

Brazilian Foreign Policy in the Cardoso Era

The Search for Autonomy through Integration

by
Tullo Vigevani and Marcelo Fernandes de Oliveira
Translated by Timothy Thompson

The Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration attempted to replace a reactive foreign policy agenda dominated by a logic of autonomy through distance with a proactive international agenda guided by a logic of autonomy through integration. In adopting this agenda, the administration maintained that Brazil would be able to confront its problems and secure more control over its future if it actively contributed to elaborating the norms and guidelines of the administration of the global order. Because of structural weaknesses, however, this policy of integration, adherence, and participation was not adequately accompanied by positions entailing practical responsibilities—responsibilities that would have prepared both government and civil society for a higher profile in the post-cold-war era. In the end, the gains achieved during Cardoso's tenure failed to alter Brazil's international standing in any significant way.

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During Fernando Henrique Cardoso's two terms in office (1995–1998 and 1999–2002), his administration, in contrast to the two that had preceded it, sought to internalize, absorb, and consolidate the markedly liberal changes that globalization brought to international society during the 1990s. Throughout his eight years in office, Cardoso sought to replace a reactive foreign policy agenda dominated by a logic of *autonomy through distance*—which prevailed throughout the greater part of the cold-war era and handed down a model of development based on import substitution—with a proactive international agenda aligned with the canons of neoliberalism and guided by a logic of *autonomy through integration*.

According to advocates of this new approach, Brazil would begin to resolve its internal problems more effectively and assume greater control over its future if it actively contributed to elaborating the norms and guidelines of global order (see Fonseca, 1998: 363–374). By actively seeking to organize and regulate international relations in a variety of contexts, Brazilian foreign policy would also help to establish an environment favorable to economic development, which

Tullo Vigevani is a professor of political science at São Paulo State University and a researcher for the Center for the Study of Contemporary Culture. Marcelo Fernandes de Oliveira, also a researcher at the Center, is a professor of international relations at São Paulo State University. Timothy Thompson is a doctoral candidate in English at Boston College and a freelance translator.

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had been the goal of Brazil's external action throughout the greater part of the twentieth century. In this regard, the Cardoso years were characterized by a constant search for international regimes and norms, a search aimed at fostering as institutionalized an environment as possible.

During this period the foreign policy standard formulated by Araújo Castro (1982) underwent a transformation, albeit not a total one. This standard had strongly resisted the consolidation of institutions and regimes, which would have frozen the cold-war hierarchy of power. In a new international environment dominated by a single great power—an environment in which the relative power of the Brazilian state had diminished—an institutionalist perspective was seen as favorable to Brazilian interests because it promoted respect for the rules of the international game, rules that once established would have to be observed by all parties, including the more powerful. In the context of the Mercosur (Southern Cone Common Market) and of South America in general, the outlook differed, however. Here more favorable power relations were seen as a way to promote Brazil's inclusion in the game as a global player.

From this initial discussion we can conclude that the Cardoso administration's foreign policy helped secure a place for Brazil among nations embracing hegemonic values that were considered universal.

FOREIGN POLICY PREMISES

This paradigm shift in Brazilian foreign policy was stimulated by the emergence, during globalization, of new configurations for the international economy. Beginning in 1990, the North-South and East-West axes of international relations, as configured at the end of World War II, seemed in the process of being replaced. The new structuration of international society emerged from an agenda based on the so-called new issues in politics, values, and economics, issues involving the environment, human rights, minorities, indigenous populations, and narcotrafficking. These "soft issues" had begun to assume greater importance in the international arena (see Keohane and Nye, 1989). From the Brazilian perspective, this meant that "the relative importance of each country [came] to be measured less by its military or strategic influence and more by its economic, commercial, scientific, or cultural projection" (Abdenur, 1994: 3). Civil servants responsible for the formulation of trade, industrial, and development policy, along with important segments of the business sector, came to understand that the cost-benefit ratio for Brazil would be more advantageous in an open environment. A lack of competitiveness would risk greater disparity in relation to wealthy countries and even to countries that, although underdeveloped, seemed prepared for sustained takeoff. Openness, then, would serve as an antidote to economic risk.

The evolution toward autonomy through integration proved incremental, however. It intensified at the end of Abreu Sodré's tenure at the Ministry of Foreign Relations during the José Sarney administration and continued into Francisco Rezek's tenure during the Collor administration. During the brief stint of Celso Lafer in 1992, the effort to refine the theory behind the model

was advanced by a policy of “universal foreign relations, without alignments or trade-offs, with the intent of preserving the autonomy [through integration] of the country in its international action” (Mello, 2000: 92). The ministry’s 1993 annual report pointed to this intent and observed that in 1992 its efforts had focused on creating “an appropriate conceptual framework for advancing the strategic action of Brazil” (Brasil, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 1993: 347). The Franco administration—which began with Cardoso himself as foreign minister, followed by Celso Amorim—was responsible for mobilizing the foreign policy objectives that had been outlined.

The redefinition of foreign policy actively involved the Finance Ministry even during the tenure of *Ciro Gomes*¹ and came at a time when adherence to prevailing international values entailed a preoccupation with economic stability. This preoccupation led to the consolidation of tariff reductions, initiated by the Collor administration but ostensibly based on studies carried out by the Chamber of Foreign Commerce in 1988 and 1989, and took further shape in the decision to sign the Treaty of Marrakesh, which created the World Trade Organization (WTO); in discussions within Mercosur of the common external tariff, which was finalized by the *Ouro Preto Protocol* of December 1994; and in participation in the Miami Summit of the same month, which launched negotiations on the creation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Taken together, these actions were responsible for solidifying the new foreign policy perspective.

According to its framers, the concept of change with continuity that predominated throughout Cardoso’s presidency meant that the renewal of traditional paradigms was expected to embrace both creative adaptation and a vision for the future. From Cardoso’s perspective, which was shared by both *Lafer* and *Lampreia*, such a vision was essential in an unfavorable environment in which diplomacy had to take long-term action while seeking to adapt to current transformations. The administration’s objective was not to adapt passively but to redirect and reshape the environment within the limits of its power, adjusting to the interests of other states and forces and seeking ways to participate in international issues through the elaboration of regimes more favorable to Brazilian interests. By adhering to international regimes that “even if not ideal still [represented] an unequivocal improvement in the matter” (*Lafer*, 1993: 46–47), Brazil would be guaranteed an international legal reference point in its pursuit of its national interests. The pragmatic side of the revamped paradigm that persisted throughout Cardoso’s tenure was represented by the reiteration of the “global trader” concept, the interpretation of Mercosur as a platform for competitive participation on a global level, and the idea—paramount but not exclusive—of the possibility of integration with other countries and regions (see *Brasil, Ministério das Relações Exteriores*, 1993).

It should be pointed out, however, that neither the consolidation of these concepts nor their renewal was passed off as neutral. By embracing the global-trader concept, Brazil exhibited its global interests and so was able to adopt various agendas and positions, seeking out markets and trade relations without tying itself to a single partner. This explains why the country took a non-institutionalist approach to Mercosur but an institutionalist approach to its multilateral agenda, particularly regarding global organizations such as the

UN and the WTO (see Pinheiro, 2000). In general, a global trader opts for multilateral trade liberalization in order to maximize profits. Throughout the 1990s and until the end of the Cardoso administration, the Ministry maintained that the objective should be “a global solution” (Brasil, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 1993: 1999), which meant, in diplomacy-speak, that opting for the FTAA or for a free-trade area with the European Union would aid the establishment and full functioning of an international regime of trade liberalization. During Cardoso’s tenure this was translated into a model of “two steps into the pool”: agreeing to specific accords would be like stepping in at the shallow end before easing into deeper water.

Universalism had already been part of Brazilian foreign policy, but its renewal through the global-trader concept pointed to the diversification of foreign relations and the addition of a regionalist angle. The Cardoso administration solidified a policy that had been practiced during the Collor and Franco administrations and that had placed Mercosur at the top of the Brazilian agenda. Mercosur was seen as a form of open regionalism that did not exclude other partners. The concept of development that had prevailed from 1985 to 1989—throughout Brazil’s trade negotiations with Argentina, at a time when the role of an expanded internal market was particularly significant—was abandoned. In spite of the importance that this bloc represented to Brazilian administrations (as Lafer put it, “Mercosur is our future, part of our milieu. The FTAA isn’t our future, it’s an option” [2001b]), none was willing to elevate Mercosur’s institutional status or to bear the costs of its consolidation. Mercosur was seen, rather, as an important platform from which member states could participate in wider international trends. In Argentina, for example, the administration of Carlos Saúl Menem maneuvered to keep its options open, a decision that was reinforced during Menem’s second term, which began in 1995. In the end, this influenced choices made by the Cardoso administration as it came to grips with the challenges of advancing regional interdependence.

THE INTELLECTUAL LEGACY

The foreign policy paradigm that had been taking shape since 1992 received systematic development once it was incorporated into the program of the state. Beginning in 1995, it was solidified in several presidential statements delivered abroad—at Stanford University, the Colegio de México, the French National Assembly, the India International Center, and elsewhere. In his first inaugural address, Cardoso asserted the need for changes that would ensure more active Brazilian participation in the world, and he highlighted the goal of “influencing the design of the new order . . . and the necessity . . . of updating our discourse and our action abroad” (Brasil, Presidência da República, 1996: 137). Lampreia confirmed this position, asserting that the government knew how “to enact the right policy alterations in response to current changes in the world, on the continent, and within the country itself” (1995: 11). He asserted that these alterations needed to occur in the course of promoting both the country and its complete adherence to international regimes, which would enable Brazilian foreign policy to converge with global trends and thus avoid isolation from the

international “mainstream.” Seeking convergence and avoiding isolation did not mean accepting a subordinate position, however; on the contrary, it was the path toward strengthening Brazil’s relative position in international society.

Another important tenet of the Cardoso administration was the correspondence between universally prevailing values and national identity: “The Brazil that is entering the twenty-first century is a country whose primary objectives for internal transformation and development are in harmony with values universally disseminated on the international level” (Cardoso, 2000b: 6). For Cardoso, compliance with international regimes would prove beneficial in the end: in the unavoidably globalized world of contemporary history, “the same system that inflicts a setback will work in our favor in the long run” (2000b: 3) as long as the country was capable of transforming external opportunities into internal benefits (see Lafer, 2001c).

More precisely, the foreign policy of the Cardoso administration followed, according to Lampreia, “a line that I would call ‘critical convergence’ in relation to the values, commitments, and practices now orienting international life. . . . ‘Convergence’ because transformations in Brazil have brought us, of our own choosing, into the central current of world history in an era when political democracy and economic liberty are the fundamental reference points” (2001: 2). The juxtaposition of the terms “critical” and “convergence” stems from the reality of contemporary international relations, within which “the observance of ‘mainstream’ values and commitments continues to suffer from serious distortions and inconsistencies fed and facilitated by the predominance of power asymmetries over the principle of juridical equality” (3). This interpretation is relevant because it elucidates the administration’s own understanding, making its adaptation to the mainstream, in principle, correct. Throughout Cardoso’s two terms in office, insistent criticism, arising from a lexicon and a diplomacy geared toward understanding, was leveled at these distortions. The goal at all times was to avoid irremediable tensions, whether with the United States or with other countries. In the case of relations with Argentina, even when disagreements were at their most intense, in January 1999, with the devaluation of the real, the policies of the Cardoso administration were guided by an attempt at understanding. Inconsistencies between discourse and practice among the most powerful and influential actors in international society arose in various areas—in relations among states, global trade, the functioning of international bodies, issues of security, and environmental concerns—as realities that could be overcome only through mutual understanding. The activism exercised in a few instances, as with the WTO, for example, was aimed at strengthening Brazil’s position.

From the administration’s perspective, the desired outcome was a proactive agenda for increasing Brazil’s ability to control its future. Foreign policy was seen as contributing to growth, development, and social problem solving. In this context, formulations of the meaning of this policy, a policy that can be traced back to 1930, were reiterated. Following Fonseca (1998), it was argued that policy goals would be better achieved through active participation in elaborating the norms and guidelines of international conduct—“an engaged and affirmative contribution to peace and stability” (Lampreia, 1997: 5).

The Cardoso administration, solidifying and renewing the paradigm of Brazilian foreign policy in the second half of the 1990s, conferred a new meaning

on the concept of autonomy, that of “autonomy through integration, meaning an autonomy connected to the international situation rather than isolated from it” (Lampreia, 1999: 11)—“in other words, maintaining mainstream behavior while attending to the specific needs of Brazil both in its material conditions and in its objectives and interests” (89). Lampreia characterized this notion as refining a line of thought that set autonomy through distance—characteristic of Brazilian diplomacy during the cold war—in opposition to the necessary pursuit of autonomy through participation. According to Fonseca (1998: 368),

The heritage of positive participation, always supported by criteria of legitimacy, opens the door to a series of approaches that have given new shape to the work of Brazilian diplomacy. Autonomy today no longer means “distance” from controversial issues for the sake of protecting the country from undesirable alignments. On the contrary, autonomy now means “participation,” a desire to influence an open agenda through values that uphold diplomatic tradition and demonstrate that we can discern the path of international order with our own eyes, from a new perspective, a perspective that corresponds to our national complexity.

In the end it was through organizing and regulating international relations in various arenas that Brazilian diplomacy sought to establish an atmosphere of international goodwill favorable to the principal objective of the country and its partners in Mercosur—namely, generating and guaranteeing lasting and sustainable development. This was seen as increasingly necessary in that large-scale transformations in the post-cold-war world linked specific Brazilian interests to general interests that were part of the international order, and that order was capable of contributing to the legitimation and fulfillment of those national interests.

The tenures of Luiz Felipe Lampreia (1995–2000) and Celso Lafer (2001–2002) at the Ministry of Foreign Relations were characterized by the pursuit of constructive moderation expressed in the ability “to tone down the foreign policy agenda, or rather to reduce conflicts, crises, and difficulties to a diplomatically manageable level in order to keep them from being exploited or magnified by short-term interests” (Fonseca, 1998: 356), or, as Lafer put it, “preferring to resolve differences through diplomacy and the rule of law, reducing the allure of power politics and aggression” (2001a: 47). In this view, which could be classified as intermediate between a Grotian paradigm (a balance between realism and idealism) and a Kantian one (pure idealism), the goal was to safeguard victories (trusting perhaps too much in the capacity for persuasion and dialogue) while recognizing the relevance of power and force.

In terms of foreign policy analysis, then, a cooperative perspective prevailed throughout the Cardoso era. Repeated denunciation of asymmetries, insistence on criticizing policies that relied on power, efforts to undermine the use of unilateralism (particularly in the United States under the Bush administration), criticism of the distorted use of principles—all of these should be understood as part of the struggle for a global order of cooperation. This legacy seems to have been a response to the possibility for change introduced at a particular historical moment—a moment when the end of the cold war presented a new set of opportunities.

In sum, the major foreign policy premise of the Cardoso administration was unequivocal conformity to the neoliberal agenda embodied in the formula of

autonomy through integration. The administration hoped to diminish the negative impression of Brazil in the international community, especially in the financial arena, and to convince its partners that Brazil was prepared both to support the obligations of the world economy and to take advantage of the benefits thereof. And at first glance this strategy could be deemed quite successful. It led to a number of achievements, including closer relations with the United States, the return of foreign direct investment as the country linked into the supply chains of important industrial sectors, the realization of advances in Mercosur, and “victories” in the WTO. Notwithstanding, in the long run costs outweighed benefits once there was a downturn in Mercosur and in foreign investment as a consequence of successive international crises and the constant flouting of multilateral institutions. This scenario was accentuated in the United States after George W. Bush came to power and principally after September 11, 2001.

In this vein we will analyze the concrete ramifications of Cardoso’s policy—its mobilization and the way it influenced negotiations in which concrete interests were at stake.

THE CONCRETE LEGACY

In terms of concrete formulations, the two central concerns of Brazilian foreign policy during Cardoso’s tenure were maintaining strong pro-Mercosur rhetoric and building up relations with the rest of South America (the latter receiving particular emphasis during Cardoso’s second term). From the administration’s perspective, these concerns would permit a better exercise of universalism and bolster the directive of autonomy through integration. It believed that the negotiating ability of the country would be strengthened if Mercosur could be consolidated and if greater integration throughout South America could be achieved. The country’s initiatives took place on innumerable fronts, among them a free-trade agreement with the European Union, hemispheric integration and negotiations about the FTAA, alliances within the WTO, and the expansion of bilateral relations with China, Japan, India, Russia, and South Africa—not to mention nuclear nonproliferation, disarmament, the spread of terrorism, the environment, human rights, the defense of democracy, candidacy for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, the development of a new international financial architecture, relations with Portugal and the other countries constituting the Community of Portuguese-Language Countries (CPLP), and relations with Cuba.

Democracy and self-determination were also values defended during Cardoso’s tenure. In this regard, we would point to the position taken by Brazil during the crises in Paraguay (in 1996, 1999, and 2001), the inclusion of a “democracy clause” in Mercosur after the joint presidential declaration of 1996 and the Ushuaia Protocol of 1998, the position taken on the institutional crisis in Venezuela at the end of 2002, which resulted from a concern for continuity with the incoming administration of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and the position taken on the “election” of Fujimori to his third term in Peru in 2000.

For the Cardoso administration, the gains derived from participation-integration would need to be sustained by specialized competence in economic

and trade negotiations, and therefore adherence to international regimes and competence in making use of them would be fundamental. In the meantime, the adjustment of the state to the negotiating context and the ability of private actors to respond and adapt to new levels of activity proved insufficient. Brazilian positions were often defensive ones, and when offensive they were concentrated in competitive areas such as agriculture, which even at peaks of importance did not represent the totality of national interests.

PRESIDENTIAL DIPLOMACY AND REBUILDING THE NATIONAL IMAGE

In diplomatic action the Cardoso administration, appropriating methods increasingly employed by other states, frequently made use of the figure of the president. The Collor administration had made an essay into presidential diplomacy, but this had proved fragile because of the challenges of consolidation it faced. To a certain extent, presidential diplomacy, on the coattails of the relative success of the Real Plan, contributed to the reconstruction of Brazil's image, solidifying and legitimating it in the eyes of multilateral institutions and numerous governments, even among wealthy countries. According to Genoíno (1999: 7), the administration's foreign policy constantly aimed "to rebuild external credibility on the basis of internal stability." And, consolidating this interpretation, Danese (1999: 7) asserts that from the beginning the Cardoso administration sought to combine, on the one hand, "greater national power, because of the stabilization and the incentives presented by the country's economic dimensions, including its participation in Mercosur, and by its economic openness, and the personal disposition and vocation of the president as protagonist in a presidential diplomacy of the sort now enshrined by top world leaders." But the improvement in its image abroad addressed only one side of Brazil's standing in international public opinion. Sensitive issues involving human rights, minorities, children, indigenous peoples, crime, the environment, and narcotrafficking all became factors in the deterioration of Brazil's image that could hardly be offset by governmental activism or even compliance with hegemonic standards. Clearly, the government could not be held solely responsible for these problems, but they contributed to weakening its international standing.

Among the favorable results deriving from the changes implemented during Cardoso's tenure we can cite the trust that Brazil inspired abroad, which enabled it to attract foreign direct investment, a crucial element in macroeconomic stability, and the support of multilateral organizations and the governments of developed nations during situations such as the exchange-rate crisis of 1999. Meanwhile, significant trends linked above all to the weakness of economic growth in Brazil throughout both terms—with the exception of the 4.4 percent growth rate registered in 2000 (see Intal, 2003: 7)—limited the possibility of using foreign policy to gain leverage in strategic objectives, both political and economic. Brazil's participation in certain important international debates—for example, the one over the attempt to create a new international financial architecture that might help to regulate flows of volatile capital—reflected the difficulties that it faced in influencing an agenda not desired by

relevant actors with more power. The strategy of autonomy through integration seems to have achieved its aims only when permitted to do so by the international mainstream. Any gains achieved by the Cardoso administration resulted from the predisposition, goodwill, and collaboration of external partners. In the attempt to alter the international financial architecture, despite broad Brazilian participation the final result was far from the administration's desired outcome.

The question of foreign relations seems to have gained much greater emphasis on the domestic agenda, probably in tune with tendencies abroad. International relations for various reasons—some related to criticism of government policy—inspired increasing attention and interest throughout society and the media. “Never before had business associations, unions, nongovernmental organizations, the Congress, and public opinion been so engaged in the debate over Brazil's relations with the world” (Lamounier and Figueiredo, 2002: 302).

Relations with the United States and Argentina were of constant concern to the administration, and it devoted intense efforts to improving them. In unofficial meetings among heads of state on the idea of a “Third Way,” a more positive image of Brazil began to emerge, one tied especially to the intellectual and political status of Fernando Henrique Cardoso and affirmed by statesmen such as Bill Clinton and Tony Blair. This does not seem to have been enough, however, to alter negative public opinion about Brazil among developed countries. In many instances, the international community's respect for Cardoso and his success in making himself heard in diverse global forums, owing both to presidential diplomacy and to the strategy of autonomy through integration, did not translate into concrete advances for Brazil.

RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

The pursuit of improved bilateral relations with the United States began in 1995, the first year of Cardoso's tenure, and achieved positive results by overcoming long-standing disagreements some of which had originated during Brazil's military regime. In particular, Washington looked favorably on Brazil's policy of macroeconomic stabilization. Additional factors that encouraged greater cooperation between the two countries included Brazil's acceptance of the Missile Technology Control Regime, its promise to sign the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (fulfilled in 1997), and its general commitment to the importance of constructive relations with the United States. In 1995 Cardoso made the importance of these relations explicit, affirming that “the United States is our fundamental partner because of its central position [in the world order]” (*Estado de S. Paulo*, September 24, 1995).

An analysis of U.S.-Brazilian relations allows for greater understanding of Brazil's foreign policy makeover. The search for improved bilateral relations emphasized the autonomy of Brazil's international action while affirming its role as a global trader and a global player. The conflicts that had occurred during Brazil's military regime and questions of foreign debt (which had weighed heavily on the administrations of João Baptista Figueiredo, José Sarney, and

Fernando Collor de Mello), not to mention intense political or trade disputes strictly speaking, seemed to vanish or were at least downgraded to the level of run-of-the-mill foreign relations conflicts. In other words, the choice of autonomy through integration was seen as fostering greater closeness between the two countries without necessitating either trade-offs or automatic alignment. According to this perspective, Brazil would maintain the possibility of dissent when its interests were threatened by U.S. action. And in spite of its global and regional power, the United States would find its capacity for action curtailed in the multipolar arena that emerged in the 1990s, thus opening the possibility of new Brazilian participation (see Soares de Lima, 1999). In the last two years of Cardoso's presidency, particularly after the attacks of September 11, 2001, the evolution of international relations that seems to have marked the beginning of the twenty-first century brought new questions and to a certain extent demanded greater energy and perhaps greater risk taking to maintain strong bilateral relations.

Cardoso's policy sought out more opportune forms of participation and took U.S. dominance into consideration—hence the explicit recognition of the importance of good relations with the United States for guaranteeing Brazil's autonomy and ensuring its viability in South America. According to Cardoso, "We must maintain both good relations with the United States and the capacity to organize the South American space of Mercosur" (1996). This is the kind of approach often adopted by pragmatic administrations, for which existing realities are considered "inputs" rather than outcomes to be minimized or neutralized. In short, a policy of cooperation in relations between Brazil and the United States was made explicit.

Good bilateral relations and a policy of autonomy through integration with the United States were considered necessary for enlarging Brazil's role on the international stage, a process beginning with its platform in South America. This perspective has not always prevailed in Brazil's diplomatic action, but it has been embraced in other historical periods, for example, during the tenure of the Barão do Rio Branco (see Bueno, 2003) and that of Oswaldo Aranha (see Vigevani, 1989). According to Cardoso, Brazil's priority was "the consolidation of Mercosur, which is not only the sphere of integration in the short term but the platform from which we will reinforce our linkage to other centers of the international economy" (1993: 9). In a context of open regionalism, "the necessity of always keeping our options open" was a logical inference. Closer relations with the United States came against a backdrop of "not . . . limiting ourselves to exclusive partnerships or reductionist criteria of international action. We must act on multiple levels, deal with multiple partnerships, and be present in multiple arenas." Cardoso's rationale in 1993, when he was foreign relations minister under Itamar Franco, helped set the boundaries of action for both of his terms in office.

And the directive of acting in various arenas was indeed implemented. Analysis of the approach taken during Cardoso's first term vis-à-vis the FTAA indicates the weight of the external constraints that this position implied. To put it simply, after the Miami Summit of December 1994, the Franco administration had decided to put off the FTAA for as long as possible. This policy was reformulated after the second FTAA summit in April 1998 in Santiago,

Chile. Throughout the negotiations between 1995 and 1998, defense of the autonomy principle was filtered through a logic of deferment. The same approach was taken in maintaining the priority of Mercosur in spite of the bloc's increasing difficulties. According to Cardoso, South America was "our historical-geographic space" (1997: 4), and therefore "Mercosur is our strategic pawn, but it is not enough: we need this broader integration" (2000a).

This was not a question of playing the game on two boards, as it were. For the administration, the different negotiations were to be complementary, not opposed, but statesmanship implied being able to project various scenarios. In the event that the FTAA failed to cohere and difficulties in Mercosur persisted, the issue of a South American space would regain significance, as it did during the tenure of Celso Amorim at the Ministry of Foreign Relations in the second half of Franco's presidency. Nor was it a question of diminishing the importance of relations with the United States, which would continue to be central. Rather, it was a question of improving both Brazil's capacity to negotiate and its bargaining power in hemispheric negotiations. Beyond this, Brazil's "South American option" would prove useful in its aspiration to a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, since it would afford the country recognition as a regional power (see Soares de Lima, 1996: 152).

During Cardoso's second term, Brazilian policy on the FTAA suffered the impact of constraints in a more direct way. After the Santiago summit, the ministry, with backing from the president, pointed to the risks of isolation, which were particularly unwelcome in a context in which the U.S. market was fundamentally important. In this case, cooperation and autonomy through integration in the end strengthened the move toward more active participation in the negotiating process. The desire to participate actively in debates about the specific regimes that would govern the FTAA led to an assertive approach that achieved a few minor successes by placing items and concepts important to Brazil and Mercosur such as the "single undertaking" idea on the agenda. In the end, however, Brazil was unable to substantially modify the docket of negotiations, the basic legal framework of which left little room for issues not geared toward North American interests.

Other issues on the docket of relations with the United States, such as pharmaceutical patents on generic drugs, were remitted to the WTO as an international body in which Brazil could articulate a broader defense of its positions. Pragmatism and the search for a cooperative approach without abdicating national interests would permit a reasonable balance in these relations and avoid more significant losses even if advances failed to reach desired levels. Meanwhile, the strategy of autonomy through integration postulated that the United States, in spite of its dominance, would maintain a more cooperative, multilateral approach to international politics. When it ceased to do so, as it did during the final two years of Cardoso's presidency, relations with Brazil grew rockier and the tone of criticism sharpened. The WTO placed new demands on the United States, and the Brazilian position in the FTAA grew more rigid in line with both the strategy of President-elect Lula and the renewal of Brazil's leadership in South America through new proposals such as the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America vis-à-vis the challenges faced by Mercosur.

MERCOSUR AND SOUTH AMERICA

During the Cardoso administration, at least in rhetoric, a geographically concerned policy was solidified and became a constant reference point for external action. This might seem to be a given, but we know that in the past, even during the Sarney administration, regional policy was not entirely central. The interpretation of Mercosur as open regionalism—which coincided with the interests of the Argentine government under Menem—made it possible for Brazil, without exclusivism or alignment, to adopt the norms and international regimes it preferred while guaranteeing the preservation of “a reserve of autonomy” (Pinheiro, 1998: 61) that could be actualized in a context of regional maneuvering. The adherence to certain norms and regimes led in certain cases to the strengthening of “soft power,” which had made a comeback because of the country’s improved image. According to Mello (2000: 112), “the universalism of the 1990s was originally expressed through regionalism: it is in this area that Brazil found the principal space in which to reaffirm its autonomy, in resistance to hemispheric integration—namely, through the process of the subregional integration of Mercosur and in new initiatives in South America.”

The discussion of a free-trade area between Mercosur and the European Union and the search for strategic partners such as China and India are issues that should be understood together with the regional dimension. In the opinion of Lampreia (1999: 12), “Although, on the one hand, it means in effect some loss of autonomy, on the other hand, Mercosur increases our capacity to act in a more affirmative and participative way in the elaboration of international regimes and norms essential to Brazil.” Particularly during Cardoso’s second term, there was a strong interest both in maintaining a modicum of consensus among Mercosur members, in view of negotiations on the FTAA, and, after the Brasília meeting of 2002, in seeking to build an integrated space in South America.

For the Cardoso administration, two initiatives pointed favorably toward the political consolidation of Mercosur: (1) The joint adherence of Argentina and Brazil to the nuclear nonproliferation treaty in the context of an accord with the International Atomic Energy Agency, which closed out the phase in which the military use of nuclear energy had been both an unknown factor in bilateral relations and the focus of concern in relations with other countries of the bloc. The two governments promised to develop nuclear research only for peaceful and controlled ends. (2) The defense of democracy during episodes of institutional crisis in Paraguay in 1996, 1999, and 2001 and the inclusion of the Democracy Clause in Mercosur in 1998. Brazil’s participation in the regional framework of international public goods (see Gama and Valadão, 2001) would contribute to both regional stability (see Lamounier and Figueiredo, 2002: 316) and the strengthening of its own position in the international community. Other actions in this vein included its contribution to the resolution of border conflicts between Peru and Ecuador and the defense of democracy in Venezuela during its crisis at the end of 2002, when the administration coordinated its efforts with the incoming Lula da Silva administration.

According to Pinheiro (2000), the administration's combination of a Grotian approach in the global arena with a universal and cooperative perspective in "harmony with values universally disseminated on an international level" (Cardoso, 2000b: 6) differed from the policies that it implemented regionally. In the latter, the power differential seems to have been used to avoid supranationalism and guarantee autonomy vis-à-vis partners outside the region. In this connection, there was an effort to maximize benefits, implying differentiated policies, not homogeneous ones.

Throughout Cardoso's administration, South America retained its centrality in Brazilian policy not only through the effort to consolidate Mercosur as a customs union with a common market on the horizon but through other actions as well. By all accounts, this was a nonconjunctural trend, since this policy was inaugurated by Sarney and continued by Franco and by Cardoso. Not only government ministries and private businesses but also certain strategic linchpins were involved in this effort. The restructuring of the country's energy matrix, for example, was solidified; formerly heavily dependent on Persian Gulf imports, above all from Saudi Arabia and Iraq, in the 1990s it shifted to imports from Argentina and Venezuela. Large projects of material integration were also realized, such as the interconnection of electricity networks and gas pipelines. But regional institutions were not adequately strengthened in the process, and beginning in 1998 Mercosur entered into a significant crisis, reinforcing the view that the bloc would not be able to transcend its status as an incomplete customs union.

Put differently, the readiness to accept the costs and obligations of the pursuit of international objectives did not gain significant ground during the Cardoso era, either in Brazilian society or in the Brazilian state. The devaluation of the real in January 1999, supported by the majority of Brazilians, had serious consequences for Mercosur and its member countries. Although the causes of these crises were diverse, a Brazilian initiative pursuing compensation would have benefited regional strategies. And on the political level, the administration demonstrated a certain timidity. For example, its nonparticipation in the group convened by the UN, the European Union, and some Latin American countries to foster negotiating conditions for an accord between the Colombian government, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional limited its influence in the arena of the Colombian crisis.

In the perception of the administration, the growth of Brazil's role in the region increased its extraregional bargaining power, but it proved difficult to increase the national effort devoted to this objective. This was not only a question of governance but one of internal tensions created by regional and social sectors fearful of being burdened with the costs of integration. Beyond this, the Brazilian leadership met with other difficulties, as much in principle as in pragmatics, particularly in relation to Argentina. Thus what prevailed was the understanding that if one country came to dominate, this would be only natural, given its larger population and more powerful economy. At the same time, the rejection of supranationalism would serve to guarantee autonomy, if necessary, in relation to other countries of the region.

Even so, the strong return to the South American question in the second term was seen, along with the choice to strengthen Mercosur, as a prerequisite

for sorting out relations with the United States. Negotiations on the FTAA demonstrated that the United States was central to innumerable countries not only commercially but strategically, financially, technologically, and culturally. The concern of the Cardoso administration in putting real instruments of action into effect—through the resources of the *Corporación Andina de Fomento*, the *Banco Nacional de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social*, and the *Fondo Financiero para el Desarrollo de la Cuenca del Plata*—suggested the need for more realistic platforms for regional policy. All the same, the idea that there could be common interests in keeping with a sense of identity and a shared vision of the region was never reinforced to the point of turning it into a bond based on these interests either in Brazil or among its neighbors.

THE WTO, MERCOSUR AND THE EUROPEAN UNION, AND THE FTAA

From the perspective of autonomy through integration, Cardoso's presidency was characterized by a policy of simultaneous action on three main levels of multilateral trade negotiation—the WTO, Mercosur and the European Union, and the FTAA—with a clear orientation toward "giving priority to multilateral negotiations over bilateral ones in the belief that they offered greater possibilities of success for a nation with Brazil's characteristics" (Lamounier and Figueiredo, 2002: 325). Among these negotiations, those that developed in the context of the WTO were considered "the forum par excellence and the best fit for our interests in formulating economic regulations on the international level" (Lafer, 2001a: 231). In the administration's understanding, which had broad-based political and social backing, this preference was justified because, as Lafer (1998: 14–15) put it, the WTO

occasions coalitions of variable geometry in keeping with the variety of issues it addresses; because of this, "automatic alignments" do not prevail in trade multilateralism. In the WTO, the United States is not the only factor in forming these coalitions. [Each country has a measure of influence] and each possesses the power of initiative through the force of joint action. In the end, the rule and practice of consensus in the decision-making process brings an element of democratization that permeates the life of the organization.

Because of this, one of Brazil's objectives was to inject the WTO with renewed vigor (Lafer, 2002). Making such possibilities viable was not automatic, however; they had to be understood, analyzed, and channeled through the state and through Brazilian society for the benefit of Brazilian interests, a process that demanded effort and resources. Still, in various contexts this policy led to clearly satisfactory results.

The WTO was considered the best option for Brazilian economic interests because "it would protect against abuses and would offer adequate resources for the reasonably just resolution of conflicts that in another form would be resolved by the survival of the fittest" (Lamounier and Figueiredo, 2002: 325). The principal mechanism in this regard was the Dispute Settlement Body, to which both the administration and Brazilian businesses had recourse in trade

disputes. In using these instruments, in addition to ad hoc groups, Brazil did achieve certain victories—on the issue of gasoline, for example, with a decision favorable to Brazil and unfavorable to the United States. Perhaps the best-known and most important dispute, however, involved the Canadian company Bombardier and the Brazilian company Embraer. For Canada, the conflict centered on the subsidies provided for manufacturing Brazilian aircraft, subsidies that ran counter to the rules of the WTO as established by the Treaty of Marrakesh. Conversely, Brazil accused Bombardier of using inappropriate methods in marketing its aircraft. After several years of arbitration, both countries declared themselves satisfied. The resolution adopted by the WTO implied the right of retaliation on the part of Brazil, with compensation for losses, at the same time that it recommended restructuring the export financing program to adapt it to the rules of the WTO in response to Canada's petition.

Another important point of contention on which Brazil achieved a favorable outcome was the dispute between the Brazilian government and big pharmaceutical companies. The administration demanded the right to break patents on medicine for the treatment of AIDS, arguing from the national and international relevance of the issue and its demographic impact. Using the argument that the public good ought to prevail over profit, the country won the sympathy of a majority of WTO members, as well as the UN, nongovernmental organizations involved in issues of public health and human rights, and the World Health Organization. On the occasion of the ministerial conference at Doha, which initiated a new round of trade negotiations, the United States accepted the accord—which it had previously opposed—and allowed for the possibility of patent breaking in questions of public health in developing countries. The ministerial decision of the WTO also favored Brazil. According to officials in Cardoso's Health Ministry, the elaboration and execution of this winning strategy were led by the state agencies involved. Independent of implicit political and electoral questions (Health Minister José Serra was a projected presidential candidate for 2002), these events demonstrated the importance of interagency connectedness in the formulation and implementation of particular aspects of Brazilian foreign policy (Oliveira, 2005).

A short time after September 11, 2001, the WTO initiated its new round of multilateral trade negotiations at Doha and returned to the unresolved issues of the Uruguay Round. Throughout the 1990s, Brazilian intervention had centered on defending the liberalization of agricultural commerce, and the administration viewed the dismantling of nontariff barriers and subsidies as a condition for the success of the round. The recent diplomatic victory of the Lula administration in the WTO is a product of this policy position.

Regarding economic relations with the European Union, our reference point from the Cardoso era is the Mercosur–European Union framework accord. The summit of European and Latin American heads of state and government in Rio de Janeiro in 1999 gave new contours to these negotiations. Once internal difficulties had been overcome, the European Union made new proposals in July 2001 with a view to advancing the negotiations. Its detailed and wide-ranging offer on trade liberalization between the blocs was not well received by Mercosur member states, however, not only because of the political and economic crises they were experiencing but because it was unsatisfactory on

a central point—namely, it contained insufficient concessions on agricultural products.

This European attempt to accelerate negotiations on a free-trade area can be explained in part by concern over the potential expansion of North American influence. The European Union worried that North American policy, which involved a reordering of international economic relations via a large number of bilateral free-trade agreements, could weaken multilateralism and above all threaten its own position as the world's greatest trading power. It also saw the FTAA as having potential economic or political consequences for its relations with Mercosur. For Brazil, relations with the European Union constituted a strategic angle that could be employed as an alternative if negotiations with the United States were to fall through. Beyond this, the European position, in contrast to that of the United States, consistently privileged bloc-to-bloc negotiations, an approach that resonated with that of Brazil.

The perspective of autonomy through integration encountered various obstacles in negotiations with the European Union, however. In its European counterparts the Cardoso administration had despaired a set of partners whose visions of the world seemed similar to its own, but relations did not flourish as expected. Shared values of democracy, human rights, the environment, the welfare state, and multilateralism were not sufficient to reconcile state and social interests when those interests proved contradictory. Partnership with the European Union with a view to the harmonization of positions and actions in international forums could have meant an increase in power for Brazil. "A European Union–Mercosur 'axis of good' would have reasonable political standing within the international community, closing the 'Atlantic triangle' and serving as a constructive interface between the North American hegemon and the rest of the planet" (Gama and Valadão, 2001: 14). For Brazil, this could have guaranteed the possibility of multilateralism in international politics via the guiding influence of the global rules and codes of conduct that are important for establishing, implementing, and defending international public goods—and done so constructively, without breaking with the logic of autonomy through integration. According to Cardoso (2001), this would have contributed to the effective management of foreign affairs, since Brazil would not have been able to undertake such a proposal on its own. The lackluster results in this direction resulted from, on the one hand, the diversity of real interests and, on the other hand, the position of Europe in the post-cold-war international system. In the case of Europe, negative public opinion in relation to poor countries, including Brazil, weakened the possibility of implementing policies more favorable to Mercosur members. Some of the administration's difficulty in fostering closer ties with the European Union stemmed from the lack of reciprocity of EU members in opening their economies to Brazil and its Mercosur partners as they had done in the 1990s, when their openness had yielded large-scale investment, particularly from Spain and Portugal. For Cardoso, an additional shock of liberalization without the offset of open markets in the developed countries would have damaged many economic sectors in the developing world, presenting a liability even greater than the existing one (see Cardoso, 2000b).

This context helps to explain why the FTAA (to a lesser extent during Cardoso's second term) arose as both a threat and an opportunity, as an option

but not a future—in contrast to Mercosur (see Lafer, 2001b). For Cardoso, speaking in April 2001 at the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec (2001: 3),

The FTAA will be welcome if its creation is a step toward giving access to more dynamic markets; if in fact it is the path toward shared rules on antidumping; if it reduces nontariff barriers; if it avoids protectionist distortion of good sanitary regulations; if in protecting intellectual property it promotes, at the same time, the technological capacity of our people; and furthermore if it goes beyond the Uruguay Round and corrects the asymmetries that were crystallized there, above all in the area of agriculture. If not, it will prove irrelevant or, in the worst-case scenario, undesirable.

This was a question not of uncritical adherence or even of adherence but of a desirable possibility of improving the relative position of the country. It was a question of the demands of a country seeking an international presence capable of making an impact on the world order and, above all, of influencing the rules and decisions that would weigh on its own future in an asymmetrical and sometimes hostile environment. At the same time, structural elements tied to historical trends, such as the weakness of the position of Brazil and South America in the world economy, weighed negatively on the country's negotiating capacity. It is worth highlighting that the situation intensified when the Cardoso administration realized that the U.S. shift to a more unilateral foreign policy had undermined the premises of autonomy through integration. There was, moreover, a clear lack of willingness to shape new strategies of international participation. In this way, the administration saw its international activism diminished during its final two years in office.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER STRATEGIC PARTNERS

The Cardoso administration sought to establish robust or privileged relations with other states that, for various reasons, it considered strategic. Thus it exercised universalism concretely, seeking to defend Brazilian interests. Among the countries to which it devoted particular attention were China, India, Russia, Japan, Portugal and the CPLP, Cuba, and Mexico.

Relations with China increased significantly throughout Cardoso's eight years: in 2002, for example, China became Brazil's second-largest trading partner. The significance of this increase was far-reaching not only economically but also politically and strategically; it actualized the concepts of universalism, global playing, and global trading. Brazil sought to maximize its advantage not only in trade but also in science and technology, with bilateral cooperation in the development of satellite technology gaining particular salience. With diplomatic relations consolidated, Cardoso visited China and twice received the Chinese President Jian Zemin in Brazil. During one of the latter's visits, in the midst of the Sino-American crisis provoked by a U.S. aircraft's invasion of Chinese airspace, Washington solicited Brazilian intervention.

Brazil also clearly manifested its support—as one of the first countries to do so—of China's admittance to the WTO. And so negotiations developed in the direction of bringing bilateral preferences in line with the rules of the WTO, even if this entailed reciprocal concessions from China and Brazil. In Geneva,

there were outlines of policy coordination in the WTO in light of the relative parallelism of interests stemming from certain common characteristics, such as broad consumer markets and the reception of large inflows of foreign direct investment. The different roles of the two countries in the international economy did not permit consistent coordination, however, though Brazilian exports to China doubled during Cardoso's tenure. Finally, the protocol on cooperation in space research, within the framework of the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation of 1982, bore fruit with the launch of the first of four Sino-Brazilian satellites, Cebris, which generated knowledge and wealth for both countries. In addition, Brazilian companies held business fairs in China and vice versa.

In the case of India, significant commonalities in international political and trade positions, expressed in multilateral forums, pointed to the potential for productive relations, but these commonalities did not translate into concrete results. The development of exchange relations proved negligible, clearly demonstrating the objective difficulties that exist in relations between developing countries, in which the noncomplementarity of their economies limits the possibilities for cooperation. When India performed its first nuclear tests, during the negotiation phase of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, Foreign Minister Lampraia issued a statement declaring Brazil's disapproval and Brazil repudiated its nuclear-cooperation protocol with India. Coordination of policies in international trade negotiations also suffered periodic difficulties because of the more rigid positions adopted by India.

In relations with Russia there was a substantial increase in commercial interchange, even if small vis-à-vis the total capital flows of the two countries, during the 1990s. On the Brazilian side, exports of farm commodities, principally those tied to the food sector, increased substantially.

The stagnation of Japan had repercussions for its bilateral, economic, and political relations. The country, which had arisen in the 1980s as a great emerging power, saw its importance in the international arena diminish in the 1990s, and this affected its relations with Brazil. It remained an important market and industrial power, but it did not participate as an investor during the process of privatization implemented in Brazil in the 1990s. At the same time, however, it did cooperate in some important Brazilian development projects. The macroeconomic balance and financial stability achieved during the Cardoso administration instilled greater confidence in Japanese businesses, which began to partner with Brazil in certain projects, especially environmental ones such as the development of ecologically friendly fuel (ethanol) for the automotive sector. There was also important cooperation on infrastructure and on social concerns such as basic sanitation, not to mention the allocation of resources—in some cases in the form of grants—for hospitals, schools, and municipal projects, among others. Also of great importance in bilateral relations has been the temporary or permanent migration to Japan of Japanese-Brazilians, who became the third-largest contingent of Brazilians living abroad. As a consequence, the quantity of remittances to Brazil has increased.

Relations with Portugal were marked by investments made through purchasing Brazilian privatized state businesses; in terms of these investments, Portugal was surpassed only by Spain among European nations. During

Cardoso's tenure, in spite of the low profile of Brazil's diplomatic presence in Lisbon, the role of Brazil among CPLP member nations expanded. Relations with the Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa were reestablished, although Brazil continued to occupy a second-tier position in African politics. Its deployment of a peacekeeping mission, its largest overseas force since World War II, to Angola stirred Brazilian companies to take renewed interest in the country. And in terms of political and symbolic impact, its decision to send a small contingent of peacekeeping forces to East Timor also proved important. During Cardoso's second term, the relative success of Brazilian efforts to control the spread of AIDS permitted the development of horizontal international cooperation in this area through the Agência Brasileira de Cooperação, which has implemented measures to combat the disease and has trained public health personnel in African countries (see Lamounier and Figueiredo, 2002).

The end of apartheid in South Africa allowed for closer relations between the two countries, relations that were formalized in a framework accord between South Africa and Mercosur. But although Brazil and Mercosur acknowledged the role played by South Africa both internationally and continentally, economic constraints and noncomplementary systems interfered with the deepening of relations in the framework of this agreement.

In Nigeria, Brazilian interests were directed particularly toward prospecting for and importing oil with the participation of Petrobrás.

Relations with Cuba remained stable, and the Cardoso administration was a constant critic of the U.S. economic embargo, making clear its support of Cuba's reincorporation into the hemispheric community. Whenever possible, and without provoking greater tensions, the administration sought to motivate the Cuban government to respect democratic and human rights. Economic and commercial relations remained stagnant, though some agreements were implemented in medicine, agriculture, tourism, and academic and professional exchange. There was also an agreement on reciprocal investment protection, although it was insufficient to move Brazilian companies to take greater interest in the island. Brazil also supported admitting Cuba to the Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración.

Throughout much of the Cardoso era, relations with Mexico suffered the impact of Mexico's adherence to the North American Free Trade Agreement. In certain negotiations, particularly those related to the FTAA, the positions of the two countries proved extremely divergent, since Mexico's implicit objective was to maintain its preferential access to the U.S. market. During Cardoso's second term, however, Mexico's economic growth and its high foreign trade potential, combined with Mercosur's worsening crisis, led Brazilian companies, particularly multinationals in the automotive sector, to seek out the Mexican market. In this way, beginning in 2000, trade relations between the two countries began to display considerable development.

The majority of these initiatives regarding relations with strategic partners, although important, occurred only once the limitations of the strategy of autonomy through integration had come to light. In other words, the choice to maintain cordial relations with developed countries limited the possibility of taking advantage of the potential complementarity among partners of intermediate standing in the international arena.

CONCLUSION

In hindsight, all the efforts of the eight years of Cardoso's watch were insufficient to impede a certain deterioration in the international position of both South America and Brazil, a deterioration expressed in low rates of growth the consequences of which were manifested in their role in the world economy. Notwithstanding, the Cardoso administration should be given credit for its effort to combat this trend through its foreign policy. We have seen that real and symbolic values prevailing in the public opinion of wealthy countries contributed to this deterioration and spread to other regions. One such example occurred in the administration's concern to avoid including issues related to civil rights, workers' rights, and environmental protection in WTO negotiations in an attempt to derail the influence of these values. Some of the successes of Brazilian diplomacy can be linked to a cooperative international environment marked by widespread interdependence, an environment in which the possibility of using multilateral forums became a reality.

One of the policies of Bill Clinton, whose administration coincided with six years of Cardoso's presidency (from 1995 to 2000), was the construction of multilateral rules and institutions, albeit amid extremely tough negotiations in which the United States categorically refused to abandon the unilateralism of its legislation. The difficulties of negotiations on the FTAA derived from these constraints. In other words, the multilateral heritage of Brazilian foreign policy was renewed during the Cardoso administration through the operationalization of the concept of autonomy through integration; through it, and in order to fulfill the concept's development objectives, the country moved closer to the central poles of international society.

After January 2001, however, the Bush administration modified the conceptual framework of international relations, bringing new practical and theoretical difficulties to every country. The new emphasis on unilateralism, focused on questions of security and accentuated after September 11, placed new burdens on the concept of autonomy through integration. The concept was not invalidated in principle, but it began to require much higher levels of both negotiating capacity and international linkage and, eventually, the search for new ways to bypass possible situations of rupture or lack of integration and cooperation. This worried the Cardoso administration, which insisted on relations with China, India, and South Africa, sought to stabilize its dialogue with the United States in the framework of negotiations on the FTAA, and at the same time worked to strengthen the relations between Mercosur and the European Union.

During Lafer's tenure at the Ministry of Foreign Relations, from 2001 to 2002, the practice of autonomy through integration, under the weight of circumstances, was attenuated by systemic changes, and there emerged, without eclipsing the former strategy, an attempt at "housecleaning" through a turn to "a diplomacy of the concrete" (Lafer, 2002). The departure under U.S. pressure of Ambassador Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães from the Ministry's Instituto de Pesquisa em Relações Internacionais and of Ambassador José Maurício Bustani from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons constituted, in the administration's understanding, an attempt at hierarchy maintenance (in the first case) and an indication that interest in cooperative international relations, especially with the United States, would be maintained. This came at a

moment when the possibility of such relations seemed to be diminishing because of changes in international society that had originated in large part in the United States itself.

Cardoso's two terms in office strengthened the presence of Brazil in certain of the great international debates, especially through the practice of presidential diplomacy, but his administration faced external constraints and internal deficiencies that worked against a more prominent international presence. The gains of autonomy through integration would have exceeded the costs of autonomy through distance if the country had been internally prepared to take advantage of the alteration, but the weakening of the state eventually undermined this capacity. The vitality of some negotiations, as in the case of ad hoc groups addressing controversies in the WTO, led to favorable results, but adherence to international regimes and norms was not counterbalanced by the internal adaptation that would have enabled the country to reap its rewards. In the same way, this adherence was not always interpreted in a way that favored internal growth, whether in terms of development or of industrial policy.

During the last phase of Cardoso's tenure, there was an effort to address the question of human resource development, and the ministry itself took specific steps in this direction. Adherence to the international mainstream, intense participation in negotiations, and the profile that the administration sought to maintain all revealed the urgency of this kind of development. Attempts at solving the problem led to specific paths of action, such as modifying the entrance exam of the Instituto Rio Branco,² requiring that candidates hold an undergraduate degree before applying, and reorganizing its curriculum as a professional Master's degree program. In addition, there were some institutional changes in the structure of the ministry. Its consolidation at the beginning of Cardoso's first term as the epicenter of international trade negotiations brought home the necessity of acquiring high levels of specialization and keeping them up to date. Finally, there was greater cooperative interaction with other ministries and greater liaison with university professors of relevant expertise, as well as with offices, businesses, unions, and nongovernmental organizations—even if not to the full extent necessary.

At the same time, the image of the Brazilian state improved internationally. The peaceful conduct of the country was solidified, and Brazil came to be respected for its constructive positions. Weakness in promoting development, however, perpetuated a historical trend of shrinkage in Brazil's world-economic standing, undermining its bargaining power in international negotiations. The negative image of poor countries manifested in the public opinion of rich ones, as well as the internal problems that affect poor countries specifically, also complicated the maximization of advantages. In Latin America, Brazil's effort to play a more relevant leading role was impaired in the end by its own internal constraints.

These limitations left the Cardoso administration without great foreign-policy achievements to be celebrated. Concurrently, however, some of its initiatives allowed its opponent and successor, the administration of Lula da Silva, to tread a creative path through the international field. The basic diplomatic premise of the Lula administration involved replacing the concept of autonomy through integration with that of *autonomy through assertiveness*, which led

Brazil to consolidate a more affirmative foreign policy around the defense of its interests. In response to U.S. unilateralism, the Lula administration chose to revive multilateralism and bring it into play as an ordering principle of international politics, understanding it as a broad movement toward decentralizing and regulating power in international society—hence Brazil’s initiative in forming the G-3, creating the G-22, reaching out to African and Arab countries, and so on. Another significant change was the Lula administration’s apparent willingness to bear the costs of its leadership both in the world and specifically in Mercosur and South America.

NOTES

1. Gomes served three months as finance minister, from September to December 1994, stepping down before the start of Cardoso’s first term. He assumed the post at a particularly sensitive moment, two months after the implementation of the Real Plan and one month before national elections pitting Cardoso against Lula da Silva. —Translator’s note.

2. The Institute, the educational branch of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, is the gateway to the diplomatic profession in Brazil. —Translator’s note.

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