Civil Society and Regional Powers in a Changing World:  
The cases of Brazil and India  

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ABSTRACT

A changing world in which global and regional powers rethink their actions and preferences in the international arena is a world where domestic politics increasingly creates a more complex framework for foreign behavior. Many newly emerging powers have just recently adopted a democratic regime, while others are still governed by hard autocracies. Within this context, their civil societies have different channels to express their preferences towards the new world order under formation and their expectations concerning how their states plan to be part of it. This paper will discuss how emerging regional powers behave in this changing world, the possibilities and limits imposed by civil society pressure, or even inaction. The authors wish to address how these systemic changes impact on the channels through which civil society movements voice their platforms for their country international role, considering the degree of democratic institutional consolidation as an intervening variable. As case studies, this theoretical debate will be applied to contemporary Brazil and India.

1. International governance in a changing world: new interactions and old actors

International governance can be comprehended as a continuous process from which interest harmonization is sought between actors within the international environment in order to avoid conflict and promote cooperation (COMMISSION ON GLOBAL GOVERNANCE, 1995). The European Concert created in Vienna Congress in 1815 is an important historical landmark for understanding this concept as a route where the state was the protagonist. Nevertheless, state prominence did not mean that all negotiations within this normative framework had not been opened to public scrutiny (KRASNER, 2009).

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During the 20th century, interstate relations were formulated through a diplomacy centered in the leader of the executive power. Despite the liberal revolutions from the previous centuries, plenipotentiaries kept clothed with a legitimacy that still lacked institutional solidity in order to be truly transferred to the people. Foreign policy, understood as the state domestic demands projected towards the international environment, was drawn based on a univocal national interest (HUDSON, 2006).

Within this scenario, a clear line between hard and low politics was defined (BUSTAMANTE, 2000). Hence, diplomacy had the noble mission to ensure the integrity of state sovereignty and, therefore, its own survival in the international environment. Foreign policy was seen exclusively as a matter of high politics – it was not open for citizen debate, and it should not be, in order to avoid risking the entire national society. It was based on this that secrecy and decision-making centralization on the executive power were justified.

Over the years, state and transnational flows have become more and more intense, and the frontier between high and low politics is not that obvious anymore. The last two centuries have testified an increasingly interdependent world concerning relationships with all its actors (KEOHANE; NYE, 2011). More heterogeneous players important for domestic decision-making process on public policies find more channels to voice their interests inside more mature democratic societies (LIMA, 2000).

Global capital, advocacy transnational networks and international organizations are examples of actors that gained increasingly power within international governance, especially after the Cold War (KECK; SIKKINK, 1998). These new players and their new interactions promote great chances within state foreign policy construction from defining national interest up to plenipotentiary final decision-making.

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3 On this distinction, Maria Regina Lima (2000, p. 273, 274) states that “Nessa concepção, a política internacional está acima da política doméstica porque voltada para a defesa dos interesses nacionais e por tratar de questões afetas à segurança e à sobrevivência do Estado, em um contexto em que tanto uma quanto outra não estão garantidas por qualquer instituição ou norma, mas apenas pelo próprio poder de cada Estado”.

4 Hermann and Hermann (1989) discuss multiple autonomous actors influences. They are individuals or groups that are outside a decision-making structure, but they are capable of constraining, even
As shown by Robert Putnam (1988), foreign policy decision-making level II has growing power in this process. As state institutions solidify their democratic regime, accountability control channels and social scrutiny over government actions may also fortify and tend to become more frequent and available. Therefore, the group of agreements that are possible for the plenipotentiary to get them approved at home – the win-set – is reduced, because the chief negotiator will be subject to increasingly strong pressures at home. National civil society becomes then an important player, able to impose constraints and to demand results concerning state foreign actions.

On one hand, national civil society increases its space for action through a foreign policy that is more accountable in front of its state institutions. On the other hand, the increasing number of transnational interactions within a hegemonic order under transformation can contribute to modify the society own social behavior. In this highly dynamic scenario, the state and its challenge for defining national interest react and interact with international environment structure side by side with the internal debate on democracy as a value defended by the international society built upon a western liberal structure.

Brazil and India are states whose economic growth and global relations are growing considerably in the last decade, specially considering the years after 2008 financial turmoil. In an international order where traditional powers as United States of America (U.S) and Europe are found more fragile, there is space to reconfigure international governance, as it can be noticed with G20 increasing influence (RAMOS, 2013). These changes bring about some questions.


Robert Putnam proposes to analyze foreign policy decision-making based on a dynamics between the level I (international) and the level II (domestic environment). In this sense, the chief negotiator behavior in the international arena is constrained by the necessity of reelection and power maintenance in the domestic field. See PUTNAM, R. (1988): Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-level game. International Organization, Vol. 42, No. 3.

Currently, it can be noted a predominant trend to use democracy as an instrumental element – democracy of low-level intensity. For a more classical definition in this sense, see Robert Dahl and its concept of polyarchy. In DAHL, R. (1972): Polyarchy: participation and opposition. New Haven.
To think about how Brazilian and Indian states place themselves in contemporary international environment, unitary actor models do not suffice. Some questions arise that go beyond these prototypes. In which way democratic regime institutions are influencing foreign policy decision-making? What is the place of civil society in these countries concerning foreign policy decision-making? In order to comprehend foreign policy decision-making in a world under change, this paper aims to think of how Brazil and India decide foreign policy matters domestically, and if there is any social participation within this process. More than arriving at empirical findings, it is sought to ramble theoretically over these challenges as an initial provocative effort about this relevant topic.

Within modern political dynamics, civil society is responsible for producing inputs that shall be addressed to the state, that then respond with public policies – the outputs. In spite of tensions on how to pose these demands and the difficulties for establishing a limit about when civil society must produce outputs for its own necessities, a very important task for this social force understood as an arena for demand construction is to verify state actions accountability (BOBBIO, 1999).

The Democratic State of Law expects a state action that is juridical within a hierarchical subjection and a material qualification made through law. A legal democracy is legitimated, thus, by the necessity for the state to absorb socioeconomic diversities in its public policies, using law as an instrument for transformation and solidarity. In this sense, social restructuring and state control happen through education and popular participation. Civil society then plays the role of controlling state behavior and matching its demands with public policies built as answers to them (WOLKMER, 1995).

If civil society arena within a Democratic State of Law relay mainly on accountability, from the moment that output construction is transnationalized through international agreements and organizations, questions on its legitimacy rise, since public policies are planned and/or constructed outside domestic democratic institutions and have a direct effect over citizens life and the own definition of common good. As a consequence, it is quite important to discuss where civil society stands not only inside the state, but also within a broader transnational horizon.
With this in mind, the next sections present two cases – Brazil and India. This discussion aims to shed some light over (1) the general lines upon which Brazilian and Indian foreign policy decision-making occur; (2) these processes openness for social participation. Finally, some considerations will be brought about concerning Brazil and India current challenges under a changing world order, and how social participation within foreign policy decision-making is related to these states capacity to project themselves internationally as emerging powers.

2. The Brazilian case

Brazilian foreign policy decision-making has been traditionally pointed as an insulated process that does not establish a clear connection with public debate, and with low participation level of legislative power. Throughout Brazilian history, some relevant changes have occurred within this realm, since a formal increasing on legislative participation until a better coordination between new domestic actors in an attempt to democratize foreign policy construction. Nevertheless, academia still describes the executive power as a consecrated actor within foreign policy decision-making in Brazil.

Aimed on better comprehending this framework and on evaluating possible changes, a brief historical discussion on legislative role within Brazilian diplomacy will be initially done, followed by presenting its current participation on foreign policy. This involvement played essentially a residual role during the Empire. This state building moment promoted complete power centralization on the executive based on the defense of national interest and survival. This background is relatively reversed with republic revolution in 1889. As Alexandre (2006:49) points out, “for the first time in Brazilian constitutional history, it was stated the congress privative ability to ‘decide definitively concerning treaties and conventions with foreign nations’ – a text that is kept almost without changes until nowadays”.

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7 Freely translated by the authors from the original text: “Pela primeira vez na história constitucional brasileira, previu-se a competência privativa do Congresso em ‘resolver definitivamente sobre
Despite this new constitutional landmark, Brazilian diplomacy during the Old Republic keeps tied to territorial configuration efforts. During this period, the Baron of Rio Branco gets prominence, and foreign policy is still full of his influence. He is a crucial and symbolic character for the Foreign Affairs Ministry institutionalization, and clearly defended a diplomacy separated from domestic policies. State matters would be then autonomous and independent from internal social groups cleavages and conflicts. This conception contributed to reinforce the already ongoing process of Brazilian foreign policy insulation, which is now also part of Itamaraty (ALEXANDRE, 2006; LIMA, 2000; RAMOS, 2012).

From 1946 on, Brazil enters a period of import substitution model consolidation. According to Lima (2000), this economic agenda made multilateral negotiations play the role of a collective good, since it was desired to protect national industry. Once more, the Foreign Affairs Ministry had its autonomy pattern reinforced in front of domestic political and social forces. It is important to highlight that legislative powers concerning foreign policy (and all other matters) were suspended during Estado Novo period (1937 – 1945), as the Congress was kept dissolved. In 1968, the Congress is again put aside during military dictatorship, and the executive power assumed integrally foreign policy decision-making, including treaties approval. Therefore, it seems that, during history, there was a fluctuation between a strong and complete executive autonomy for foreign policy decision-making.

With political democratization and the introduction in the new constitution of a wide set of social rights, it was expected that there would be changes concerning democratization and decentralization of foreign policy decision-making. Nevertheless, the final version of constitutional text kept executive powers concerning international relations and reinforced its ability to decide over it before congress, even after it has given the congress more exclusive powers over treaties celebration⁸ (LIMA;

tratados e convenções com as nações estrangeiras’ – redação que é mantida quase sem alteração até os dias de hoje”.
⁸ The 1988 Constitution states the exclusive competence of the congress to “resolver definitivamente sobre tratados, acordos ou atos que acarretem encargos ou compromissos gravosos ao patrimônio nacional”. In the article 84, nevertheless, it treats as an exclusive competence of the president, as a power to “celebrar tratados, convenções e atos internacionais, sujeitos a referendo do Congresso Nacional” (ALEXANDRE, 2006).
SANTOS, 2001). Alexandre (2006:60) states that “in 1998 constitutional regime, legislative fundamental participation in foreign policy kept laid down on its competence do approve international agreements ex post”. It seems clear that the congress is quite limited to act, as its costs for rejecting a convention already celebrated by the executive would bring high costs and possible sanctions for the country. Therefore, legislative can only play the part of accepting the agreement already defined by the president and the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The power concentration over executive hands must be stressed, that end up with unilateral power for defining the country foreign agenda (LIMA; SANTOS, 2001).

The new constitution also brought about some degree of confusion concerning executive and legislative roles: the articles that dealt with foreign policy used different terms to define each power competence for celebrating international treaties. The obscurity and the absence of further regulation have been utilized, thus, as mechanisms to enhance legislative powers. Capacity to make amendments, safeguards and interpretative marks to international conventions enabled the broadening of legislative participation. While analyzing agreements made by Brazil in the last years, Alexandre (2005; 2006) points that congress usually participates within foreign policy decision-making by inserting amendments during approval of certain international acts.

So it can be noted that legislative has resorted to this legal void, and the increasing of its participation within foreign policy decision-making has not been definitively solved. Nevertheless, it would not be reasonable to suppose that this participation would happen in all treaties. Alexandre (2006) states that this control has been made in situations in which there was more public opinion sensitiveness concerning a given agreement. That is, the congress claims for more powers when it sees a social mobilization concerning certain international negotiation. Legislative interest seems to be produced through some social sectors domestic activation (ALEXANDRE, 2005; 2006).

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9 Freely translated by the authors from the original text: “no regime constitucional de 1988, a participação fundamental do Legislativo em questões de política externa continuou assentada em sua competência para a aprovação ex post de acordos internacionais”.

10 There is an important debate concerning Brazilian foreign policy and the relation between the executive and the legislative powers (ALEXANDRE, 2006; CESAR, 2002). This discussion is set around delegation and abdication power theories that go, however, beyond the purpose of this paper.
This legislative participation over legal voids reveals that foreign policy decision-making process can be enlarged and less insulated. It seems a possible way out for thinking foreign policy democratization, since congressmen, the people representatives, have fired this prerogative precisely when they see civil society mobilization and consequent public opinion impact. In this perspective, a quite frequent argument in the academia shows up: globalization and certain topics transnationalization promote the domestic component within foreign policy formulation (LIMA, 2000).

However, this paper is not that optimistic concerning foreign policy democratization through legislative powers enhancement. It seems crucial and urgent to establish democratization and decentralization tools within Brazilian foreign policy decision-making. To fortify internal democracy also means making foreign actions accountable, and, with a more careful analysis, it is possible to find some problems that rise from congress action in this realm.

Classical studies on political participation (VERBA, SCHLOZMAN & BRADY, 1995; MILBRATH, 1965) and a number of current researches show that sociodemographic variables as income, schooling, race and gender can predict political participation. Generally, these variables indicate that political activity is skewed in favor of higher income and higher schooling level groups (Aires, 2010). It is possible to note that individuals with more resources for political participation, according also to this sociodemographic differentiation, are the ones usually heard by the government. That is, they can voice their preferences more efficiently and make them hit the political system (Aires, 2010). This social hierarchy constrain different social groups participation and influence capacity, and it is not, as pointed by Fábio Wanderley Reis (2010:56), “incompatible with a thoughtful public opinion concerning international problems and foreign policy that is able to exert influence over decisions on these matters”.11

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11 Freely translated by the authors from the original text: “incompatível com a existência de uma opinião pública atenta aos problemas internacionais e de política externa e capaz de exercer influência sobre as decisões a esse respeito”.
As shown above, it is this same public opinion that has pushed for more congress participation within Brazilian foreign policy. The problem is how this public opinion is skewed by socioeconomic and schooling levels, and, hence, not able to completely fulfill democracy requirements. Given political participation pattern found in Brazil, it can be noted that public opinion is generally a small socioeconomic elite ideas, perceptions and desires. That is, the public opinion of a minority.\(^\text{12}\)

Here, a contradiction concerning current Brazilian congress enhanced participation on foreign policy following national public opinion mobilization as a democratizing mechanism can be found. What can be, at a first sight, perceived as a possibility for enlarging social participation within foreign policy formulation through its elected congressmen, reducing then the Ministry insulation and contributing for democratization, must be revaluated more cautiously.

It must be highlighted that actors with unequal resources for participation present themselves in an unequal position within a democratic regime, since not everyone can effectively have the chance for being heard by the political system. Since public opinion reflects individual and groups positioned more favorable in the socioeconomic strata, the government listens and answers to these groups mobilization when it behaves according to public opinion. Here, there is a clear risk to the equal interest protection democratic principle (VERBA; SCHLOZMAN; BRADY, 1995). It can be noted that to homogenize public opinion is to make its emancipatory character null. Society is composed of a number of interests and those associated to dominant groups have prevailed, not otherwise.

However, public opinion has been activated by foreign policy formulators, as an expression of a univocal national common will. Therefore, it is supposed that there is something collectively shared by all population, and it is possible to comprehend and express this national will by the way elite interests constrain policies concerning Brazil international standing. Once more, the government reinforces foreign policy

\(^\text{12}\) Fábio Wanderley Reis (2010) still points out, with his usual precision, the role of midia for public opinion, and notes that the journalist position, in general, has no correspondence with Brazilian population.
insulation, this time protected by the reference to public opinion, in spite of the fact this is skewed. That is, as this will can be comprehended and expressed through the Foreign Affairs Ministry highly qualified bureaucrats, there is no longer the need for defining this will through electoral race or democratic deliberation (REIS, 2010). Once again, the democratic ideal is disrupted.

This means then that it is impossible to combine foreign policy formulation with democratic practices? Not at all. A democratic regime legitimacy and strength relay over the connection between multiple demands from a number of socioeconomic and demographic strata and the public policy construction, and the foreign policy is indeed a public policy. This mechanism ensures state action as a transformative agent and as a social justice promoter. As we note, in Brazil, the absence of such a correspondence, there is a need to evaluate alternatives for legislative action, as an instance of democratic representation that effectively reflects societal demand more broadly. In order to do so, it is of utmost importance to establish civil society empowering mechanisms through all its strata beyond institutional channels and constitutional arrangements. The search for voicing less favored groups, traditionally excluded from formal political power, as a way to effectively guide public policies formulation can create a more democratic foreign policy management.

This democratization process in Brazil needs, therefore, to have a desire for constructing “broad democratic consensus, creating conditions in which the general public perceives the relevance of foreign policy initiatives and approves them, and do so precisely through values and institutional mechanisms consecrated by democracy” (REIS, 2010:66).

The democratic institutions existence is a landmark that differentiates also India from other emerging countries, in the same line shown in Brazilian case. A brief historical

13 In the last years, Brazil assisted to a significant enlargement of its popular participation mechanisms, as participative budget, management councils, special commission and the creation of a number of civil society organizations dealing with environment and human rights, among other topics. However, these efforts have not been translated into a significantly increased participation on foreign policy decision-making.

14 Freely translated by the authors from the original text: “amplos consensos democráticos, de criar condições em que o público em geral perceba a relevância de iniciativas de política externa e as aprove -, e de fazê-lo justamente pelo apelo a valores e mecanismos institucionais que a democracia consagra”.

of its construction and functioning, and its fragilities concerning foreign policy decision-making will be debated following. Finally, these observations will be compared to the current challenges these countries face for their projection in the international system.

3. The Indian case

India is one of the oldest political societies in human history (KARIM, 2013). Hindu civilization dates back five thousand years ago of social acquaintanceship that endures until nowadays. Nevertheless, it is only possible to think about India as a modern westphalian state with a democratic regime after its independence from British rule, in 1947, after almost one century of foreign domination.

Since then, India can be described as a federative republic with a democratic political regime and a parliamentary government system. Republic was a natural choice after the colonizing monarchical submission of the Viceroy and after previous territorially destabilizing nobility experiences. Federalism adoption had a similar logic due to the multireligious, multiethnic and multilingual character of Indian people (LIJPHART, 1996).

Remembering John Stuart Mill (1958), Karim (2013) discusses how Indian democracy survived despite Mill indication that it would be impossible to adopt a democratic regime in such linguistically divided society. In this sense, panchayat tradition, colonialism, charismatic leaderships, federalism, elections, constitution, military and civil sector relationship, and the role of the Supreme Court were fundamental to ensure the relative success of the nowadays most diverse democracy.

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The *panchayat* is an Indian millenary tradition from which social groups used to organize themselves politically in the local realm (JOHNSON, 2003). It is a council composed for, generally, five elected members that seek consensus concerning disputes related to a number of issues. Originally, it was believed that they had divine legitimacy, but today their temporal representativeness is stronger. Currently, these councils still are the primary political unit of rule in India, and it is believed that they collaborated to create a culture of elective relation between the representatives and the *demos*.

Despite attempts to dissociate ideally from British rule during the independence process, the metropolis legacy for democratic institutions in India is still quite relevant. In 1885, United Kingdom authorized the creation of a proto-party, the Indian National Congress, as a mean to voice Indian preferences to the British Crown. It ended up in the future as basis for the independence movement. From 1895 on, local governments were elicited, and they too contributed to shape a more professionalized group of individuals that eventually entered for independent Indian politics (KARIM, 2013).

Charismatic leaderships also played a central role for Indian state creation, and largely dominated its decision-making, specially concerning foreign policy. From Mahatma Gandhi legacy, to Nehru and its family – Indira, Rajiv and Sonia Gandhi, strong leaders and prime ministers are a significant part of the country history. In spite of Karim (2013) consideration that these leaderships helped state democratic consolidation and the diversity conformation in India, its personalistic actions also marked their rule not solely in a positive way, as posed by Ganguly (2010).

The federalist choice obviously contributed as well to conform the high ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity, as did the creation of many regional parties, especially from the 1960 on (NARANG; STANILAND, 2012). Furthermore, Indian electoral practice is surprisingly uninterrupted. With a brief suspension in the 1970s for only two years, all other governments came to rule with an increasing voters turnout that reached 66,4% in 2014, according to India Electoral Commission.¹⁶

Elections regulation, federalism, and an independent Supreme Court are among other information on fundamental rights and state organization in a written constitution that came into force in 1950. Finally, it is important to stress the separation between military and civil sectors, a legacy from British Crown own organization (KARIM, 2013). With a military subservient to the civil, a decision-making process centralized in a civil bureaucracy largely controls even matters related to security and defense (NARANG; STANILAND, 2012).

Indian decision-making on foreign policy happens within this federalist, parliamentary, democratic and highly social diverse environment. Nehru created Indian Foreign Affairs Service in the 1940s. Its diplomatic action, however, has always been closely tied to the Prime Minister, as during Nehru, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi rules, or to the governing coalition, as can be observed in the last two decades (NARANG; STANILAND, 2012).

Markey (2009) lists a series of difficulties for a successful Indian diplomacy action abroad aimed on placing India within current global challenges and on promoting the country regional leadership. The author points the small size of Indian diplomatic network, with about seven hundred officials; the lack of information on governmental actions to be analyzed by independent and well equipped universities and think tanks; and the lack of interest of the mídia and the private sector to truly engage in the debates on foreign policy.17

This structure is mostly insulated and dependent on a small elite centralized in the federal government (FAIR, 2012). The basic political framework in India lays down over multiple-oriented coalitions, built upon ethnic, regional, religious, casts, among other factors (NARANG; STANILAND, 2012). A resource that is greatly used in the relationship between the state and its demos is patronage, defined as a clientelistic exchange of provisions in the public realm based on private relationships and on

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17 Routray (2013) makes an interesting literature revision about critics that have been made to Indian diplomacy. See ROUTRAY, B. National Security Decision Making in India. Singapura: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2013.
future compromises made by the political actor involved in the negotiation (NUNES, 2003).

Nevertheless, in spite of an increasing popular participation during the elections, there are no great incentives for the politics to use foreign policy matters as platforms for the electoral race. It can be observed that the average citizen guides its vote on short-term domestic issues, like welfare policies, and on the many internal cleavages and its patronage system. Eventually, it has been tried to mobilize international issues for electoral race, but they were not as successful for granting votes as, for example, coalition dynamics (NARANG; STANILAND, 2012).  

The low level of social mobilization on foreign policy collaborates for its insulation and its ideologization. Generally, these two characteristics constancy was marked by foreign policy guidelines fragmentation during different governments, showing that India lacks a solid strategy for its insertion in the international environment (ROUTRAY, 2013; THAROOR, 2012; MOHAN, 2010; MARKEY, 2009). However, Narang and Staniland (2012) indicate it is possible to note an emphasis on autonomy search based on domestic self-reliance and aversion to alliance during the three main periods about the Indian foreign policy – Nehru Era (1947 – 1965), Gandhi Era (1965 – 1988) and Post-Cold War Era (1989 – today).

Jawarharlal Nehru based Indian foreign policy first guidelines on non-alignment (GANGULY, 2010). Fearing that a close relationship with one of the superpowers in the international bipolar system would bring about a colonial dependency revival, Indian strategy was funded in the defense of de-colonization, of disarmament, of equitable international resources sharing, and of participation on multilateral forums.

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18 It can be noted a small sensitiveness concerning tensions with Pakistan, Muslim population in India, Sri Lanka situation and terrorism. On this discussion, see ROUTRAY, B. National Security Decision Making in India. Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2013; e SAHNI, A.; MOHAN, R. India’s security challenges at home and abroad, National Bureau of Asian Research, Special Report 39, May 2012.
Indira Gandhi and her son, Rajiv Gandhi,\(^{19}\) did not present such a coherent vision for the Indian foreign policy as their ancestor did with non-alignment. More ferociously opposed to United States, Indira Gandhi ended up getting closer to Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), like the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation signed in 1971. Rajiv Gandhi, despite having rhetorically proposed changes, largely did not modify his mother legacy (ROUTRAY, 2013).

Narang and Staniland (2012) state that it is possible to note a strategic center that persists after Cold War, even though some domestic and structural changes have taken place. Coalition governments that came about followed a tendency to privilege autonomy, flexibility and a desire to avoid dependency on stronger powers, as elements that trace back to Nehru Era, no matter were they from Hindu right\(^{20}\) or from left orientation.\(^{21}\)

Coalition dynamics that are predominant currently tend to modify state apparatus in order to give voice to more multiple interests. According to Muni (2009), centrality around party leadership tends to give space to a consensus necessity through coalition, what could open more space for social mobilization, historically important for demos manifestation since Indian independence.

Pachayat and civil disobey legacy bring about civil society importance for India. Some resist to discuss social groups in India following what they consider to be a western concept, and most of readings are focus on more strict interpretation based on rural, labor, and anticolonial movements from the beginning of state history, following the liberal benchmark of three sectors (MCDUIE-RA, 2009).

Nevertheless, it can be noted the relevance of civil society groups in India for constituting the demos build up discourse. As Katzenstein et al (2001) highlights, many political groups, specially regional ones, have gained prominence firstly linked

\(^{19}\) Indira Gandhi (1966 – 1977, 1980 – 1984) and Rajiv Gandhi (1984 – 1989) rules in this era are not continuous, and were interrupted by a short authoritarian interregnum and by some coalition governments.  

\(^{20}\) Bharatiya Janata Party, specially. It is currently in the government, with Prime Minister Narendra Damodardas Modi.  

\(^{21}\) The strongest party in this spectrum, nationally speaking, is the Indian National Congress, a center-left party that occupied Indian cabinet up to the recent elections in 2014.
to social and political movements before become elected. During the 1940s and the 1950s, these movements happened as social fights mainly connected to imperialism and anticolonialism, and took Nehru political party to federal government after independence.

Specially after the Cold War, with a profound economic crisis and state liberalization, social and political movements start to address resources management in India, assuming sometimes the role of providers within the liberal context (GUPTA, 2003). It can be perceived a ruling elite consolidation in New Delhi, increasingly influenced by regional parties, and a social mobilization more concentrated on local specific issues, as, for example, some environmental movements.22

As previously discussed, civil society domestic proactivity in India was not translated into great mobilizations on foreign policy issues. The independence movement adopted a non-aligned position of rejection towards international alliances, what was also adopted domestically by the average citizen. In this sense, during the first five decades of Indian state, there was little room for transnational fight channels, or even for domestic problems connection to the international realm.

It is expected that economic liberalization and a more profound insertion of Indian market in international trade after Cold War could contribute for addressing civil society demands to foreign policy decision-making. However, it can be still noted a significant apathy within the average voters, that largely have few information and knowledge on international relations (KAPUR, 2009).

Narang and Staniland (2012) think that a tendency to a greater foreign policy elitization can occur due to business sector participation on it. Trade groups have contributed for effectively enhancing some institutional flaws within Indian diplomacy, specially the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). Some strategic dialogues have been kept between Indian industry and central figures in United States, Japan and

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Singapore, and commercial visits were arranged. Moreover, some authors remember the importance of Indian diaspora and the media as voicing vehicles for society interests concerning foreign policy, even though they are restrained to a privileged elite and distant form the majority.

It is expected that this business sector will increasingly act closer to foreign policy decision-making in India, since the state is inefficient for correcting diplomacy institutional flaws. They will have, however, some challenges ahead, according to Ganguly (2010). Firstly, there is no truly articulated alternative for non-alignment, and the decisions are made more based on stakeholders expectations than on a rational long term calculus (ROUTRAY, 2013). Lasting issues, as Pakistan tensions, bilateral relations with US and China rise seem to lack good analysis and planning. There are still serious institutional deficiencies in the Foreign Affairs Service, what makes the task of finding this new axis even harder. In this scenario, India would have fewer chances for successfully acting within contemporary relevant international regimes like non-proliferation, climate change and international trade.

While comparing Brazilian and Indian cases, it is possible to note some differences concerning their foreign policy decision-making. Nevertheless, it is possible to also note many similitudes when it comes to deal with civil society involvement in this realm. Considering the current challenges Brazil and India face for global insertion, these points shall be following debated.

4. Brazil and India: old and new challenges in the changing world

Brazil and India are emerging powers in contemporary international system, especially after 2008 crisis. Their territorial and population continental dimensions and their sharp economic growing have contributed to put these countries diplomacies to more than ever search the consolidation of a more privileged position in international relations and in the regional realm.
Considerable natural resources richness\textsuperscript{23} and diverse cooperation initiatives with developing countries\textsuperscript{24} are elements that mark Brazilian insertion in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century (CHUN, 2013). Nevertheless, a historical defender of non-intervention principle, the country lacks hard power capacity, and its consolidation as a global power largely depends on larger investments in the military sector. For doing so, the greatest Brazilian challenge is to reverse its current economic growing retraction in order to generate capital for solidifying not only its economic and financial leadership, but also its power in other realms.

The fact that it is the largest non-western democracy in the world grants India an important role as strategic western powers ally, what can generate capital for a better regional and global insertion. Its current investments in the military, its nuclear power and its economic growth also collaborate as positive factors for enhancing Indian role. Chun (2013) also remembers that for a sustainable enlargement of its capacities, Indian diplomacy must rectify its institutional flaws, consolidate its rapprochement with South East Asia, and solidify its recent closer bilateral relations with US and other states as BRICS alliance.

Brazilian diplomacy professionalization took a leap in quality with the Baron of Rio Branco leadership in the beginning of the last century, leaving as legacy a Ministry with solid formation and well prepared diplomats. A number of personal leadership that has been played by Brazil in many international forums can be perceived as an indication of such preparation. On the other hand, in the Indian case, it can be noted a lack of larger investment in their bureaucrats preparation and even in hiring such personnel.

Itamaraty more solid institutionalization may have elicited more concise rapprochement initiatives with public opinion. Since last two governments, public dialogues with civil society multiplied and information and transparency channels have been created. The same impetus cannot be so strongly perceived in Indian

\textsuperscript{23} Brazil has the largest biological diversity in the world, and almost a tenth of global fresh water (CHUN, 2013).

\textsuperscript{24} An example is the country recent enlargement of African policy, with direct actions in many African states as medicaments and agriculture cooperation and investments on infrastructure. See SARAIVA, J. A política exterior do governo Lula: o desafio africano. Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional, 45 (2), 2002, pp. 5-25.
diplomacy, that as promoted a more structured proximity with the business sector, which has played for many times the role of diplomat advisors.

The business sector also plays a role side by side with Brazilian diplomacy, and this tradition is older than Indian one. Brazilian economic liberalization traces back to foreign investment openness during the 1940s, expanding considerably when Juscelino Kubistchek ruled the country some years later. On the other side, Indian market opening got stronger only after the Cold War, when the socialist center-left party – the Indian National Party, lost elections for a right-wing coalition. In this sense, the diplomatic proximity with business sector only happened in a denser way more recently, and this is a crucial challenge for India projection and the sustainability of its considerable last years economic growth.

If Brazilian and Indian diplomacy proximity to businessmen is almost an inevitable move due to the growth and openness of these states economies, to promote a democratic consensus around other issues as security and defense is a much more complex task. Some problems of this nature have been capable of mobilizing Indian public opinion and promoting interfaces with its foreign policy, especially when it comes to deal with border tensions and terrorism. It can be perceived a trend for these channels to become more frequent due to regional parties increasingly important participation in national politics. On the other hand, in Brazil there are no such challenges more directly noticed by the population, and enlarging investments in military and the country participation in international activities such as United Nations peacekeeping operations are not that well comprehended and accepted by the citizens.

While evaluating this brief history concerning Brazil and India foreign policy decision-making, institutional mechanisms that try to democratize this process and its relation with civil society and its demands face quite similar challenges in both countries. Firstly, and mainly, it is clear that there is an insulation of the actors dedicated to negotiate and decide on these policies when it comes to deal with international issues. As pointed out above, both states present a history of few and small exemptions, and largely denote a considerable centralization in a diplomatic bureaucracy linked to an individual or a coalition government.
This insulation consecration as basis for foreign policy formulation and negotiation seems in both cases to have been strengthened by a low level of social mobilization around international issues. Since there is no significant pressure made by the population for a more participative process, and as demands are not that clearly organized concerning foreign affairs, there is no systematic discussion about institutional mechanisms to democratize foreign policy decision-making. In spite of the recent civil society activation in both countries with organized movements increasing, this domestic dynamism was not translated into larger mobilizations on foreign policy.

Moreover, as already discussed here, due to socioeconomic, cultural and demographic cleavages, the participation tends to be highly skewed. The trend is that more favored groups from higher socioeconomic strata are the only ones that can not only give voice to their demands, but also make them having an impact on the formal political system. It can be noted, then, a reversal in the democratization process: an elitization of Brazilian and Indian foreign policies, mainly concerning the business sector. This sector benefits from the institutional porosity for directing diplomacy closer to its interests.

On one hand, this can mean a seed for increased societal participation. Nevertheless, it still can risk democratic equality ideal. Therefore, it seems that both Brazil and India will have to deal with its society structural issues in order to initiate a democratization process for their foreign policies. Such a process, however, is essential for adapting their international projecting to their domestic democratic regime, making it more legitimated.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


