London, between 1891 and 1900, a period in which he consolidated his trajectory within the Brazilian scholarly environment, becoming correspondent-partner of the Historical and Geographical Institute and a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. He was the head of Legation in Tokyo, between 1901 and 1902, being removed

towards the end of this period to Lima, a post he never actually assumed, remaining in informal availability in Rio de Janeiro, between 1903 and 1904, when he started a public conflict with Rio Branco. He was transferred to Caracas and Brussels cumulatively with Stockholm, between 1904 and 1913, when he also retired from diplomatic service. He lived in London for a while and, between 1916 and 1920, he lived in Pernambuco. Also in 1920, he permanently moved to Washington, after completing negotiations with the Catholic University of America for the transfer and shelter of his monumental library. He died on March 24, 1928.

## MANOEL DE OLIVEIRA LIMA: THE REFORM OF DIPLOMATIC SERVICE

*Helder Gordim da Silveira*

In Oliveira Lima, what can be called diplomatic thought is just one of the expressions of broad intellectual production with multiple faces. The face of historian, diplomat, journalist, professor, collector, traveler, without being able to say that one is clearly superior to the other, always appears in the “singular and plural” Pernambuco, at the same time Brazilian, American, and European, both in his influences and in his placements.

It is hard to lean, even though on a very limited way, on any aspect of this work and of the individual figure of Oliveira Lima without evoking the image of the “fat Don Quixote”, consecrated by his friend and, in some senses, disciple, Gilberto Freyre. It is the sociologist from Recife who claims that his fellow countryman

*as an individual, was different from his fellow citizens and his generation's companions. [...] Sometimes, he was a foreign body among them: a huge foreign body..., singular, almost unique, in certain aspects of a personality that,*

*however, asserted itself in various and even contradictory activities (FREYRE, 1968, p. 37).*

He courted controversy and accumulated frictions and enemies in various spheres of his political and intellectual activity throughout his life and even after his death. As a diplomat, he lived almost half of his career “in the shadow” of the great Baron of Rio Branco (ALMEIDA, 2009, p. 97), who was perhaps the most important of the windmills of the Don Quixote of Parnamirim.

Therefore, when it comes to Oliveira Lima, it is especially difficult to notice the dimension and the limits of the diplomat’s thoughts regarding what he considered a necessary reform in the structure and the functioning of the Ministry, as well as in the primary sense of Brazilian foreign policy. Thus, we must consider these independently from his trajectory and his positions – both contradictory and controversial – in the political and cultural spheres in which he operated and located himself. Thus, based on his classical (FREYRE, 1968; GOUVÊA, 1976; LIMA SOBRINHO, 1971) and contemporary (FORSTER, 2011; MALATIAN, 2001) biographers and commentators, we shall propose, without any ambition to innovate, an assessment of his views on the reform in Itamaraty necessarily as part of a broader and unique *diplomatic thought* in his generation.

## THE BOY FROM PERNAMBUCO AND THE EUROPEAN MAN

Manoel de Oliveira Lima was the youngest son of Luiz de Oliveira Lima – a native of the city of Porto and a successful merchant living in Recife since 1834 – and of Maria Benedita de Miranda Lima – a descendant from a traditional family from Pernambuco tied to the large sugar estate, an economic sector in clear decadence in the late nineteenth century. In 1873, Manoel,

who was 6 years old at the time, moved with his parents to Lisbon, where the Porto merchant of Recife, also for health reasons, intended to take advantage of the solid and well renowned fortune that had accumulated in Brazil. The older brother, Luiz, and both sisters, Amália and Maria Benedita remained in Pernambuco. The latter, nicknamed *Sinhá*, the closest to Manoel, married the diplomat Pedro de Araújo Beltrão, who rendered service first in London, as Secretary of Legation, and was an important contact for Oliveira Lima's career.

When the Republic was proclaimed in Brazil, Oliveira Lima, who soon after that became an acclaimed historian within the Brazilian scholarly environment, being 22 years old at the time, was rendering extraordinary service in the Brazilian Legation in Lisbon, where he had been in attendance since he was an adolescent. At the time, the young Luso-Brazilian scholar professed vigorous sympathy for the Republican ideals, seasoned with some influence by Comte – which, apart from that, was neither profound nor lasting – coming from some of his professors at the College of Language and Literature of Lisbon where he had graduated, after he went to Elementary School at the school of the French Lazarist priests. Since then he started to provide information to the Provisional government about the political and journalistic reception of the young Republic in Portugal and in Europe and he organized a campaign to respond to attacks suffered by the new Brazilian system, made especially by the Portuguese monarchist press.

Having been a devoted student and loving the books since his adolescence – for which, according to him, his father's influence was decisive, with a refined autodidactic training, despite the intensive lifelong devotion to the commercial activity –, Oliveira Lima met important figures of the Portuguese scholarly environment of the end of the century, receiving from them the most striking

influences, particularly within the College of Language and Literature, such as Jaime Moniz, Adolfo Coelho, Vasconcelos Abreu, Pinheiro Chagas, Teófilo Braga and those from previous generations, such as Alexandre Herculano. He had begun early in the journalism of the time, in the editorial office of *O Repórter*, where he had contact with Oliveira Martins. Since he was 15 years old he edited the *Correio do Brasil*, a vehicle through which he expressed his intellectual interest for his homeland and his affective link with Pernambuco, surely nourished by the domestic environment in Lisbon – the Lima household was a meeting and reception place of Brazilians in Portugal and the parents preserved daily habits that kept alive the memories of his childhood in Recife. Throughout his youth, Manoel de Oliveira Lima also maintained a rich and permanent collaboration in the *Jornal do Recife*, in which he published impressions of holiday trips to European cities, especially London, which was always his favorite, and Paris, as well as analyses of the European political panorama, particularly of cultural events in the Old World and, occasionally, Brazilian domestic issues in these spheres. The trips he made as a young man and the frequency in the Legation in Lisbon were also marked by contacts with important Brazilian scholars and diplomats, in which stood out, at that stage, Eduardo Prado, of whom he came to know well and grew close to, Carvalho Borges and the Baron of Penedo, to whose residence he often went during his trips to London.

In 1890, the year his father died, he returned to Brazil for the first time in order to negotiate his definitive appointment to the diplomatic service, a yearning nourished for a long time and now strongly anchored in his Republican profession of faith, in the recent actions in defense of the new regime from the Legation in Lisbon, as well as in the contacts indicated by his diplomat brother-in-law Araújo Beltrão and by other family friends somehow

integrated with the newly installed regime. He went personally to Rio de Janeiro to implement the necessary procedures for the desired appointment, obtaining decisive interviews with President Deodoro, Vice-President Floriano and Foreign Minister Quintino Bocaiúva. About these meetings with the leaders of the infant Republic, Oliveira Lima said in his Memoirs:

*Deodoro liked to sit in a large rocking chair in the dining room of the old Itamaraty before the décor was Italianized by commander Betti, and he liked to say what he had to say loud and clear for all to hear coram populo which was not the case with Floriano, this clearly shows their different tempers (apud GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 172).*

About Floriano, to whom he was introduced by Marshal Pires Ferreira, he said that he “was very gentle to me: he spoke of my *services to the Republic*, and Quintino Bocaiúva also referred to them when I visited him in his cabin of Cupertino”. Oliveira Lima had been introduced to the Minister – a decisive contact for the appointment – by the Count of São Salvador of Matosinhos, a friend of the family and owner of the newspaper *O Paiz*, which at the time was strongly linked to the interests of the Portuguese colony in Rio. About those *demarches* to his appointment, Oliveira Lima, recalled then:

*the fact was that I had won my spurs of knight of the Republic and when later, in the face of the outrages of this lady, said aloud what many said softly, namely, that the monarchy was better, Pinheiro Machado, who was as intransigent as Robespierre, but was not incorruptible as him, referred to me as our companion who abandoned us (apud GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 173. Emphasis in the original).*

Thus, on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1890, the Act of Appointment of Oliveira Lima to the position of First-Class Attaché of the Brazilian

Legation in Lisbon was signed, at the time headed by José Coelho Gomes. Before returning to Europe to take on the position to which he aspired since he was an adolescent, Oliveira Lima spent a season in his hometown, where he met Flora Cavalcanti de Albuquerque, the daughter of traditional families linked to the large sugar estate, such as her mother, whom at 27 years old, was a teacher at a private school in Recife – something non-standard for girls of her social background – owned by the former governess of her father’s house, the English lady, Mrs. Rawllinson, who at the time was her close friend and with whom she had learned, in addition to the habits of social behavior in her early childhood, a solid English accent which she carried for her entire life. The practicing Catholic Flora confessed, many years later, to the family friend and fellow citizen Gilberto Freyre, that she only knew how to pray in English (FREYRE, 1944, p. 82). The author of *Casa Grande & Senzala* mentioned that D. Flora “was almost born and raised to be an Ambassadors ... Her air, her manners, her elegance of a somewhat English aristocrat – that, however, did not hinder her sweetness as a Brazilian – were the manners and the elegance of an Ambassadors”, and that “it is impossible to imagine Oliveira Lima without the collaboration of Dona Flora, whom he considered as being more than precious: it was essential. She completed Don Quixote” (FREYRE, 1944, p. 82-83). Sometime later, in October 1891, Manoel, who was in Europe, married by proxy with Flora, who was his wife and close partner for life, of active female personality (MALATIAN, 2004), of her many intellectual, political and diplomatic activities – and battles.



## THE EXPERIENCES THAT FORMED A UNIQUE DIPLOMATIC THOUGHT

As a diplomat in Lisbon, Oliveira Lima consolidated his already very solid circle of relationships within the Portuguese scholarly and journalistic environment and increased his contacts with many Brazilian scholars, besides diversifying his collaboration with several important journals in the country, both in Recife and in Rio de Janeiro. However, the hostility of the diplomatic environment of the Portuguese monarchy with the new Brazilian regime, associated with the confrontation of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by the Count of Valbom, in which his brother-in-law, Araújo Beltrão – who had been appointed Plenipotentiary Prime Minister of the Republic in Lisbon – was involved, determined his transfer, already promoted to Second Secretary, to Berlin, in April, 1892.

Having taken on the new post, which was headed by the Baron of Itajubá, in June of that year, Oliveira Lima remained in the capital of the German Empire until 1895, during which the diplomat-historian projected himself in a definitive manner among the Brazilian scholars. A milestone in that trajectory was the publication, in 1894, of his first book, *Pernambuco – Seu Desenvolvimento Histórico*, in Leipzig. The work, which showed the strong influence of the masters of German historiography, of which the author was aware of since the days of the College of Language and Literature, received unanimous praises amongst Brazilian scholars, among which the positive assessments of Capistrano de Abreu and José Veríssimo stood out.

In July 1895, before being transferred to Washington with a new functional promotion, Oliveira Lima enjoyed some time off in the State of Pernambuco. Back on Earth, as always, he renewed and narrowed contacts among scholars and politicians, even

rejecting an invitation made by the governor at the time, Barbosa Lima, of whom he had become a friend and a correspondent, to be a candidate as a federal representative for the ruling party. About the episode, the diplomat-historian recalled many years later:

*in 1895, I resisted the political temptation that more or less everyone nourishes [...] and I preferred to stay in the diplomatic career, to which contributed the benevolent reception that Carlos Carvalho gave me in Rio, certainly the most competent Minister of Foreign Affairs of the new regime, even better than Rio Branco, if not in the services actually rendered as far as the delimitation of the country was concerned, at least in perseverance, the endured and ongoing diligence rendered to the matters of his Ministry, in the method of work that he was able to instill in his staff dependent on his action, the legal skill to deal with international problems without losing sight of the political character (apud GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 259).*

More than the compliment to Carlos Carvalho, this passage of *Memórias* somehow explains the kind of criticism that Oliveira Lima made about Rio Branco, beyond the personal and functional issues that led to the deterioration of their relationship. In the late nineteenth century, the diplomat from Pernambuco seemed to already have sedimented a modern and modernizing idea of diplomacy and of the diplomatic service – in an era of clashing imperialist systems and colonial expansion – grounded on the systematic and professional promotion of trade and on the equally ongoing scientific and cultural dissemination of the country – for which the German influence and the professional presence at the capital of the German Empire, which was in full splendor at the time, were decisive in many respects, including in terms of the philosophical bases of his thought.

Promoted to first Secretary in the beginning of 1896, Oliveira Lima was transferred to the Legation in Washington, which at the time was headed by Salvador de Mendonça, a historical Republican who developed solid ties of friendship and of moral and intellectual admiration, otherwise reciprocal, which remained until he died. Américo Jacobina Lacombe even said that such admiration was “almost religious” and the fact that Salvador de Mendonça had been transferred to the diplomatic staff only in 1889 – for the urgent need of the novel Republic to change the representation in Washington because of the I Interamerican Congress that was being held there –, after developing a fruitful work of Brazilian advertising and of creating an important network of contacts as Consul-General in New York, since then Oliveira Lima became “a champion of the fusion of careers, which generated frictions and ill will” (LACOMBE, 1968, p. 6). We will discuss that again later.

From the post in Washington, Oliveira Lima started to collaborate assiduously to *Revista Brasileira*, a periodical headed by José Veríssimo and around whose founders occurred the creation of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. The diplomat-historian had moved closer to this intellectual circle during his stay of a few months in Rio during the above-mentioned time off in 1895, when he also took office as a partner-correspondent of the Brazilian Historic and Geographical Institute (IHGB). Thus, the closer relations and the systematization of contacts through correspondence with Machado de Assis (MALATIAN, 1999) and other regulars of the circle of *Revista Brasileira*, date from that time. In addition, during this period in Washington, there occurs the consolidation of the journalistic career of the already famous historian and diplomat from Pernambuco, with an emphasis on frequent collaborations to the *Revista de Portugal* and in the journals *Jornal do Brasil* and in the newspaper from Rio de Janeiro *Jornal do Comércio*.

In 1896, his second book, *Aspectos da Literatura Colonial Brasileira*, was partially published in *Revista Brasileira*. Overall, it had a positive review, although it no longer had the unanimity verified regarding Oliveira Lima's first historiographical work.

In the following year, there was the foundation of the Brazilian Academy of Letters, with 30 initial members, who were supposed to elect 10 others. Among these were Oliveira Lima, who was 29 years old at the time, overcoming in the election to fill seat number 39, figures as important as the Baron of Rio Branco and Assis Brasil, his future enemies. The supplementary group that was elected included, besides Oliveira Lima, Salvador de Mendonça, Domício da Gama and Clóvis Bevilacqua.

In 1899, *Nos Estados Unidos*, the first book of his travel impressions, was released. Also printed in Leipzig and partly published in *Revista Brasileira*. That year saw the climax of the deterioration of the relationship between Oliveira Lima and Assis Brasil, the new head of the Legation in Washington, who had replaced his friend, who was admired *almost religiously*, Salvador de Mendonça, who was removed from post, according to the assessment of the diplomat from Pernambuco, by political intrigues in Rio de Janeiro, after more than 20 years of consular and diplomatic service in the United States. Otherwise, right from the start Oliveira Lima had criticized the new *gaucho* boss, which he considered as being clearly unprepared for diplomatic functions, either by the superficiality of his intellectual training, in which the ignorance of the English language stood out, or by what he considered as little affection to everyday work. The professional conflict between the Chief and the First Secretary ultimately reached both the personal and the family spheres – with some people claiming that things happened in the reverse order – with their respective wives breaking in an irreconcilable manner, which ultimately made Assis Brasil request in a radical

manner the removal of the subordinate, or his own, from the American legation. The old Viscount of Cabo Frio, who at the time controlled the Secretariat of State, ironically suggested to the Minister Olinto de Magalhães that their wives should be transferred. By the end of the year, Oliveira Lima was actually sent to London, which seemed, to both enemies, more an award than a punishment, with Assis Brasil having reported to the Ministry, accusing the removed Secretary of inaction at work and abandonment of post, which resulted in a formal warning.

In the beginning of 1900, Oliveira Lima took on the new functions in London, in the Legation headed by Souza Corrêa. At that time, the young diplomat started to flaunt himself around, projecting a certain image, established mainly by the growing voices of his enemies, led by Assis Brasil, of a subordinate who did not like the discipline that characterized the function. In the *Memórias*, Oliveira Lima reports that his new boss received him with indifference, since intrigues of his predecessor had already poisoned him, which qualified him as a “Secretary who thought he was a writer”.

However, Souza Corrêa’s death, in March of that year, made the First Secretary become, for a long interim period, the *chargé d’affaires* in London, a first level post in the service, which must have caused nuisance to his enemies, considering that Oliveira Lima had been a diplomat for only 9 years and he was 33 years old. As Interim Head of the Legation, the diplomat from Pernambuco represented Brazil at the funerals of Queen Victoria, whose death he considered a milestone in the decline of the British international power. It was also as Interim Head that the diplomat-historian directed initial negotiations and hosted the Special Mission to the British Guyana, headed by his fellow citizen Joaquim Nabuco, who was returning to public life by the hand of President Campos Sales. The slight disagreements with Graça

Aranha and with the working group of the Mission, although limited to a few incidents, contributed to consolidate the public image of diplomat-historian, even though at the time he had consolidated an excellent personal relationship with Nabuco, with whom he exchanged frequent correspondence until they parted, which was quite traumatic for Oliveira Lima, given his deep admiration for his famous fellow countryman.

Back to the proximity of the European archives, notably of the British Museum, Oliveira Lima complemented the search for jobs that were in progress, some in conclusion, and later he published in the magazine of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute, an excellent research guide to Portuguese and Brazilian manuscripts sheltered in that institution. The brief presence in Europe ended by late 1900, with the appointment of Joaquim Nabuco as Head of the Legation in London and Oliveira Lima's transfer to Tokyo, in the actual condition of Head of Legation, as *chargé d'affaires*. The return to the Old Continent, or at least the transferring to a Legation of major importance in the Americas, became a *career* goal systematically sought by Oliveira Lima.

During the period he stayed in the East - which led to the production of the book of impressions *No Japão* (ABREU, 2006) - he published *O Reconhecimento do Império - História Diplomática do Brasil*, in 1901, in which he condemned the famous "payment" by the Empire, with which the historian Rio Branco disagreed. In the diplomatic sphere, as Américo Jacobina Lacombe understood it, "the philosopher and historian showed [in Japan] that he was a practical man as few others were" (LACOMBE, 1968, p. 8). In fact, both studies about the relationship with Japan, which Oliveira Lima included in the controversial compilation *Cousas Diplomáticas*, established the explanation of the predominantly economic sense that the author thought should preside over modern diplomatic activity. Somehow, the presence in

Westernized and imperialist Japan of the *Meiji* era strengthened in him the pragmatic and commercial idea of a positive diplomacy, which he had outlined at least since he was in Berlin.

Always eager to return to Europe, Oliveira Lima expected favorably presidential succession in 1902 and announced changes in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In that sense, he was optimistic enough about the news of Rio Branco's appointment, with whom he maintained, since his youth in Lisbon, sparse personal correspondence to head the Ministry in Rodrigues Alves government. He expected above all that the old correspondent, fellow historian and new Minister reviewed his removal to Peru, promoted to Extraordinary Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary, by Olinto de Magalhães, published in November of that year. According to his greatest biographer, Oliveira Lima considered that post to be "a nightmare" (GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 525).

#### THE PERUVIAN MISSION NEVER TAKEN ON AND THE WAR WITH RIO BRANCO

Rio Branco not only confirmed the removal, but also, as it seems, he relied on Oliveira Lima so that, as Minister in Peru, his participation in the negotiations regarding the issue of Acre was decisive, known to be of the utmost importance and urgency to the Baron. In that sense, since January 1903, the new Chancellor started to telegraph his Minister in Lima who was still in Japan, requesting maximum promptness to present himself in Rio de Janeiro to receive instructions concerning the serious ongoing negotiations.

However, the Lima couple left Tokyo only in March of that year, for a long journey to Rio through Europe. Claiming health problems – which from Italy, where they met, Joaquim Nabuco

attested to the Baron (GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 525-6) that they were true – and family issues to solve, Oliveira Lima answered vaguely to his superior that he would only be able to return to Brazil around the middle of the year, which provoked the infamous Telegraph Minister ultimatum

*four months have gone by and I still do not know when you can be in the position to which you were appointed or if you will be able to arrive in time to intervene in the serious pending matters whose negotiation will begin soon [...]. Therefore, I request you to declare to me by telegraph if your health condition or other reasons do not allow you to respond to the government's appeal, so that arrangements can urgently be made to send for another Minister and I must warn you that other than this once, the government will think twice about using your services (apud GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 530).*

It is worth reproducing here, the considerations of the great biographer:

*as Minister of State and because of the seriousness of the international situation, Rio Branco had plenty of reasons to carry out that interpellation [...]. On his part, incapable by temper, to accept the discipline and the hardships imposed by the public service, the Minister's telegram caused an impact on Oliveira Lima that he was never able to overcome. Without exaggeration, it can be said that his feelings changed since Rio Branco's interpellation: an outraged Oliveira Lima, put on guard against the Baron, a man prone to harsh and negative criticisms, started since then to replace the independent, but optimistic scholar.*

He goes on: "Oliveira Lima considered that his self-respect was hit, and his inability to receive orders, to be part of a corporation ...



exacerbated his ecstasies of independence, turning him ever since into a relatively difficult man” (apud GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 531).

If the relative exaggeration of the relevance of the telegraphic episode itself was discounted, what is certain is that the Peruvian Mission – which was never taken on – represented a deeply negative inflection point in his career and it was certainly striking, if not for the thought of the intellectual-diplomat, for the way in which this thought started to express itself as well as for the reasons of the enemies that multiplied. It might be stated that the “Peruvian Mission” that took place in Rio de Janeiro, during 1903 and 1904, when Oliveira Lima was at the same time present at and away from the scenario that enshrined Rio Branco in national politics, has been one of the main conditions of the set of actions and discursive expressions that were attached to the future image of the Don Quixote of Parnamirim.

In fact, the Baron took a stance that put Oliveira Lima in an at least embarrassing functional and political situation: he received “amicably” in Rio his Minister in Lima, not giving, however, any order or instruction to take on the post and, mainly, to participate in the negotiations around the momentous and *mediatic* issue of Acre, for which he had called his archenemy Assis Brasil, which caused even greater discomfort for the diplomat and historian and, it is never too much to remember, his always present wife.

Therefore, it is impossible to dissociate from this original context the public criticism that Oliveira Lima started to make of the Baron’s policy ahead of the Ministry and to his own *career*, although these always appear based on his profound intellectual training and in the significant professional experience that he already had. It was striking, in that sense, the three articles he published, between August and September 1903, on the front page of the opposition newspaper *Correio da Manhã*, by invitation of

its Director, Edmund Bittencourt, entitled “Diplomatic Reform”, which were later added into the not less controversial collection, *Cousas Diplomáticas*. We will discuss this subject later.

Being aware of the delicate and troublesome functional situation in Rio de Janeiro, Oliveira Lima used to stay in the city to intensify actions and contacts in the intellectual sphere. He advanced the research for *Dom João VI no Brasil* at the National Library and he finally took office in the Brazilian Academy of Letters. In a ceremony at the Portuguese Reading Office, he delivered the provocative speech of apology to his fellow diplomat and historian Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, whom he chose as his patron (ALMEIDA, 2009, p. 101-102), in which he reaffirms, in many ways, the criticism of the career that had been carrying out by the press and even to the very role of the Brazilian Chancellor. Certainly, the absence that Oliveira Lima felt the most at the ceremony was that of the Baron of Rio Branco. Judging by the codes of sociability and recognition that intertwined in the political and intellectual spheres of the Republic, the diplomat from Pernambuco was right to interpret his remarkable absence as a clear signal of his removal from the central circle of power in the Ministry.

Only in August 1904 Oliveira Lima was appointed to a new post, as Extraordinary Envoy and Plenipotentiary Minister in Venezuela. Since he already expected the transfer to an American Legation that he considered even less important than that in Peru, Oliveira Lima, according to his correspondence with his friend at the time Nabuco, was seriously inclined to refuse to assume the new post and be formally placed on availability, living in London. The considerations of the fellow citizen and the hint that there could be some functional advantages, as well as the appointment of his close friend, Luiz Lorena Ferreira, as the Secretary in Caracas, seem to have contributed to Oliveira Lima’s reconsideration,

ending “the case of what was arguably one of the longest and most tempestuous transits of a chief of post in our diplomatic history” (FORSTER, 2011, p. 40-41).

### THE ARTICLES IN THE CORREIO DA MANHÃ AND COUSAS DIPLOMÁTICAS – VIEWS OF THE REFORM IN THE SHADOW OF THE BARON

Analysts often agree when they consider Oliveira Lima’s proposals for reform in the diplomatic service – exposed in these three articles of the *Correio da Manhã*, in 1903, and later, in 1908, together with other texts under the title *Cousas Diplomáticas* – both controversial and sarcastic for the time and, above all, because of the functional situation of the author in 1903 and of his conflict with Rio Branco that became evident from then on. However, from a historical perspective, they are a set of realistic and consistent criticisms and suggestions, in the wake of the modernization process that Itamaraty underwent shortly after that, still under Rio Branco himself (ALMEIDA, 2009; FORSTER, 2011; LACOMBE, 1968; GOUVÊA, 1976).

That is how Maria Theresa Forster argues: “his ideas, many of which were both relevant and promising for the modernization of the structure of the Ministry could perfectly have been exploited if they had not been introduced in such an untimely manner” (FORSTER, 2011, p. 157-158). Américo Jacobina Lacombe went in the same direction when he said:

*It may be that at the time its appearance [Cousas Diplomáticas] had caused the deaf anger of the stubborns and uneventfuls, but the truth is that today it makes us smile, because the ills that it indicates are exactly those*

*that the people in charge of this House [Itamaraty] have been fighting and winning consecutively (LACOMBE, 1968, p. 16-17).*

From that point of view, Oliveira Lima's idea regarding the reform of the diplomatic service and of the prevailing sense of Brazilian foreign policy based on a severe criticism of the conditions in which this service was structured, as well as of vices and historical inadequacies of which it was a victim in the early twentieth century. According to the diplomat from Pernambuco, the core of the solution would be found in the unification of the careers of the Consular and Diplomatic offices, which would result in real democratization of the service, making up the basis for the establishment of a future foreign policy based on expanding market relations in the country.

In the first of the famous articles of *Correio da Manhã*, Oliveira Lima introduces the theme in his colorfully controversial and provocative journalistic writing style:

*Absolutely every year diplomatic reform is discussed. The constas show up with the cool breezes of May and falter with the heat of November. The current year was not different from that and the matter has been even more agitated because everyone expected, those from inside and outside the career, the aspiring and disenchanted ones, the indifferent and the curious ones, that the current Foreign Minister took advantage of the enormous prestige in which after unforgettable services he returned to his homeland to introduce in that sphere, as well as in others of his Department, the imprint of his remarkable individuality. A newspaper already explained that the matters of Acre took up all his time, and that reform would come later, at dessert (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).*

Oliveira Lima added to the malicious introduction that “the ideas of the Baron of Rio Branco on the subject have not yet become known, which, by the way, enables me to present these brief considerations on the subject, without them taking the appearance of criticism and being an act of indiscipline” (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).

In that direction, the diplomat believes that both reforms implemented by the Republic, by Quintino Bocaiuva, in 1890, and by Carlos Carvalho, in 1895, had addressed “much more the classification of legations and salary scales than services themselves” and, above all, both had been “carried out without a thought that defined them, without a guidance that characterized them” (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1). Thus:

*reforms to improve wages, to increase pensions, to increase the difficulty in achieving promotions or to ensure access, are not true reforms: they are forms of work, administrative details. However, since it was organized in Brazil, the diplomatic career has been undermined by an evil worsened by the regime change and of that is must be freed: it is a privileged career, which leads to envy and dislikes. Two unprotected vines grow alongside it, the consular career and the hierarchy of the Secretariat, the former without mirages of greatness, and the latter without even the reality of fortune (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).*

According to Oliveira Lima, the remedy for this evil of origin is “simple, depurative and tonic at the same time”,

*while the three careers do not merge with one another, while there is the current separation, which causes jealousy and destroys the efficiency of the service, we will have a false and harmful situation. It occurs with it the wicked case of consular employee, more trained by the nature, extent*

*and variety of his work, which includes acts of notaries, the study of economic and commercial issues... to see his legitimate ambitions limited to a Consulate General, to an always subordinate post, while the diplomatic employee, who as Secretary was often never more than a copyist, rises sharply to head of a legation (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).*

The separation of careers also conditioned two other disastrous iniquities according to the view of the author-diplomat: on the one hand,

*An offspring of diplomats that [...] ignore their language, their fellow citizens and their own customs and ideas about their land, spend their lives in the capitals of the Old World – since those of the New World do not deserve those figures of cosmopolitanism – without ever learning how to breathe in their moral environment.*

And, on the other hand,

*an official of the Secretariat [who] spends his whole life [attached] to the ruthless bureaucratic discipline, [...] to the meager wages, without any distraction, a pleasure of intelligence, an unraveling of new horizons, just because he was born a pagan and never found a sponsor (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).*

Once the ailments and their origin were thus described, the author could plan the advantages of the remedy he indicated. In that sense, he foresaw the image of a future ideal Foreign Minister, which resulted from a unified service:

*the Minister really prepared for his post would be one who, having started as a scribe of the Secretariat, then, as a Chancellor, a Consulate and, as Secretary, went by a legation, later occupying a consular post of responsibility,*

*to then become section chief in the Ministry and ultimately be promoted to head of a diplomatic mission. (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).*

And, still projecting future benefits:

*If the diplomat knew well the department that he was in charge of heading, having both affections and ties within it, he wouldn't live in constant terror of incurring in his easy displeasure [...]; as well as, if he was used to deal, as Consul, with practical things, to inspect loads of onions, to collect spoils and to label small coffee jars, he wouldn't consider it a breach of dignity [...] caring for our pressing interests at hand, only because they are positive (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).*

The author still claims the need to move along differentiated professional experiences for the ideal consul-diplomat, stating that, “foreign languages cannot be learned by simply reading passports, nor can rubber, sugar, cotton, and coffee be disseminated by wearing silk stockings to go to concerts... or by wearing an irreproachable tail coat”. Thus, “the consul lacks the opportunity to move around in high society, and the diplomat lacks the opportunity to learn how the trade market works”. (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).

Thus, Oliveira Lima was able to conclude with a question:

*Why not truly democratize the career - democratize it, not demote it - saving all its tradition, surrounding it with all the warranties, and turning even its prestige more expensive with the infiltration in it of new and more serious concerns, equivalent to inoculating new blood in it? (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).*

Once the foundations of his thought about reforms were supported in that manner, Oliveira Lima proposed legitimizing contrasts between what he considered positive situations present in “advanced” countries and the situation in Brazil. Thus, the author informs that

*the French Republic enjoys an organization similar to [his proposal] and it was that diplomacy of Consuls and Secretariat employees that obtained Taiwan and handed it to England to defend Korea from the Russians. [...] For Director General of the Foreign Ministry the Japanese Government appointed its Minister of Russia, a former Consul in Shanghai. On the contrary, we are the ones who think that an internship in Itamaraty unables for diplomatic tact, and that a Consul serves only to elaborate statistical maps and to authenticate proxies (CM, 08/25/1903, p. 1).*

The second article is predominantly devoted to develop the contrast between the diplomatic services that the author considers standards of advanced and progressive countries, and the Brazilian ones of that time. Accordingly, he maintains that, thanks to the nefarious isolation of the career, “our legation secretaries reach ministerial positions absolutely unaware of what they’re worth: they are lottery tickets that can either be winning or not”. And, in contrast: “in England that’s not how it happens” because “the secretary works for himself, produces personal work, he’s not limited to copying what has been elaborated by a boss who sometimes is worth less than himself”. Moreover, “every new language that he learns, of those languages that few people care about, such as Russian, Arabic, Persian, Japanese, Chim (sic), provides to the secretary a substantial additional bonus per year” (CM, 08/28/1903, p. 1).



For example, in the case of a certain Mr. Elliott, Second Secretary in Washington, who had already noticed three bonuses for three exotic languages he dominated and for that reason he had been chosen by the *Foreign Office* to represent British interests in connection with the matter of Samoa, Oliveira Lima can conclude that England “has many such a diplomat, which they cultivate with care”. And again in contrast: “among us, in order to stand out, the Secretary must write books, which does not prove anything, because being a good literate is not always synonymous with being a good diplomat” (CM, 08/28/1903, p. 1).

In this second article, Oliveira Lima also supported, based on a historical perspective, the greatest relevance for Brazil of an economic diplomacy in relation to a political diplomacy, being impossible not to see here a new criticism of Rio Branco. In that direction, he pointed out that the last shadows of Luso-Brazilian imperialism at the colonial era had been perpetrated when the Court of D. João was in Rio de Janeiro, with the conquest of Cayenne and Montevideo. However, “the Congress of Vienna and Ituzaingó made us turn back to the primitive boundaries”. From then on,

*our imperialism came to consist more modestly [...] in ensuring our supremacy in the Plata region, which the great advance of the Republic of Argentina turned later into balance, and our good right in discussions about borders.*

And, about those, “what the Empire obtained [...] was to prepare the solution of the border issues that the Republic has been very successful in clearing with the help of the knowledge and skill of the current Minister of Foreign Affairs”. It is interesting that, by commenting on such “knowledge and skill”, Oliveira Lima did not mention the case of Acre, which was under way at the time, referring to Washington and Bern and the “good

law” put forward by the Baron in those cases. Maybe to support the assertion:

*a country such as Brazil, which should not have territorial ambitions, because its territory is huge for its population and for the prospects of its immigration in a near future, nor can it aspire to now play a major role on the world scene [...], doesn't need so much a political diplomacy as an economic diplomacy (CM, 08/28/1903, p. 1).*

And later:

*If the period of hegemony has passed, if we can no longer be prevalent and have to be content with being influential, since others have grown with us; if on the other hand we have been liquidating, without fear of the arbitration, because we knew that we were right, old backlogs that worried our Portuguese parents and grandparents [...], our diplomatic action does not remain without purpose or activity because of that. In these cases, to preserve is already to improve, and the current base of the good international relations is above all mercantile, as well as the base of the mistrusts and hostilities [...]. The main duty of our rulers is to put on and, thus, to turn profitable the national production, since without fortune there's no force and without force one can't impose respect (CM, 08/28/1903, p. 1).*

It is impossible not to see there, beyond a realistic and well-articulated proposal, a criticism to the Baron and to what became the “purchase of Acre”. Reading between the lines, this was opposite to a good law.

In the third article, Oliveira Lima basically resumes his theses in order to enrich them with what he calls a few details and special cases, such as the fact that, for legations in courts such as Russia or

Austria, of high refinement and complex protocol in the diplomatic sphere, it would never be polite, and much less productive, to send an employee with consular training, which would be far more useful in Japan or Switzerland, as he exemplifies.

Finally, the author partially justified the emptying of the consular function as an inheritance of the Empire, in order to direct the conclusion of its propositions:

*the consulates were positions not to work, but to rest. They were distributed among politicians or scholars, who were sick, tired or simply wanted to live in other environments. [...] Our Consul, in turn, was an employee whose activity were encoded in signing manifestos and repatriating destitute Brazilians, besides going to museums and shops with the fellow citizen friends and acquaintances who sought him. Our articles were very profitable: coffee was like gold, sugar was sold for high prices, cotton, rubber, tobacco, every thing sold. At home, the farmers and sugar lords relied on their slaves to feed in a cheap manner the rich source of export trade. There was nothing more necessary than planting, harvesting, packing and boarding. The markets were ready and payments in good British pounds were about to be made (CM, 09/01/1903, p. 1).*

However, when the recent past is thus described in a somewhat regretful way, the diplomat from Pernambuco, whose family was tied to the world of the decadent sugar business, stated:

*We know to what extent all that has changed, how hard agriculture struggles nowadays, how it anxiously seeks consumers for its products, how the customers have become a matter of life or death for them, how the misery of that class is reflected on the entire national economy,*

*generating discouragement, causing pessimism, nourishing the discontent, encouraging rebellion! The solution of the economic problem lies entirely, not in the restriction of the production, but in the enlargement of trade relations (CM, 09/01/1903, p. 1).*

Thus,

*the function of our diplomats and consuls, besides being practical, became essential. They became in charge of making an effort to remove custom tangles, achieve reductions in import taxes and at the same time open up new markets and gain wider acceptance in the articles, thus proclaiming the origin and enforcing the superiority of the genre.*

Oliveira Lima maintained in short that the diplomats “should be ashamed to descend from courtiers to traveling salesmen of their countries, when the monarchs themselves are not disgusted to relate with the dictators of *trusts*” because, ultimately, “it is the time of commercialism” (CM, 09/01/1903, p. 1).

When *Cousas Diplomáticas* was published, the first results of the reform implemented by Rio Branco were already known, based on the Regulation of 1906. Oliveira Lima demonstrated satisfaction in seeing the implementation, if not formally at least in practice, of some degree of fusion in the careers, not without making ironic references, such as the use of typewriters in the Ministry, which he had suggested only in passing in one of his articles of 1903. However, according to the diplomat, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the achievement of an economic sense for the country’s foreign policy was still far away.

IN LATIN AMERICA AND EUROPE: AGAINST ROOSEVELT  
AND IN FAVOR OF A CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

The period in Venezuela of the *caudillo* Cipriano Castro, which went until June 1906, marked Oliveira Lima's rapprochement to several scholars of the Hispanic-American world and the sedimentation, in the thought of the diplomat and historian, of a well-grounded image of that portion of the continent, which was expressed in several articles, many of which to the *Estado de São Paulo* – which became his favorite newspaper in Brazil – later collected under the title *Impressões da América Espanhola*, published after his death.

In the sphere of diplomatic activity, Oliveira Lima, beyond the routine services and the elaboration of acclaimed reports concluded in a successful manner the Special Mission of which he was in charge concerning border problems, thanks to the cordial relations that he was able to establish with President Castro, who even went so far as to award him with the *Busto do Libertador*. The Brazilian diplomat complained that his success in the only border issue in which he worked was completely disregarded and suppressed in Rio de Janeiro, even though, according to himself, he acted under boycott of his leadership and that the territorial gains obtained, although small, were the only ones that, in the short-lived Republican history, had not generated any expense to the Public Treasury, in a new mention to what he often qualified as the “purchase of Acre” by the Baron.

The interventionist imperial action of the United States in Venezuela, in the famous case of this country's public debt, and its contradictory invocations of neomonroism were the context from which Oliveira Lima started to publicly and vehemently condemn Theodore Roosevelt's “big stick policy”. In fact, since 1903 he had already stated that he was in favor of the famous Doctrine by the

Argentinean Luis María Drago on this issue. That extremely anti-Roosevelt and, to some measure, anti-Monroe belief (SILVEIRA, 2003), which Gilberto Freyre called “critical Pan-Americanism”, as well as Paulo Roberto de Almeida classified as “principled” (ALMEIDA, 2009, p. 99), led to a new personal breakup, apparently the most traumatic of all, for Oliveira Lima: that with the first Ambassador in Washington, Joaquim Nabuco, which confirmed the interpretation according to which the diplomat from Pernambuco did not hesitate to jeopardize friendships for the sake of a controversial issue that was dear to him (MOTA, 2002).

In early 1906, with the III Pan-American Conference scheduled to be held in Rio de Janeiro that year – for whose Brazilian delegation Oliveira Lima, surprisingly, requested from Nabuco his appointment – with the spectacular attendance of Secretary of State Elihu Root, which Nabuco considered to be directly related to his action in Washington, Oliveira Lima, besides addressing himself in a letter to his friend condemning what he considered an excessive and inconvenient Monroism although grounded on good intentions (GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 689-6810), in the *Estado de São Paulo* published a series of articles condemning the spirit that presided over the future conclave and renewing his positions against the American interventionism and imperialism in the continent. The *writing unrestraint* of his fellow countryman and friend, as Nabuco qualified it at the time, together with the fear of everything that could impair *his* Conference, led the Ambassador to interrupt definitely the correspondence exchange with Oliveira Lima, who never stopped to make either positive or negative references to the former confidant and, in many ways, idol in the spheres of politics, culture and diplomacy.

That series of articles against the dangers of which he considered subordination to Washington of the Brazilian policy

was gathered, in 1907, under the title *Pan-Americanismo*, devoted to the Baron of Rio Branco, justifiably by the famous speech at the opening of the Conference, praising the country's traditional relations with Europe, which greatly pleased Oliveira Lima. The Baron would have appreciated the position of equilibrium that he flaunted at the time among the most important Brazilian diplomats from Pernambuco.

The year 1906 was also marked for Oliveira Lima by the deterioration of his health because of the worsening of his nephritis. Sick and deeply dissatisfied with the post, in many senses the materialization of the "nightmare" that he had only foreseen in Peru, the diplomat decided to present his formal request for functional release to the Ministry, after losing the hope of obtaining regulatory license. The Baron, however, demonstrating, as in other opportunities, actual consideration for the subordinate – of whom he seemed to expect only not to be bothered so much by the press – ignored the request and granted medical leave for six months for health treatment. Thus, in June 1906, the Lima's left Caracas and headed towards London.

After treatment in German and French seaside resorts and a visit to his sister *Sinhá* in Madrid, Oliveira Lima returned once again to Rio de Janeiro in October, always hoping to be appointed to Europe. Once again, his functional situation became delicate and once again, he thought about being put in availability, which he even complained directly to President Afonso Pena. Once again, the Baron ignored the request and renewed his leave. Oliveira Lima used that time to finally complete his masterpiece, *Dom João VI no Brasil*, whose first edition was released in 1908. In this new period that he stayed in Brazil he made a triumphant visit to São Paulo for a series of conferences on the role of José Bonifácio in the independence, where he was received, according to provocative comments in the press, with honors of a Minister of State.

In December of 1907, because of the diplomatic movement of the period, the diplomat from Pernambuco was finally appointed to Brussels, cumulatively with Stockholm, the last post in his career.

In Europe, Oliveira Lima represented the Brazilian scholars in several scientific events, sometimes in special missions appointed by Rio Branco, such as in the conference promoted by the *Société Royale Belge de Géographie*, which had the Royal family in attendance, and in the Congress of the Americanists, in Vienna, with extensive coverage of *O Estado de São Paulo*, which published their communications between 1908 and 1909. The paulista newspaper, by the way, translated and published almost all the conferences by Oliveira Lima in Europe during the period he spent in the legation in Brussels. That is the case, for example, of the series of conferences at the Sorbonne, gathered in the form of a book, in 1911, under the title *Formation Historique de la Nationalité Brésilienne*. Thus, the intense activity in the field of what today would be called cultural diplomacy made Oliveira Lima receive from the Swedish poet Björkman the famous epithet of “cultural Ambassador of Brazil”. In private, Oliveira Lima complained of what he considered indifference and even envy by his boss of the impact in Europe of his cultural activity, as in the correspondence to his friend Joaquim de Souza Leão: “The Baron neglects the conferences [at the Sorbonne], poor thing! That only proves his downfall. There is nothing worse than senile envy” (apud GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 902).

In the field of the standard diplomatic activity, he completed, in 1909, the negotiations with Sweden for a bilateral Arbitration Agreement, which he considered, in the spirit of his idea of diplomacy, perfectly useless, given the absence of an economic-commercial Treaty between both countries. He also condemned in public the arms race with Argentina, in the famous confrontation of Rio Branco with Estanislao Zeballos, referring to the Baron ironically as “our Bismarck”.



The following year, Oliveira Lima engaged with unprecedented intensity and enthusiasm in his public life until then, in Brazilian domestic policy, which brought new and serious negative consequences for his diplomatic career. That was the support of the presidential candidate and leader of the civilista movement, Rui Barbosa, in the notorious campaign against Marshal Hermes da Fonseca, supported by the Baron and by the oligarchic articulation led by Pinheiro Machado. There were comments at the time that, if Rui was elected, Oliveira Lima would succeed Rio Branco in Itamaraty.

His civilista enthusiasm, which Rui Barbosa later called “my political belief”, associated shortly after that with the beginning of rumors about his monarchism since an article in which he praised D. Luiz de Orleans e Bragança, regarded as the articulator of a virtual restorationist movement, whom he met at the Universal and International Exhibition in Belgium – were fatal for his definitive departure from career. Moreover, in this exhibition, the head of the Brazilian Legation also had to deal with the visit of President-elect, Hermes da Fonseca, which he did within the best protocol, without escaping, however, from charges in Brazil about a possible inadequate and even disrespectful attitude towards the Marshal.

In order to complicate his career situation even more, Oliveira Lima, and his unrestrained quill, engaged in a new direct confrontation with the Baron, in mid-1911, when the historian-diplomat stood up for his fellow diplomat, Mr. Gabriel de Piza, a Minister in Paris, who had confronted the Chancellor. Piza, by the way, reconciled with the Baron soon after that, which left the most enduring consequences of the *affair* on the wide back of the D. Quixote of Parnamirim.

That was how, according to Maria Theresa Forster, “in a particularly shadowy moment of the relationship with the

Chancellor” (FORSTER, 2011, p. 48), Oliveira Lima received the news of his death, in February 1912. Then he dedicated to him a praiseful article, though sober and without forgetting past disagreements (GOUVÊA, 1976, p. 940).

Sick and, perhaps, already without hope of obtaining a top-level post in the career, the diplomat from Pernambuco was satisfied with the news of the appointment of his friend from Santa Catarina Lauro Müller to head Itamaraty, but he consolidated the decision to ask for retirement for health reasons, which he could do according to the law, since he had already reached twenty years of career. The new Minister, planning finally to reward him with the desired Legation in London, ignored the terms of his request, granting a new license for medical treatment. It was in that context that, in September 1912, the Lima couple left Brussels and headed towards the United States.

Oliveira Lima was invited by his friend John Casper Branner, Vice-President of Stanford University, for a series of lectures in the country, which unfolded in several other top US universities, such as Yale, Harvard, Cambridge and Columbia, which was the basis for the insertion of the Brazilian historian in the life of the American University. In *O Estado de São Paulo*, Oliveira Lima published at that time *Cartas dos Estados Unidos*, a series of articles with impressions of his return to the United States. The work of the lectures was collected and published in 1914, under the title *Evolução Histórica da América Latina Comparada com a da América Inglesa*.

#### A LAST SCANDALOUS PASSAGE IN RIO, RETIREMENT AND VOLUNTARY EXILE

By late 1912, Oliveira Lima returned to Rio de Janeiro, for yet another noisy stay in the capital of the Republic, this time the

last one as a diplomat. When he arrived, the historian was even amazed with the amount of reporters, from virtually every major daily newspaper in Rio, which, in an American way, at the dock, just knocked down questions demanded agile answers by an Oliveira Lima who considered himself almost retired, since he was unaware of Lauro Müller's intentions who, by the way, was counting on his vote to join the Brazilian Academy of Letters.

It was in the midst of the reception, both warm and eventful, that Oliveira Lima gave his famous response to *Gazeta de Notícias*, an American style newspaper of João do Rio, attesting to its sympathy for the monarchical system compared to Republican and confirming his personal relations with D. Luiz, as well as positive assessments regarding the Prince, which dropped like a bomb in the headlines in Rio. There was an immediate burst of the rumors that Oliveira Lima was returning to the country in order to reorganize, on behalf of D. Luiz, the monarchical party and lead the restoration movement. The rebuttal given to the newspaper *O Imparcial*, denying the party links with monarchism, but confirming the theoretical sympathy, as well as the old civilista beliefs, did not erase the fire released around the D. Quixote, but it poked the fire. Américo Lacombe Jacobin was right when he stated that "all the intrigue against Oliveira Lima occurred around two points: his monarchism and his attacks on the *career*" (LACOMBE, 1968, p. 14).

It was in the midst of this fire that Lauro Müller took the risk of sending to Pinheiro Machado's Senate – warned at the time against a possible candidacy of the Minister to the Presidency – the assessment of Oliveira Lima's transfer to London. Facing the journalistic scandal, the senator from Rio Grande do Sul demanded a formal declaration of Republican loyalty by the diplomat, who refused to do so. Next, there was an extremely aggressive campaign against the appointment, which hit hard his

personal plan – ironically led by Edmund Bittencourt’s newspaper, who many years before that, had published, upon invitation, the infamous articles about Diplomatic Reform.

That was how, in a secret session, on July 4, 1913, the Senate of the Republic rejected the appointment of Manoel de Oliveira Lima to the Legation in London. In August, the diplomat-historian, based on a medical report that indicated that he was overweight and that he had kidney lithiasis, required retirement due to disability. Oliveira Lima published his impressions regarding this last *affair* of his career in the leaflet called *O Meu Caso*, still in 1913.

Retired into private life, Oliveira Lima lived initially in *his* London, where most of the vast library that he had collected throughout his life was located, watching the beginning of World War I in Germany, whilst undergoing medical treatment. The Fat Don Quixote did not escape from a new intrigue regarding his germanophily which, fueled by the articles of ardent defense of pacifism that he had been publishing, ultimately made it unfeasible for him to live in London, from where he left and never went back, in September 1915, once again heading towards the United States for a new cycle of lectures at Harvard.

He spent in his Pernambuco the years between 1916 and 1920, when he came into contact with the young students and with the new generation of intellectuals from his State, especially the teenage Gilberto Freyre and Assis Chateaubriand. He carried out a successful cycle of lectures in Argentina, in 1918-19, which was the basis for a new book of impressions, *Na Argentina*, published in 1919.

In 1920, he decided to move to Washington for the last time, based on the acceptance of the invitation made by the Catholic University for a post of full professor at the Law School, as well as in the support of the transfer and of the shelter, negotiated since

1916, of Oliveira Lima's library and his monumental collection (LEÃO FILHO, 1968; LEAL, 2004), which ultimately became a world reference for Iberian and Brazilian studies in Washington.

According to Ângela de Castro Gomes (GOMES, 2005), the Lima couple's household in Washington, masterfully described by the anthropological genius of Gilberto Freyre (FREYRE, 1968), was "an address that became a Brazilian lounge in the United States during the 1920's, being attended by American intellectuals and other nationalities, in addition to being a place of shelter for Brazilians" (apud FORSTER, 2011, p. 56). In many senses, if Oliveira Lima's view of diplomacy as a means of cultural dissemination is retained, the house located at 3536, 13<sup>th</sup> Street, was a true Embassy of Brazil in the United States.

"Here lies a lover of books", the D. Quixote of Parnamirim, who died in the morning of March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1928, asked to be sculpted in an anonymous shallow grave graveyard of Mount Olivet, Washington, made of a good stone that came from Pernambuco. The Brazilian diplomat also stated, in his will the desire not to have his body removed in one more and final voyage, as well as the refusal of any posthumous distinction by the Brazilian Government. Miss Flora, "the tragic widow", according to Gilberto Freyre, remained guarding the House and the manuscripts of the eternal *Mr. Lima* until she died in 1940. The efforts of the Victorian-Pernambucan Grand Dame – enabled the posthumous publication of *D. Miguel no Trono*, in 1933, and of the unfinished *Memórias – Estas Minhas Reminiscências*, in 1937.

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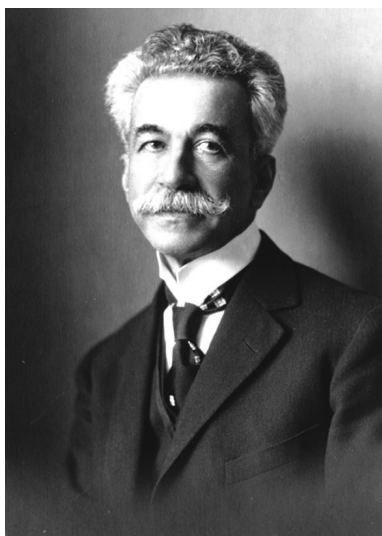
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## DOMÍCIO DA GAMA

Domício da Gama was born on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1861 in Maricá and died in Rio de Janeiro on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 1925. The son of Domingos Affonso Forneiro and Mariana Rosa do Loreto, he was a writer, journalist, founding member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. He was a friend of Raul Pompéia, João Capistrano de Abreu, Eça de Queiroz, Eduardo Prado and the Baron of Rio Branco. With the latter, he started to work in the diplomatic field through the Immigration Service of the Ministry of Agriculture. He was also secretary to Rio Branco in the missions of Palmas, French Guyana and Acre. He served in the Legations of Brussels and London. Since 1903, he served in Rio Branco's Cabinet until he was promoted and removed to Lima. From there he served in the Legation of Buenos Aires and represented Brazil in the Fourth International Conference of American States. He was the second appointed Ambassador in the history of Itamaraty and went to the United States of America where he served between

1911 and 1918. There, besides having been an attentive server, he participated in the mediations in the case at the time of the Mexican Revolution. Appointed for the Chancellery in 1918, he played a key role for the inclusion of Brazil among the eight members of the Council of the League of Nations. In 1919, he replaced Rui Barbosa as President of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. In July of the same year, he resigned from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to head the Embassy in London, where he remained until 1924 when he was put in availability. He died on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 1925 at the Copacabana Palace Hotel.

## DOMÍCIO DA GAMA: THE DIPLOMACY OF PRIDE

*Tereza Cristina Nascimento França*

Domício da Gama was born in Maricá on October 23, 1861.<sup>1</sup> The son of the Portuguese Domingos Affonso Forneiro and of Mrs. Mariana, he had six siblings: Maurício, Maria Agnelle, Antônio, Domingos, José and Sebastião. His father had three beliefs for the seven children. The first was that they should make their own names throughout their lives, hence the different surnames: Forneiro, Faustino and da Gama. The second had to do with the studies. Forneiro established that Maurício and Antônio would be doctors, “in order to be respected by the rich farmers”; Domingos and José would be lawyers, “in order to always win in the matters of land and taxes”, and Domício and Sebastião, engineers since “Brazil, which was so big, naked and backwards needed them very

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1 The birth date mentioned both in the IHGB files and in Alberto Venancio Filho is October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1862. The biobibliographical dictionary of Argeu Guimarães indicates the birth year as being 1863. However, the tombstone on Gama's grave says October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1861, thus being the closest to the one attested in the book of Baptism of the Maricá Head Office, Book n. 4, leaves 19 and 19<sup>th</sup> back, according to which he was born in October, 1861. In: FRANCA, Tereza Cristina Nascimento. *Self Made Nation: Domício da Gama e o Pragmatismo do Bom Senso*. 2007.408 f., il. Thesis (Ph.D in International Relations) – Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, 2007.

much”.<sup>2</sup> Finally, if they failed in school, they would have a second chance, but if there was recurrence, their allowance would be cut and there would be two choices: return to their father’s house and to the hoe, or open their own path in life.

When he was 16 years old, Domício fostered a vocation for literature. His tales of 1878 describe religious doubts and dissatisfaction with the desires of his father regarding his fate. In the Polytechnic School, Domício “lasted until the end of the first year, in the second he was barely approved and in the third year he was a complete and definitive failure. A shameful and unquestionable failure”.<sup>3</sup> In his second attempt, when he was 18 years old, he rarely appeared in the Polytechnic School since he was already engaged with the Garden of Academus Literary Guild, a society made up of 20 members who talked about reforming the world and, for that purpose, they studied politics, religion and art, physiology and grammar and poetry. The weekly meetings took place at the second floor of a building that served as workshops of the *Gazeta de Notícias*, a Rio newspaper that began in 1875. Later, Domício stated that he made a vow to change from mathematics to literature. By the end of the year, despite having failed and with no allowance, he was able to get rid of the hoe when Ferreira de Araújo, the editor of the *Gazeta de Notícias*, gave him a job as a short story writer in the *Sétima Coluna*. While he collaborated in that journal, he had contact with two major influences both in his personal and in his professional lives: Raul Pompéia and João Capistrano de Abreu. He dropped out of the Polytechnic School, but he did not stop studying. He engaged in the task of filing classical authors, studying French, participating in literary discussions, as well as thinking about an experimental method

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2 Diary of Maria Luiza Frederica Ave Precht de Mesquita, niece of Domício da Gama. In: GAMA, Domício da. *Contos*. Rio de Janeiro: Brazilian Academy of Letters, 2001. p. XIX.

3 Idem.

of literature and, besides writing short stories, he became a geography teacher in private schools of Rio de Janeiro. When he was 24 years old, he even took a civil service entrance exam for the post of Secretary of the National Library, obtaining second place.

Chosen by Ferreira de Araújo to cover for his periodical the Universal Exhibition of Paris, Domício took the steamer to Paris, carrying in his luggage introduction letters by Capistrano and Ferreira de Araújo addressed to Eduardo Prado and the Baron of Rio Branco. When the steamer stopped in London, he met Eça de Queiroz. In Paris, he appeared at the door of Eduardo Prado to deliver the introduction letters. After reading the letter, the latter shouted to the next room, “Juca, do not be afraid: the lad is a friend of Araújo arriving from Rio”. And so appeared Rio Branco who entered muttering, “I thought it was some dumbhead [...]”.<sup>4</sup> The first meeting was fast and ceremonious. While Rio Branco only watched, Prado asked him to appear from time to time to give news. A few days later, when Domício strolled along the Champs Elysées on his way to the Place de la Concorde, he found Prado and Rio Branco in the midst of a crowd. Prado called him to join them and, from that night on, they became friends. Domício thus began a period of bohemia, studies, bookstores, restaurants and conversations in Eduardo Prado’s library.

When Eça de Queiroz and his family started to live in Paris, at the Rue de Neuilly, Domício started to attend the household and to see the family as his “shelter”. According to him, while Rio Branco turned him into a diplomat, Eça turned him into a writer. While the coexistence with Queiroz immersed him in literature, diplomacy entered Domício’s life by means of an invitation from Rio Branco to work as Secretary in the General Superintendence

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4 LYRA, Heitor. *Memórias da Vida Diplomática - Coisas Vistas e Ouidas - 1916-1925*. State Department and Embassy in London. Lisbon, Center of the Brazilian Book, 1972, p. 227 to 233.

of Emigration, a division of the Ministry of Agriculture whose main function was to advertise Brazil. He remained in office between August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1891 and February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1893, when he left to be a member of the Special Arbitration Mission in Washington, also by invitation of Rio Branco.

### DOMÍCIO AND THE BRAZILIAN BORDERS

The Republic received from the Empire a nation virtually without any borders, except for the agreements with Peru (1851) and Bolivia (1867). Not all attempts to set limits with Argentina, which took place since 1857, reached a positive solution. The last attempt at negotiations held in the Empire, on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1889, had foreseen a decision by arbitration in a period of 90 days. The first Chancellor of the Brazilian Republic, Quintino Bocaiuva, who was eager to solve the problem quickly, signed with his Argentinean counterpart, Estanislau Zeballos, a Treaty by which the disputed territory would be divided in half. The negative reaction of public opinion and the subsequent refusal of the Treaty by the Brazilian Congress made the controversy progress, that is, to the arbitration of the U.S. President Groover Cleveland.

The leadership of the Brazilian Demarcation Committee was in charge of Francisco Xavier da Costa Aguiar de Andrada, the Baron Aguiar de Andrada, who even travelled to Washington and started preparations for the mission, but he died unexpectedly on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1893. The next day, Rio Branco was invited to be the Plenipotentiary negotiator of the mission. The team, formed by General Dionísio Cerqueira, as second Plenipotentiary; Olinto de Magalhães and Domingos Olímpio, Second Secretaries and Admiral Cândido Guillobel as technical helper, Rio Branco requested the



inclusion of Domício da Gama as Third Secretary and of the English professor Charles Girardot as a translator.

Rio Branco imposed on the mission the motto to work slowly, which demanded absolute dedication to work, and silence about what they were doing. On the eve of the delivery of the memoir, the team was divided among correctors and proofreaders of the text, while Rio Branco drilled and sewed the pages. The pace of work caused serious health problems to Domício, which had uraemia attacks. Yet he remained proofreading the evidence from 2:00 pm to 6:00 am in the following morning. On February 6<sup>th</sup>, 1895, the decision of the arbitration report was announced in favor of Brazil. The result reflected public acts all over the country. The Republic had solved the border pendency where the Empire had failed.

Domício da Gama had been in charge of organizing Rio Branco's books, manuscripts and maps and was still carrying out this task when another border problem became more serious: the issue of French Guyana, or of Oiapoque. In the wake of the victory in Palmas, the name of Rio Branco was naturally appointed to make up the team that would deal with the new challenge. At that time, his requests to appoint Domício da Gama and Raul Rio Branco for the mission were stunted in the procedures of the then Chancellor Dionísio Cerqueira, who resented that Rio Branco had signed the memoir of Palmas and had received full credit. Thus, Domício's appointment took place only on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1898, already under the administration of Olinto de Magalhães.

The literate side of Domício was highlighted in 1897, when he was elected to Chair 33 of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. Domício said he was embarrassed with the choice made at the expense of other elders, such as Ferreira de Araújo, Capistrano de

Abreu and Rio Branco himself.<sup>5</sup> He commented that the friends who remembered his name and voted for him “forgot to explain to me what this society does, to whose composition they gave me the honor to be chosen”.<sup>6</sup> For patron of his chair, he chose Raul Pompéia, paying homage to the friend, who had shortened his life two years earlier.

The call of the Academy made him recall the vote he had made when he was young, at the Academus Garden, about the importance of literature in his life. However, how could he reconcile that with the troubled diplomatic life?

During the five years of the mission of French Guyana, Gama divided himself among copies, translations and travels. The pace of work, as well as the difficult relationship of Rio Branco with the negotiator Plenipotentiary of the case, Gabriel de Toledo Piza had a negative impact on the morale of the members of the mission. At almost 40 years old, Domício complained that his tasks were useless and he sought a reason to live. In that state of mind, Olinto de Magalhães called him to take a written exam in order to qualify for the diplomatic career.

Joaquim Nabuco and Rio Branco were troubled with Olinto’s initiative, who was certainly aware of a decree, which was moving through Congress at the time, which foresaw the entrance of Rio Branco and his assistants in the diplomatic system, without an exam. Nabuco even pleaded with Olinto that Domício was appointed to the post of First Secretary of the Legation in London, or that he was sent to some other post as *chargé d’affaires*. He argued that his services differed from those of other secretaries,

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5 Domício received thirteen votes while Rio Branco only seven. FRANÇA, Tereza Cristina Nascimento. *Self made nation: Domício da Gama e o pragmatismo do bom senso*. 2007.408 f., il. Thesis (doctorate in international relations) – Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, 2007, p. 91.

6 Letter of Domício da Gama to José Veríssimo, 02/27/1897. In: *Revista da Academia Brasileira de Letras*, vol. 41, Rio de Janeiro, 1933, p. 235.

since he had started his career for a longer time. The decree that was moving through Congress foresaw not only the recognition of the period of service of those who were at Domício's position, but it also gave them preference for the first appointments.

Although he did not feel comfortable with the situation, Domício left for Rio de Janeiro. There, besides taking the exam, he seized the opportunity to articulate support for the project that was moving through Congress, something that Olinto had not done, and to work on the possibility of increasing the allowance for Rio Branco, on the issue of French Guyana. After the written exams, Olinto decided to leave Domício on that mission, keeping the post in London. However, he did not promote him to the level of First Secretary, as Nabuco had suggested. Claiming lack of vacancies, he appointed him Second Secretary, failing to acknowledge his 7 years of seniority and, in practice, demoting him to the post for which he had been appointed in 1893.

With the mission finally close to an end, Domício was concerned about Rio Branco's uncertain fate and interceded with Tobias Monteiro, who was close to President Campos Salles, in favor of Rio Branco's appointment to Lisbon, as he wished, and he also asked Nabuco to talk to José Carlos Rodrigues about the embarrassing situation in which the Baron found himself. In turn, Rio Branco wrote to Olinto to inform not only the completion of the mission's works, but Domício's personal qualities and to his job.

With the arbitration decision in favor of Brazil, the Brazilian Congress granted to Rio Branco an annual allowance of 24:000\$000 and a prize of 300:000\$000. Exactly at that moment, there was the approval of the law regarding the officialization of the diplomatic career. Through it, Rio Branco, Joaquim Nabuco, Oliveira Lima and Magalhães de Azeredo entered officially into the career. Since the law foresaw the retroactive

acknowledgement of working time in the missions, Domício hoped to be promoted to First Secretary. However, Olinto exonerated him from the post in London and removed him to the legation at the Holy See, not as First, but as Second Secretary. Olinto messed with him a third time, consulting with him about a possible transfer to Rome in August 1901, and suddenly removing him to Brussels, as Second Secretary, regardless of his period of service and the fact that he dealt in that legation with the responsibilities of a *chargé d'affaires*.

The paradoxical situation increased Domício's chagrin with his career and prevented him from improving his wages. At that time, he even thought about retirement,<sup>7</sup> but he eventually decided to invest 2,000 francs in the publication of his book *Histórias Curtas*, to see if it provided him financial return. Later, he was deeply upset at the news that the publication did not sell any copies, because the *Gazeta de Notícias* had distributed it for free.

## NUANCES OF AN INVITATION

In early July of 1902, President-elect Rodrigues Alves, invited Rio Branco to be the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The invitation appealed to Rio Branco's patriotism, and Domício da Gama disagreed with that kind of appeal: "it is the most perfidious way of forcing the decision of a man, who, even against his will, is a national figure".<sup>8</sup> He thought that Rio Branco considered the head of the Ministry as an act of "pure sacrifice. I'm sure that he will often regret having agreed to the contract, but that does not mean that he will not work to carry it out". On the other hand, the

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7 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Graça Aranha, Brussels, 01/21/1902. ABL, AGA 10 3 13.

8 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Graça Aranha, Brussels, 07/16/1902. ABL, AGA 10.3.13.

acceptance would actually be “a great good, not only for all of us, but also for the public service” because “it can be expected that the good line is renewed, that the program of Itamaraty’s policy is established”.<sup>9</sup> One month later, Rio Branco was still undecided and Domício urged him to make a decision, whatever it was: “Those agonies of his disappeared as a result of the need to act”.<sup>10</sup>

After Rio Branco had accepted Rodrigues Alves’ proposal, Domício continued in Brussels. His wish was to be able to collaborate with Rio Branco, but from afar, “in Peru, Bolivia, in Washington.”<sup>11</sup> Capistrano de Abreu warned him, however, that Rio Branco wished not only to promote him, but also to come and get him. When he received a telegram from Rio Branco confirming such appointment, Domício thought that the possibility was interesting. He admitted that “it is my passion that makes me dream at night, which entertains me during the day, as absorbing as a feather or a great contained desire”.<sup>12</sup> However, he feared that to accept according to his conditions was a mistake. In a letter, he expressed his uncertainties to Rio Branco: “In order for me to take advantage of the momentum you gave me, without running the risk of ultimately being seen as a simple satellite, it would be better if I continued that collaboration outside, which might often be more effective for the public service and for both of us”.<sup>13</sup>

He ultimately accepted the invitation. The next day, there would be the long-awaited promotion to First Secretary. The Legislative Decree no. 754, dated December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1900, determined

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9 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Sylvino Gurgel do Amaral, Brussels, 07/28/1902. AHI, ASGC. 346 Tin, 3 Pack, 31 Folder.

10 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Rio Branco, Brussels, 08/16/1902. AHI, APBRB. Part III (34). 824 Tin Pack 2.

11 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Graça Aranha, Brussels, 10/05/1902. ABL, AGA. 10.3.13.

12 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Graça Aranha, Brussels, 01/13/1903. ABL, AGA, 10.3.13

13 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Rio Branco, Buenos Aires, 08/03/1908. IHGB, CDG, Tin 646 12 folder.

his time as Second Secretary of Legation from December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1895, as well as the count of seniority in the rank of First Secretary since November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1898. Domício's expectation was to stay at "the foot of the boss," at the "position of a son who has to wait for the best opportunity to ask a service to another",<sup>14</sup> but he would wait for the vacancy "even letting it be filled, if he still needs me".<sup>15</sup>

## BACK TO BRAZIL

Rio Branco dispatched from time to time, following the action superficially. Domício said that when there was talk about "anything other than Acre, he entrenched with the most urgent obligation: that he had to finish his annual report, which thus has been delayed from one month to another, after having delayed it from one week to another".<sup>16</sup> His initial plans for Domício da Gama was for him to work as a secretary to Rio Branco in the settlement of the foreign policy machine, help him to grease his cogs and get away from him. However, he ended up staying in the role for four years, divided among the routine of the Cabinet, the movement of the diplomatic environment and the negotiations of the Treaty of Petrópolis.

His greatest challenge was to move away from Rio Branco. The latter did not take into consideration his personal requests for movement, unless he had an interest in them. Domício managed to be appointed to Paris in August 1904. He actually travelled there, but one month and a half later Rio Branco called him back as Support Attaché to the Cabinet, though he was still stationed

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14 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Joaquim Nabuco. Brussels, 01/25/1903. Fundaj, CP P107 DOC 2270.

15 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Graça Aranha, Petrópolis, 03/19/1903. ABL, AGA 10.3.13.

16 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Graça Aranha, Petrópolis, 01/28/1904. ABL, AGA 03/10/2013.

in Paris. Four months later, he received from the Viscount of Cabo Frio the presidential decree that promoted him to Minister resident in Colombia. However, Domício was not displaced to that post.

There was an opening in Lima, which was an extremely important post for Rio Branco considering the border issue with Peru. The position of head of the Legation was granted on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1902, to Manuel de Oliveira Lima, who did not hasten to take it. In fact, when he left Japan, Oliveira Lima made a trip that Almeida called “the longest diplomatic transfer, ever”,<sup>17</sup> although he was aware not only of the urgency of taking over, but also of the significance of the position to the Chancellor. Ultimately, Domício da Gama was appointed to Lima, where he arrived on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1906, that is, in the beginning of Rio Branco’s second term.

### TAKING OVER A POST

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1907, Domício da Gama arrived in Lima taking orders to submit to the local government a proposal for the recognition of Peru’s Eastern boundary. His performance, however, was beyond instructions, dedicating himself to the softening of the harsh tone of the newspapers against Brazil. Two months after his arrival he already reported to Rio Branco the result of his work: “for some weeks now, annoying adjectives expressing regret or simple malevolence against us have failed to appear”. In his Spanish lessons with an Augustinian friar, he realized that the Peruvian society did not know the Brazilian writers. When he became aware that the National Library of Lima was still recovering from

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17 CARDIM, Carlos Henrique, FRANCO, Álvaro da Costa. (orgs). *Rio Branco, a América do Sul e a modernização do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: EMC, 2002, p. 251.

the attack made by the Chilean soldiers during the occupation of the city, he started to work for its recovery, asking his scholar friends to send him books.

After watching a military parade, Domício wrote a confidential letter to Rio Branco, in which he recommended the appointment of military attachés to the three legations of South America “that are most interesting for us to know”.<sup>18</sup> The profile of the attachés should be carefully evaluated, because they needed to be reserved without looking reserved, and to be sociable without intimacies. Rio Branco took note and promised a response, but he did not do that. Gama’s intuition regarding the desirability of naval and military attachés only became important with Nilo Peçanha’s regulation, in 1918.<sup>19</sup>

The pace of the border negotiations under Domício da Gama was slow. The completion of the Peruvian issue only occurred in 1909, when Gama was already in Argentina. In a later assessment of his stay in Peru, Domício said he was convinced that he had been able to solve the relationship problems of both countries, because during his stay there was no open hostility or indifference. The delight of the Peruvians was attested to by several vehicles of Lima’s press, such as the Magazine *Actualidades*, which even considered him a *standard diplomat*.

## IN BUENOS AIRES

Domício’s transfer to Buenos Aires was published in December 1907, but he only moved in May 1908, and not without tribulations.

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18 GAMA, Domício da. Official communication addressed to the Baron of Rio Branco, Lima, 06/06/1907. AHI, MDB. Lima. Ofícios. 1906-1907, 212.4.05.

19 CASTRO, Flávio Mendes de Oliveira. *História da organização do Ministério das Relações Exteriores*. Brasília: Ed. da Universidade de Brasília, 1983, p. 242.



Telegrams sent by Rio Branco, received when he was on his way, informed Domício that he had to go to Rio de Janeiro, no longer Buenos Aires. At the same time, Rio Branco instructed the legation in Buenos Aires to consult the Argentinean government about the appointment of a naval attaché. These unusual instructions by Rio Branco were due to the increase of tension in the diplomatic relations between Brazil and Argentina, which took place after the rise of Estanislau Zeballos, the Argentinean negotiator in the matter of Palmas, to head of the Argentinean Chancellery in November 1906.

Given that background, Domício da Gama's trip to take over the post in Buenos Aires was long and busy. After 34 days of travel from Peru to Brazil, the twenty days spent in Rio de Janeiro were of intensive studies and works next to the "chief who was oblivious, ill-tempered and tormented by dispersive occupations".<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, he thought that the Argentinean capital would be an interesting post, mainly for the challenge of an "advertisement of a Brazilian gentleman's personal experience and gradual action in a frankly, hostile environment".

On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, he arrived in Buenos Aires within an environment, which was at its peak of distrust regarding Brazil. For that reason, at first, based on conversations with Assis Brazil, whom he succeeded at the post, Domício suggested the promotion of a Triple Entente among Argentina-Brazil-Chile, since "if the authorization for the armaments is simply not voted, a friendly gesture from us (the *Entente*) will promote *détente*".<sup>21</sup>

The official reception occurred only 18 days after he arrived, but the *Diário* of Buenos Aires interviewed him the next day. The ultimate assessment of the journal was that Brazil had made a

20 Letter to Joaquim Nabuco, Buenos Aires, 08/15/1908. Fundaj, CP P252 DOC 5163.

21 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Rio Branco, Buenos Aires, 08/03/1908. IHGB, CDG, Tin 646 12 folder.

good choice, since the circumstances demanded someone direct, rather than *contradanzas de espadín*. Yet the mood of the press was not friendly. Domício told Rio Branco that Zeballos's goal was to work for his candidacy for Representative and advised him not to feed the controversy, adding that Zeballos had more friends than enemies. Meanwhile, he had to keep calm and to seek the means for conciliation. Because of the continuation of the alarmist campaign of Zeballos, Gama asked Rio Branco to intercede with the Brazilian press in order to prevent the Argentinean game, whose purpose was to provoke unrest in Brazil.

The increased distrust in the Argentinean scenario led Domício to advise against the continuation as attaché of the Brazilian Navy commander Batista Franco, for he has not "been able to fulfill his mission to study naval advances of this country whose Government refused him permission to visit military ports and establishments".<sup>22</sup> To agitate the political scenario even more, Estanislau Zeballos made criticisms in the Argentinian newspapers about the content of a telegram that the Brazilian Chancellor supposedly sent. Making efforts to find out the problem, Rio Branco associated the telegram from Zeballos as being his telegram sent to the Brazilian legation in Santiago of Chile, the number of which was 9. Since then, the efforts were made in a triangular action: Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires and Santiago. The function of Domício da Gama was to obtain through Victorino de la Plaza three copies of the true encrypted telegram, comparing his text with the content of the complaint made by Zeballos and with one of the alleged copies that the Argentinean Chancellor circulated. Once that was done, the documents were published in the Platine newspapers, and the debates were divided regarding the truth of such instructions.

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22 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Lauro Müller, 04/18/1912. AHI, MDB, Washington, Letters of 1912, 234.1.13.

Domício interpreted that the events advanced favorably, since the newspapers were tired of the subject, while the European diplomats admired the Brazilian patience in the case. His expectation was that the incident was near its end and he was waiting for a statement by the Argentinean Government, or a cordial word of Victorino de la Plaza about the case. Domício feared, however, that de la Plaza used the strategy of silence to bury the incident, and thus avoid waves that could hinder his project to be nominated for President. During a dinner at the Jockey Club, Gama and de la Plaza got what Domício called one hour of heated discussion, in which “I raised my voice several times”.<sup>23</sup> That public irritation, unprecedented in his career, resulted from Domício’s non-acceptance of the Argentinean government’s attitude, which intended to consider that the incident was over without a formal explanation, which was what actually happened.

To Domício da Gama the end of the episode of telegram no. 9 was not satisfactory. It served to strengthen his argument that the frankness that he had used was justified, because he was certain that to speak loud and clear was a tactic that would yield good results in that episode. For him, the Argentineans were impulsive and changed their opinion and their resolution very quickly: “That’s how we must treat them, yelling when it is needed, and lowering the voice when they admire that they were ‘extra limited’”. Domício did not fear a breakup, since the Argentinean conservative interests were “indifferent to all that seem to them as a simple game of politics, or even entertainment of ambitious exhibitionists”, but they would arise to “suppress any attempt or threat of harm to the material life of the nation”.<sup>24</sup>

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23 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Rio Branco, Buenos Aires 12/04/1908. AHI, MDB. Lima. Letters. July- December 1908, 206.2.04.

24 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Rio Branco, 12/22/1908. AHI, APBRB. Part III (34). Tin 824, Pack 2.

Gama was also not shaken with the suggestions of reduction of armaments. “To the third one that mentioned that to me,” he said, “I already answered almost impatiently that even if we were convinced that we had made a mistake to build big ships, we wouldn’t give way to bitter foreign pressure in terms of national dignity, and that no one can believe that the law of armaments in Argentina is a consequence of ours”.<sup>25</sup> Because of rumors about a possible foreign mediation, he claimed that the only possible policy option would be the non-admission of intervention in internal affairs. He was concerned about the possibility that “Nabuco’s pacifism or his Americanism could lead to American mediation”,<sup>26</sup> if the level of the discussion reached such levels.

## AMBASSADOR IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

With Joaquim Nabuco’s death in January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1910, the newspapers in Argentina and in Brazil speculated widely about who would be his successor in the office. While the name of Domício da Gama pleased the Argentineans, the Brazilian press was split. Domício da Gama’s career was assessed and his qualities were emphasized, at the same time that there arose allusions to the indication of Rui Barbosa or of Oliveira Lima for the post.

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1911, Rio Branco informed Domício that his appointment as Ambassador in the United States of America was signed, although it had not been published yet. The approval by the Brazilian Senate occurred one month later, on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1911, without debate and by unanimous vote. At 49 years old, Gama became the second Ambassador (the first one had been Nabuco)

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25 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Rio Branco, Buenos Aires, 08/11/1908. IHGB, CDG, Tin 646, Folder 12.

26 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Rio Branco, 12/22/1908. Op. Cit.

in the history of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In a rare public demonstration of esteem, Rio Branco welcomed Domício on his departure for the United States of America, in what turned out to be the last time they met in person:

*I met him when he was still a young man, more than 25 years ago, being at the time already very loved by my father and my uncles, who were old servers of the homeland. Since that time, I was able to enjoy the beautiful endowments of his spirit and his heart, and to follow with affectionate interest his laborious and worthy career both in Europe and in America, and even here in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. With his personal qualities, and having worked in the early years of his public life, successively, subordinate immediately to Antônio Prado, Rio Branco and Joaquim Nabuco, his career had to be what it has actually been: an example of fruitful devotion to the service of the homeland.<sup>27</sup>*

Going to Washington gave Domício the pleasure of ending his diplomatic career in the same country in which he had begun it. However, his view of the United States of America was different from that of Joaquim Nabuco. In his view, “Nabuco’s Americanism” made him believe that the United States of America would reciprocate the friendship with the same intensity. An assumed Monroist, Nabuco interpreted the doctrine as a good will warning to foreigners, a possession ban that ensured Brazil the possibility to sleep profoundly while the Americans “watched all night long”.<sup>28</sup> Domício, in turn, believed that the sense of watching was

27 RIO BRANCO, Barão do. Salute to Domício da Gama, Rio de Janeiro, 05/18/1911. APBRB. 877 Tin Pack, 12 Folder.

28 JORNAL DO COMMERCIO. O Sr. Joaquim Nabuco e a Doutrina de Monroe, 09/23/1905 apud in: CADERNOS DO CHDD. Fundação Alexandre Gusmão, Brasília: Year IV – n. 7. 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester, 2005, p. 266.

understood in an opposite way. He adopted what he himself called *psychology of the watch*, “whomever wakes up is alert, and must be suspicious”. He praised the attachment to the domestic home, which for him was the extension of the feeling of the homeland, and he believed that if “we had the time to be patient, in moral terms this (Brazil) would be the higher land”. Unlike Nabuco, he would hardly let a foreigner watch his homeland – his home – from so close.

Domício studied broadly what he called the spirit of the North American people, that is, their political tradition, their ruling processes, and their domestic and foreign expressions. He reached the conclusion that since the country was made up of so many different peoples, it started to feel superior to other countries. Business had urged the North Americans to privilege material life, increasing individually egocentrism that was shaped in the national egoism itself. Domício understood that the alliances or even the expressions of friendship did not move him as they were seen as calculated interest. In that sense, it was important to be aware, for “when the American interest, either national or simply private, is in conflict with ours”.<sup>29</sup>

It could be concluded that the American spirit was in full expansion. The idea of being able to intervene “as a big brother in the political life of the unsafe sisters, to teach them how to live” was a practice even before it was established as a doctrine. “This will be the doctrine by Taft or Knox, if Roosevelt does not claim that his name is given to it”.<sup>30</sup> He believed that the United States of America was not only growing as a nation, but that it was also increasingly aware of its weight in the world. Thus, he understood

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29 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Marshal Hermes da Fonseca, Washington, 12/29/1911. IHGB, CDG, Tin 648, Folder 5.

30 Idem.

that it was both a necessity and a national duty to only give way to the United States of America in what was fair and useful. His thought was that Brazil should relate to the Americans based on the samples of consideration actually received, not before them. Besides the absence of prestige, an accommodation could lead to an imbalance in the bilateral relations of both countries, especially due to the unequal competition, since, according to Gama, Brazil was still a small nation in the international system.

The pragmatic Domício did not believe in collective friendships or in certain kinds of cooperation either, especially when they occurred between powers and weak countries. He understood that, when put to the test, when faced with a clash of interests, the power would abandon its good intentions and put their powers in action. Thus, the collaboration with the power should be clearly delineated to avoid traps or tainted competitions that would leave the weakest ones exposed to outrages from the strongest ones. Treating with independence the affairs of the United States was even more necessary since more people started to think that the concessions should be made to that country indefinitely. The trend to increase the importance of the US market, which was already in charge of about 40% of the Brazilian production of coffee and in decisive expansion, after having obtained the *status* of trading partner of Brazil and having received customs favors of 30% for several products, required the attention of the Brazilian government. Domício foresaw that the Americans would always have new demands, which they expected that were promptly satisfied. “Now this is where you might want to put a base if we do not want to be reduced to a simple economic province of the United States”.<sup>31</sup> Concessions shall not be made in exchange for political interests, because the more you gave, the more concessions would

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31 Ibidem

be demanded and the requirements would have no limit. According to Domício da Gama's understanding, one country, any country, should not take on condescending behavior that can be confused with an open door to foreign intervention in its domestic affairs. According to him, in international politics one shall never seem to be weak. Not understanding one's own interest is also showing weakness. He said that we should present ourselves to the world as a *Self Made Nation*, which develops without harm to the right of others, entertaining friendships in the same level line, aware of its responsibility, zealous of its sovereignty.

#### THE CASE OF COFFEE

In the United States, Domício da Gama plunged immediately into the problem of Brazilian coffee in the local market. The main Brazilian product had a unique situation: in domestic terms, it was almost entirely produced and financed by the national farmers and 90% of their export was made by British, American and German exporters.<sup>32</sup> In this scenario, the Brazilian Government was a hostage to the requirements and demands of the coffee bourgeoisie, which was reflected in the policy known as *café com leite*. In order to sustain its overproduction the surplus of the product was purchased by the US Government or by the federal government. Successive valuation policies were directed by the coffee barons with the endorsement of the federal government. The world recession of 1907 affected the promise of the Brazilian federal government to help raise funds for the Government of São Paulo who had begun to negotiate a new loan with German bankers. By the end of 1907 and with the opposition of the Rothschilds,

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32 TOPIK, Steven. *A presença do Estado na economia política do Brasil de 1889 a 1930*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 1987, p. 73 and 86



traditional Brazilian bankers, the scheme was already doomed to fail. Without money, the natives of São Paulo appealed to coffee importers and exporters of coffee.

*In December 1908, the government of São Paulo concluded an agreement for 15,000,000 pounds with the Schroder Bank, of the Englishman Henry Schroder, and the Société Générale. 10,000,000 of Schroder and 5,000,000 of the Société; however, later the Société sold 2,000,000 to the American bankers, J.P.Morgan and First National City Bank. The loan was ensured by the special rate of 3% gold on each sack of coffee exported at the prices of the Covenant of Taubaté and by the value of the coffee purchased by the government of the State of São Paulo. With the loan, the government of São Paulo repeated the action of 1905, buying large quantities and retaining a portion to keep the price, selling the other part to pay the loan.<sup>33</sup>*

Thus, of the approximately 11 million sacks purchased by the Brazilian State, approximately 7 million were stored, at the disposal of the Executive Committee of the loan, made up of seven members: four of them were backed by *Schroder*, two by the *Société Générale* and one by the government of São Paulo, Paulo Prado, of the Prado Chaves House. The sacks were arranged in New York, The Hague, Antwerp, London, Rotterdam, Bremen, Trieste and Marseilles. *Pari passu*, the bankers who financed the operations overtaxed the coffee and created the Recovery Committee to coordinate its sale, which was in turn controlled by the merchant Herman Sielcken. In February 1911, the American Representative George Norris, claiming danger of exploitation of the American consumer, filed a request for information, in view of the possibility

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33 FRANÇA, Tereza Cristina Nascimento. Op. cit., p. 282.

that Brazil retaliated by imposing customs taxes. As a result, the Justice Department endorsed several investigations by Congress.<sup>34</sup>

When he started to talk to Philander Knox, the US Secretary of State, Gama argued that the intention of the government of São Paulo had been to protect farmers against the gradual decrease of the product's prices.<sup>35</sup> He emphasized that, despite the rise in price of all commercial items, coffee prices had maintained, especially in the United States of America, a stable level for 25 years. Gama knew that he and Knox did not agree on the fundamentals of their arguments, but he claimed that it was better for Knox to know about his political stance in order not to prevent excessive "claims with us or, at least, to be cautious in presenting them".<sup>36</sup> However, Domício da Gama's greatest concern was with the possibility that the US government became an official sponsor of the cause, which would be counterproductive to Brazil, due to our extreme susceptibility when dealing with a powerful nation".

## DOMÍCIO DA GAMA AND LAURO MÜLLER

With the death of Rio Branco on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1912, Lauro Müller took over the Ministry. As early as February 23<sup>rd</sup>, he requested Domício to survey the opinion of the Americans, "with whom we always want to march together", about the case of Paraguay. Even though he did not know Lauro Müller in person, Domício responded the next day, advising him to maintain the freedom of action that Brazil always had. He proposed that

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34 FRANÇA, Tereza Cristina Nascimento. *Op. cit.*, p. 280-285.

35 Letter to Philander Knox, Washington, 06/19/1911. AHI, MDB, Washington, Ofícios. apr/dec 1911, 234.1.12.

36 Official communication addressed to the Baron of Rio Branco, Lima, 06/18/1907. AHI, MDB. Lima. Ofícios. 1906-1907, 212.4.05.

the new Minister avoided asking for advice or seeking the approval of the Americans on Brazilian politics in South America, “in order not to pave the way for inadmissible claims, in that realm and in another, as has been the tendency”.<sup>37</sup> Domício consulted if the Minister agreed with his way of thinking and if he authorized him to pursue that line. The response to this consultation, however, never arrived. Müller’s stance was to avoid coffee-related matters altogether.

Gama informed the Brazilian Chancellery that the American Ministry of Justice was preparing to submit an opinion on the coffee issue. His intuition was that the American government would be strict and he feared the establishment of a criminal prosecution, which would lead the public opinion to complain against the foreign product.<sup>38</sup> He feared that the rumors of the judicial sale of the coffee damaged business, and could decrease the action of public authorities, preventing them from retaining the products and from maintaining the prices. Such an action could have an unpredictable impact on the Brazilian coffee crop. On May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1912, Müller responded to Domício da Gama authorizing the hiring of a lawyer and defining a stance on the case: to prevent the judicial sale of the coffee.

Despite an elusive Knox, Domício was able to tear from him the promise that he would talk to the Minister of Justice. Two hours later, Knox called Gama stating that the Minister had refused to intervene *ex officio* and that the process could only be decided by the Court. In a further visit to the State Department, Gama found out that it intended to delay the procedure, rather than to suppress it altogether. As a result, he protested with Knox

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37 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to the Baron of Rio Branco, Washington, 01/31/1912. AHI, MDB. Washington, Letter, 1912. 234.1.13.

38 GAMA, Domício da. Craft to Lauro Müller, 01/18/1913. AHI, MDB, Washington, 234.201.

for the unfriendly and unfair treatment and he asserted that he would address the subject in the speech that would be held at the Pan-American banquet at the Waldorf Astoria. Knox agreed that the attitude of the Minister of Justice had been reckless and that he himself had protested to the Ministry of Justice.

In turn, Lauro Müller advocated the argument according to which only the cancellation of the process was interesting to the Brazilian government and that, if that did not take place, Brazil would have a right to complain formally. Assuming that Müller and he were working in unison, Gama left for New York, spent the night in Long Island and from there he went directly to the banquet at the Waldorf Astoria. Thus, he did not go to the Embassy and he did not read the telegrams of Lauro Müller and Enéas Martins who instructed him not to speak about the incident of coffee.

The ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria was full of Latin American politicians, businessmen, Ambassadors e Ministers. Domício da Gama's 4-page speech was right after the one by Philander Knox and took everyone by surprise. Following the advice of John Barrett, who was the Director of the Pan-American Union, he made the most remarkable speech of his life. He started lecturing about South America, going through the feelings of justice of the North American citizens and describing their ignorance about South America. According to the *New York Times*, when the word coffee emerged "throughout the hall, there were heard whispered words 'coffee trust, coffee trust'".<sup>39</sup> Gama went on calling the attention for the need that the development of trade took South and North America to a new era of trade relations. He stated that he had received a harsh blow with the endorsement by the American government to the "somewhat arbitrary and totally

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<sup>39</sup> *New York Times*, 5/28/1912.

revolutionary doctrine to pay the commodity of the others not at the price they ask for, but at what the United States of America, that is, the American traders are willing to pay for it". He concluded that by interfering with the authority of a foreign State and by admitting that an American Court of Justice would determine the loss of the sovereignty of that foreign State, the government of the United States committed a "lapse of consideration due to a friendly government on the brink of international discourtesy".<sup>40</sup>

Only when he went back to the hotel, Domício became aware of the previous instruction made by the Chancellor. He replied, asking him not to spread any news, in order not to weaken the coffee process. In the next day, Müller stated to Domício that his purpose was to create an embarrassing situation for the United States of America. The speech had great repercussion, having been reported in many ways not only in the United States of America, but also in Buenos Aires and London.<sup>41</sup> Five days later, Knox requested to President William Howard Taft the end of the *coffee suit*, and one month after the banquet, the Attorney-General of the case was fired. Domício da Gama's speech, in addition to internal debate nurtured by the press made the attorneyship restate that the lawsuit was against individuals and traders, not against Brazil.

Müller's reaction was to be silent. Again, he did not answer Gama's service letters. The latter asked Enéas to convince Müller to let him issue a note asking the North American government for a definition of its trade policy. Müller's silence made him question, "how can I know which policy I am serving, if nobody writes to me, not even to approve previous procedures"? Yet, Gama

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40 GAMA, Domício da. Discurso no banquete da União Pan-Americana, Washington, 27/5/1912. Anexo numero 2. AHI, MDB, Washington, Ofícios 1912, 234.1.13.

41 FRANÇA, Tereza Cristina Nascimento. Op. cit., p. 293-297.

persisted in his position against the excesses of the United States of America. In August, Müller made the first attempt to move him from Washington by suggesting that it would be convenient for him to go to Japan for the Emperor's funeral, together with Philander Knox. Gama answered that it was no longer possible to reach the ship that was taking Knox. Six months after the banquet, Müller remained silent. Gama received news from São Paulo via Herman Sielcken and he continued to suggest in his letters to the Secretariat of State that that was the moment to eliminate the tax favors granted to the North Americans, since the rise of the price of coffee would prevent them to retaliate by taxing the product. He argued that the victory of the democrats in the election of 1912 would turn the situation easier for Brazil, since some of the leaders of that party were among his best friends. In November, Müller made the second attempt to move him away from Washington, inviting him to head the Brazilian Legation in London. Gama replied that his exit at that moment would hinder the cause, that he was thankful for the trust and he said that he never desired the post in London. It must be emphasized that the proposal, even though honorable, was for a London that only reached the level of an Embassy in 1918, when Domicio da Gama became Minister of State.

Gama's firmness was based on his certainty that it was preferable to jeopardize his personal position than to show political weakness or to taint the national character. He often had to deny, in Washington, rumors that the coffee would be sold by the Brazilian government and to go against the pressures that Müller said that he had received from the North American Embassy in Rio de Janeiro. With Sielcken having stated that the North-American government would not go on with the lawsuit, Müller asserted to Edwin Morgan, the North American Ambassador in Rio de Janeiro, that, the statement made by

Sielcken was not the desire of the Brazilian government. At that stage, Gama clarified that the indiscretions did not come from him, but from the Ministry of Justice, which had apologized to the Embassy, and warned the Chancellor about the biased news that was published in the newspapers and that he promptly denied. He also argued that the United States would be the greatest loser if the situation lasted longer and, having in mind the rise of the democrat administration, scheduled to occur soon, the moment was opportune to settle the relations between both countries.

Despite Gama's advice, when, in November, Ambassador Morgan proposed to the Brazilian Foreign Office the sale of the sacks in the market, free from restrictions and in the short run (before or until April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1913), Müller accepted the arrangement without consulting Domício, and, in January, the stock was liquidated in London. It must also be emphasized that one month after the negotiation with Morgan, the Ministry of Finance renewed the reduction of rights to certain North American products, "previously granted for the terms of 1904, 1906, 1910, 1911 and 1913".<sup>42</sup> Thus, in the serious financial crisis of 1914, at the same time as World War I, Brazilian coffee underwent serious value losses.

Gama still tried to call the attention of the Chancellor for a likely collateral effect of this attitude in the region: mainly Argentina could feel harmed. He emphasized that a withdrawal of Argentina from the Pan-American Union would be a blow to Pan-Americanism that was so dear to both the American statesmen and traders. He warned Müller that the representative from Argentina had let him know that the issue of the flours would be brought up at the debate. With this in view, he suggested that Müller request to Morgan the exclusion of wheat flour from

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42 BRAZIL. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Report*, 1914, v. 1, part I, p. XX.

the list of products favored by the Brazilian tax, and that he re-established the reduction to 20% for other items. Even knowing that he would not be heard, he reiterated his assessment that it was necessary a reciprocal equalitarian treatment, a friendship without dependence.

With the rise of the democrat Woodrow Wilson, North American policy started to give priority to the effort to reduce the prices of coffee. Such a stance went against all the efforts of the Brazilian Embassy, which, since 1907, tried to prevent a special policy regarding coffee. Angry, Domício da Gama unburdened with his friend José Veríssimo about the Müller's negotiation attitude and about his inhibition to complain against the offense he received: "now we have a special law against the entrance of the valuation coffee in the United States of America. This was what Mr. Lauro Müller gained with his unsuccessful negotiation: an inciting lawsuit that is still pending and a special one against the government of São Paulo and its coffee. Is not that a great diplomacy?"<sup>43</sup>

In March 1913, Domício received a telegram in which Müller requested that he used the beginning of Wilson's administration to expose the situation of coffee and to request greater commercial facilities.<sup>44</sup> According to the instructions, Gama sought the new Secretary of State, William J. Bryan, who asked him for a brief memoir about the subject. There was a heavy game between both governments about the taxation on coffee for fiscal reasons, having in mind the increase of the income of the treasury.<sup>45</sup> Gama insisted

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43 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to José Veríssimo, Washington, 24 February 1913. *Revista da Academia Brasileira de Letras*. V. 42, Rio de Janeiro, 1933, p. 120 and 121.

44 MÜLLER, Lauro. Telegram to Domício da Gama, 7/3/1913. AHI. MDB. Washington, Telegramas Expedidos, 1911 a 1915. 235/4/2.

45 BUENO, Clodoaldo. *Política externa da primeira república e os anos de apogeu (1902 a 1918)*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2003, p. 377.



with Bryan that the action would hinder the relations between both countries. In April 1913 the Attorney-General Bryan withdrew the lawsuit, which was concluded one month later. Domício da Gama's stance was a counterpoint to servility in diplomacy and right at the moment of expansion of the diplomacy of the dollar. However, Gama's realistic view suffered the counterpoint of Lauro Müller's servility, and Domício's action in the coffee case started to be seen as the dissonant voice within Brazilian diplomacy.

### THE CONFERENCE OF NIAGARA FALLS

The Mexican Revolution did not have profound repercussions in Brazil. Itamaraty followed the case through its Consulate in Mexico City and its Embassy in the United States. With the breaking of diplomatic relations between the United States and Mexico, the Brazilian consul, Cardoso de Oliveira, came to represent American interests in the country.

On April 9<sup>th</sup>, 1914 one American officer and nine sailors disrespected Mexican authorities, entering the forbidden zone of the port of Tampico that was besieged and they were arrested. The Counter-Admiral considered the arrest an insult and demanded the raising of the American flag on Mexican soil, accompanied by 21 cannon shots, an act that the Mexican President at the time, Victoriano Huerta, refused to carry out. The reaction of the US President Woodrow Wilson was to ask the authorization of the Congress for use of the armed forces against Mexico. Ten days later, the Americans occupied the port of Veracruz before the German steam *Ypiranga* landed with war material for Huerta. The tension increased and both Huerta and the first Chief of the Constitutionalist army, Venustiano Carranza, considered the American action as an act of war.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, Domício da Gama, along with the Ministers, Rómulo S. Naón, of Argentina and Eduardo Suárez Mujica, of Chile, sent a joint proposal of good offices to the Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan. The Mexican newspapers welcomed the proposal of the so-called “A.B.C. Powers” as a means capable of restoring peace. Suarez Mujica, who called two other colleagues to discuss the Mexican crisis with the State Department, had taken the initiative. The next day, all three chancelleries supported the joint mediation effort. The historian Frank H. Severance, contemporary of the case, noted that with the blockade of the Mexican ports, the bombing of cities and the invasion of the territory by the United States, “an offer of mediation came like a ray of light through the storm clouds”.<sup>46</sup>

Even though both parties initially accepted the mediation, President Wilson changed his mind. The real problem, he claimed, was the Mexican chaos and so, before the negotiation, Mexico should present a government worthy of recognition. The mediators requested a cease-fire both to Carranza and to Huerta. Carranza replied that the conflict between the United States and Mexico was independent from a domestic war and that the suspension of hostilities would benefit only Huerta.<sup>47</sup>

In March 1915, the US Congress granted to the mediators the Gold Medal, its highest honor, for their generous service in conflict prevention. According to Stephen W. Stathis, only 17 non-Americans received the award.<sup>48</sup> It is noteworthy that the

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46 SEVERANCE, Frank H., ed. *Peace Episodes on the Niagara: Other Studies and Reports* (including Severance's essay, “The Peace Conference at Niagara Falls in 1914”). Buffalo, N.Y.: Buffalo Historical Society, 1914, p. 6.

47 VINHOSA, Francisco Luiz Teixeira. “A Diplomacia Brasileira e a Revolução Mexicana (1913-1915)”. In: Magazine of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute. Brasília/Rio de Janeiro: 1980, n. 327, April /June, p. 64.

48 STATHIS, Stephen W. *Congressional Gold Medals 1776-2002*. CRS Report for Congress Received Through the CRS Web. The Library of Congress, 2002, p. 28.

mediation showed the South American countries that it was both possible and useful to work together. In May, the Chancellors from the three South American countries signed in Buenos Aires, the peace treaty of ABC, pledging to preserve the peace and refrain from wars, sending any controversy to an unbiased Commission.<sup>49</sup> This Treaty was based on bilateral treaties of peace of William Jennings Bryan reportedly intended a “cooling off period” for international disputes. Two months after Domício da Gama, Naón, Suarez Mujica and Bryan signed bilateral peace treaties between the respective States in Washington.

The meetings among the mediators, the US representatives and those of Huerta in Niagara Falls began on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1914 and lasted for 5 weeks. Carranza did not send any delegates because he considered unacceptable the enlargement of the Conference’s scope, since the United States had no right to intervene in the Mexican domestic affairs. Domício da Gama’s stance was against any interference in Mexican domestic affairs, both during the meeting and in subsequent work. Lauro Müller assessed that Brazil should follow the United States if they recognize a Government in Mexico, but should not influence the establishment of this Government. Gama maintained that Itamaraty should have an independent policy from that of the United States, because greater was the desire to help them “it would not be okay for us to attach them unconditionally as true satellites in actions that must be promoted with entire independence of judgment and security reasons”.<sup>50</sup> In addition, Brazilian domestic opinion was more

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49 SMALL, Michael. *The Forgotten Peace: Mediation at Niagara Falls, 1914*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2009, p. 132.

50 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Lauro Müller, 09/29/1915. AHI, MDB, Washington, 1914 to October 1915 Letters, 234.2.03.

linked to Domício's position than that of Müller, tended to oppose any attack on Mexican sovereignty.<sup>51</sup>

During the Pan-American meeting of September 18<sup>th</sup>, 1915, Domício took a stance contrary to the approval of a draft resolution that, in his view, violated Mexican sovereignty – a stance, according to Arthur Link, which was correct and sensitive.<sup>52</sup> Fifteen days later, on October 18<sup>th</sup>, there was a new Conference between the Secretary of State Robert Lansing and the mediators. He concluded that the Carrancista party was the only one that substantially had the crucial characteristics to be recognized as a *de facto* government. Domício was authorized by the Brazilian government to recognize the carrancista government separately, but on the same day as the others did. On the same day in which he received this statement, he sent a letter to Müller, advising him not to immediately accredit a Minister by the government only. He considered that Itamaraty would recognize Huerta's government in an isolated manner as a gesture of Pan-Americanism.<sup>53</sup>

In the following years, Domício continued to follow the case through newspapers and in conversations with Mexican politicians such as Eliseo Arredondo. In his letters to Müller, he returned the thesis that the ruin of the Republic of Mexico was hurried, if not determined, by the neighborhood of the United States, but if the war broke out, the blame would be only of the government.<sup>54</sup>

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51 VINHOSA, Francisco Luiz Teixeira. "A Diplomacia Brasileira e a Revolução Mexicana (1913-1915)". In: Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro. Brasília/Rio de Janeiro: 1980, nº 327, April / June, p. 70

52 LINK, Arthur. *La Política de los Estados Unidos em América Latina – 1913-1916*. México-Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960, p. 212.

53 GAMA, Domício da. Letter to Lauro Müller, 10/09/1915. AHI, MDB, Washington, Letters 1914 to October, 1915, 234.2.04.

54 GAMA, Domício da. Confidential Letter to Lauro Müller, 07/14/1916. AHI, MDB, Washington, Letters Confidential Reserved Political Dispatches 1914 to 1919, 451.4.05.

## WORLD WAR I

Lauro Müller instructed Domício da Gama in the sense that the Brazilian government stood for peace and therefore it reserved the right to wait for an opportunity to cooperate or act in any case that involved its sovereign rights. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1917, two days after the rupture of diplomatic relations between the United States and Germany, Gama informed Müller that he had reported directly to President Wilson the reason why Brazil took on the position of neutrality: “The Justice of history would say that we broke with Germany because we follow unconditionally the United States that only communicate to us the consummate acts for us to support them”.<sup>55</sup>

In June, already exchanging correspondence with the Chancellor Nilo Peçanha, Domício expressed his opinions about the war and about the United States. He was certain that the Americans appreciated the moral value of Brazilian cooperation in any act of international politics. Reiterating that he did not criticize any orders, or neglected to fulfill them in the best way possible, he stated that it was his duty, as a governmental agent, to say confidentially what he thought would be useful in the sense of contributing to the success of Brazilian foreign policy, which “has always been correct and haughty and, as such, I am proud to serve. But your Excellency knows that it is not enough to be, but you also need to appear to be, since appearances are able to make and destroy reputations”.<sup>56</sup>

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55 GAMA, Domício da. Confidential Letter to Lauro Müller, 03/03/1917. Op. cit.

56 GAMA, Domício da. Confidential Letter to Nilo Peçanha, 06/21/1917. AHI, MDB, Washington, Confidential Letters Reserved Political Dispatches 1914 to 1919, 451.4.05.

## MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

In mid-1918, Domício da Gama was invited to be the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs. As a Minister, he was certain about his participation in the Peace Conference in Paris since the ally Chancellors would attend. He had already begun the organization of the mission when, 20 days after taking office at Itamaraty, he became aware that President Rodrigues Alves wanted Rui Barbosa to head the Brazilian delegation. Even though he was surprised by the news, Domício did not oppose any argument and he soon told the US Secretary of State Frank J. Polk that he would not attend the Congress due to domestic political reasons.<sup>57</sup> Meanwhile, he continued to instruct the Brazilian legation in Paris about the preliminaries of the Conference, confirming, in the same document, not only the invitation to Rui (“today we will invite Senator Rui Barbosa to head the delegation”), but also the fact that he had sent a wire to “the United States and England appreciating good domestic policy effect that we are also represented in the preliminary conferences and insisting that we are invited now”.

On the contrary, when Rui received the letter from the hands of Rodrigues Alves’s son, he claimed that the invitation had been late, since the press had already announced that the Chancellor would be the head of the delegation. Then Domício went to Rui’s house and reiterated the president’s invitation. In vain: Rui rejected the invitation, despite the “loyal explanations of the honored Minister, it was not him who raised his candidacy, and considered his appointment as consummated. All that took place by the newspapers”.

According to Moniz Bandeira, based on Rui’s interpretation about the case, the United States vetoed Rui’s name in a sordid

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57 Telegram of Domício da Gama to Alberto Jorge de Ipanema Moreira. Rio de Janeiro, 12/3/1918. Versailles Peace Conference. Dossier supplied by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 1916-1919. AHI

international intrigue. Francisco Vinhosa, in turn, claims that Rui did not want to submit himself to the instructions of Domício da Gama. Joseph Smith claimed that “Domício feared that Rui’s selection would diminish his own authority as Foreign Minister”.<sup>58</sup> What is certain was that, since that controversy, the nomination of Epitácio Pessoa emerged to head the delegation, which was made up of Raul Fernandes, João Pandiá Calógeras and Olinto de Magalhães, the latter being Minister of the Brazilian legation in Paris.

As far as the organization of the Conference was concerned, Domício made an effort to ensure the participation of four Brazilian representatives in the event and, for that to happen, he resorted to American support. Woodrow Wilson supported the Brazil claim, sustaining in the meeting of the Higher War Council, on January 14<sup>th</sup>, the argument of the Brazilian population density. It was decided that the major powers would have five delegates, while Belgium, Brazil and Serbia, three, and the other delegations would have one or two delegates. It must be emphasized that both Belgium and Serbia were, unlike Brazil, largely affected by the conflict. The decision of the Higher War Council demonstrated Domício da Gama’s personal prestige, whose interests were advocated by the US Secretary of State Robert Lansing himself.

On January 13<sup>th</sup>, the proposal of 2 delegates was approved for the “Committee of representation of the minor powers in the Executive Council of the League of Nations, nominated by the Legislative Assembly”.<sup>59</sup> Epitácio Pessoa protested and proposed that it should be four delegates and, facing the possibility of Brazil not being among the four, he set Domício in motion who

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58 SMITH, Joseph. *Unequal Giants – Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and Brazil, 1889-1930*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991, p. 127.

59 VINHOSA, Francisco Luiz Teixeira. *O Brasil e a Primeira Guerra Mundial - A Diplomacia Brasileira e as Grandes Potências*. Rio de Janeiro: Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute, 1990, p. 235.

once again, asked for American help. He addressed not only the State Department, but also President Wilson. According to the Undersecretary of State, Frank J. Polk, the tough request was granted exclusively by the personal intervention of Domício da Gama.<sup>60</sup> Brazil secured the place and a 3-year term.

Brazilian interests had to do with the sale of coffee from São Paulo, which was stocked in European ports as guarantee of two loans and with the possession of the German ships that Brazil had seized in April, 1917, when the country broke diplomatic relations with Germany. Epiácio Pessoa managed Brazilian interests regarding the German liability for the payment within the scope of the Finance Committee. The result was favorable because of Article 263 of the Treaty of Versailles. As far as the case of the seizure of the German ships was concerned, the Brazilian situation was similar to that of the United States, as Vinhosa noted. Both States had seized more tons than they had lost. In the end, the thesis of rejecting the sharing of the ships in the maritime proportion prevailed, as France had claimed.

On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1919, Rodrigues Alves died. Three months later, Epiácio Pessoa was elected President of Brazil. Upon his return to Rio de Janeiro, Epiácio fired Domício. One year later, he justified that his goal had been to reorganize the Ministry with aids of his choice, and that Domício wanted to go to the Embassy in London. However, Domício never found out why he was fired. He considered that Epiácio was against him choosing the collaborators who did not please him, but in fact, the delegation was already almost organized when Epiácio was chosen to head it.<sup>61</sup> According to Heitor Lyra, a more plausible explanation is that the new president did not want to have in his administration

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60 LYRA, Heitor. *Op.cit.*, p. 279.

61 VINHOSA, Francisco Luiz Teixeira. *Op. cit.*, 1990, p. 198.



someone on whom he relied so much while he was in Europe, and without whom he would not have been able to obtain the results he did.<sup>62</sup>

Domício da Gama's term was short and troubled, yet victorious. Relying on his personal prestige, he obtained for Brazil the result that perhaps no other diplomat in his position would be able to obtain. Despite the successes, his fate was suspended for three months. In September, indications of his transfer to London emerged, the legation was raised to the category of an Embassy. The official announcement of his transfer to London took place on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1919. Ten days later, he took over his last diplomatic mission.

#### FROM THE EMBASSY IN LONDON TO AVAILABILITY

While he was the Ambassador in London, Domício da Gama once again had the League of Nations in his path. In it he was a delegate, President of the Council during the Third Assembly of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session, in 1922,<sup>63</sup> and he represented Bolivia in the territorial dispute between Bolivia and Peru against Chile, regarding the territories of Tacna and Arica. In 1923, Brazil was re-elected as a provisional member. The administration of Artur Bernardes, who succeeded Pessoa, turned the quest for a permanent seat into a real obsession. On March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1924 there was the creation of a Permanent Delegation in Geneva with the category of an Embassy, of which, on May 19<sup>th</sup>, Afrânio de Melo Franco was nominated head. After intervening in the government of Rio de Janeiro, Bernardes sent the recently elected governor of Rio de Janeiro,

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62 LYRA, Heitor. *Op. cit.*, p. 100.

63 Session conducted between August 31 and October 4, 1922. Rol of meetings of the council and the Assembly, AHI, Tin 1271, pack 29.087.

Raul Fernandes, to coordinate the Brazilian campaign for a permanent seat. In mid-September, Domicio wrote to Melo Franco:

*I believe that you do not have much hope to see Brazil as a permanent member. Everything I know goes against that claim. When, since the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly, I wrote and telegraphed about the convenience for us to make diplomatic works so that we could ensure votes in the Assembly of this year, I predicted that we will not be able to convince anyone, except theoretically of the advantage of Brazil occupying a permanent seat to which all countries claim they are entitled... Nevertheless, what could be expected from a separate diplomatic work, we should not expect from a delegation on a majority already unsatisfied... Tyrrell asked me if Brazil was excluded from the Council it would withdraw from the League and I answered that not, but that we would be very disappointed and we would lose the passion to work and to pay. The threat to leave and the withdrawal itself are not kind gestures in those cases.<sup>64</sup>*

This letter was transformed into what became the emphatic telegram that Franco sent to the Chancellor at the time, Felix Pacheco, about the need for “an anticipated, methodical and energetic work next to the other chancelleries for the cause of the permanent seat”.<sup>65</sup>

The scenario of the League of Nations had changed with the withdrawal of the United States, mainly due to the increase of the influence of France and England.<sup>66</sup> The various attempts by Domicio to create a situation that was favorable to Brazil always

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64 Letter of Domicio da Gama to Afrânio de Melo Franco in 9/18/1923.

65 Telegram of Melo Franco to Felix Pacheco, Genebra 9/29/1923, AHI, 274/2/3.

66 VINHOSA, Francisco Luiz T. Op. cit., 1990, p. 245.

came up against the lack of interest and the arrogance of Lord Curzon, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs. Domício opted for working with other employees of the *Foreign Office*. This fact, plus his various health problems made Itamaraty consider that he had a limited entry in the *Foreign Office*, due to “neglect or lack of interest”, and for that reason, he did not obtain British support.<sup>67</sup> On October 17<sup>th</sup>, 1924, the Artur Bernardes administration retired him because of that very questionable assessment, since the British government would never give in to anyone, as was clear with the successors of Domício da Gama, Raul Fernandes and Régis de Oliveira. Gama remained at the Embassy in London until November 12<sup>th</sup>, the date of his last signed letter. The next day, he went to Paris, on his way to Brazil. Still hoping to revert his situation, he sent letters and telegrams that had no reply.

Despite his fragile health, Domício stated that he would not resign to the official impairment. He expected that Brazil gained prestige in the League of Nations due to the quality of its representatives, when they had contact with the representatives of other nations, becoming more known. The most important thing for him was the distinction of the Brazilians “in the Council, in the Committees of the Assembly, in the special unions, emanations of the League, and in the International Court of Justice”. He advocated the annual payment of 40,000 pounds for the honor to be able to be present there, and he expected that Itamaraty created “a special and technical section of *liaison* with the Brazilian Delegation in Geneva, which enables it to fulfill its mission, transmitting information to it, clarifying instructions, helping from within those who work abroad and using and disseminating the work done abroad”. That was quite a prophetic view of the Brazilian diplomacy.

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67 LYRA, Heitor. Op. Cit., p. 331.

Heitor Lyra described in an impressive manner Domício da Gama's exit from the scene, recording the disrespect with which he was treated in the Itamaraty Palace. When he was ignored both by the President of the Republic and by the Chancellor, limited to the corridors and to the auxiliary rooms of the Cabinet, where he sat in silence waiting for a call from the Minister. He did not seek, nor was he sought:

*One afternoon, as always, when he arrived at Itamaraty, he went up to the room of the Cabinet aids and went to look for his chair. He could no longer find it. It had been taken away. So he understood. He took, silently, his hat and left. He left never to come back. In fact, he left to die.<sup>68</sup>*

His physical death took place at 6:30 pm of November 8<sup>th</sup>, 1925, when he was 64 years old, in a room at the Copacabana Palace Hotel facing Ponta Negra Beach, where he had spent his youth. The report signed by the physician Oscar Clark pointed to arteriosclerosis and uraemia as the cause of his death, but it was actually the sorrows and the melancholy that had a decisive impact on him.

## CONCLUSIONS

Domício da Gama's diplomatic views were based on 3 intertwined and key dimensions: the love for the homeland, anti-interventionism and the *self-made nation*. He used to say that he would jeopardize his personal situation before scratching the defense of the country. This was a lesson that he learned with Rio Branco, who often said that the public man must submit with all his strength to the service of the country.

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68 Idem, p. 341.

A fierce anti-interventionist, he took a stance against the Monroe Doctrine, claiming that America for the Americans was equivalent to a condemnation of unfortunate people to barbarism. Paying attention to everything that was interesting to Brazil, he advocated in an intransigent manner the possible bargains, even when there did not seem to be a real reciprocity of interests. He took his beliefs literally both in Buenos Aires and in the United States, in the defense of the coffee and of the Mexican case. Such zeal to defend the international conciliation and friendships without dependencies was supplemented by the frankness in his dealings and by a pragmatism that made him advocate both a stance without retractions as compared to the United States and the approximation from the Hispanic-American countries.

He said he was an agent of the State. His goal was to contribute to the success of Brazilian international policy, which was both correct and proud, and for that reason he was proud to serve it. His idea of *self-made nation* implied the right and the duty of a country to development, without harming others and fully aware of its responsibility towards the international system. Domício da Gama believed that working hard in the international conciliation was more useful than any advertisement campaign. This was the view that he advocated along his entire diplomatic journey, a proud proposal and one took for granted, a necessary national density as a platform to be able to fly in the international scene. As his friend Rio Branco said, Domício da Gama's career was an example of useful devotion in serving the homeland.

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**AFRÂNIO DE MELO  
FRANCO**

Member of a traditional family from the state of Minas Gerais, Melo Franco was born in Paracatu on February 25, 1870. He graduated from the São Paulo Law School in 1891, served in the state assembly from 1903 to 1906, and then began his long career (1906-1930) as a federal congressman, during which time he periodically held a post in the federal government. After a diplomatic mission to Bolivia in 1917, he became Minister of Transportation during 1918-1919, and represented Brazil in the first International Labor Conference in Washington in 1919. He headed the Brazilian delegation at the V Inter-American Conference in Santiago in 1923 and that same year embarked for Geneva to serve as Brazil's representative to the League of Nations. During 1923-1926 he led the unsuccessful and controversial campaign to gain a permanent seat on the Council of the League. Reelected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1927, he played a prominent role in the formation of the Liberal Alliance,

under the banner of which the Revolution of 1930 occurred. From 1930 to 1933, he served as Minister of Foreign Affairs during the Provisional Government of Getúlio Vargas. Highlights of his performance as head of Itamaraty were the “Melo Franco Reform” (1931) of the ministerial administration and his effort as mediator in the Letícia conflict between Colombia and Peru; in 1934, after resigning from Itamaraty, he once again accepted the role of mediator and was able to negotiate a peace agreement between those two countries. In 1938, he headed the delegation to the VIII Inter-American Conference at Lima and, during the early years of World War II, served as president of the Inter-American Neutrality Committee. He died on January 1, 1943.

## AFRÂNIO DE MELO FRANCO: THE CONSOLIDATION OF FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY

*Stanley Hilton*

The telephone call on the night of October 24, 1930, made on behalf of the Army's Chief of Staff, put an end to the voluntary asylum of Afrânio de Melo Franco in the Peruvian embassy, where he had taken refuge to escape police pursuit. Summoned to Catete Palace and invited that same night, by the military junta that had just deposed President Washington Luís, to accept the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, Melo Franco agreed. A few days later, Getúlio Vargas, the leader of the victorious revolutionary forces, assumed power in Rio de Janeiro and, on organizing his Provisional Government (1930-1934), asked Melo Franco to remain at his post. A professed partisan of the movement that had overthrown the Old Republic, Melo Franco accepted the task and thus became the *Chanceler da Revolução* ("Foreign Minister of the Revolution") in charge of Brazilian diplomacy during what was one of the most tumultuous periods of contemporary history. This

would not be his first experience with challenges abroad – in the decade prior to the Revolution of 1930, he had participated closely in some of the most dramatic moments in Brazil’s diplomatic experience, earning an international reputation for his knowledge of law and talent as a negotiator and diplomat. The problems he would now face, however, would put all his qualities as a statesman to the test. His tenure at Itamaraty took place during the Great Depression, an era that saw the outbreak of the Chaco War and the Leticia conflict, Japan’s military conquest of Manchuria, which represented the initial phase of Tokyo’s imperialistic program in the Far East, and the rise to power of Adolf Hitler, an event that triggered a political crisis in the Old World that would result in the most catastrophic war in modern History. To complicate Melo Franco’s mission even more, sharp internal political divisions led to civil war in 1932 as the state of São Paulo rebelled against the Provisional Government. All of this, as well as the challenge of modernizing the country’s diplomatic apparatus, Melo Franco met with uncommon tact, firmness, and ability. And his services to Brazil would not end when his supervision of Itamaraty came to a close. With a new global conflagration imminent by the end of the decade, he was summoned to represent the country at the 8<sup>th</sup> Inter-American Conference in Lima; and, when World War II broke out and spread across the globe, he found himself presiding over the Inter-American Neutrality Committee. Melo Franco died in 1943, having contributed in a fundamental way, with his long public life, to the consolidation of the ideas and values that served as basis for Brazil’s foreign policy strategy.<sup>1</sup>

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1 This essay was translated by the author. He wishes to thank Dr. Paulo Roberto de Almeida for his friendly and valuable cooperation in its preparation.

## DIPLOMAT OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC

It was in July 1917, at the height of the Great War, that Melo Franco, at the request of President Venceslau Brás, carried out his first independent diplomatic mission. Seemingly only ceremonial – to represent the government at the inaugural ceremony of Bolivia’s new chief executive – the mission had a broader political dimension. Because of the conflict in Europe, there was considerable tension throughout the Western hemisphere. Since the beginning of the year, the United States, with the collaboration of Brazil, had been trying to mobilize Latin American support against Germany in the face of strong opposition from Argentina and Mexico. When the United States entered the war in April, after attacks on its merchant ships by German submarines, and Rio de Janeiro broke relations with Berlin, that campaign naturally became more intense. Argentina, in turn, immediately redoubled its efforts to forge a neutral Hispanic-American bloc.<sup>2</sup> The diplomatic battle, sharpened by the declarations of war by several American states, generated multiple political and legal problems, and Melo Franco, according to his instructions from Itamaraty, was to discuss the situation with his Hispanic American colleagues in the capitals he visited. More specifically, he was to endeavor to strengthen Rio de Janeiro’s bilateral dialogue with La Paz in the face of Argentine pressure on Bolivia.<sup>3</sup>

During the trip, both in interviews and speeches, Melo Franco made clear his personal sympathy, and that of Brazil, for the cause of the Allies – and also proclaimed his beliefs about the moral and ethical uniqueness of a hemisphere united around New World ideals. “This remarkable show of Pan-American

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2 Emily S. Rosenberg, “World War I and ‘Continental Solidarity,’” pp. 313-327.

3 Afonso Arinos de Melo Franco (henceforth Afonso Arinos), *Estadista*, II, 881-882.

solidarity,” he stated in a speech greeting the Bolivian president, “is all the more comforting and full of hopes the greater its contrast with the sinister picture our stupefied eyes behold on the battlefields of the Old World.”<sup>4</sup> With his public declarations, Melo Franco not only expressed his personal feelings, but also fulfilled his instructions by implicitly reminding officialdom and public opinion in Latin America that there was an alternative to Argentina’s neutralist and anti-United States policy – that of the solidarity with the sister country forced into war. As far as the second part of his mission was concerned, he was able to create an atmosphere of bilateral cordiality in La Paz that would redound to Brazil’s benefit during subsequent negotiations. In a broader sense, his contacts with various diplomats and South American leaders – the Argentine President Hipólito Irigoyen, for example – gave him a deeper understanding of Spanish America and deepened his conviction that *détente* with Argentina was indispensable. Once back in Rio de Janeiro, during a secret session of the Chamber of Deputies after Brazil’s declaration of war on Germany, Melo Franco used his influence to calm resentful passions arising from Argentina’s hesitant attitude toward the Pan-American movement led by the United States. The goal of the session was to examine Brazil’s military situation in light of the state of war and growing tensions in the Southern Cone. Designated to assess Brazil’s position vis-à-vis Argentina and other Spanish-American countries, Melo Franco sought to counterbalance the scaremongering of some of his colleagues by vigorously defending the need for greater efforts to strengthen Inter-American solidarity.<sup>5</sup>

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4 Ibid., 885.

5 Ibid., p. 898.



Melo Franco subsequently found himself in the vortex of the two most controversial episodes of Brazilian foreign policy in the 1920's<sup>6</sup> – the V Inter-American Conference in Santiago in 1923 and the withdrawal of Brazil from the League of Nations in 1926. The gathering at Santiago was the most controversial in the history of the Pan-American movement up to that point because of the heated public debate over disarmament that occurred both before and during the Conference. Chancellor Felix Pacheco, seeking to avoid friction at Santiago, inadvertently played into the hands of Brazil's adversaries when he proposed to the governments of Argentina and Chile a preliminary tripartite meeting hopefully to define a common position regarding disarmament.<sup>7</sup> Brazilian strategists believed not reasonably that the armed forces of a country should be proportional to its territory; a nation such as Brazil, with a coastline of more than 5,000 kilometers, needed a larger navy than it possessed. The lamentable state of the Brazilian military was an open secret at that time; in fact, General Maurice Gamelin, head of the French military mission to Brazil, had commented recently in a confidential report that Argentina spent four times as much as Brazil in the Armed Forces.<sup>8</sup> For the Brazilian leaders, therefore, it was unthinkable to agree to a reduction of armaments and Pacheco, in good faith and supported by Rui Barbosa, hoped that Argentina and Chile would form a united front with Brazil in that regard.<sup>9</sup> Pacheco's *démarche*, however, was counterproductive: Chile accepted his invitation to a preliminary meeting, but, while the Buenos Aires press denounced Brazil's alleged militaristic impulse, the Argentine government rejected the idea of tripartite

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6 On the foreign policy of that era, see Eugênio Vargas Garcia, *Entre América e Europa*.

7 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1113-1119.

8 Quoted in Stanley E. Hilton, "Brazil and the Post-Versailles World," pp. 347-348.

9 Felix Pacheco to Minister of War, November 28, 1922; Rui Barbosa to Pacheco, November 30, 1922, Arquivo Histórico do Itamaraty (henceforth AHI).

talks, claiming that “brother countries might be resentful.” Thus, Melo Franco, who had been invited to lead the Brazilian delegation, arrived in Santiago in the middle of a diplomatic storm.<sup>10</sup>

His task was delicate: to prevent any restrictions on Brazil’s right to acquire the means of defense considered necessary and, at the same time, to counter intrigues and mitigate fears of a Brazilian military build-up. He arrived at the Chilean capital on March 24 and immediately sought out President Arturo Alessandri to emphasize Brazil’s peaceful intentions and warn him against what appeared to be an attempt to sabotage the Conference by certain Argentine sectors. The maximum concession that he could make, the Brazilian envoy indicated, was a general statement of principles along the lines of those already approved by the League of Nations and that took into account the individual security needs of each nation.<sup>11</sup> At the Conference the debates at times were heated, the friction palpable, and the tension constant. Brazil was the target of “acrimonious attacks” by the head of the Argentine delegation and the Buenos Aires press kept up its “campaign of virulent hostility” toward Brazil. The pressure on the Brazilian delegation was thus intense, but Melo Franco, a courteous, patient, affable man by nature, conducted himself, in the words of then Major Estevão Leitão de Carvalho, one of his military advisors, with “good judgment, conciliatory spirit and firmness.”<sup>12</sup> To counter the accusations of militarism levied against Brazil, he reminded the Spanish-American delegates that the country’s Constitution prohibited wars of conquest and that Brazil, moreover, had signed thirty

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10 “Never, in any other international congress, had Brazil found itself in such a difficult situation,” General Tasso Fragoso, a member of the delegation to Santiago, aptly observed. Quoted in Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1120-1123.

11 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco, March 25, 30, 1923, AHI.

12 Estevão Leitão de Carvalho, *Memórias*, pp. 86-87.

arbitration agreements over the previous quarter of a century, those negotiated with neighboring Spanish-American countries being especially noteworthy. Moreover, of all the members of the sub-committee that drafted the final text of the so-called Gondra Pact, which reinforced arbitration as a means of avoiding armed conflicts, it was Melo Franco who most assiduously devoted himself to consensus-building; Brazil, furthermore, would be the first country to ratify it after its adoption at the Conference. Meanwhile, he had the satisfaction of achieving his main goal at Santiago: deflecting the debates away from the idea of making specific recommendations on armaments.<sup>13</sup>

The experience in Santiago left Melo Franco more impressed than ever by the Luso-Spanish dichotomy in America and thus reinforced in him the central conviction of Brazilian strategic thought, deepening his fears of even greater politicization and fragmentation of the Pan-American movement. "It is clear that the formation of a Hispanic-American bloc [...] can never be favorable for us," he warned in a telegram to Pacheco on April 20. How could such a trend be fought? The key component of the national strategy was the use of diplomatic cordiality as an instrument of containment of Argentina; Melo Franco firmly embraced that line of action, which promised to help weaken Spanish-American suspicion toward Brazil. His enthusiastic support for the Gondra Pact was a calculated step in that direction; he also acted to prevent what might have been interpreted as a gesture of open discourtesy or resentment toward the Argentine government. According to Leitão de Carvalho, several other members of the Brazilian delegation, fearing that hostile elements in Buenos Aires might engage in patently unfriendly gestures toward Brazil when the group passed through on its return trip to Rio de Janeiro, urged

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13 Melo Franco, *Brazil's Declaration of Principles... April 21, 1923* (Rio de Janeiro, 1923), pp. 35; Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1148-1151.

Melo Franco to omit the customary stopover in that capital. Melo Franco decided against their recommendation,<sup>14</sup> not only because he thought it would be undignified, but because he did not want to miss an opportunity to try to dispel animosity arising from the debates in Santiago. Thus, when passing through Buenos Aires he had a friendly meeting with the Argentine president, Marcelo Torquato de Alvear, in which he made a point of emphasizing Brazil's cordial sentiments toward Argentina. His efforts may have helped to facilitate management of bilateral friction, but Argentina held to its course of seeking to counter Brazil's influence in the Southern Cone: in ensuing months newspapers in Buenos Aires continued to criticize Brazil's alleged expansionist impulses, while the Alvear government pushed ahead with its own rearmament program that saw Argentine military expenditure reach unprecedented levels in the 1920's.<sup>15</sup>

The diplomatic battle in Santiago was excellent preparation for Melo Franco's next trial by fire. A few weeks after his return to Brazil, President Arthur Bernardes persuaded him to head the delegation to the IV Assembly of the League of Nations in September. After that first mission in Geneva in 1923, Melo Franco returned the following year as ambassador and occupied that position until mid-1926. Brazil had been a temporary member of its Council since its inception and the main objective of the Bernardes government was to obtain a permanent seat alongside the major powers, a position that would have increased Brazil's international prestige and influence – and therefore would have strengthened the government domestically.<sup>16</sup> That goal, however, was unrealistic and the campaign undertaken to attain it was

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14 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco, April 20, 1923, AHI; Leitão de Carvalho, *Memórias*, p. 89.

15 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1158-1159; Robert A. Potash, *Army and Politics in Argentina*, p. 8.

16 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1173.

thus doomed to frustration. Brazil was the largest nation in Latin America and the only one that had participated directly, although on a much reduced scale, in World War I alongside the Allies. But it was an under-developed country, weak in both military and economic terms, and it could not legitimately claim to speak for Latin America, where Spanish-American governments tenaciously denied it that right. The reality of Brazil's situation, both internally and within Latin America, thus ensured that the major European powers would not accept it as an equal player on the international stage.<sup>17</sup>

Melo Franco nonetheless made a made a supreme effort to garner votes for Brazil's candidacy for a permanent seat on the Council. "I do not write much because I do not have time to do so, since I spend entire days working until 7 o'clock in the evening and sometimes much later. . . .," he commented in a rare letter to his mother.<sup>18</sup> In the 1923 session he addressed a memorandum to the other members of the Council proposing that two additional permanent seats be created for the United States and Germany and that, until those two countries joined the League, Brazil and Spain occupy the new positions. Because of Washington's adamant refusal to join the international organization, Melo Franco's proposal, if adopted, might be a way for Brazil to become a *de facto* permanent member. Any modification of the Council's composition, however, would require amendment of the League's Covenant, which in turn would depend on the unanimous vote of the Council – and the British government clearly stated its opposition to any such change. Melo Franco did succeed in obtaining Brazil's reelection to another non-permanent term, but

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17 Essential reading on Brazil's effort to achieve a permanent seat on the Council of the League is Eugênio Vargas Garcia, *O Brasil e a Liga das Nações, 1919-1926*.

18 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1178-1179, 1215-1221; Afrânio de Melo Franco Ana Leopoldina de Melo Franco, February 7, 1925, Arquivo Virgílio de Melo Franco (VMF).

a special meeting of the heads of the Latin American delegations to discuss the subject revealed no change in their strong opposition to Brazil's ambition to gain a permanent seat.<sup>19</sup>

Over the next two years, Melo Franco struggled unsuccessfully to convince his colleagues in Geneva of the legitimacy of Brazil's claim.<sup>20</sup> For their part, the European nations that actually controlled the League were concerned almost exclusively with the Old World's problems, demonstrating as a result a marked indifference toward Latin America. "I am not aware of any American interest whatsoever, of any continental problem of ours, that has appeared on the agendas of the sessions of the Council or of the Assembly," Melo Franco noted. The "ignorance" of European leaders regarding Latin America, he thought, was almost total.<sup>21</sup>

The possibilities of Brazil's being able to occupy a more prominent place within the League were thus almost non-existent as the Council early in 1926 prepared for a special session to decide on a request made by Germany to join the League and simultaneously gain a permanent seat on the Council created exclusively for it. Berlin's *démarche* came as the result of an understanding reached by the major European countries at Locarno late in 1925; the aim of the so-called "Pact of Locarno" – in reality a series of agreements – was to stabilize the situation in Europe through border guarantees and the full reintegration of Germany into the political life of the continent. Implementation of the Pact depended on the creation of a permanent seat for that country on the Council, so broader issues underlay the

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19 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1173, 1175.

20 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco, September 9, 1925, AHI.

21 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco, March 19, 1925, Arquivo Afrânio de Melo Franco (henceforth AMF). Sir Robert Vansittart, head of the American Department of the Foreign Office at the time, indirectly confirmed Melo Franco's judgment, recalling that British diplomats tended to scorn Latin America. Vansittart, quoted in Stanley E. Hilton, "Latin America and Western Europe, 1880-1945," p. 5.

determination of the European powers to impose that special arrangement in Geneva. Artur Bernardes, however, curiously saw in the admission of Germany an opportunity to insist on Brazil's claim. If that effort failed, he was even willing to retaliate by exercising Brazil's right as a member of the Council to veto German admission, even though it might have only temporary effect. Melo Franco, on the other hand, fully appreciated the wider political significance of Germany's admission and its possible contribution to the maintenance of peace in Europe, so he warned Pacheco about the inconvenience of disrupting the process. "The use of the veto at this moment would probably result in the failure of the Pact of Locarno, in which mankind has put so much hope. . . ," he stated on a telegram on February 20. "We would expose ourselves to a very unpleasant situation and to universal condemnation, if we took on that odious responsibility," he argued one week later.<sup>22</sup> Bernardes nonetheless stubbornly maintained that Brazil would lose "international authority" if it acquiesced in a permanent seat for Germany alone. Thus, in the early part of March he sent through Itamaraty repeated instructions to Melo Franco to use the veto if Brazil did not receive a permanent seat as well.<sup>23</sup>

The period of the special session may have been the most arduous of Melo Franco's diplomatic career. "I am so tired of the tough battle that I have been waging here for 12 days, working day and night, not resting even in the shelter of home . . . ," he wrote to one of his sons at the end of the month. "I lived on nervous energy, without food, without sleep, without being able to go off alone, just to close my eyes and think." The ambassador exhausted all his legal and ethical arguments with Council members, but

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22 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco (for Bernardes), February 15, 1926, Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1239; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco, February 22, February 28, 1926, AHI.

23 Bernardes to Afrânio de Melo Franco, March 05, 1926; Pacheco to Afrânio de Melo Franco, March 7, 9, 11, 1926, AHI.

they ended up closing ranks in favor of granting a permanent to Germany alone. Foreseeing diplomatic disaster, Melo Franco urged Bernardes to modify his instructions, remonstrating in a message on March 12 that it would be “a fatal mistake” to resort to the veto and thereby shoulder the “awesome responsibility” of jeopardizing the Locarno agreements, “when all other members of the Council shrink in the face of this very serious danger.”<sup>24</sup> The president paid no heed and adamantly insisted on a veto. What made Brazil’s defeat even more bitter was the attitude of the Hispanic American delegates. Demonstrating what Melo Franco labeled “thinly disguised hostility toward Brazil,” they not only expressed to the Council their disagreement with Brazil’s attitude, but sent a collective appeal to Bernardes asking him to withdraw the veto.<sup>25</sup> The final humiliation came when the Council, faced with Rio de Janeiro’s intransigence, set up a special committee to study a reorganization of its composition – in other words, to find a way to remove Brazil – and placed Argentina, which had just rejoined the League, on that committee. The beneficiary of Bernardes’s misguided diplomacy was thus, ironically, Brazil’s arch-rival. While the mainstream press in Buenos Aires condemned Brazil’s stand in Geneva, the Argentine representative on the special committee openly questioned Brazil’s qualifications to serve as spokesperson for Latin America. In view of Brazil’s diplomatic isolation in Geneva, Bernardes sent official notice in June that his country was withdrawing from the League of Nations.<sup>26</sup>

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24 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Afrânio de Melo Franco Filho, March 26, 1926, Arquivo Afrânio de Melo Franco Filho (hereinafter AMFF); Afrânio de Melo Franco to Bernardes, March 12, 1926, Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1243.

25 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco, March 17, 1926, AMF; Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1246.

26 British ambassador (Buenos Aires) to Foreign Office, March 24, May 3, 1926, Records of the Foreign Office (hereinafter RFO); Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1266-1271.



His experience in Geneva left a deep mark on Melo Franco. Hoping to protect what he could of Brazil's reputation in Europe, he wanted no questions about the country's trustworthiness to surface, so he reminded Otávio Mangabeira, who had replaced Pacheco at Itamaraty with the advent of the new government of Washington Luís, to make certain Brazil should make sure to fulfill promptly all its financial obligations when it closed its representation in Geneva. He also remained attentive to the work of the League of Nations and to European politics, corresponding occasionally with European politicians. He urged continued cooperation at some levels with the League, recommending to Mangabeira in February 1927, for example, that Brazil send a representative to a League-sponsored economic conference. But Melo Franco retained from his sojourn in Geneva if not resentment, at least greater reserve, toward Old World political leaders whose disinterest in Western Hemisphere issues seemed patent. In the absence of the United States and Brazil, the League of Nations would increasingly become a purely European institution, he predicted in a letter to Pacheco in 1929.<sup>27</sup> Given what he saw as a political abyss between Europe and America, Melo Franco returned to Brazil convinced that Brazil should redouble its efforts to promote Pan-American solidarity, maintain close cooperation with the United States, and, by extension, avoid European interference in the affairs of the American continent.

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27 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Otávio Mangabeira, May 10, February 23, 1927, Otávio Mangabeira Archive; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Melo Franco Filho, June 28, 1926, October 09, 1927, AMFF; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Austen Chamberlain, February 26, 1927, AMF; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco, February 4, 1929, Félix Pacheco Archive.

## FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE REVOLUTION

The Revolution of 1930, which put an end to the so-called “Old Republic,” was the major watershed of Brazilian history, one that ushered in an era of political and administrative centralization as well as rapid economic and social change, all within the context of political turbulence at home and abroad. At his post in Itamaraty Palace, Melo Franco was not only a keen observer of those events, but he played an important role in decision-making with regard to many of them, helping to strengthen key elements in broad national strategy. In addition to his proven skill and experience in the diplomatic sphere, he enjoyed immense prestige in “revolutionary” circles. He had been a major figure in the negotiation of the political understanding between Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul that had resulted in the opposition candidacy of Getúlio Vargas, governor of the latter state, for the presidency in 1930 under the banner of the Liberal Alliance. When outgoing president Washington Luís attempted to impose his hand-picked successor, those two states, supported by democratic, reformist elements in other states, rose in rebellion in October 1930. João Neves da Fontoura, the main *gaúcho* political agent in Rio de Janeiro during the period preceding the uprising, credited Melo Franco with having seen early on that force would be necessary to end the oligarchical rule exemplified by the high-handed political tactics of Washington Luís. According to João Neves, Melo Franco had employed all of “his consummate diplomatic skill, his *savoir-faire*, his power of persuasion” in the service of that ideal. He gained additional prestige from the fact that his eldest son, Virgílio, was one of the main conspirators and a close friend of Oswaldo Aranha, the real organizer of the “Revolution of October.” For the leaders of the Liberal Alliance, Melo Franco was “an inspiration, an arbiter, a source of wisdom, and at

times a judge,” recalled Aranha, who joined him in Vargas’s cabinet and admired Melo Franco’s capacity for impartial judgment. Vargas wrote later that he had invited him to be foreign minister because of his international “moral projection” and proven diplomatic skill.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, the achievements and personal qualities of the sixty-year-old Melo Franco, did give the new government, in the eyes of international observers, a dimension of moral legitimacy that facilitated initial consolidation of the new regime.

Moral authority was necessary for the agenda Melo Franco set for himself and he intended to maintain it. One of his immediate goals was reform of Brazil’s diplomatic service and, to carry that out, he thought it particularly important that he maintain a line of ethical conduct that would place him above reproach. When his *chef de cabinet* Hildebrando Acioly wanted to place one of Melo Franco’s sons, who were diplomats, on the foreign minister’s staff, the latter quickly vetoed the idea. “I have really missed having one of you on my staff,” he admitted to them a few weeks after the Revolution, “but, to have the moral authority to carry out the tremendous responsibility that falls to me at this difficult time, I was forced to forego that measure.” If his projected reform should end up hurting their careers, he added, “your family name will be compensation for the service that, by chance, I may have rendered our country.”<sup>29</sup> His experience in Geneva years earlier had convinced him of the need for an administrative overhaul at Itamaraty – diplomatic functions, he had written in 1925, should not be “a simple decorative element for individual enjoyment” –

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28 João Neves da Fontoura, *Memórias*, p. 51; Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1305-1355; Oswaldo Aranha to Afonso Arinos, June 30, 1955, Oswaldo Aranha Archive (hereinafter OA); Getúlio Vargas to Afrânio de Melo Franco, 12/14/1931, Getúlio Vargas Archive (hereinafter GV). On the Revolution of 1930, see Stanley E. Hilton, *Oswaldo Aranha*, and Luiz Aranha Corrêa do Lago, *Oswaldo Aranha*.

29 Oswaldo Aranha to Afonso Arinos, June 30, 1955, OA; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco and Afrânio de Melo Franco Filho, December 8, 1930, February 1, 1931; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco, March 29, 1931, VMF.

and the inefficient, somewhat chaotic situation he found in 1930 was a decisive stimulus. "I intend to effect profound reforms in all services . . .," he stated in a private letter on December 2. "I will not make any exceptions, because that is the only way I will be respected." He recognized the difficult nature of the task, but was determined. "I will not commit injustice, but I will not court popularity, because the period we are going through requires from everybody a sincere spirit of sacrifice and renunciation of any material interest." The foreign minister's "very conciliatory" attitude as he implanted his reforms made a lasting impression on young diplomats just beginning their careers, among them future foreign minister Vasco Leitão da Cunha, who was a second-secretary in 1930. "There was no persecution, he would not engage in anything like that," Leitão da Cunha recalled.<sup>30</sup>

In attempting to carry out his reform program, which was designed to improve the efficiency of the diplomatic service, Melo Franco operated in an atmosphere of severe budget constraints. Vargas, worried constantly about the general financial disorder and wanting to avoid a suspension of payment on the foreign debt, more than once in the early weeks of the Provisional Government urged his foreign minister, as he did other members of his cabinet, to cut back on spending;<sup>31</sup> Melo Franco, predicting that he would find himself operating in "an ocean of hatred and resentment,"<sup>32</sup> was thus forced to impose painful retrenchment. He drafted decrees for Vargas to sign that dismissed excessive staff *en masse*

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30 Afrânio de Melo Franco (Geneva) to Melo Franco Filho, January 5, 1925; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Zaide and Jaime Chermont, December 11, 1930; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Afrânio de Melo Franco Filho, December 2, 1930, AMFF. According to a survey made by the Secretary-General of Itamaraty, 63 percent of functionaries were not at their posts when Melo Franco took over the Ministry. Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1374. For Leitão da Cunha's comment, see his *Diplomacia em alto-mar*, p. 39.

31 Gregório da Fonseca (Casa Civil da Presidência da República) to Melo Franco, November 11, November 12, December 3, December 8, 1930, AHI 292/2/2.

32 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Zaide and Jaime Chermont, December 8, 1930, VMF.

and abolished all positions deemed not essential to the operation of consulates and diplomatic missions. In just two months, he was able to reduce Itamaraty's expenditures by almost 21 percent and managed, "almost at the cost of his own blood," to find new ways to save money in ensuing weeks. Even so, Itamaraty, like the other ministries, would continue to suffer pressure from the Finance Ministry to restrict spending even more.<sup>33</sup> Melo Franco had to struggle to persuade Vargas to authorize sending a delegation to the Geneva Disarmament Conference the following year. Such participation, the foreign minister remarked to the British ambassador, would be the "only luxury" that Itamaraty could afford at that time.<sup>34</sup>

It was, therefore, in the context of a constant effort to reduce expenses that Melo Franco sought to carry out the first major structural reform of Itamaraty since the mid-nineteenth century. Hopefully to end the tradition of friction and rivalry between the functionaries of the Secretariat of State, that is, those working at Itamaraty itself, and those serving abroad in consulates and in legations or embassies, and between the consular and diplomatic personnel, he planned to merge the three groups, or *quadros*, into a single, unified *diplomatic service*. This, he reasoned, would be an important step toward creating a corps of public servants – a "civic militia," he privately called it – dedicated to the democratic ideals of the Revolution of 1930, imbued with a healthy nationalistic spirit, and equipped by intellect and training to defend national interests in the face of the multiple challenges of the modern world. In other words, as he told Aranha later, the reform had

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33 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Vargas, December 4, 1930, Arquivo Presidência da República (hereafter PR); Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco, January 12, March 29, 1931, VMF; Minister of Finance to Afrânio de Melo Franco, April 10, 1931, AMF.

34 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Vargas, November 24, 1931, PR; Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1374-1375; Amb. William Seeds (Rio de Janeiro) to Foreign Office, August 11, 1931, RFO 371, W9794/8838/98.

been intended to create “a seedbed for future heads of mission – ones trained in the realistic school of the industrial, economic and commercial competition of our times.” The preliminary purge caused by cost-cutting measures helped to prepare the ground. Mandatory retirement for age and length of service would be a way to open space for younger personnel at senior levels, and that measure was part of Decree-Law 19,592 of January 15, 1931<sup>35</sup>, which implanted what became known as the “Melo Franco Reform.”

To complete the first stage of the merger of the three *quadros*, the decree-law created two mechanisms. The first was periodic rotation of personnel between posts abroad and at Itamaraty (Secretariat of State). Melo Franco wanted “maximum rotation” not only to enhance the professional competence of functionaries by giving them a broader outlook and deeper understanding of Itamaraty’s operations and requirements, but to eliminate gradually the cause of bureaucratic friction. Thus, the text of Article 16 stated that, “for all intents and purposes, the Secretariat of State becomes a ‘post’ for members of the diplomatic and consular Corps.” Melo Franco intended to get the program under way by first calling home the better-performing personnel from posts outside Brazil. The second mechanism was the transfer of functionaries from consular to diplomatic posts, and vice versa (Article 22). This represented a partial merger, with the complete unification to come at a future time after the “purge” of current personnel – that was the explanation he gave Vargas in an official report. The foreign minister was fully aware that the reform would

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35 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco, February 16, 1931, VMF; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Aranha, February 22, 1935, OA. The text of the Decree-Law is in Ministério das Relações Exteriores (hereinafter MRE), *Relatório apresentado ao Chefe do Governo Provisório* [...] 1931, II, Annex C, pp. 25-32. For a careful analysis of the reform, see Flávio Mendes de Oliveira Castro, *Dois Séculos de História da Organização do Itamaraty*, pp. 315-321. Aranha, as foreign minister, oversaw completion of the fusion of the *quadros*.

not please everyone, but that did not affect his determination. "I am making the greatest sacrifices in order to be fair and impartial," he commented to one of his sons. "I keep in mind not friends or enemies, but only Brazil and service to it."<sup>36</sup>

In the realm of foreign policy *per se*, one of Melo Franco's most significant and characteristic areas of action was his conciliatory intervention in the conflicts of the Chaco and Leticia. The goal of maintaining *détente* in the La Plata Basin and peace on the borders proved unattainable because of the volatility of the political situation. When he took office, the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay in the Chaco region was already threatening to degenerate into war, and he quickly began searching for a conciliatory solution that would avoid armed conflict between the two neighboring countries.<sup>37</sup> Itamaraty participated in inter-American talks in Washington about the problem, suggested arbitration on more than one occasion, and advised Bolivian authorities to proceed with restraint, assuring them that Brazil "would make every effort to find a solution satisfactory to both sides."<sup>38</sup> The two adversaries, however, resorted to arms in June 1932, creating a tense situation in the Southern Cone that caught Melo Franco with an agenda already full. In addition to normal administrative demands on his time, Vargas had asked him to chair a special committee to draft a new national Constitution, he faced special circumstances arising from the paulista revolt, and there was the Leticia problem. Still, he did everything he could for over a year to bring about a cease-fire between Bolivia and Paraguay, but, in the atmosphere

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36 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Vargas, January 19, 1931, PR; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco, February 16, February 01, 1931, VMF; MRE, *Relatório* [...] 1931, I, xiv-xv.

37 For a careful analysis, based on an extraordinary wealth of sources, of Itamaraty's involvement in the Chaco question during the crisis period of Melo Franco's tenure at Itamaraty, see Francisco Doratioto, *Relações Brasil-Paraguai*, pp. 387-408.

38 MRE to Brazilian Legation (La Paz), April 11, 1932, AHI.

of suspicion and intrigue that prevailed on the continent, his effort failed to bear fruit. Impressed by Melo Franco's selfless, impartial diplomacy, the new American ambassador in Rio de Janeiro, Hugh Gibson, mentioned to the State Department in 1933 his admiration for the Brazilian diplomat, but he recognized that Melo Franco's sincerity in seeking peace in the Chaco had not been matched by others involved in the process. Due to the lack of disinterested support, Melo Franco, after making a final attempt to secure arbitration of the conflict, abandoned the effort in October of that year.<sup>39</sup>

In the hope of putting an end to the bloody struggle and also improving Brazil's strategic position in the heart of the continent, Melo Franco held out the lure of bilateral cooperation programs. Bolivia had been interested in closer ties with Brazil for some time, and, because of Paraguay's marked economic dependence on Argentina, there were also influential sectors in that country interested in broader options. Building on the modest progress made by governments prior to 1930 in that sense, the foreign minister took advantage of the VII Inter-American Conference, held in Montevideo in December 1933, to take the matter up again. Since the lack of communications was one of the greatest obstacles to the expansion of Brazilian influence, the main project he had in mind was the construction of railways linking both neighbors to São Paulo. Rio de Janeiro had signed an agreement with La Paz in 1928 to finance construction of a railway between the Bolivian province of Santa Cruz and Brazilian territory; Melo Franco, in Montevideo, proposed to his Paraguayan colleague, among other bilateral projects, the construction of a railroad that would link Paraguay to São Paulo. In Itamaraty's broader strategic

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39 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1384-1406; Hugh Gibson to State Department, September, 1933, United States, State Department, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereinafter *FRUS*], *Diplomatic Papers*, 1933, V; Doratioto, *Relações Brasil-Paraguai*, p. 404.



view, São Paulo would become, at some point in the future, the center for the supply of industrial products to both neighboring countries, with all that such a situation would mean not only in commercial, but also in political and, therefore, strategic terms.<sup>40</sup> Even though Melo Franco did not achieve peace in the Chaco, his impartial efforts in that sense and the resumption of discussion about possible economic cooperation helped to pave the way for bilateral agreements with La Paz and Asunción at the end of the decade.

Simultaneously with the Chaco issue, Itamaraty faced another military crisis on its borders, this one between Colombia and Peru. The episode began when an armed Peruvian group seized the fluvial port of Leticia, which belonged to Colombia, in late August 1932. The Peruvian government ended up supporting the group, triggering conflict with Colombia. Once again issues of neutral rights and national security arose. The incursions of combatants into Brazilian territory were frequent; Vargas dispatched troops to the border area; and Melo Franco found himself striving to find a conciliatory solution, insisting at every turn on the need for Brazil to remain equidistant from both parties to the dispute. Explaining to Vargas that it was crucial for us “to take measures which put us above any suspicion of partiality for one side or the other,” he reported that he had asked the Army and Navy high-commands to “use great tact so as not to displease either of the belligerents.”<sup>41</sup> After nine months of war a special committee of the League of Nations, with which both the United States and Brazil collaborated, finally managed to secure a preliminary

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40 Hilton, “Brazil and the Post-Versailles World,” pp. 357-358; Hilton, “Vargas and Brazilian Economic Development, 1930-1945,” p. 769; Paraguayan Legation to MRE, 17 January 1934, AHI. Doratioto, *Relações Brasil-Paraguai*, chapters 4-5, provides a detailed discussion of Brazil’s pre-1930 efforts to strengthen relations with Paraguay.

41 Sérgio Corrêa da Costa, *A diplomacia brasileira na questão de Leticia*; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Vargas, March 10, 1933, PR.

agreement stipulating that, while formal negotiations between the warring countries took place, a troika composed of Brazilian, American, and Spanish officers would administer the disputed territory. The Brazilian representative received instructions from Melo Franco to demonstrate “perfect impartiality” in his work.<sup>42</sup> The governments of Peru and Colombia subsequently agreed that Rio de Janeiro would host the peace talks so that the Brazilian foreign minister could oversee the negotiations.

Argentina presented a special problem for Brazil’s foreign relations. Throughout his public life, Melo Franco suffered one disappointment after another in his interaction with Argentine authorities – the experiences in Santiago and Geneva were particularly bitter ones – but even so he kept his sights firmly set, in large part for reasons of national security, on the need to persist in the effort to forge more harmonious relations with the historical adversary. He made a profession of faith in that regard in a letter he had written to Hipólito Yrigoyen in 1928, on the eve of the election that would take the former Argentine president back to the Casa Rosada. “Deeply convinced that Argentina is, among all the American nations, the one with which we have to make continent-wide policy . . . ,” he said, “I have made it one of the goals of my parliamentary life and of my activity as a citizen to preach the need for harmony and trust between Argentines and Brazilians. . . .” As chancellor, he sought to take advantage of every opportunity, no matter how small it seemed, to open cracks in the wall of prevention and suspicion that separated both countries. He thus gave full support to the idea of holding a Brazilian industrial exhibition in Buenos Aires, encouraged negotiation of a new bilateral trade agreement,<sup>43</sup> and persuaded

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42 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1448-1463.

43 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Hipólito Irigoyen, [?] April 1928, Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1297; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Embassy of Brazil (Buenos Aires), June 11, 1931, AHI; Afrânio de Melo Franco to

Vargas to invite General Agustín Justo, president of Argentina, to visit Brazil, an initiative Melo Franco had been considering for some time to “help dispel mutual suspicions” – a phrase he used in a private letter. The drafting of an innocuous Antiwar Treaty by his Argentine counterpart, Carlos Saavedra Lamas, which Melo Franco made sure to praise on a circular telegram to Brazilian diplomatic missions, led him to take the subject up again, suggesting to the Argentine government that a presidential visit would be a perfect opportunity for Brazil to become the first country to sign that treaty, which condemned “wars of aggression” and called for arbitration of disputes. “I have always been in favor of a broad policy of understanding with Argentina...,” he had explained to the embassy in Buenos Aires and he now commented in a memorandum to the Argentine ambassador in Rio de Janeiro that Brazil’s formal endorsement of the pact during a state visit would be “a truly happy moment of their political history.” Lamas did not want to miss any opportunity to generate publicity for his treaty, so Buenos Aires accepted the invitation. The signing of the “Saavedra Lamas Pact” was, for President Justo and his foreign minister, the high point of the visit to Brazil in October 1933, where the new trade treaty and other agreements were also signed. Vargas was more than pleased with Melo Franco’s initiative and with the arrangements made by Itamaraty. “Everything went perfectly: the affectionate greeting, the spontaneous enthusiasm of the people, ... the brilliance of the official acts, the impact of the treaties and the good impression they made,” he wrote in his diary.<sup>44</sup>

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Ambassador João F. de Assis Brazil, January 25, 1933, AAMF.

44 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco, October 01, 1933, VME; MRE, Circular no. 741, December 28, 1932, “A Versão Oficial”, part VI, pp. 74-81; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Orlando Leite Ribeiro (Buenos Aires), October 17, 1932, GV; Getúlio Vargas, *Diário*, vol. I, p. 243.

While Melo Franco sought to improve bilateral relations with Argentina, create conditions for a strengthening of ties with Bolivia and Paraguay, and reestablish peace on the borders, he strove to cultivate special relations with the United States. That was precisely why the decision, for financial reasons, to give up the American naval mission was so painful. The Navy high command objected that naval instruction would be seriously degraded, and Melo Franco agreed completely, but, as he reported to the director of the School of Naval Warfare in December 1930, Vargas unfortunately remained “adamant” about the need to avoid the expense. In an apologetic letter to Edwin Morgan, the American ambassador, Melo Franco explained that the financial crisis was necessarily the “primordial and basic concern” of the government.<sup>45</sup> International circumstances at that time did not call for large-scale bilateral initiatives, but Itamaraty, through diplomatic gestures and political coordination, sought to compensate for the unexpected setback in the naval sector. In an effort to coordinate diplomatic action, Melo Franco maintained frequent contact with Morgan and his successor, Hugh Gibson, during the Chaco crisis. The foreign minister welcomed the inauguration of Franklin Roosevelt as president of the United States in early 1933 and became a profound admirer of the New Deal. “I know very well that the Washington assignment outweighs all others in importance and interest, especially now, when the vast program of economics and finance is being carried out...,” he noted. Gibson, who was at his first South American post after several years in Europe, was impressed by the friendliness shown by Itamaraty and the Provisional Government and quickly came to view Brazil as a dedicated friend of the United States. “These strange people really

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45 Admiral José Maria do Penido (Escola de Guerra Naval) to Minister of Navy, December 2, 1930; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Penido, December 03, 1930; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Edwin Morgan, December 04, 1930, AHI.

seem to like us . . . ,” he commented in a letter to a friend. The signals of goodwill sent by Itamaraty were welcome in Washington, and Roosevelt, in conversation with Ambassador João Francisco de Assis Brasil, expressed “sincere interest” in Brazil, a country that naturally occupied a central place in the “Good Neighbor” policy and also represented a key partner in the liberal trade program that Roosevelt intended to launch. In order to meet Washington’s interest, Melo Franco ordered preliminary discussions for a new trade agreement with the United States.<sup>46</sup>

As far as Europe was concerned, Brazilian diplomacy dealt mainly with trade and foreign debt problems, avoiding any political involvement. The series of trade agreements that Itamaraty began negotiating in 1931 – it ultimately signed more than thirty – was designed primarily to revive commerce with the Old World. But the only politicalmilitary episode pertaining to Europe in which Brazil participated during Melo Franco’s tenure at Itamaraty was the Geneva Disarmament Conference, which began its sessions in February 1932. The foreign minister, with his realistic view of the problem and quite aware of the climate of opinion in Europe, was deeply skeptical about any contribution the Conference might make to international peace. “I do not think there will be any appreciable results,” he confessed to his son Afonso Arinos, who accompanied the delegation as its secretary, “but our duty was to attend and collaborate.” Melo Franco was well aware of the precariousness of Brazil’s means of national defense and, thus, to “collaborate” meant to insist on the right to acquire weapons. In consultation with military leaders, he had already turned down an invitation from the League of Nations to join a

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46 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Hildebrando Acioly, April 10, 1933, Hildebrando Acioly Archive (henceforth HA); Hugh Gibson to J. Phillip Groves, September 25, 1933, Box 46, Hugh Gibson Papers (henceforth HG); João F. Assis Brasil, report, June 9, 1933, AHI; Gibson to State Department, August 21, 1933, *FRUS, 1933, V*, 13, 18; Stanley E. Hilton, *Brazil and the Great Powers, 1930-1939*, p. 50.

moratorium on arms purchases, and it was during the gathering in Geneva that Brazilian authorities completed their studies for a program of naval rearmament and Melo Franco began seeking possible suppliers abroad.<sup>47</sup> Aside from sending delegates to Geneva and cooperation with the special committee of the League of Nations in the case of Leticia, political interaction with Europe was minimal. Melo Franco not only made it clear in talks with British diplomats that Brazil was not interested in rejoining the League of Nations, but also resisted its interference in the Chaco question. In mid-1933 he even expressed to the Bolivian and the Paraguayan governments his “sadness” over the possibility that the inter-American system might not be able to solve a “peculiarly American” problem and have to hand it over to what was basically a European entity, a point he made to the American *chargé d'affaires* as well.<sup>48</sup>

There was another political influence coming from Europe that Itamaraty resisted tenaciously during this period: communism. The information that arrived from various European posts on the activities of the Third International (Communist), or Comintern, headquartered in Moscow, were somber and, in South America, the Communists appeared to be dangerously active, fomenting strikes and subversive movements in several countries. What was even more serious, the Comintern seemed to be channeling agents, weapons and funds to Brazil

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47 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Afonso Arinos, April 19, 1932, AAMF; Vice-Admiral Augusto C. De Sousa e Silva to Afrânio de Melo Franco, January 7, 1931, AMF; General Augusto Tasso Fragosos to Minister of War, October 29, 1931; Chief, Army General Staff to Minister of the Navy, November 6, 1931, Arquivo José Carlos de Macedo Soares (henceforth JCMS); Minister of Navy to Afrânio de Melo Franco, November 24, 1931; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Ambassador Raul Regis de Oliveira (London), November 25, 1931; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Brazilian Embassy (Washington), November 28, 1931, AHl; Hilton, *Brazil and the Great Powers*, p. 113-114.

48 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1397-1405; U.S. Embassy (Rio) to Department of State, July 26, 1933, *FRUS*, 1933, V, p. 350; Foreign Office, memorandum, November 29, 1933, RFO 371/16515. An official of the Foreign Office actually attributed to Itamaraty an effort to sabotage the work of the League in South America. Robert Craigie, memo, January 22, 1934, RFO 371/17441.

itself, its main target in the region. In that connection Melo Franco received constant news from the Brazilian diplomatic missions in neighboring countries about alleged movements of Luís Carlos Prestes, the former leader of the protest and reform movement in the 1920s known as *tenentismo*, who had converted to Marxism and who actually was not in South America at that time, but in Moscow where he was indeed developing plans for a revolution in Brazil. The information from abroad gained credibility, however, because of the abundant signs of Communist-sponsored agitation inside the country.

Melo Franco, therefore, took several steps to strengthen the *cordon sanitaire* that governments in the 1920s had tried to erect around Brazil in the face of the perceived threat from the Soviet Union, with which Rio de Janeiro had broken relations in 1918. Itamaraty and the Federal District police developed an intensive exchange of information on subversive activities, Melo Franco helped forge an understanding between the Brazilian and Argentine police forces on anti-Communist cooperation, sought to interest the authorities in Montevideo in a similar service, and supported new restrictions on Russian immigration. He also firmly opposed the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with the Kremlin and any direct trade with the USSR.<sup>49</sup>

The most arduous episode for Melo Franco as foreign minister was undoubtedly the civil war unleashed in July 1932, when the state of São Paulo, with the aid of dissident military elements, rebelled against the Provisional Government, demanding an end to the dictatorship and immediate reconstitutionalization. Melo Franco believed sincerely in the cause of the Revolution of 1930

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49 Stanley E. Hilton, *Rebelião Vermelha*, Chapter 5; Hilton, *Brazil and the Soviet Challenge, 1917-1947*, chapter 2. For restrictions on immigration, see MRE, Circular Reservado No. 637, October 10, 1931, "A Versão Oficial", pp. 39-40. For further discussion of Communist activities in Brazil and those of Luís Carlos Prestes in the Soviet Union, see Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, *Estratégias da Ilusão*.

insofar as it promised to eliminate injustice in the political system and democratize it. The rebellion launched by São Paulo he saw as an attempt to restore the oligarchical practices of the Old Republic. He thus had no qualms about contributing to quell the uprising. Inevitably, the conflict created several areas of friction between federal authorities and foreign diplomatic missions, including the interruption of communications, the sea and air blockade, foreign involvement in the fighting, and damage to foreign property – all leading to inquiries, complaints, and even veiled threats, requiring constant attention, patience, and tact by the foreign minister and his aides.<sup>50</sup>

Melo Franco's service at Itamaraty ended unexpectedly in December 1933. He was in Montevideo as head of delegation to the VII Inter-American Conference at the time of the denouement of the so-called *caso mineiro*, that is, the dispute over whom Vargas would appoint as federal interventor (governor) in the state of Minas Gerais. Virgílio de Melo Franco, backed by Oswaldo Aranha and several other leaders of the Revolution of 1930, was a candidate for that post and Vargas had given to understand that he intended to appoint the foreign minister's son. He was, consequently, stunned when the dictator, to ensure himself control of that key state as part of his Machiavellian maneuvering to get himself elected under the new Constitution that was being debated, selected a politician with no significant support of his own in Minas Gerais, meaning that he would owe his position and authority to Vargas personally. Feeling betrayed, Melo Franco departed abruptly from the Conference, returned to Rio de Janeiro, and presented his resignation. In vain Vargas attempted to dissuade him. "Moral reasons that concern only me, but which I considered imperatives of conscience, forced me to

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50 Stanley E. Hilton, *A Guerra Civil Brasileira*, pp. 223-229.



leave the Government,” he commented in a letter to Acioly, his *chef de cabinet*.<sup>51</sup>

## FINAL ACT AND DIPLOMATIC LEGACY

Ironically, Melo Franco rendered one of his greatest services to peace in South America after leaving Itamaraty. Responding to repeated appeals, he agreed in January 1934 to broker the Leticia peace talks under way in Rio de Janeiro. The British ambassador, confessing his disappointment at no longer being able to count on the presence of Melo Franco at Itamaraty, referred to him in a message to London as the principal mediator for the troubled countries of South America. The fact that there had been little progress in the negotiations in Melo Franco’s absence seemed to confirm that judgment, which was one that Ambassador Gibson shared. As he explained to the State Department, Melo Franco was the “sole existing motive force” in the search for peace in the Leticia region. From his vantage point in Washington, Secretary of State Cordell Hull likewise concluded that only Melo Franco, with his “high sense of impartiality and justice”, could guide the negotiations to a successful conclusion. Late in May the governments of Colombia and Peru finally did accept the draft agreement prepared by the Brazilian diplomat, their representatives in Rio de Janeiro expressing, according to Gibson, “great satisfaction” with the tireless effort of Melo Franco, who had soldiered on despite family tragedy. “In spite of the death of a brother and a daughter during the critical period of the negotiations,” the ambassador commented, “it was largely

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51 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1503-1507; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Hildebrando Acioly, December 30, 1933, HA; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Vargas, January 10, 1934, GV.

on account of his patience, tact and resourcefulness that any agreement was concluded.”<sup>52</sup>

After the successful conclusion of the negotiations, which brought Melo Franco applause from the entire continent, he considered his long career in the diplomatic sphere over. “It’s now a place for younger men and my time has passed,” he said in a letter to his son Caio. Although he had gone into retirement, he was not forgotten; indeed, the possibility of an extraordinary capstone to that career now emerged. Five European and nine South American governments, including those of Colombia and Peru, announced support for his nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize, as did several cultural, academic and professional entities in various countries. Gibson, who personally thought that the former foreign minister more than deserved the honor, endeavored unsuccessfully to persuade the State Department to make an official endorsement. In the end, Melo Franco’s candidacy did not bring the result for which his friends and admirers had hoped.<sup>53</sup>

Melo Franco withdrew from national service at a moment when the global crisis was entering its critical stage. In the Far East Japan was continuing its imperialist expansion, starting a brutal war of conquest against China; Hitler’s regime openly began to rearm in 1935, disregarding the restrictions imposed by the Treaty of Versailles; Benito Mussolini unleashed war in East Africa by invading Ethiopia that fall; in March 1936 Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland, in July the civil war broke out in Spain, which sparked the intervention of Germany and Italy in favor of the rebels; and, late that year, Berlin and Rome proclaimed the formation of the

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52 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1466-1484; Seeds to Foreign Office, January 19, 1934, RFO 371/17485; Gibson to State Department, January 29, 1934; Cordell Hull to Gibson, April 4, 1934; Gibson to State Department, June 1, 1934, *FRUS*, 1934, IV, 321, 332, 360-361.

53 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1512-1513; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco, October 18, 1935, VMF; Gibson to Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, September 27, 1934, HG.

Axis, completing the ideological polarization of Europe. In March 1938, Hitler carried out his first territorial conquest by abruptly annexing Austria and immediately afterward launched a campaign of pressure on Czechoslovakia that culminated, in late September, in the infamous Munich Conference, at which France and England acquiesced in the dismemberment of that unfortunate Central European country by Germany. Although he had no official position at the time, Melo Franco attentively followed events, evincing in letters to family and friends a deep disgust for dictatorships, growing disillusionment with the major European powers in general, and the conviction that the appeasement policy adopted by London and Paris toward Hitler would end up being counterproductive.<sup>54</sup>

With war clouds gathering over Europe, the government once again summoned Melo Franco to service. His friend Oswaldo Aranha became foreign minister in 1938, representing the liberal current in the Estado Novo, the dictatorial regime erected by Vargas and the military high command in November 1937, and he wanted Melo Franco to head the delegation to the VIII Inter-American Conference, scheduled for December in Lima to study Pan-American cooperation in case war broke out in Europe. Despite the rigors of travel to that Andean capital, the elderly diplomat accepted and met with a warm reception by the Peruvian people and authorities, who, in a series of banquets, paid tribute to the mediator of their dispute with Colombia. Melo Franco was elected chairman of the main committee at the Conference, that of Peace Organization, charged with drafting the text of the most important resolution of the conclave, one dealing with continental solidarity in case of extra-Hemispheric war. Due to Argentine obstructionism, debate over the text of the draft proved time-consuming, but Melo

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54 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Melo Franco Filho, September 7, 1935, September 18, 1938, October 5, 1938, AMFF; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco, October 5, 1938, VMF.

Franco once again effectively played the role of mediator. In order to appease the Argentines and thus show to the world at least a façade of hemispheric unity, the final resolution on inter-American consultation in the event of a threat to the Hemisphere made such consultation voluntary, rather than mandatory.<sup>55</sup>

International tension continued to increase in the coming months and, as Melo Franco's pessimism deepened regarding European leadership – that “half-dozen crazed fools fellows who presently govern the decrepit European continent” was how he privately described it in February 1939 – , his Pan-American convictions grew stronger, out of both idealism and national security considerations. “Because of all that,” he noted in a letter to Acioly, now ambassador to the Vatican, “each day I cling more and more to the idea of strengthening our solidarity in the Americas, because this continent is the refuge of peace.”<sup>56</sup> The long-feared conflict broke out in September, when Hitler set in motion the invasion of Poland, provoking declarations of war on Germany by Great Britain and France. Late that month representatives of the Pan-American countries gathered in Panama, where they announced the creation of a neutrality zone around the Hemisphere and established an Inter-American Neutrality Committee to examine the multiple issues arising from the war in Europe. The logical choice for the Brazilian representative on the committee was Melo Franco; the logical place for its headquarters, given Brazil's strategic significance and its devotion to the hemispherical solidarity, was Rio de Janeiro. At the inaugural session of the Committee in January 1940, Melo Franco was elected chairman by acclamation.

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55 Afrânio de Melo Franco (Lima) to Aranha, December 20, December 22, 1938, AHI; Rosalina Coelho Lisboa Miller to Aranha, n.d., OA; Cordell Hull, *Memoirs*, I, 605; Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1569- 1587.

56 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Melo Franco Filho, February 8, 1939, AMFF; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Acioly, May 13, 1939, HA.

During the period of hemispheric neutrality (1939-1941) two things dominated Melo Franco's intimate thoughts: the hope that the Americas could escape direct involvement in the war, and, above all, his faith in Pan-American solidarity. "I am absolutely convinced that the unity of the Americas is the basis of happiness for its people and the most powerful force for universal peace," he said in a letter to his son Afrânio in March 1940, the eve of the Blitzkrieg against Western Europe.<sup>57</sup> One year later, while half of Europe subjugated by the Third Reich, the Luftwaffe bombed British cities, the war at sea became increasingly destructive, and Hitler opened a new battlefront in Southeast Europe, Melo Franco once again stated his conviction that the American nations would find their salvation in pulling together. "Europe is again under the darkness of the Middle Ages...," he pondered in a letter to Acioly. "So let's turn our sights to the Americas, because only here can peace prevail."<sup>58</sup> International circumstances would not allow the permanent isolation of the Hemisphere from the war, but even during the rapid march of the United States towards belligerency in 1941, which progressively eliminated options for the Latin American countries, Melo Franco worked assiduously as chairman of the Neutrality Committee to ensure that the American community marched together as much as possible.<sup>59</sup>

The Japanese attack on the American fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, led to the outcome that Melo Franco had anticipated for some time. Now that the United States had become a formal belligerent – Hitler, in solidarity with Japan, declared war on that country on the 11<sup>th</sup> – most Latin-American nations either broke relations with the aggressor and its European allies

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57 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Melo Franco Filho, March 20, 1940, AMFF.

58 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Acioly, March 1, 1941, HA.

59 Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1589-1615.

or declared war on them. Late in January 1942, a special inter-American conference convened in Rio de Janeiro to define a common hemispheric position in view of the belligerency of the United States. Once again, the Argentine government was able to block more decisive action and the Conference merely *recommended* that those countries that still maintained diplomatic relations with the Axis sever them. On the last day of the Conference, Foreign Minister Aranha dramatically announced that Brazil was also breaking its official ties with Tokyo, Berlin and Rome. Melo Franco, lauded by the plenary for the work of his Committee, saw it transformed into the Inter-American Juridical Committee with much broader tasks. In the following months, while Brazil moved rapidly towards belligerency, that diplomat *par excellence* devoted himself to the coordination of what would be his last legal study: a preliminary examination of postwar problems, which he completed in September 1942. Three months later he suffered a heart attack and, in the early hours of January 1, 1943, he passed away. Getúlio Vargas paid final tribute to him by decreeing a three-day period of official mourning and extending to him the honors of a Minister of State. High authorities of the entire continent expressed their grief, especially those of Bolivia and Peru, but it was felt in all American Governments – and also authorities and entities in European countries that still enjoyed enough freedom to allow such demonstrations.<sup>60</sup>

Melo Franco, one of the major figures of Brazilian and inter-American diplomacy, was a profound student of International Law and his expertise in that field was widely recognized by the international community. But he was not a theorist of international relations and he left no collection of writings on the

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<sup>60</sup> See, for example, the telegrams to Vargas sent by the presidents of Bolivia, Peru, and Venezuela, PR. Also Afonso Arinos, *Estadista*, III, 1623-1624.

subject. What, therefore, was his influence on the set of ideas that governed Brazilian diplomacy? Conclusions in that regard emerge from assessment of his *actions*. During the Rio Branco period, that is, during the time Melo Franco was beginning his career in the Chamber of Deputies, Brazilian leaders adopted a foreign policy strategy that originated in a perception of external threat that varied in intensity, but was permanent. Argentina was the main source of that perception, although trends in European policy also periodically represented, in the eyes of the Brazilian elite, an actual or potential threat. The image of Argentina as a country hostile to Brazil was a permanent element in the Brazilian worldview, one that resulted from the historic division of South America into two areas: Spanish and Portuguese America. For Brazilian leaders, Argentina's strategic goal was the resurrection in modern form of the old Viceroyalty of Plata through expansion of its influence over neighboring Spanish-American countries and the progressive isolation of Brazil.

To counter that general threat, the strategy adopted by Rio de Janeiro consisted of six basic components: (1) the peaceful settlement of disputes through diplomacy or arbitration; (2) the strengthening of Pan-American solidarity; (3) diplomatic containment of Argentina through the use of official cordiality and the intensification expansion of bilateral trade; (4) the expansion of Brazilian influence in other countries of the La Plata Basin, especially in Bolivia and Paraguay, to counterbalance the influence of Buenos Aires; (5) a special relationship with the United States, based on similar historical experiences vis-à-vis Spanish America, economic complementarity and commercial dependence, and potential assistance in time of war; and (6) increased military-industrial capacity.<sup>61</sup> Brazil was not an imperialist country and had

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61 The formation and consolidation of this strategy, on the basis of foreign policy elite perceptions of national and international conditions are analyzed in Hilton, "Brazil and the Post-Versailles World";

no territorial ambitions; its strategy, therefore, was a defensive one with one fundamental goal: to maintain peace in the Southern Hemisphere.

The development of a *doctrine*, either diplomatic or military, begins with the study of the past, of previous experiences, and the assessment of the current situation, in order to define both the problems and the challenges. There may be a dose of theory in the calculations, but, generally, the more pragmatic the conclusions about the course of action, the better. The strategy formulated in the early twentieth century was highly pragmatic, but it did not have the character of a doctrine. It was not set down in any document. It was not the result of a debate about its components by a National Security Council (which did not exist at that time). It emerged from historical experience, analysis of national problems and vulnerabilities, the attentive observation of hemispheric and transatlantic politics – and from simple common sense. It would be only in the application of this strategy to concrete situations, and in the evaluation and reevaluation of the results obtained, that its components would be gradually solidified and institutionalized as doctrine. It was in this process that Melo Franco contributed in a significant way to Brazilian “diplomatic thought.”

It is important to emphasize that his diplomatic career began in the period when the components of national strategy and their character as an integrated plan of action had not yet acquired a well-defined profile. Thus, Melo Franco’s profound knowledge of international law, his observation of international politics in general, his scrutiny of the positions taken by South American governments on various issues involving Brazilian interests, and his personal experience in negotiations, especially with Hispanic

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“The Argentine Factor in Twentieth-century Brazilian Foreign Policy Strategy”; and “The Armed Forces and Industrialists in Modern Brazil: The Drive for Military Autonomy (1889- 1954),” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 62 (Nov. 1982), pp. 629-673.



American diplomats, contributed to the consolidation of that strategy even before he became foreign minister. During the period between 1930 and 1933, when he possessed a considerable degree of autonomy in decision-making, he was able to apply that strategy to its fullest and deliver it consolidated to his successors.

The historian discovers in the diplomatic activities of Melo Franco a reflection of that strategy, point by point, mainly the political ones, and of the thought that underlay it. His dedication to the peaceful solution of the disputes was a function not only of his deep attachment to the law, but also of reasons of State and of his personality – factors exemplified in his performance before 1930, especially in Santiago. As foreign minister, he made an extraordinary personal effort to avoid war over the Chaco and Leticia, maintaining the strictest impartiality while he sought solutions that were acceptable to both sides in those disputes. His disinterested and generous performance greatly increased Itamaraty's prestige and the reputation that he personally enjoyed in the international community – to such an extent that, after leaving Itamaraty, he was urged to continue, as a private citizen, his effort to mediate the Colombian-Peruvian dispute, managing to conclude a peace agreement applauded by both belligerents.

Melo Franco's interest in the restoration of harmony between neighboring countries was part of a broader policy of promoting inter-American solidarity whenever possible as a means of better ensuring peace. The goal of his first diplomatic mission, in 1917, was precisely that: to promote greater Pan-American cooperation at a time of growing tension within the hemisphere. Despite the difficulties often found when seeking to strengthen Brazil's ties with Spanish-American countries, Melo Franco devoted himself body and soul to that task in ensuing years. The unpleasant experience in Santiago in 1923 did not discourage him, nor did the disappointing episode in Geneva. After 1926 he remained a

champion of the policy of Inter-American unity, consistently advocating American solutions to American problems, without the intrusion of European governments or entities. His opposition to the involvement of the League of Nations in the political and military crises in South America in the 1930 was the logical consequence of that attitude. In face of the global turmoil of that time, Melo Franco believed that Inter-American solidarity was the only means of protecting the Western Hemisphere against the contagion of war. At the Lima Conference in December 1938 he had to use all his talent as a conciliator and mediator to avoid public disruption of hemispheric unity, and, with the outbreak of war in 1939, his dedication to Pan-Americanism became even more intense.

Cultivating a cordial relationship with Argentina as a means of keeping bilateral friction within manageable limits was an indispensable part of the national strategy. Whether in Santiago or Geneva, while at Itamaraty or in Lima, and in spite of all the disappointment, Melo Franco sought to dispel suspicions, demonstrate good-will, and maintain or lay the foundations for greater bilateral cooperation. Preserving *détente* in the La Plata basin was a primary mission and, if there had been no financial crisis, the Chaco War, and the *paulista* rebellion, Melo Franco, as foreign minister, undoubtedly would have attempted to do a great deal more to improve relations with Argentina. He and his colleagues in the government understood the value of trade as a means of mitigating political differences, which helps explain the support given to the idea of a Brazilian industrial exhibition in Buenos Aires and the negotiation of a new trade agreement. During World War II, there was a tremendous surge in the exports of Brazilian manufactures to Argentina,<sup>62</sup> which was partly the

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62 Hilton, "Vargas and Brazilian Economic Development," p. 769.

result of the discussions that had led to the modest initiatives taken by Itamaraty during his tenure there.

Initiatives to draw Bolivia and Paraguay closer to Brazil were partly due to a purely commercial interest, but they also represented a logical part in the strategic machinery – a complement to the pursuit of Pan-American solidarity and to the efforts to moderate the anti-Brazilian thrust of Argentine policy. Once again the financial crisis and the Chaco conflict prevented greater initiatives in the period when Melo Franco headed Itamaraty, but his personal effort to reconcile both neighbor nations and plans for economic cooperation once the dispute over the Chaco ended was a clear sign of Brazilian interest in creating the bases for more beneficial relations in the future. It bears repeating that Itamaraty, at that moment, helped to sharpen the profile of an image of Brazil as the industrial center of the Southern Cone – a vision that led to several steps in following years to make it a reality.<sup>63</sup>

As for the special relationship with the United States, it existed much more in Brazilian thought than in reality. The fact is that Washington attached importance to it only in moments of crisis – thus during the World War II there was a true special relationship.<sup>64</sup> As a component of the national strategy, however, it progressively lost its salience in the post-war period as Brazilian frustration grew due to the lack of genuine correspondence from Washington. That, however, belonged to an unforeseeable future; for Melo Franco's generation, the need to strive for a special relationship with the United States was an article of faith. In the difficult circumstances he faced as foreign minister, Melo Franco did his best to maintain close and especially cordial contacts

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63 Ibid., pp. 769-770, 773-776.

64 Hilton, "Brazilian Diplomacy and the Washington-Rio de Janeiro 'Axis' During the World War II Era."

with the United States embassy, working as much as possible in harmony with it during the Chaco and Leticia episodes; and, in view of the interest shown by Washington, he ordered preliminary negotiations for a new bilateral trade treaty that was eventually signed in 1935. The Lima Conference in 1938 provided a special opportunity for him to demonstrate to American diplomats the value of close cooperation with Brazil. Secretary of State Hull, who headed the American delegation, wrote in his memoirs that the talks in Lima with the Argentines had been “among the most difficult” of his career; on the other hand, according to Hull, Melo Franco “worked with me 100 per cent.”<sup>65</sup>

Melo Franco helped to define the national strategy and, as foreign minister, he consolidated its components, thus giving direction to Brazil’s foreign policy for the next quarter of a century. None of his successors in charge of Itamaraty and none of the chief executives whom they served thought seriously of modifying that strategy – until the Juscelino Kubitschek administration (1956-1961). During that period, policy-makers finally reached the conclusion, dictated by facts that had been obvious for a long time and especially since the end of World War II, that Washington was not interested in a special relationship with Brazil, as the latter conceived it, and it did not intend to provide economic and military aid of the kind and quantity sought by Brazil and proportional to the services it had rendered to the United States. Therefore, they argued, Brazil should abandon the effort in favor of the special relationship, desist from seeking the role of intermediary between Washington and the Spanish-American countries of South America, and, instead, ally itself with those countries to form a South American bloc vis-à-vis the United States for the purpose of increasing the region’s

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65 Hull, *Memoirs*, I, 605-606.

bargaining power.<sup>66</sup> Ironically, the decades of Brazil's diplomacy of continental fraternity, such as Melo Franco had followed, facilitated that extraordinary shift.

The diplomatic activities of Afrânio de Melo Franco, especially during the period when he headed the Itamaraty, contributed significantly for the consolidation of "diplomatic thought" – the amalgam of ideas, images, perceptions, expectations, suspicions and hopes that produced a worldview shared by the Brazilian foreign policy elite and that led to the formulation of a well-defined, pragmatic, coherent strategy that served the interests of the country admirably during a time of dangerous international transformations. As he confronted, as foreign minister, the multiple external challenges of his time, Melo Franco did not ignore the human element in the diplomatic equation. He thus pursued, within Itamaraty, a goal he considered crucial: the formation of diplomats with a broader vision, with more varied experiences, and imbued with a collective spirit. His eyes always on the future, he began his reform of Itamaraty by gathering around him functionaries who had demonstrated superior capability and a keen sense of duty to create "a sort of general staff for our future peaceful Army at the service of Foreign Affairs", as he stated in 1931. The goal of the reform initiated that year was to train a new generation of diplomats who were capable of meeting the demands of the modern world, regardless of how difficult the circumstances might be. After all, as Melo Franco once pondered, diplomats "should be considered a kind of military, since they also are charged with defense of the Fatherland abroad."<sup>67</sup>

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66 Stanley E. Hilton, "The United States, Brazil, and the Cold War, 1945-1960".

67 Afrânio de Melo Franco to Caio de Melo Franco, February 16, February 1, 1931, VMF; Afrânio de Melo Franco to Pacheco, September 6, 1923, AHI.

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