



UEPB

**UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL DA PARAÍBA
CAMPUS V**

**CENTRO DE CIÊNCIAS BIOLÓGICAS E SOCIAIS APLICADAS
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM RELAÇÕES INTERNACIONAIS**

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**MIDDLE POWERS' GRAND STRATEGY:
the case of Brazil from Cardoso to Lula**

**JOÃO PESSOA
2021**

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Área de concentração: Política Externa e Segurança Internacional.

Orientador: Profa. Dra. Cristina Carvalho Pacheco

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C331m Carvalho, André Luiz Viana Cruz de.
Middle powers grand strategy [manuscrito] : the case of
Brazil from Cardoso to Lula / André Luiz Viana Cruz de
Carvalho. - 2021.
95 p.

Digitado.
Dissertação (Mestrado em Relações Internacionais) -
Universidade Estadual da Paraíba, Pró-Reitoria de Pós-
Graduação e Pesquisa, 2022.
"Orientação : Profa. Ora. Cristina Carvalho Pacheco ,
Coordenação do Curso de Relações Internacionais - CCBSA."
1. Grande estratégia. 2. Potências médias. 3. Brasil. 1.
Título

21. ed. CDD 327.81

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Aprovada em: 22/11/2021 .

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DEDICATION

In loving memory of my grandfather, Army Captain José Patrocínio, for always being my biggest supporter, for teaching me to never give up on my dreams and never lose heart in difficult times.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Taking into account the particularities of each phase of a researcher's career, developing an academic work is never a simple task. In fact, the paths of academy are often extremely complex and challenging. However, as an old Brazilian saying goes, “weak seas never made good sailors”. Therefore, as corny as it may seem, I am very proud of all the obstacles and rough seas that I had to face. I could say that the accomplishment of this work is a credit to many people, and not exclusively mine. Throughout the “journey” of my MSc, I received the support of many people, who contributed in a special way to make this moment possible, and I need to acknowledge them here.

First, I have to acknowledge the importance of two people that have already these people have already fulfilled their mission among us: my father Nei Carvalho, and my grandfather Captain José Patrocínio. My father was a good man, always happy as if no problem could ever affect him. As a geographer, he was the first to introduce me to “the world” by giving me a Top Trump card game entitled “Countries of the World”, what clearly drove my passion for geopolitics more broadly. My father always insisted that I should always follow my heart, because sometimes more important than any financial outcome, the pleasure from doing what you really love outweighs any other thing. I miss him and I wish he is in a peaceful place now.

My grandfather was my superhero, a man like no other. Overcame poverty and rose from the ranks becoming a highly decorated army officer. One of the first gifts I remember getting from my grandfather as a kid was a game of Risk (which I have until the current moment), and what of course threw me into security, and later, strategy and defence. I could spend pages talking about his importance for my life and my education. He was my biggest supporter, gave me wise advices but always giving me space to take my own decisions. From him I learned the importance of staying focused and calm in times of trouble. I learned that there is nothing wrong with having a dream and that I should always aim high and do my best in order to achieve them. He has always done everything to help me, from giving me some change so I could take the bus to paying for my studies when my mother was unable to do it. He was my rock. I owe him so much, and I am most thankful for everything he did. I miss him, and I wish I could share this moment with him.

I also have to thank my mother and grandmother. There are no words to describe how thankful I am for having them in my life. My mother that has always given up on her own well-being to be able to offer me all the best. Thank you for all your love and for showing me that hard work always pays off. My grandmother, for all the kindness, guidance and love, without her, things would be much harder. I love them, and without their support, I would not be able to have completed this task. I extend this to two other especial people: my cousins (brothers) Quéops and Neto. Thank you for being the brothers I always wanted.

To my girlfriend and future wife, Polianna, all the acknowledgments in the world. Having her by my side during these years have been the most incredible experience, which I want it to never end. Polianna is more than I could ever deserve or ask for. She supports me like no other person. She always sees the best on me, and always tried to show me how great life is even when I was going through my darkest hours. She showed me that I can accomplish great things and that I should never doubt myself. I am the lucky fella Dean Martin used to sing about, and I hope that I can share my accomplishments with her, and that she can share hers with me. All the love.

There is also a lot I would like to say about professors and colleagues from my University. I could not begin with anyone if not her, the boss, Dr. Cristina Pacheco, also

known as my supervisor. Having the opportunity to work under her supervision during these years have been an amazing experience from which I learned things I will take for my entire career. Cristina became more than a supervisor for me. I have the utmost respect and gratitude for everything we did together as friends and as scholars. To my former supervisor and forever mentor, Dr. Paulo Kuhllmann, I am most thankful for all the opportunities I had to work with you, as a former student and former teaching assistant. I wish one day I can be at least half of what he is as a person and as an academic. To Dr. Fabio Nobre, my most sincere thanks. I think today I can call him a friend, but this relation goes beyond that. He is one of the best professors I have, and his way of teaching influenced me more than he knows. I hope we can still have great talks about strategy and history of warfare. To my colleagues and friends, Raphaela de Melo, Edith Larissa, Rodrigo Otero, Monique Medeiros and Murilo Mesquita, thank you for your friendship and support. I definitely lived great moments with all of you.

Another important person who is an influence, and that I have the utmost respect and endearment for is Dr. Hillary Briffa. Thank you for being so welcoming and willing to help when I was still very shy to contact you at first. In the same way, thank you for accepting being a part of this moment. Your comments, suggestions and guidance have been priceless. I wish you all the best on your future endeavours and hopefully, I will be able to repay all the support at least with a coffee at Sommerset House as soon I start the PhD.

To my friends from King's College, in special Dr. Zeno Leoni, Dr. Michelle Groppi, Marriam Qureshi, Julia Hodgins, Giovanni Razzio, Arslan Sheikh, Alessandra Gramolini, Chiara Aquilino and Raphael Lima. I am lucky to have met all of you, and I wish our friendship can grow stronger overtime. May we meet in England next year.

To my 'non-academic', however best friends ever, Caio, Amanda and Eduardo. You are the best friends one could ever ask for, and I am most grateful for having you by my side. I may not say this often, but I love you and your friendship has been a rock during troubled periods of this process.

"This study was financed in part by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior - Brasil (CAPES) - Finance Code 001". Therefore, in a period where the practice of Science and research are considered a misdemeanor, and consequently a target for dismantling by leaders in the country, All thanks to CAPES for funding this research, without which it could not have been carried out.

RESUMO

Tendo em vista que a literatura tradicional em grande estratégia privilegiou o estudo e a limitação desta apenas às Grandes Potências, a presente dissertação questiona se as potências médias poderiam desenvolver e criar uma grande estratégia. A hipótese principal é de que sim, pois não existem limitações teóricas que torne a teoria da grande estratégia aplicável apenas às grandes potências. Entretanto, uma série de critérios e condicionantes precisam ser cumpridos previamente para que a ampla política de uma potência média seja considerada uma grande estratégia. Para alcançar estes objetivos, foi feita uma revisão sistemática da teoria da grande estratégia através da sua evolução histórica como disciplina para entender suas causas e manifestações. Fez-se também uma revisão sistemática da teoria referente ao conceito de potências médias para identificar suas principais características e aplicar o conceito de grande estratégia às suas idiossincrasias com o objetivo de determinar quais seriam as principais determinantes da grande estratégia de uma potência média. Para fins de teste, fez um estudo de caso com foco no Brasil do governo Cardoso ao Governo Lula a partir da política de inserção internacional desenvolvidas por eles. Identificou-se por sim que, mesmo Cardoso cumprindo alguns critérios, a falta de foco e coerência não corrobora com a existência de uma grande estratégia no período. No governo Lula, identificou-se não apenas o cumprimento de todos os critérios mas também a implementação de um tipo de grande estratégia que o autor intitulou de ‘amalgama’.

Palavras-chave: grande estratégia, potências medias, Brasil.

ABSTRACT

Considering the traditional literature on grand strategy has privileged the study and its limitation only to the Great Powers, this dissertation questions whether the middle powers can devise and implement a grand strategy. The hypothesis is that there are no theoretical limitations to make grand strategy exclusive to great powers. However, a series of criteria and conditions need to be met in advance so the comprehensive policy of a middle power can be considered a great strategy. To meet these objectives, a systematic review of grand strategy theory was carried out through its historical evolution as a discipline to understand its causes and manifestations. A systematic review of the theory regarding the concept of middle powers was also carried out to identify its main characteristics and to apply the concept of grand strategy to its idiosyncrasies, with the aim of determining which would be the main determinants of the grand strategy of a middle power. For testing purposes, it was carried out a case study focusing on Brazil from the Cardoso to Lula administrations, based on the policy of international insertion developed by them. It was identified that, even though Cardoso fulfilled some criteria, the lack of focus and coherence does not corroborate the existence of a grand strategy in the period. In the Lula government, not only was the fulfilment of all criteria identified, but also the implementation of a type of grand strategy the author entitled 'amalgamation' or 'weaving'.

Key-words: grand strategy, middle powers, Brazil.

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INTRODUCTION

The study of Grand Strategy in a world of intense geopolitical flow has become increasingly prevalent in recent decades, especially since the end of the Cold War. This importance is mainly due to the fact that Grand Strategy raises and instigates the debate around some of the main questions of International Relations: why, how and with what objectives do States mobilise their national resources of power to promote their interests in the international arena.

Since 1991, the year of publication of Paul Kennedy's *Grand Strategies in War and Peace*, the popularity of the term has grown exponentially. Nonetheless, the increase in grand strategy's popularity is inversely proportional to the advances towards its conceptual and definitional establishment. The reason for this is that the field still lacks conceptual clarity when it comes to a single definition of what grand strategy is. This can be understood as the epistemological problem of grand strategy, and it remains a barrier within the field, especially when critics insist in questioning its utility and feasibility.

From a methodological perspective, Rosenau (2006) claims that concepts are fundamental for the development of knowledge, as well as being the basis for theoretical formulations, as theories are systematic conceptual propositions that can lead to the establishment of causal relationships ($X \rightarrow Y$). However, within the studies of grand strategy, scholars still struggle to differentiate definitional and causal claims. Meaning that there is still little clarity regarding what is the proper definition of the concept, and what its causal mechanisms are.

Currently, there is a common understanding on the basic principles of grand strategy as being: the mobilisation and coordination of the totality of a nation's resources of power (economic, political, diplomatic and military) to best promote its interests and long-term political objectives¹. However, this definition may present an impasse because if a concept is not directly linked to the empirical analysis of a phenomenon, then there is no way to sustain that concept. In this sense, grand strategy should always start in theory so that it can later be incorporated into political practice.

Another problem in the literature on Grand Strategy is the exclusive attention to the behaviour of the great powers, their respective strategies and their ability to shape the international system. The focus of the analysis of the grand strategy only on great powers

¹Feaver (2009); Layton (2012); Silove (2018); Miller (2016).

can, to some extent, present some problems, considering that in a complex international system, middle powers also have a strategy of operationalization of their national interest. Edward Luttwak, Paul Kennedy and Williamson Murray are just some of the authors who dedicate themselves exclusively to the great powers. Although in his first book about strategy, Luttwak (1987) claims grand strategy is only feasible in accordance with the scope of the great powers, in his later (2009) book assessing the grand strategy of the Byzantine Empire, he changed his argument by saying that all states have a grand strategy, whether they are conscious of it or not. Therefore, Luttwak's later conceptualization of grand strategy does not exclude the potential of extending this theory to other actors in the international system, be they small or middle powers.

This dissertation starts from the hypothesis that middle powers can develop and implement a grand strategy, and that there are no theoretical constraints for applying this theory to these countries. Therefore, this is not a concept exclusive to the great powers. To this end, a systematic review of literature of grand strategic theory and middle power theory were conducted in order to identify points of convergence that showed middle powers also need to take comprehensive international decisions mobilising limited resources of power.

Although it would be difficult to derive extensive 'proof' that middle powers have a grand strategy without a thorough comparative analysis, single-case studies also have great importance for bringing positive results as they are open to the practice of replication, one of the most important scientific characteristics in social sciences research (KING; KEOHANE; VERBA, 1994).

The present dissertation has as its main assessment techniques in the qualitative, descriptive and explanatory-analytical approach, and the hypothesis test based on systematic review of literature and a single-case study. The methodological emphasis then will be on the single-case study, which, according to Rezende (2011) and Landman (2008), is highly relevant for formulating causal inferences and develop more complex interpretations within International Relations and Political Science.

The Brazilian case was chosen because it was observed that, during the period under analysis (1995-2010), even as a middle power Brazil enhanced its image and leveraged its instruments of power to become an important player and project its influence on the international stage. After the success of the macroeconomic stabilization, Brazil gained international credibility and started its path to become an important voice in world

politics. On the regional level, Brazil was responsible for promoting the economic integration of South America, in addition to playing a crucial role part in the creation of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the South American Defence Council (CDS). Globally, the country showed intense participation in international fora, ranging from the United Nations Peace Missions to the IBSA forums (India, Brazil and South Africa), and later with the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), as well as in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Brazil also deepened its economic relations with France, China and Russia, in addition to maintaining a good relationship with the United States, even though it was the mediator responsible for the success of the 2010 nuclear agreement with Iran and Turkey. Comparing Cardoso with Lula allows contrasting two subsequent moments in which the recent democratic turn begins the path to economic stabilization so that Brazil can then position itself as a global player.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters, where the first two chapters are theory driven and the last chapter is an exploratory single case study. Chapter 1 (one) is focused on analysing the concept of grand strategy since its early appearances, offering an assessment of the evolution of grand strategy as a theory and as a discipline. The purpose behind the chapter is to show the process through which grand strategy went from a purely “military focused” nature to a concept more policy oriented. Further, the author will present his understanding of grand strategy based on the literature analysed. It is worth mentioning, however, that the author does not intend to bring a new definition to the term. Instead, the idea is a clearer operationalization for the purposes of this work.

Chapter 2 also analyses the evolution of another theoretical concept: middle powers. Since historically the concept received different approaches, it evolved in an unclear way. Therefore, the chapter seeks to analyse what defines a country as a middle power by identifying their characteristics. The purpose behind this first assessment is to analyse the theoretical approach to middle powers in light of the grand strategic theory. The aim is to identify whether there is any theoretical limitation in the application of grand strategy theory to the middle powers, and also whether they can devise and implement one. Based on the literature analysed both on chapters one and two, the author further identifies three characteristics of a middle power grand strategy.

Last, chapter three analyses the case of Brazil during two different, but consecutive periods: the administration of Presidents Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995

– 2002) and Luís Inácio Lula da Silva (2003 – 2010). Since the highest goal of a middle power is to establish itself as a global player, the Brazilian case will be analysed through the country's foreign policy behaviour and international actions on three different levels. The regional level, in order to see its regional impact; the global level, in order to see its systemic impact; and the international security level, to see whether there is a coordination between the country's foreign and defence policy. Further, the author will identify the characteristics established on the previous chapter and then test the country's international posture against two models: grand strategy as acquiescence and grand strategy as autonomy.

1. CHAPTER

1.1 Grand Strategy: Exploring The Conceptual Swamp

Grand Strategy, within the disciplines of International Relations and the Political Science, is a broad concept. It has become conventional to refer to grand strategy as something related intrinsically to the state's greatest interests, coordinating its various spheres of statecraft, such as social, economic and political variables, along with the country's military power calculus in its relationship with the foreign world.

The neophyte, when faced with said “conceptual breadth”, can easily conflate the idea of grand strategy with fundamental concepts studied in International Relations, such as foreign policy, power and, in some cases, even military strategy. This is due to an epistemological problem: there is still no consensual and established definition for the concept of grand strategy.

The theory was interpreted in different ways, both by its first proponents in the early 20th century and by academics who worked on the topic in the post-Cold War context. Thus, despite the increasing popularity of the term, this phenomenon led some of the most established scholars in the field² to deal with the concept as a double-edged sword.

The focus of this chapter is to assess the theoretical and conceptual development of Grand Strategy as a discipline, since its earliest formulations with the naval theorists from the early 20th century, through the main military historians of the mid-20th century, until the contemporary debates.

1.2 The concept of *Strategy* defined

The strategic theory and the strategic studies are, initially, both directly related to the polemology field. Polemology is a branch of the social sciences responsible for the scientific study of war, its effects, forms, causes and functions as a social phenomenon (BOUTHOU, 1991).

Etymologically speaking, the term “strategy” is a derivative from the Greek word *strategos* (στρατηγός), which was used to describe or refer to what we know nowadays as an army general, who was responsible for the art of wartime command, specifically

²Hal Brands (2014) refers to GS as a “slippery” concept. Paul D. Miller (2016) uses the term “fuzzy”, and Lukas Milevski refers to it as a “jumbled” concept. See also Silove (2017).

during land campaigns (MILLER, 2016). Thus, it was from its etymological origin that the Prussian General Carl von Clausewitz – considered to be the father of modern military science – gave birth to his definition of strategy as “the use of the engagement for the purpose of war” (HOWARD; PARET, 2005, p. 177; CLAUSEWITZ, 1979, p. 199). However, important strategic theorists like Liddell Hart, Michael Howard, Richard Betts, Thomas Mahnken, Lawrence Freedman, and Arthur Lyke, among others, furthered Clausewitz’ work and built upon his theory contributing to the advancement of strategic theory with equally relevant conceptualizations and definitions.

Basil Henry Liddell Hart was a British Army Captain, military historian and military theorist whose work proved to be influential among strategists after World War I. In his words, strategy can be conceived as “the art of the general” and he defines the concept of strategy as “the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfil the ends of policy” (LIDDELL HART, 1954, pp. 335-336). Michael Howard (1979), also a British military historian, similarly claims that strategy concerns the deployment and use of the military to accomplish a certain political aim. The American approach also reflected that of the British, with Professor Richard K. Betts, an American political scientist, also arguing that strategy the use of military means to achieve/fulfil political ends. According to Professor Betts’s description, strategy can be understood as “a plan between policy and operations, and an idea for connecting the two” (BETTS, 2000, p. 07).

The consideration of strategic theory was not restricted to the Anglophone world. Héctor Saint-Pierre, an Argentino-Brazilian strategic theorist, devoted a significant portion of his work to systematising the evolving thought on the strategic studies field. According to Saint-Pierre, within the theoretical exercise of strategic thought it is possible to identify three main levels of analysis with which we can properly assess the phenomenon of strategy: the political level, the strategic level and the tactical level. In his words

“At the political level, fundamental decisions are made that will guide all other decisions and war actions [...]. At the strategic level is defined the general war behaviour as well as the general operations planning [...]. Finally, at the tactical level, the attitude in the battle is defined” (SAINT-PIERRE, 2018, pp. 499-500).

Therefore, based on the previously presented theorists, as well as on the Clausewitzian maxim that war is the continuation of politics by other means, it is possible

then to conclude that strategy in its strict sense, is about how to win wars and is - or at least should be - a rational process (MAHNKEN, 2007).

Having outlined the debate around the concept of strategy, strongly related to the phenomenon of war, it is imperative now to turn to one of its qualifiers: grand strategy. In light of this, within the narrow concept of strategy, depending on the level of decisions and operations, it is also possible to distinguish the singular concept of strategy from that of grand strategy.

1.2 A theoretical overview of the origins of Grand Strategy

In both Strategic Studies and International Relations, grand strategy (hereafter, GS) is a basic concept in the study of international politics. However, it can also be ambiguous, like many other concepts in the political and social sciences. Today, Grand Strategy still lacks a certain level of conceptual clarity, mostly due to the absence of a consensual definition of what the concept really is. According to Krishnappa (2012), Silove (2017) and, in Brazil, Alsina (2018), this epistemological problem can lead GS to acquire different meanings to different people, and for scholars like Murray, Sinnreich and Lacey (2011), it is impossible to think of it as a concept universally applicable to all the states that make up the international system.

The term here assessed derives from that of strategy, already briefly discussed above. In its basic conception, grand strategy was depicted – based on Liddell Hart’s observation – as being the conjunction and coordination of all national resources for the political objectives of war. According to Lukas Milevski (2019, p. 04), “the idea of integrating various forms of power in war used to be one of the dominant interpretations of GS embraced by various strategists”. One possible assessment to explain the expansion of the concept of strategy lies on the emergence of military conscription during the French Revolution, with the emergence of the phenomenon of total war (FULLER, 2002). According to the General Ferdinand Foch, the ushering in of a new era with the revolution and subsequent Napoleonic wars meant that warfare would demand both the large-scale conscription of the male population, as well as the channelling of all the nation’s resources into the war effort, thereby changing the parameters of strategy and statecraft (FOCH, 1903). Bearing in mind that the demands on the structures of the State and society were becoming colossal, the adoption of a broader concept, such as that of grand strategy, was fully applicable.

Nonetheless, even though Liddell Hart was the first to specifically offer a structured definition of grand strategy, its idea had already been discussed and theorized by Sir Julian Corbett (1911) – British naval historian, theorist and geostrategist – and Major General J. F. C. Fuller (1923; 1926) – British senior army officer, military historian and strategist.

Sir Corbett was responsible for the formulation and distinction between “minor strategy” and “major strategy”. Both principles proposed by Corbett were developed during a series of lectures addressed to the military officers at the Royal Naval War College, in 1911 (before World War I), and later published an essay, entitled ‘The Green Pamphlet’, in which Sir Corbett outlined his strategic terminology (STRACHAN, 2006). He argued that the planning of operations, selection of objectives and the deployment of military force ought to be called “minor strategy”. The “major strategy” was then defined as follows:

“In its broadest sense [major strategy] has also to deal with the whole resources of the nation for war. It is a branch of statesmanship. It regards the Army and Navy as parts of the one force, to be handled together; they are instruments of war. But it also has to keep in view constantly the politico-diplomatic position of the country, and its commercial and financial position” (CORBETT; 1911, p. 308).

In this regard, Sir Corbett was the first to highlight the importance of broadening the concept of national power outwards from the military scope, showing how a nation can clearly benefit from the linkages made between different branches of power.

In turn, Fuller was the first to use the specific term “grand strategy” as an extension of the scope of strategy, as it was understood until the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, in 1923, the constant attempts to link peacetime preparation with the conduct of war led Fuller to entitle one chapter of his book, *The Reformation of War*, “The Meaning of Grand Strategy”. According to Fuller,

“Peace strategy must formulate [...] war strategy, by which I mean that there cannot be two forms of strategy, one for peace and one for war [...]. The first duty of the grand strategist is, therefore, to appreciate the commercial and financial position of his country; to discover what its resources and liabilities are. Secondly, he must understand the moral characteristics of his countrymen, their history, peculiarities, social customs and systems of government, for all these quantities and qualities form the pillars of the military arch which it is his duty to construct” (FULLER; 1923, p. 218).

It is important to highlight that Fuller’s concern with the financial and commercial position of the country derives from Corbett’s concern with economic resources to

finance the activities of the state. Furthermore, Fuller shed light on an argument that would be later reinforced by Liddell Hart, stating that grand strategy no longer requires exclusive planning for wartime, but also a “vision for peace and building post-war society” (BRIFFA; 2020, p. 05). In other words, for Fuller the grand strategy was but the act of transmission of power, with the final objective of maintaining policy.

In this way, it is possible to understand that victory in the military confrontation is not enough for the protection of peace. Beyond this, the victory must also be translated into results intrinsically favourable to the interests of the victorious belligerent. This implies that in order to achieve its main objectives, the nation needs to mobilize resources of the most varied nature, including in times of peace (ALSINA, 2018).

Having established that one of the main purposes of war is to achieve better peacetime period afterwards, it becomes fundamental to conduct the war with the constant concern for the peace that we desire thereafter, a truth that lies at the heart of Clausewitz’ assertion that “war is the continuation of politics by other means”. In this sense, one feasible assessment of Liddell Hart’s theory of grand strategy is that maintaining the political objective of war always regarding the problems of subsequent peace, shapes the core of grand strategy.

Writing after Britain’s experience in World War I, Liddell Hart offered a definition of the concept, which remains the favourite among many grand strategic theorists and scholars today. As mentioned previously, Liddell Hart first conveyed the idea that the role of GS was – or still is – “to coordinate and direct all the resources of a nation [...] towards the attainment of the political object of the war” (LIDDELL HART; 1991, p. 322). In his own words “[...] while the horizon of strategy is bounded by the war, grand strategy looks beyond the war to the subsequent peace. It should not only combine the various instruments, but also regulate their use as to avoid damage to the future state of peace” (*Ibid.*, p. 322).

According to Liddell Hart, strategy and grand strategy must be analysed and studied as distinct concepts. In the author’s view, grand strategy must always control strict strategy, even though common principles may exist. Liddell Hart’s theory of grand strategy although related to the full mobilisation of a nation’s strengths to the fulfilment of the political objectives of war, can also be conceptualised as a “policy in execution” (LIDDELL HART, 1991, p. 406).

Regarding Hart's definition of GS, both Paul D. Miller and Alsina offer contributions that deserve to be highlighted. Alsina shows us two important points of Liddell Hart's definition: *first*, it is explicit in the transcendence of the purely military dimension and; *second*, it identifies the permanence of the war phenomenon as the central axis of *strategy* (ALSINA; 2018, pp. 26 – 28).

Paul D. Miller (2016) identifies that: *First*, “grand strategy includes identifying and articulating the political goals at which strategy aims”. *Second*, “grand strategy also expands [...] beyond its core field of military deployment [...] to include other instruments of foreign policy and even national power”. *Third*, “because grand strategy involved more than the application of military resources, Liddell Hart argued the concept was not relevant only in wartime”. *Finally*, “the construction of grand strategy has bred the expectation policymakers will provide a unifying theme or organizing concept around which to integrate [...] the several instruments of national power” (MILLER; 2016, pp. 240-242). Through these contributions to the intellectual debate, Alsina and Miller thus highlight how grand strategy is therefore distinct from, and more comprehensive than, strategy itself.

Meanwhile, in the United States, there were already sketches of what would become the American grand strategic tradition.³ Most of the thought regarding grand strategy in the United States preceded the two great wars and were mainly focused on the military character (MILEVSKI, 2016). According to Carrington (1904), during the American War for Independence, a concern with the continental army's inability to equate to the British military in battle, called for a ‘grand strategy’ instead of a bigger tactical plan to give them more room for manoeuvre.

However, the first definitions started to flourish during the interwar period, and contrasted starkly with that of Britain. This was mainly because the lessons America learned from their campaigns during WWI differed from those of the British and had a rather different impact within the United States itself. Edward Mead Earle was the first American scholar to dedicate his work to develop a more thorough analysis to the concept of grand strategy (HOWARD, 2001; MILEVSKI, 2016; ALSINA, 2018).

In addition to the lessons learned during WWI, Mead Earle's theory was also “shaped by the crisis in the liberal democratic model of government” (BRIFFA, 2020, p. 6) and the economic crash of 1929. For Meade Earle, “the highest type of strategy –

³See: Bellow (1917) and Carrington (1904).

sometimes called grand strategy – is that which so integrates the policies and armaments of the nation that the resort of war is either rendered unnecessary or is undertaken with the maximum chance of victory” (EARLE; 1943, p. 08). In addition, Mead Earle bolstered his own argument by stating that grand strategy was also a “combination of domestic and military policies by which the vital interests of a nation may be most effectively advanced and defended”.

Some scholars agree that Earle’s definition of GS is broader than that of Liddell Hart. The interpretation is that the conduct of GS during peacetime is so important that, once successful, it is capable of avoiding the outbreak of another war, such as that under escalation at the time of Earle’s first publication in 1943. According to Alsina:

“[...] the definition of grand strategy proposed by Earle incorporated deterrence as an essential component of State policies management, since now it was no longer a question of conducting the war in order to obtain peace, but of managing the grand strategy during peace so that war was unnecessary”⁴ (HOWARD, *apud* ALSINA; 2018, p. 29).

According to Lukas Milevski (2016), after WW II and during the first half of the Cold War, the rise of important concepts such as nuclear strategy and the return of limited warfare ended up overshadowing the concept of grand strategy. In addition, according to Briffa (2020), the idea that the war happened because of a failure or absence of a Western grand strategy, also contributed to the dormancy of the concept. However, despite the lack of explicit interest and references to grand strategy, it became more common during this period “to see grand strategies being explicitly articulated and written down”⁵ (BRIFFA; 2020, p. 7).

In the United States, few employed or saw any utility in the term during the Cold War, except for the navy who perceived that the concept was an useful asset for them to mitigate some of the structural constraints of sea power. The grand strategic approach enabled them to maximize their own utility, especially because at the time there was an increasing interest by the Army and Air Force on the above-mentioned concepts of nuclear strategy and limited warfare, following the trail opened by Sir Corbett (MILEVSKI, 2016).

⁴ Free translation from the original in Portuguese.

⁵ The Containment Strategy proposed by George Keenan in his “Long Telegram” is one of the most explicit example, when he stated that the focus of the US policy should be the containment of any Russian expansive activity.

Milevski highlights that “the re-emergence of grand strategy as a major idea in strategic studies was symptomatic of larger trends and the reopening of larger questions within the discipline” (MILEVSKI; 2016, p. 108). The term returned to fashion during the 1970s within the field of strategic studies as an important concept, responsible for influencing debates around issues of defence, strategy and the decline of the superpowers (COLLINS as cited by MILEVSKI, 2016).

In light of this, during the second half of the Cold War other important definitions also gained their ground. Among the theorists who ventured through the uncertain terrain of the Grand Strategy, two stand out: the American political scientist Barry R. Posen, and the strategist and military historian Edward N. Luttwak. Although their contributions were not the only ones provided by the Americans, they were the ones that proved to be the most enduring until the end of the bipolar conflict in the early 90’s.

Barry Posen first defined GS in his book *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (1984). In Posen’s word, “a grand strategy is a political-military, means-ends chain” capable of being conceived as “a state’s theory about how it can best cause security for itself” (POSEN; 1984, p. 13). The perspective adopted by Posen states that a GS best works when a state is capable of identifying probable threats to its security, and creates a structure where political, economic, military and other “remedies” can be used to contain those threats. According to Posen, GS should have a specific subcomponent to deal exclusively with military means, and, for the component mentioned, he uses the term “military doctrine”.

Edward Luttwak also posited relevant assessments on the matter. The author works specifically with strategy; however, his analysis supports the existence of five levels at which the strategy unfolds: technical, tactical, operational, theatre of operations and grand strategy (LUTTWAK, 2005). His analysis applies different labels to establish the differences between military, institutional, and normative doctrines, analysis from the observers, and the objective reality of each level. For instance, tactics recommended by military handbooks; tactics applied to a specific military class, like artillery or battle tanks tactics; tactics for a specific type of terrain, like jungle or open field tactics; the tactical analysis for the assessment of a war episode, and strategy itself, as it is in reality.

However, according to the author, in the study of grand strategy we do not have proper terms to differentiate grand strategy as a doctrine proclaimed by a State, the doctrine imputed to it, grand strategy as a level of analysis and the reality of grand strategy

as a decisive level of strategy. In this regard, Luttwak also combines military and non-military means when defining his idea of GS

“[...] at the level of grand strategy, the interactions of the lower, military levels, their synergisms or contradictions, yield final results within the broad setting of international politics, in further interaction with the non-military transactions of states: the formal exchanges of diplomacy, the public communications of propaganda, secret operations of others formed by intelligence official and unofficial, and all economic transactions⁶[...]” (LUTTWAK; 2005, p. 209)

One important aspect of Luttwak’s theory is how to assess the possible results of an implemented grand strategy. According to Luttwak, the interpretation that defines the results of grand strategy as successful or unsuccessful is a subjective issue. This means that the way to analyse the results depends on the objectives pursued. Thus, an early assessment of grand strategy, according to Luttwak’s theory, would be the net result from the technical, tactical, and operational areas on the theatre of operations, in a constant interaction with the transactions between states.

Both the British and the American schools of GS have their convergences and their divergences, especially when it comes to the importance policy achieved throughout time. Even though some differences, a forceful contestation of each other never existed, which contributed for grand strategy become more and more popular among scholars and political commentators.

1.4 The post-Cold War debates on Grand Strategy

After going through a period of dormancy, studies on grand strategy re-emerged in the 1970s and gained momentum during the 1980s, with the first works of Edward N. Luttwak and Barry R. Posen. During that time, the term and concept of grand strategy started to be appropriated and re-appropriated with increasing frequency by political scientists and International Relations scholars, as well as historians, as a phenomenon that was intensified after the Cold War (MILEVSKI, 2016).

Over the course of the three decade since the end of the Cold War, one was able to witness the flourishing of an enormous number of books and articles regarding Grand Strategy, in both its theoretical and applied (mainly case studies and prescriptions) forms.

⁶This quote was originally read by this author in an edition of Luttwak’s book in Castilian translated to English from this very edition.

With great importance, universities began to dedicate full programmes and research centres exclusively to the study of Grand Strategy on both sides of the Atlantic, such as the Yale programme which began in the 1990's, and the Centre for Grand Strategy launched in 2016 at Kings College London.

To assess exhaustively every single approach to contemporary grand strategic thought is beyond the scope of this research. What is significant, however, is the fact that such a proliferation has resulted in multiple interpretations, and the deliberate 'use and misuse' of the concepts has led to the development of the discipline in conflicting ways. According to Briffa, this revealed a "lack of clarity and consensus about the constitutive qualities of grand strategy" (BRIFFA; 2020, p. 8). This happened mainly because at the beginning of the 1990s, few authors dedicated themselves to theorizing about grand strategy. Instead, they sought to address the subject through case studies or, with what Milevski would call 'prescriptions', which were idealisations of what would characterise a good grand strategy.

During the 1980's, when grand strategy was still gaining momentum and re-emerging within the academic and policymaking circles, scholars and practitioners would usually refer to foreign policy to inquire about a nation's interests and how it would coordinate its strengths to promote those interests internationally (HILL, 2004). Nonetheless, it is imperative to highlight that, despite its many similarities, grand strategy and foreign policy are not the same. Whilst foreign policy encompasses all the political actions of a nation in international politics, grand strategy is a broader conceptual framework that purveys the bases upon which foreign policy is based (BARACUHY, 2011).

Nevertheless, despite its latency post-World War II and subsequent re-emergence during the second half of the Cold War, scholars such as Silove and Alsina identify that the popularity of grand strategy as a discipline only reached its apogee after 1991, with the publication of Paul Kennedy's collection "*Grand Strategies in War and Peace*". This work marks an important moment in the studies of grand strategy since it was the first to better develop and 'lay the foundations' of what would become one of the most prominent interpretations of the field: thinking and theorizing about grand strategy as a coherent long-term policy about what a nation, in its clearest sense, wants to do in the world.

British historian Paul Kennedy is an important visionary in the field of grand strategy, responsible for developing one of the most popular interpretations of grand

strategy, which contrasted starkly with both his contemporaries, and also his ‘predecessors’ who had already theorised on the matter during the second half of the Cold War.

Kennedy’s theory of grand strategy stands out because it did not focus on achieving security, as Posen argued, or on thinking about the political utility to the use of force, as Liddell Hart proposed. Instead, the first glimpses of his interpretation emphasized a long-term strategy and the importance of a relationship between a nation’s military power and its economic strength, however, the main point of distinction was the importance and focus Kennedy gave to policy more broadly defined (MILEVSKI, 2016).

Notwithstanding, it is important to observe that, unlike the strict concept of strategy, one no longer talks exclusively about sheer military might and its engagement in battle. In this sense, Grand Strategy would also encompass economic, diplomatic, social, cultural and geographical resources to achieve the country’s national interest (KENNEDY, 1991).

It is important to highlight that Kennedy also understands grand strategy as a policy in execution, but he bolsters his own argument saying that the underlying logic of grand strategy lies on the integration of policies “that should operate for decades, or even centuries” (KENNEDY, as cited in MILEVSKI, 2016, p. 118). In light of this, it is feasible to say that Kennedy thought of grand strategy as being a ‘long-term perspective policy’. In his own words, Kennedy summarises grand strategy as follows

“The crux of grand strategy lies therefore in policy, that is, in the capacity of the nation’s leaders to bring together all the elements, both military and non-military, for the preservation and enhancement of the nation’s long-term (that is, in war time and in peacetime) best interests” (KENNEDY, 1991, p. 5).

The concept of GS requires a high level of comprehension of the past and the present to achieve a nation’s long-term objectives. Its formulation and execution requires constant adaptation to new realities and adjustment to objectives and expectations (RIBEIRO, 2018).

Kennedy’s theory shows a limitation as it is a theoretical idea without universal application, both in strategic theory and in practice. According to Kennedy, grand strategy is concerned mainly with great powers rather than small or middle ones. Nevertheless, Kennedy says that it is possible to devise and implement grand strategy in the context of

a country with potential to become a great power (KENNEDY, as cited in MILEVSKI, 2016, p. 120).

The fact that Paul Kennedy paved the way for the establishment of one of the most important contemporary approaches to the study of grand strategy did not erase the attempts of other “schools” to develop their own ways of assessment and theorisation. Scholars like Peter Layton, Hal Brands and William Martel dedicated a significant portion of their work to identifying the different “trends” on the study of the discipline.

Within his analyses, Layton identifies two main groups that tend to formulate grand strategy in differing ways. The first are the governmental policymakers, who usually devise grand strategies by applying historical analogies (which will be better assessed by Martel’s work) and experiences to current problems; however, the author found a significant number of failures related with the misuse of historical experiences (LAYTON, 2018).

The second group consists mainly of scholars and think tanks. They have embraced an alternative approach, which Layton calls “advocacy”. This approach is what Milevski came to call “prescriptions”, with the main intention of addressing specific contemporary challenges (LAYTON, 2018).

Furthermore, Hal Brands in a monograph called “*The Promise and Pitfalls of Grand Strategy*” (2012) and later in his book entitled “*What Good is Grand Strategy?*” (2014), also clarified the existence of groups assessing grand strategy in diverging ways. The author found that, with the term in vogue after the end of the Cold War, it became feasible to see that the scholars devoted to the study of grand strategy can be placed into ‘loose groupings’ according to their main focus. These groups can be wide-ranging, but it is possible to separate them into three major groups. The first group, including scholars such as Robert Art and Edward Luttwak, applies the study of grand strategy mainly to wartime decision-making and strategic planning of the military, extremely close to the approaches developed during the emergence of the discipline. Others contend with grand strategy as a “long-term policy”, a broader approach which sometimes can be confused with foreign policy itself. Important scholars – although this can be a disputed categorisation – who contributed to this approach are Paul Kennedy, Charles Hill and John Lewis Gaddis, also known as the Yale School of Grand Strategy (KISSINGER; KULMAN, 2016). Finally, there are the advocates of grand strategy as a matter of

national security, including Barry Posen and Lawrence Freedman, who usually adopt its study to provide systematic planning, prescriptions and explicit doctrines (BRANDS, 2012; 2014).

The latter approach gained significant notoriety because a main concern amongst ‘grand strategic’ scholars during the 1990’s was the uncertainty of what should be the purpose of the United States’ foreign policy. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the world witnessed the advent of the unipolar moment (KRAUTHAMMER, 1990), which raised questions about what the ‘new’ hegemon (the USA) was supposed to do (MILEVSKI, 2016). Therefore, during the first post-Cold War decade, several academics dedicated themselves to thinking about grand strategy to ‘prescribe’ the new direction of the US international role.

Barry Posen and Andrew Ross, in their 1996 article “*Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy*”, thoroughly examined all of the most important prescriptions prevailing at that time, and divided them into four grand strategy ‘models’: neo-isolationism, selective engagement, cooperative security and primacy (POSEN & ROSS, 1996). The key differences among those models revolved mainly around the use of force and the level of focus on national security. However, as Milevski well observed, this approach did not change with the advent of 9/11. At the time, advocates of differing models of US grand strategy were interested in imposing these prescriptions on the war on terror, instead of transforming them.

It is important to highlight here that the “national security school” of grand strategy – an approach that became quite common and widespread before the demise of the Soviet Union – has its foundational basis in the neorealist theory of International Relations, predominantly developed by Kenneth N. Waltz.

Despite its significant American characteristics, there are also important British theorists sympathetic to the national security approach. Sir Lawrence Freedman is one of the British scholars who devoted his grand strategic thinking towards the security of the state.

In his brief essay entitled *Grand Strategy in the 21st Century*, Freedman analyses grand strategy as the process of how, and for what purposes, nation states position themselves within the international system. Within this logic, one can infer that, if the main purpose of the state is to secure its survival, thus the state must be aware of all the potential threats to its security so that it can mobilise and employ all the means necessary to contend with such threats (FREEDMAN, 2001). Notwithstanding, one of the most

important features of Freedman's theory is that, sometimes, the extreme focus on national security matters raises a certain kind of "analytical problem". His argument is that, given that the main purpose of the state in the international arena is to guarantee its survivability, the countries may start a tireless search for radical threats prior to assessing what outcomes could arise through the actions of another state (FREEDMAN, 2001).

In William C. Martel's book "*Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice*" (2015), a more detailed assessment of all the differing groups devoted to the study of grand strategy post-Cold war is offered. Martel focuses the core of his work on American grand strategy. Within his assessment, he found that, after the Cold War, four different disciplinary approaches to the study of American grand strategy have been established. However, despite his focus on the case of the United States, a more thorough examination reveals that these approaches identified by Martel can also be useful and applicable to the study of grand strategy more broadly.

The first approach is focused on the study of grand strategy through the lens of history. This approach focuses on the unique political, cultural, social conditions and historical experiences existent in each country to develop a better plan as to how these countries should act internationally (MARTEL, 2015).

The second, which Martel calls the "sociological approach", focuses on the study of grand strategy through the lens of theory and theoretical debates. Such analysis is more deductive and its proponents believe that grand strategy can be better assessed and explained based on general theories. The sociological approach is the more egalitarian since its advocates tend to treat all states as equivalents (MARTEL, 2015).

The practitioners (diplomats, political leaders, policymakers etc.) develop the third approach. This approach is focused on the matter of implementation, since policymakers in general have a more knowledgeable sense of the role of domestic politics and the institutions shaping and constraining the development of a nation's grand strategy (MARTEL, 2015).

The last approach derives from the military strategists. This is the most well-known approach, which was developed by scholars who see grand strategy as the primal concern of military strategy. Yet despite its greater notoriety, currently, due to the evolution of the discipline, these scholars are in minority. However, their arguments are still very strong and worth noting (MARTEL, 2015). One of the biggest advocates of this

approach today is Robert J. Art, who defines grand strategy in terms of military capabilities (ART, 2013).

However dispersed the attempts to address the issue of grand strategy may be, several authors⁷ began to worry about a search for unanimity in understanding the concept. Brands, for example, comes to the conclusion that grand strategy is an ambiguous concept, and focuses his work mainly on explaining why grand strategy is important and how important it is to define the concept, prior to engaging in a more serious and deep study on the matter (BRANDS, 2012). Therefore, over the last decade, scholars began to focus their efforts on the matter of devising, untangling, and implementing grand strategy to secure good results.

According to Brands, the fact that out there is an enormous number of definitions for the concept can lead critics to think that, in the end, the concept is rather subjective. If a concept is not directly linked to the empirical analysis of a phenomenon, then there is no way to sustain that concept, and everything becomes a question of who is in charge of the definition (GOERTZ, 2006). Thus, sometimes the remaining option for the analyst is to devise a definition that is considered “right enough” (GRAY as cited in BRANDS, 2012).

In this sense, the main contribution brought by Hal Brands is the theorisation of grand strategy as a “structured and coherent idea of what a nation sets out to accomplish in international affairs” (BRANDS, 2012, p. 3). In his words, grand strategy is “the intellectual architecture that gives structure to foreign policy and helps nations find their way in the world” (ibid, p. 4).

Nonetheless, the author claims that this definition still requires further elaboration, raising six aspects for a better understanding of the whole. The first one is that grand strategy should not be confused with foreign policy in its totality. In fact, grand strategy shapes a country’s foreign policy, but they are not the same. Second is that grand strategy deals with converting short/medium-term actions into long-term goals; how to make today’s policies bring tomorrow’s desired ends. Third is that grand strategy involves the combination of all aspects of national power to accomplish a country’s objectives.

Fourth sets out that grand strategy should be adaptive in a world where almost nothing sits still. Thus, even if a country’s interests remain constant, the decision process

⁷See: Brands (2012); Venkatshamy (2012); Martel (2015); Miller (2016); Silove (2017); Layton (2018); Lissner (2018), and Briffa (2020).

on how to allocate the resources of power should inevitably shift. The fifth aspect is that grand strategy is no less important in peacetime than in wartime. Lastly, is that grand strategy should not necessarily be formally enunciated. According to Brands, regardless of whether or not leaders seek to establish a formal grand strategy, they end up engaging in one⁸. The synthesis of these arguments is that all countries have interests and all countries must make trade-offs about which goals are most important. Thus, it is correct to say that all states have or do grand strategy, even though many of them may not do it very well.

Peter Layton is another scholar who seeks to provide a set of “principles” one can appreciate to devise a grand strategy. The author assesses three different case studies⁹ to explain which factors leads to failure when implementing a grand strategy and how to overcome them (LAYTON, 2018).

The first “principle” worth noting is that grand strategy is “futuristic” in essence, which means that, whilst strategy focuses on immediate concerns, grand strategy looks beyond immediacy and focuses on a desired future. However, even if the author corroborates the argument previously elaborated by Fuller and Hart, Layton says that instead of just looking into the future, the main goal of grand strategy is to impose a preferred state of order on the future as well (LAYTON, 2012; 2018).

The underlying logic of this principle is that grand strategy attempts to bring a certain level of improvement to the established international order, even if such improvement is only considered through the implementing state’s perspective. Thus, the ends of grand strategy should be quite clear regarding who the target is, be that a specific country, region, or the totality of the international system.

The second “principle”, commonly understood amongst academics, is that grand strategy is comprehensive when it comes to the means used. This means that it applies a diverse array of instruments of national power (diplomatic, informational, military and economic). In this principle, grand strategy not only employs an integrated blend of these various instruments, but also needs to build and mobilise them (LAYTON; 2012, 2018).

⁸This ties back to Luttwak’s argument that all states have a GS whether they know it or not.

⁹The British grand strategy of deterrence and engagement to avoid the outbreak of another war with Germany; the grand strategy adopted by the Soviet government, which sought to become an “equal partner” of the USA in managing world affairs adopt the grand strategy; and the grand strategy to bring democracy to the Middle East adopted by the USA in 2002.

The third “principle” mainly concerns how the countries develop these means and allocates them to the specific strategies responsible for the conduct of grand strategy.

However, in a world of limited resources, Brands views grand strategy as a discipline of trade-offs, where the vital interests of the country should be clearly defined so it avoids spending resources in non-essential matters (BRANDS, 2014). This is based on a basic economic presumption that while human needs are infinite, resources available are scarce. The same notion applies to foreign policy, where there are never enough resources to promote a nation’s best interests everywhere. Therefore, it is important that political leaders maintain a clearly defined interest – or set of interests – so that they can deploy their limited resources in the most appropriate way.

When assessing a feasible theorisation for grand strategy, Layton uses Arthur Lykke’s threefold model of strategy, which he describes as the usage of ‘means’ in certain ‘ways’ to achieve specific ‘ends’ (LYKKE as cited in LAYTON, 2018). However, in grand strategy, the ways are often overlooked, which means that scholars and policymakers give more importance to the ‘means’ and the ‘ends’ (LAYTON, 2018). This choice does not make the ways through which a country implements its grand strategy less important; however, the reason for this oversight may be that whilst the means and the ends can be clearly tangible, the ways cannot.

Christopher Layne, an important scholar who developed relevant work on American grand strategy, described the practice of grand strategy in a very easy, simple and practical way: it was just a matter of the state matching its desired ends to its available means (LAYNE, 2007). Nonetheless, Layton assesses that, usually, nations with great means do not always manage to convert these into achieving desired ends successfully.

The main reason for such a problem is a failure to establish a clear political objective (end). In this sense, it is important to highlight that, this work continues to build upon the Clausewitzian rationale that war is the continuation of politics by other means. However, the main argument within this rationale is that it should not be war that drives grand strategy, but politics. In other words, if politics drives war, politics should also drive grand strategy.

Thus, establishing a coherent grand strategy could be vital, as the political leaders will have the ability to keep fundamental interests always in view. In this sense, Brands states that

“[...] states with a well-crafted grand strategy may be able to overcome or correct mistakes in daily conduct of military or diplomatic policy,

while those with a fundamentally deficient grand strategy will be hard pressed to preserve their core interests over the medium and long term” (BRANDS, 2012, p. 9).

Based on the prior discussion, it is possible to draw attention to the fact that grand strategy can be – and, in fact, is – fundamental to successful statecraft since the increasing complexity of international politics has made the act of thinking about grand strategy as a policymaking process/approach an imperative.

From all the literature reviewed thus far, it is, at least, possible to draw one common understanding that grand strategy is the relationship between means and ends where a state uses its resources to achieve state level goals. Notwithstanding, there is one key component missing from all these aforementioned approaches and “schools”: a clear and established definition of what grand strategy really is. Even though there are a significant number of authors looking for a concrete definition of the concept, those who try to define it do so in a variety of different and contradictory manners, which further obscures the literature on the matter.

Due to the great number of possible definitions for the term, Brands characterises grand strategy as “one of the most slippery and widely abused terms of the foreign policy lexicon” (BRANDS, 2012, p. 1), and draws attention to what can be understood as the “epistemological crisis” of grand strategy. According to the author, one of the main problems regarding the concept is that it is invoked with great frequency, but in return, very little attention is paid to define the concept properly.

Layton, when analysing the reasons why Britain finds it so difficult to devise a grand strategy, shows some concern regarding how authors have been focusing on different aspects and defining the term in dissimilar ways. Unfortunately, this problem is not restricted to academics. Instead, it extends to the executive sector, which plays a crucial role in determining the country’s national strategy (LAYTON, 2012).

In this regard, over the past decade, scholars such as Krishnappa Venkatshamy, Nina Silove and Rebecca Friedman Lissner have been trying to bring a more systematised approach to the study of grand strategy by developing methods and models on how to establish the field amongst so many differing interpretations.

1.5. Methods and Models

Building upon the Clausewitzian approach to the philosophy of science and the purposes of theory building, one can understand that the role of theory is mainly to clarify

ideas that were previously confusing and entangled. According to Clausewitz, theories should explain, rather than prescribe, to develop a more systematized explanation about the reality of the world. In Clausewitz's words, "not until terms and concepts have been defined can one hope to make any progress in examining the question clearly and simply and expect the reader to share one's view" (CLAUSEWITZ, 1984, p. 132).

After Hal Brands, Venkatshamy Krishnappa (2012) was one of the first scholars to develop a more thorough analysis of the problem of grand strategy. His basic assumption is that, despite being a largely desirable concept, grand strategy lacks a high level of systematization, coherence and articulation. According to the author, the devising of a grand strategy is only possible when one has a feasible and proper understanding of what it really is. Thus, he falls into an important category of scholars who have been trying to develop a more systematised analysis of the concept (KRISHNAPPA, 2012).

Krishnappa divides grand strategy into what he call "images". There are seven in total, and these represent the possible ways by which one can assess, understand or even implement the different approaches to grand strategy. The "Krishnappan" images of grand strategy are; plans, visions, politics, paradigms, strategic culture, harmonisation of ends and means, and patterns (KRISHNAPPA, 2012).

The dominant view of the literature – at least over the last three decades – views grand strategy as a plan of action clearly articulated by the nation's leadership. In the first image (plans), a group of experts usually identifies the challenges to national security, which to prioritise, and how to approach them, in order to maximise opportunities and minimise risks (KRISHNAPPA, 2012). The second image (vision) regards how a national leader's visions are the representation of the grand strategy created in his/her mind. Generally, a leader's vision functions as a guiding idea, providing clarity and inspiration for what needs to be done (KRISHNAPPA, 2012).

According to Krishnappa, in the third image (politics) "grand strategies emerge out of bargaining and compromise among various stakeholders within the state" (KRISHNAPPA, 2012, p. 117). This means that the fourth image (paradigm) is the representation of grand strategy as a simplified version of reality. Within this context, a paradigm is generally a perspective of the world widely shared amongst the elites of the country. Krishnappa explains that the examples that best encapsulate this idea are the academic theories of realism and liberalism (KRISHNAPPA, 2012). The fifth image (strategic culture), emphasises the role played by verbally articulated ideas because,

within this context, “nations are moved by words”, meaning that nation leaders and policymakers can use discourses to create favourable situations in order to promote the nation’s core interests (KRISHNAPPA, 2012, p. 118).

The sixth idea regards how the harmonisation of ends and means characterises a grand strategy, since its purpose is to ensure the best deployment of means to achieve a nation’s interest on the international arena. Within this context, grand strategy ensures that ends will never over-step the available means, ensuring that resources are not wasted in the process. Finally, the seventh image (patterns) is widely shared amongst political scientists – particularly those who come from a behaviourist background – and historians. In this view, grand strategy is identified by the pattern of behaviour of a state on its foreign affairs, and those “predictions” are made based on historical analysis to identify how the country have behaved under certain conditions in order to find consistency of behaviour (KRISHNAPPA, 2012).

His systematisation of the phenomenon has the objective of guiding future research into surpassing the lack of conceptual clarity. Nina Silove is part of a contemporary group of scholars who have been likewise seeking to bring greater unity to the understanding of what grand strategy really is. Whilst using Krishnappa’s work as an important source for her own work, she goes a step further in assessing the state of the art of grand strategy by attempting to systematize the study of the discipline in the format of a methodology, which can better guide further studies on the matter.

Similar to Brands and Krishnappa, Silove also draws attention to the “epistemological crisis” of grand strategy, as the main problem driving her whole argument.

As has been established, this crisis is characterised by the increasing number of proposed definitions to the concept, where each one of them is starkly different from one another. Thus, instead of helping to establish the theory, a high level of dissensus arises about its meaning (BRANDS, 2012; SILOVE, 2017). To restore clarity, Silove says the study of grand strategy can be organised into three different categories: grand plans; grand principles and, grand behaviour, which can be useful to understand the forms grand strategy will take.

The first category, “grand strategy as a plan”, refers to the scholars – mainly military historians - who usually analysed, theorised and defined grand strategy as a

formal document; a clearly elucidated plan of action generally deliberated by policymakers. Silove named this category “grand plans” (SILOVE, 2017).

The second category is “grand strategy as an organizing principle”, which Silove refers to as “grand principles”. The advocates of the grand principles category mainly reject the idea of grand strategy formalised in a plan or document. This approach usually claims that grand strategy is created and implemented through the existence of a set of core guiding ideas, something related to a nation’s values and strategic culture. Scholars within this field criticize the grand plans approach for trying to devise a grand strategy by purveying a “prefabricated recipe”, whereas the focus on principles and doctrines gives direction to foreign policy (SILOVE, 2017).

The last category is “grand strategy as a pattern of behaviour”, which Silove calls “grand behaviour”. According to Silove, this category is the most difficult amongst the three to identify clearly, because it is based only on the pattern of behaviour of a given nation’s foreign policy. By pattern of behaviour, Silove means a series of repeated actions of a state over a given period. Therefore, the resulting grand strategy can be a product of a plan, of a guiding doctrine, or only the pattern itself towards a specific political objective (SILOVE, 2017).

Rebecca Friedman Lissner (2018) uses Silove’s work as a ‘starting point’. She claims that there is a certain degree of agreement regarding the basic definition of Grand Strategy. Nonetheless, the author argues that scholars have been applying the concepts in largely differing ways, generally according to specific research agendas within the grand strategy literature.

According to Lissner, Silove’s method is useful, however, only to the approach of research questions. When it comes to those seeking to understand what constitutes the basis of the grand strategy research agendas, it is of little – or almost no – help. The author then attempts to resolve the problem of conceptual inconsistency of grand strategy by distinguishing three research agendas within the specialised literature: grand strategy as a variable, grand strategy as process and, grand strategy as blueprint (LISSNER, 2018).

The ‘variable’ agenda is merely descriptive and takes grand strategy as an object to be explained - or a dependent variable in methodological terms. Usually this agenda has a predominant focus on the origins of grand strategy with the main objective of considering where grand strategy come from and under which conditions it might change. In the ‘process’ agenda, grand strategy is no longer an object in need of explanation.

Instead, it focuses mainly on the procedural characteristics of grand strategy's formulation and execution. The decision-making process and the influence of individual choices bear great weight within this agenda. The last category is rather prescriptive. The 'blueprint' agenda generally seeks to depict what a country's grand strategy should be. In this sense, it provides a set of recommendations with the objective of guiding that country's foreign policy (LISSNER, 2018).

In short, approaches with a greater methodological character have proven to be strong candidates for solving the biggest problem of grand strategy conceptualisation and, in addition, its effectiveness. The discipline has evolved over the past few decades and nowadays it is possible to highlight the existence of a growing consensus on the basic principles of grand strategy. When it comes to establishing the parameters through which grand strategy should be measured Silove and Lissner sought to impose more methodological rigour, however more efforts are still required.. In addition, it is possible to realise that scholars still struggle to properly differentiate definitions and causality. Therefore, just like democracy and power – both disputed concepts – grand strategy has a long way to go towards a coherent, cohesive and consensual definition.

1.6. Final Remarks

Although a relatively new academic concept, Grand Strategy has always been in evidence as states always had to make 'big picture decisions' about their international behaviour using limited resources. Despite the large number of diverging definitions, grand strategy presented itself either as an output or as a tool. The 'output' conceptions being merely the results of political actions, where there is little room for strategic choice and less chance to adaptability under structural constraints. The latter conceptualisation as a 'tool', conversely, gave the political leaders and policy-makers greater room for manoeuvre, making it possible for the individual agencies to change and adapt their grand strategies wherever needed.

This "applicability" differentiation is due to the evolving – and changing – underlying character of grand strategy. The discipline went through an important transition from a focus purely on the military apparatus and how a nation would ensure victory in warfare, through to the use of all resources of national power to a more broad and 'all-encompassing' approach. In either case, the need for strategic choice was always prominent.

Whilst undertaking the literature review, it became apparent that the probability of the outbreak of conventional wars remains a concern amongst those who propose to theorize about grand strategy, particularly due to the significant influence of the Realist approach to international relations. This concern could be found even in the works of authors more focused on political approaches. Therefore, even if grand strategy is no longer restricted exclusively to the efforts of warfare, its probability and avoidance will remain a constant concern.

Nonetheless, it has become increasingly common, in the grand strategy-making process, to focus on foreign policy matters, rather than exclusively military issues, even in the approaches concerned with state security. This may be a source of the conflation of the two concepts. This may lead to an interpretation that the extreme concern with the conduct of foreign policy in periods without war is essential for the maintenance of international peace (peace here understood within the “negative peace” perspective – the absence of conflict/violence). In other words, the optimal conduct of foreign policy during peacetime is essential to maintaining peace and ensuring the achievement of states' political objectives, without their having to raise arms.

The possibility is that the idea of grand strategy as being the mobilisation of a country's national strengths to best promote its interests in the international arena has blurred even more what grand strategy really is. The scholars reviewed in this chapter have been making important advances in the field; however, the attempts to bring a solution to the grand strategy problem remain rather palliative. What lies ahead for researchers and practitioners on the battlefield of grand strategy is the great ‘fog of war’ - a period of incertitude until there is a largely accepted definition for the concept.

Although the objective of this dissertation is not to propose a new theory nor definition for the concept of grand strategy, the author elaborated his understanding based on the literature review presented. The root of the author's understanding is on the theoretical approaches developed after the Cold War due to their focus on policy more broadly defined and the weight of foreign action, especially Kennedy (1991), Brands (2012), Martel (2015), and Silove (2017).

First, it is understood that a grand strategy depends on the existence of a national interest, and although this drawback to Cold War approaches, having a clear national interest is of great importance for any country that wants to take comprehensive decisions. Making an analogy, the grand strategy would be a compass, and the national interest

would be the compass needle, since it points in the direction the country should follow. Second, even though the domestic component is relevant for the devise and implementation of a grand strategy, the latter shows its effectiveness on the international stage. This means that a grand strategy suits the country's behaviour in relation to the world and to what the country sets to accomplish in international politics. Last, it is known that grand strategy above all comprises the mobilisation of all resources of national power of a given nation. Nonetheless, not all countries are able to establish such a comprehensive mobilisation of resources. Since grand strategy needs to be adaptive, this means also dealing with limited resources. Therefore, the mobilization of all resources is not mandatory, but only key resources to achieve the objectives established by the State.

2. CHAPTER

2. 1 MIDDLE POWERS AND GRAND STRATEGY

The nature, distribution, and exercise of power always have been a source of intense debates and an important paradigm within the fields of International Security and Foreign Policy. Within the field of International Relations (IR), the debates regarding the conceptualisation of power appeared in the form of a “confrontation” between the Realist and Liberal schools of IR. Realists – such as Waltz (1979) and Mearsheimer (2001)- argued that power was defined primarily in terms of military force, whilst the liberal school based their assessment on a more diversified idea of power, including economics and concepts such as Nye’s soft power¹⁰.

The study of the exercise of power in international politics has always focused on countries characterized as great powers. According to Paul Kennedy (1987), one of the reasons for the focus on the great powers is because historically, they were responsible for the dictates of power relations in the international system. Notwithstanding, throughout history great power were not always able to maintain their powerful position. Therefore, understanding the context through which these countries came to rise can be a way of understanding the reasons for their fall. It can also be helpful to understand also how the countries that were marginalised have risen to the position of a power capable of altering the status quo through their systemic mechanisms of instability and stability (KENNEDY, 1987).

The most recent example is the demise of the Soviet Union (USSR). After almost fifty years of great power competition in a bipolar order, the fall of the USSR and the end of the Cold War generated a vacuum of power, characterised by the sudden disappearance of one of the hegemons. In this scenario, the United State alone was unable to fill all the space left by Soviet political and military power, nor was it able to manage the new dynamics of conflict that emerged after the Cold War. This combination between the decline of one hegemon and the inability of the other to expand its power quickly, created an ideal scenario so that countries characterized as middle powers, could take full advantage of the reconfiguration of the international system in favour of their interests.

¹⁰Briefly defined, soft power is the capacity of a country's values, culture, policies and institutions to attract other actors to its interests and indirectly influence their behaviour in international politics (NYE, 2004).

Middle powers are emerging / status quo countries who aspire a greater role in international politics through the increase of their absolute power. In most cases, these countries also seek to establish themselves as regional powers as well as exert enough influence on the international system to be considered global players. In addition, it is imperative to highlight that middle powers are also known for having enough resources, capabilities and level of development so their objectives can be potentially achieved. Therefore, the redefinition of power in the international system forms a new structure in which its redistribution is altered, thus forming a new pattern of hierarchy between powers.

In this sense, the debate about the configuration of a new polarity structure in the international system, which had been in formation since the end of the Cold War, revealed a great difficulty in finding a new definition (WALTZ, 1979; KRAUTHAMMER, 1990; HUNTINGTON, 1996). The classic reading of the bipolar world gave way to the postulate of unipolarity under the auspices of the USA, a hypothesis that was contested with the emergence of the multipolar approach of the international system. In turn, the idea of multipolarity was also criticized, as it did not take into account the huge disparity of power from the military, economic, and scientific point of view between the countries characterized as middle powers.

Along with the evolution and changes in the structure of the international system, over the past few years it has also been possible to identify significant changes in fields such as international security and the economy that have shown a change in power relations on the international stage. According to Vercauteren (2015), the debate between supporters of hard and soft power in the face of the new dynamics of global power has shown that countries' priorities have increasingly leaned toward the latter. Nonetheless, military power and the use of force should not be undervalued since it is still one of the most – if not the most – important instruments of national power. This is because in the current international scenario, even the most powerful states have understood all the difficulties in achieving their goals solely and exclusively by the use force. Thus, countries started to pursue their interest also by the use of economic power and financial sanctions (VERCAUTEREN, 2015).

Therefore, according to Krasner (1983), power starts to be analysed as the product of a capacity that is no longer exclusively based on the use and projection of force, but rather the result of a combination of resources, including also the economic and cultural

fields in a formal and informal international normative structure, increasingly influencing the behaviour of States.

According to the neorealist approach of John J. Mearsheimer (2001), this is conceived at first through the military primacy of a country in its strategic environment. However, in the case of the middle powers this would happen through the conversion of the latent power, measured by the population and the economic growth, in preponderant military capacity in a regional subsystem (MEARSHEIMER, 2001). In addition, Robert Gilpin (1981) - a scholar mostly credited to be part of the rise and fall realist school of IR - highlights the need for regional financial, productive and commercial integration in order to effectively link the interests of its regional partners with those of the emerging middle power.

These approaches show how the middle powers would be a product of domestic transformation with an impact on the international system, building military capacity or improving their economic structure. Therefore, according to Paes, Fonseca and Cunha (2016), as part of a system, aspects of distribution and positioning in the structure would affect the unit and the subsystem. Thus, they determine the initial position of the unit and the character of its change that characterizes it as an intermediate unit to be called a 'middle power'.

Another characteristic amongst these countries is the recognition of their status as a middle power. In general, this is mainly because there is no consensually shared definition between authorities and academics about the limits of the concept. Countries like Italy, Canada, Germany, Japan, India and even Brazil - countries commonly characterized as middle powers - have already been analysed from the perspective of the politics of a great power (BRZEZINSKI, 2012). However, a country's level of power in the international system cannot be measured by taking into account only one or two of the dimensions of state power. Thus, an important aspect to be recognized as a middle power is the recognition of the State as a regional leader, as well as the increase in the geopolitical relevance of the region in which the State is inserted.

In this way, the status of a middle power from an economic point of view means having the capacity to create a new combination of activities capable of establishing an economic structure closer to the countries of the centre, and from a political point of view, converting latent power into military capacity.

It is argued that a country, although considered as a middle power, is above all a developing economy with only the potential or the hope of increasing its influence in international politics. According to Paul Kennedy (1987), this is due to several limiting factors, which are largely the seven dimensions of state power: “geography, population, economy, resources, military strength, diplomacy and national identity” (KENNEDY, 1987, pp. 01 - 10). Thus, traditionally only great powers or superpowers have been successful in all seven dimensions of state power throughout history.

Different countries have differing levels of strategic influence on the international system. Buzan and Waever call the outcomes of this influence (2003) “systemic impact”¹¹. In this context, it is correct to say that the systemic impact of the great powers is greater than that of middle powers. Therefore, it is understandable the reasons why grand strategic thinkers such as Kennedy (1991), Luttwak (2001) and Murray et al (2011) often neglect the application of grand strategy theory to peripheral countries.

This argument is not always backed by reality. He points us to a reasoning where it is believed that only nations considered to be the "most relevant" would be able to mobilize the various resources of power in order to implement a ‘multidimensional foreign policy’. However, if taken grand strategy as the mobilisation of a nation’s resources of powers in its relation with the world in order to achieve a given interest, there is nothing in this logic exclusive to great powers. Thus, even though middle powers have limited abilities, they are completely capable of articulating *means* into policies to achieve certain *ends*. In other words, this does not always mean limited capabilities.

This chapter intends to contribute to, and advance the theoretical debate on grand strategy applied to the reality of the middle powers. It is shown through a systematic review of literature how the concept has been theorized since the post-Second World War era and, based on theoretical approaches, the main characteristics of a middle power were identified. The identification of these characteristics is a fundamental step towards the main objective of this chapter: to delineate the main characteristics (as well as possible constraints) particular to the grand strategy of a middle power. The criteria for selection of characteristics are based on a systematic review, where the pattern of repetition and/or convergence of defining characteristics of middle powers was observed in works of

¹¹The concept of ‘systemic impact’ was developed by Buzan and Waever (2003) and depicts the ability of a country to affect or alter specific elements of the international system. This concept will be further explained along this chapter.

grounded theory and greater empirical robustness. Thus, a fundamental step in this process was the crossing of this information with the components of the concept of grand strategy in order to achieve a balanced proposition of how grand strategy would manifest itself within the limitations of a middle power.

2.2. Middle Powers: theory, definition and characteristics

Much has been written about specific political problems of a limited group of middle powers, such as Germany, Australia, Canada and India. However, Holbraad (1984) argues that these works lack substantial relevance, since they do not address the role and nature of these states as a level of analysis, a category, and a class of the international system properly. The author points out the two main reasons: first, there was still an enormous difficulty on defining the object of study, since middle powers lack “special standing in international law that could serve as guide to their identity” (Holbraad, 1984, p. 2). Second, the mentioned works were not successful in reaching valid and significant generalisations about their international conduct.

As far as the specialised literature goes, the idea of middle power appeared during the creation of the United Nations, when representatives from Australia and Canada sought to secure a more proactive role for their countries in the international system (WILKINS, 2018). However, although the main efforts to theorise about the idea of middle powers only gained strength with the creation of the UN, - and specifically during the Cold War -, authors such as Holbraad (1984), Vick (2014), and Abbondanza (2018) highlighted that it is still possible to draw back to the end of the Napoleonic Wars to see how the structure was divided according to the distribution of power amongst the established nation states.

These authors highlight that the Treaty of Paris (1814) and the Congress of Vienna (1814 - 1815)¹² showed that, already in the 19th century, institutional efforts were made to differentiate great powers - regarding their military effectiveness during the war - and less powerful but still important nations, already called middle powers. Nonetheless, the

¹²The Treaty of Paris of 1814 ended the war between the Napoleonic France and the Sixth Coalition (United Kingdom, Prussia, Russia, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Austria and German States), restoring the French borders to those of 1792. The Congress of Vienna was the series of diplomatic conferences with the objectives to restore the European political order after the fall of Napoleon and restore the thrones of the defeated royal families.

study of middle powers have been surrounding IR academics circles with higher intensity since the end of the Second World War.

According to Abbondanza (2018), the fact that terms like ‘superpower’ or ‘great power’ are often observable on a daily basis makes one develop a more deep familiarity with issues regarding great power politics and their impacts. However, the same does not replicate when it comes to middle powers, especially because their “characteristics and roles are not always clear, even to specialists” (p. 32). In this context, the author says that, in order to appreciate a more thorough definition of the concept, middle powers need to be contextualised according to the current structure of the system, especially because the notion of an ‘intermediate entity’ in international relations can change over the course of history (ABBONDANZA, 2018).

The early literature on power asymmetry often focused on different kinds of small powers, and although these writings have shed light in important issues related to these countries, it also highlighted some degree of deficiency. Holbraad (1984) argues that this literature failed for not acknowledging previous works on small states (especially during the interwar period); not providing a broadly agreed definition of the subject matter; and not achieving substantial generalisation applicable to the category as a whole.

It is a fact that these works helped to broaden the perspectives on the group of states in the international system, as well as to redress the balance in the study of power politics. Nonetheless, they were not accompanied by an equally serious, thorough, and systematic study of countries characterised as middle powers.

Thus, the process that led to the creation of the United Nations (UN) “represented the most intense chapter in the institutional discussion of middle powers” (ABBONDANZA, 2018, p. 37). Nonetheless, even though after the end of the Second World War Australia and Canada were the foremost advocates of what they called “secondary powers”, Canadian scholars and diplomats were the first to try to develop a more thorough definition and detailed characterisation of the concept¹³, whilst in Australia the term appeared a couple of times in newspapers (ROBERSTON, 2017). According to Mackay (1969) and Holbraad (1984), during that time, the role of middle

¹³A clear example on the effort made by Canadian specialists is the fact that the only modern dictionary to have an entry for a definition of middle power is the Canadian Oxford Dictionary, defining it as “a nation with average political or military influence on world affairs”.

powers were still seen through the lens of the “solidarity” of the great powers and the responsibilities to the security system of the UN.

In this context, Glazerbrook (1947) characterised middle powers as opposing actors to the great powers control, with a growing tendency to act together although with a willing to exert influence individually. In 1948, R. G. Riddell, a Canadian diplomat, took the discussion a little further and addressed middle powers as countries closer to being great powers. Characteristics such as the country’s size, material resources (military and economic), willingness to accept international responsibilities, influence, and stability were taken into consideration in Riddell’s analysis in order to produce identifiable results capable of distinguishing the intermediate countries of both great powers and small states (Mackay, 1969; Holbraad, 1984; Wood, 1987)¹⁴.

The moment that followed the beginning of the Cold War was not a very fruitful period for theorisations on middle powers, especially because many of the nations characterised as such were dragged into military alliances with the two superpowers of the bipolar system. The main problem was that, although the conduct of many of these middle powers could provide good case studies, the high state of dependence on one of each great power did not inspire scholars to develop more concise theories about their participation in international politics. According to Ædstrom and Westberg (2020), although an important amount of research have been developed during the 50’s and 60’s, relevant comparative analysis on middle powers as a separate category in the international system of states begun way later.

According to Holbraad (1984), the 60’s and the 70’s were years marked by an important turning point in the academic study of international politics. Since the end of the Second World War, the proliferation of new states in Africa and Asia, as well as their performance in the international system, demanded the attention of International Relations and Political Science scholars. Wilkins (2018) divides the efforts for theorising on the concept of middle powers in waves, identifying the first wave with authors such as Holbraad (1971; 1984), Holmes (1984), and Wood (1987). These authors identified middle powers as balancers, mediators and bridgers in international relations.

¹⁴It is important to highlight that, although Riddell’s work are largely cited by these scholars, the author of the current dissertation was unable to access the original document since it is a transcript of and address given by Riddell at the UN in 1948.

The second wave of theorising appeared after the end of the bipolar order with the demise of the Soviet Union (WILKINS, 2018). Although Australia and Canada – just like the period that followed the end of the Second World War – were once again the focus for the case studies, Ravenhill's (1998) work stood out proposing an analytical distinction in order to impose some level of structure and generalisation upon the concept. The author then proposed what he called the "Five C's" in order to approach middle powers: capacity, concentration, creativity, coalition building, and credibility.

Wilkins identifies that the third and most recent wave of theorising looks at "what it means to be such a state in a time of systemic transformation" (2018, p. 48). For example, approaching middle powers according to their systemic impact is part of this novel scholarship. This wave is very influenced by Paul Kennedy and Robert Gilpin's works on "rise and fall realism" and seeks to answer questions related with major power transition and how middle powers are supposed to respond to 'disturbances' in the system during periods of hegemonic shift¹⁵.

According to what were already mentioned, Abbondanza (2018) showed that, given the various configurations of the international system throughout history, always existed a substantial number of intermediate units which were neither great or small powers. In this sense, the study of middle powers is of considerable importance to complement traditional concerns with power asymmetries. Holbraad (1984, p. 3) says that the study of middle powers is essential because their position represents "the meeting place of once great but declining powers, [...] and of lesser but ascending powers, conscious of their potential".

In this sense, those whose focus are exclusive on great power politics enjoy all the advantages of dealing with the system-determining states, but under the risk of developing views of international politics that might be considered too Olympian. On the other hand, despite the importance of these countries, those scholars who approach power politics from the angle of small states can experience a number of disadvantages. This happens mainly because small states can be under strong influence of great powers, which makes it difficult for these countries to catch up with processes decided at higher level.

¹⁵Swielande (2018) divides the waves of middle powers based on the activism of certain countries during specific periods through the 20th century. However, the author did not consider this approach to have enough robustness since the mentioned literature agrees that the waves of middle powers are better understood according to how these countries were analysed and defined theoretically.

According to Edström and Westberg (2020), the contemporary view on middle powers is that of countries known for having access to greater economic, military and political power resources when compared to those countries characterised as small states. In this context, the access to such range of resources is reflected on middle powers' increasing interests in international politics; their abilities to project power internationally, but especially regionally; greater access to international decision-making institutions; and a significant expansion of their partners across the globe.

Although the condition of middle power theorisation have not exactly corresponded to the trends of the International Relations field, all the efforts to define and theorise the matter have been highly influenced by the key tenets of IR research traditions. According to Robertson (2017), the classic pools of study of middle powers are directly related with the three most prominent schools of International Relations theory: functionalism, realism, and liberalism. The group bounded by the “functions” of a middle power correlates with the functionalist theory; the group focused on the capabilities are bounded by the dominance of realism; and the behavioural (in these cases, not the positivist behaviourism from political science) definitions usually are more related to the rise of international liberalism approaches. However, according to Wilkins (2018), currently the old functional approach merged with liberalism.

Based on the works of Soward (1963), Chapnick (1999), and Robertson (2017), Wilkins present an IR theory based approach to analyse middle powers more directly and to provide a more composite picture of the concept. Although he highlights the importance of constructivist approaches, he builds upon realism and liberalism in a more nuanced manner. Thus, he proposes the categories of *middlepowerhood* – bounded by a realist approach - , and *middepowermanship* – bounded by liberalist approach.

The realist approach to the study of middle powers focuses on positional, quantitative, material, and structural aspects of a given country or group of countries. Although rarely recognised – mainly because realism often focuses on the reality of great powers – is the middlepowerhood approach that brings a better “a priori definition of what a middle powers is, and how it is defined” (WILKINS, 2018, p. 49). For example, quantitative measures and positional indicators such as GDP, or even military power, are the first “rule of thumb” to identify a middle power. Thus, quantifiable attributes end up determining the country's position with the system structure.

These countries must possess strong resources, such as strengthened economy, an established industry, as well as stable institutional organisations. They also must possess relatively strong capabilities, here defined exclusively by military means. According to Mario Cesar Flores, a Brazilian admiral and former Minister of the Navy, “only middle powers that have relevance in their geopolitical region” (2002, p. 47) are supposed to develop more powerful militaries. However, the armed forces of all middle powers have to be able to control significant air, land and seapower means, as well as force projection assets (WILKINS, 2018).

Therefore, such aspects assume that middle powers have a preordained role within the structure, occupying an intermediate position in relation to the great powers in a hierarchy based on the distribution of power in the international system (HOLBRAAD, 1984). In addition, since this approach is aligned with structural realist assumptions, it is correct to posit that the structure of the international system will define the environment that the middle powers are supposed to operate, and the configuration of the structure will dictate their behaviours in terms of constraints and opportunities (WILKINS, 2018).

Although middle powers are typically engaged with multilateralism and coalition building, there are no constraints for them taking part in alliances. However, they rarely act as leaders, opting just to follow the norms and procedures. This reflects their policy of alignment or non-alignment with great powers. According to Jordann (2003) and Wilkins (2008), middle powers can be often courted by alliance leaders since they can provide meaningful military capabilities as well as to provide diplomatic legitimacy to the cause due to their international standing.

The liberalist approach on the other hand is more focused on middle powers behaviour, normative properties, and niche diplomacy. Thus, taking into account that middle powers have a positional advantage point in the system, the main concern of the middlepowermanship is what middle powers actually do with their capabilities. In this sense, their foreign policy roles is the main definitional characteristic. Sometimes, middle powers have to follow limited foreign policy objectives due to their limited power capabilities, which means that they cannot exert overwhelming diplomatic power. In this context, their activities will lean towards niche diplomacy in very specific issue-areas as well as the maintenance of strategic expertise on key diplomatic topics (SOWARD, 1963; COOPER, 1997).

Since middle powers' diplomatic efforts also leans towards the reinforcement of the international public goods, Wilkins notes that there is a strong normative aspect in the study of middle powers. In this context, Holbraad says that "middle powers could be trusted to exercise their diplomatic influence and military power in the interest of international society, since they are capable of being less selfish than the great powers and more responsible than the small states" (1984, p . 58). This is one of the reasons why the main roles of middle powers under the United Nations auspices is to act as an intermediary in peacekeeping and peace-building missions in order to deescalate great power proxy conflicts.

Another important definitional criterion for the liberalist approach is multilateralism. As already mentioned in this chapter, middle powers are also coalition builders, which means that there is a proclivity to seek for multilateral solutions for certain problems. Within this context, middle powers also apply their "lateral strategy" in order to bring consensus amongst "like-minded" states (WILKINS, 2018, p. 52). Thus, the foundation of multilateral organisms or even the participation in collective international regimes and institutions are central axis to the liberalist perspective.

Robertson (2017) argues that the diversity of definitions for middle powers, as well as their diverging use, can lead to substantial confusion on how to apply the concept properly in a way it can prove useful on encompassing all kinds of states that are neither small or great powers. Nonetheless, even though there is a considerable number of different definitions for middle powers, it cannot be characterised as what Gallie (1956) calls an "essentially contested concept". According to the author, the definition of middle powers evolved to be less about the meaning of a word or the nature of a thing. Instead, he argues that middle powers definition is more about persuasion, influence, coercion, and the exercise of power.

The main reason for such impreciseness on the definition of middle powers derives from the difficulties on measuring a full scale of power. According to Robertson (2017, p. 4) "power is relative, perspectival, dynamic and contextual; determining where lies the 'middle' in a scale of power is far from easy". In this sense, to have a proper appreciation on the international hierarchy of power distribution, it would be ideal if the concept of power were measurable outwards economic or military capabilities.

It is possible to identify that, likewise grand strategy, the concept of middle power has few common definitions upon which scholars could reach a consensus. However,

according to Swielande, “it is necessary to link different concepts from different paradigms to stress the conceptual complexity of middle powers” (SWIELANDE, 2018, p. 19). Nonetheless, although the traditional literature on middle powers often focuses on three different approaches: identity, behaviour, and position (EDSTRÖM et al, 2020), it is possible to identify that they share common characteristics. Thus, the variant is then, how much importance one lies on each of the defining features of middle powers. To make a proper assessment of a middle power and all of what it represents, it is important to set a sample of common characteristics they share, such as self-perception status, regional impact, systemic impact, and capabilities (CARR, 2014; SWIELANDE, 2018).

The self-conception is an important characteristic to define a middle power. Based on a self-perceived role within the international hierarchy, these countries identify their position and consider themselves as middle powers. Notwithstanding, self-perception is not sufficient since middle powers need to be recognised by major powers and other countries as such. Therefore, a country to establish itself as a middle power need to have what Vandamme (2019) entitles *robustness* and *centrality*. The former being their recognition by other states and the later their recognition by the great powers.

In this sense, the status reflects the recognition that an audience grant to a specific country; it captures the need to be recognised and respected. This means that a country’s position only becomes a reality through the recognition of other. Since middle powers want to have great international role and status, they seek for wide international recognition and large contributions for international politics (SWIELANDE, 2018).

The identity approach uses the national self-identification of a state as a defining criterion. However, this approach, as useful and important as it is, shows some problems that makes difficult to identify which states should be included in the category. For example, the identity approach leaves open a question whether only the self-conception is enough to be considered as a middle power regardless of geographical size, economic strength and political influence. In addition, this approach lacks an important basic characteristic of any state: status and recognition (EDSTRÖM et al, 2020). As previously mentioned (SWIELANDE, 2018), mutual recognition by other states is an essential factor.

The systemic impact is another important defining characteristic. It can be understood as the ability of a country to affect directly specific elements of the international system. To Andrew Carr (2014), middle powers are completely capable of

inducing change in specific aspects of the existing international order. The author says that, in order to protect their interests, middle powers initiate a change process in the existing order. Swielande says that the systemic impact is enabled because middle powers have access and good relation with great powers and are also able to exert influence upon small powers choices and behaviour, what he entitles respectively *upward strategy* and *downward strategy* (SWIELANDE, 2018).

Although middle powers have limited systemic impact, their regional influence is greater. They have a strategic position being closer to daily regional interactions and realities hence they have better knowledge about regional dynamics, detecting opportunities more quickly than great powers. Such ability shows that middle powers have to develop a level of autonomy to do things great powers not always would agree with. The regional impact is also directly related to a country's regional security complex. Therefore, middle powers also need what can be understood as a "lateral strategy" to influence their peers. As middle power cannot develop a power of domination in international politics, they need to deploy strength in combination with others. According to Hayes (1994, p. 14), "middle powers are knights, bishops and rooks in international relations who cannot dominate and thus have to deploy their strength in combination with others". Therefore, Swielande (2018) states that the more a middle power constitutes a node in the network, the more power it has.

Both the systemic and the regional impact have a great behavioural aspect. In this sense, the behavioural approach has a better axis of measurement since it defines middle powers in function of patterns of statecraft, especially when it comes to coalition building, international cooperation and multilateralism as tools for technical leadership. According to Edström & Westberg (2020), the preference for such practices focuses on reducing conflict and promoting international security. However, even though the behavioural approach can be perceived and measured with more clarity than the identity approach, the exclusive focus on diplomatic matters leaves open the spot for any state with similar practices to be considered as middle powers as well.

However, one of the foremost characteristics of a middle power regards its capabilities. Usually, when talking about a country's capabilities, the IR literature tends to focus exclusively on material and tangible ones. That said middle powers own

capabilities with limited range, whether economic or military¹⁶ (SWIELANDE, 2018). Since middle powers are characterised by their “medium range capabilities”, the use of their economic and military strength gains more meaning when a country has a clearly devised goal and articulates such strengths with foreign policy objectives (HOLSTI, 1964).

The positional approach is focused on characterise middle powers based on quantifiable indicators between states. The main indicators are population size, military power usually measured by military expenditures and defence budget, and economic strength according to the gross domestic product (GDP). This dimension, according to Gilley and O’Neil (2014, p. 4), takes into consideration the material capabilities of middle powers relative to great powers as well as small states. The positional approach then can be used as the main “rule of thumb” to define middle powers, since access to power resources is a necessary condition to make foreign policy initiatives (Edström; Westberg, 2020). It is important to highlight that, the mere fact that middle powers have relative access to power resources does not necessarily determine what states will do, but in fact, what they can do (p. 174).

In order to tackle some limitations from this myriad of diverging approaches, Edström and Westberg devised two sets of criteria that countries must fail or succeed to be considered a superpower, great power, or what they call “major middle power”. In this context, to be considered a middle power a state must have one of the world’s; i) top twenty largest economies (measured by the GDP); ii) top twenty accumulated defence expenditures during the last ten years; iii) have recognized political status by membership in the Group of Twenty (G20).

However, they also identify what they call “system-determining states”, which the defining criteria should be tested against the previous ones in order to have a more thorough result on the characterisation of middle powers. The system-determining states have aggregated capabilities relating to: i) economic capabilities indicated by the size of GDP and GDP per capita; ii) military capabilities measured as accumulated military expenses and access to key capacities such as global power projection (superpowers) and

¹⁶Realist approaches, e.g. Mearsheimer (2001), also take into consideration the latent power of a country as a defining characteristic. However, Mearsheimer is rather focused on the conversion of economic power into military means for a country to establish itself as a regional power.

access to nuclear weapons and second strike capabilities (great powers); iii) political recognition by permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

In view of the possibilities and limitations of the concepts presented, it was considered that the criteria established by Edström and Westberg would be more appropriate to identify countries that fit into the "middle power" category. These criteria encompass all the main characteristics of a middle power and also provide a negative pole through which each a country can be "tested" in order to fail or succeed. Moreover, the selection of the Edström/Westberg criteria is important since a clear and precise definition is essential to the next topic, in which the author argues that there are no empirical nor theoretical limitations for a grand strategy for the middle powers.

2.3. Arguments for a Grand Strategy for the Middle Powers

According to Buzan and Waever (2003), countries with different power capabilities exert different levels of strategic influence on the international system; the authors call this influence "systemic impact" (BUZAN; WAEVER, 2003). In this sense, great powers can exert a great impact on the system than the middle powers. This is one of the main reasons why grand strategic thinkers such as; Kennedy (1991), Luttwak (2001), and Murray et al (2011) often neglect the application of grand strategy theory to peripheral countries and smaller states.

According to Williamson Murray (2011), grand strategy is an exclusive burden of the great powers; hence, it is not possible to think about it within the reality of smaller powers. The author says that whilst great powers have considerable room for manoeuvre to define and implement their grand strategies, middle powers would have none, mainly due to the limited reach of their international operations (MURRAY, 2011). This argument is not always backed by reality. It points us to a reasoning where it is believed that only nations considered to be the "most relevant" would be able to mobilize the variety of resources of national power in order to implement a "multidimensional foreign policy" (ALSINA, 2018).

Nonetheless, if one takes into consideration Liddell Hart's assertion that grand strategy is a policy in execution, one can see that Rosecrance's (1993) defence that grand strategy is also a public policy is far from wrong. Within this logic, grand strategy would be a public policy that reflects all the mechanisms of a given nation to achieve the collective choices of its national interests (ROSECRANCE; STEIN, 1993). Therefore,

within this choices would be since the pursuit for survival and economic development to, eventually, the projection of military power.

According to Kassab (2018), even though the threats to survival vary according to power position and vulnerability from a small power to a great power, all states with no distinction have a grand strategy, especially because they all seek to survive as independent political units. The only distinction then is that states with differing power capabilities practice their grand strategies in dissimilar ways (KASSAB, 2018).

This raises another important reflection: if one insists on the definition of grand strategy as the articulation of national power resources in order achieve and accomplish values and political objectives in its international relations, one can say that, there is nothing within this logic that is exclusive to the great powers. Middle powers are fully able, within the circumscriptions of their capabilities, to mobilize the same variables with the same objectives. However, they would have a much-limited systemic impact. In the words of Peter Layton (2016, p. 59), “[...] grand strategy is not a specific function of a particular kind of political arrangement. The integration of power creation with the instruments of power and the careful balancing of resources with goals is important to all, perhaps more so for small and medium states with limited resources”.

One of the main limitations in the grand strategy of a middle power is its ability to mobilize economic and military instruments. This happens, usually, because the maintenance of a strong military apparatus depends directly on an economic power that is often unavailable to the middle powers. However, even though middle powers have a very limited range of options, it does not mean that they are incapable of articulating their interests into a public policy, including defence and security. According to Milevski (2016), the instrumentalization of both the military power and the economic strength in a complementary relationship of a given country, can be considered as an essential factor for the strengthening of a middle power. Therefore, one of the ways in which the grand strategy of a middle power becomes viable is by rebalancing the relative weight of each of the components of the concept. Thus, themes like economic development or international coalition formation gain relevance without excluding the importance that military power can assume.

Kassab claims that the root of all power lies on the process of economic development. According to the author

“Economic development allows states to use resources efficiently to promote further development. The more the states develop, the more

they must extend control across states to protect national interests. [...] Economic development provides the necessity to expand outward which then forces states to begin changing the rules of the system. Systemic ambition results in a state developing so much so that it requires a reorganizing of the international political system in its favour” (KASSAB, 2018, p. 30).

In this way, as countries develop their economies, they become able to achieve goals that are more ambitious. Therefore, with a growing economy, states can develop other areas of national power – such as a robust and powerful military – making power projection more feasible and status an important reality.

Kassab points to the fact that the International Relations literature on grand strategy often focuses on great power, or exclusively on American Foreign Policy practices. However, the main problem here is that a theory cannot be “general enough” if its understanding is limited to a selected group of countries (KASSAB, 2018, p. 26). Moreover, to consider different types and practices of grand strategy amongst states, we need to have a proper understanding of its aims. Colin Gray (2011) summarises the understanding of grand strategy as presented previously on this dissertation. According to the author, grand strategy is “the direction and use” of all assets of national power available to a given country “for the purposes of policy as decided by politics” (GRAY, 2011, p. 13).

Within the international anarchical system, great powers seek to increase their relative gains and pursue prestige against other great powers, whilst weak or small powers – with little power and prestige to protect due to their systemic vulnerability - usually trade any political power they might have in order to receive aid or economic assistance from a great power. According to Kassab, “this locks these states into dependency and underdevelopment [...], forming world-systems’ dependency networks based on trading political support for aid” (KASSAB, 2018, p. 11). Nonetheless, not all middle powers are willing to trade their political power to have great power support. As mentioned before in this chapter, middle powers seek for a greater role in the international system, and sometimes they seek to balance great power interests instead of bandwagoning. Moreover, since they are prone to coalition building, they use lateral strategies to influence their peers and act together against great powers interests.

In this sense, Michael Glosny (2012) claims that middle and rising powers grand strategies are identified through the defence of interests and the pursuit of status and prestige under the international anarchy. These countries usually challenge the hegemon

or the prevailing great powers because one the characteristics of their grand strategies is the pursuit for influence the system in their favour (GLOSNY, 2012).

As already mentioned, grand strategy was – and still is – a concept bounded by the security studies approach. Schimidt (2008) defines grand strategy as a “state’s national security goals and the determination of the most appropriate means by which to achieve these goals” (SCHIMIDT, 2008, p. 164). According to the author, a country should follow a three-step process to devise a grand strategy: i) the determination of a security goal, ii) identifying the main sources of threats to these goals and, iii) mobilise key political, economic or military resources to achieve these goals (*Ibid.*). Since any country can have security goals (broadly conceived) and identifiable threats, this process can be replicated across countries with different capabilities. Thus, in the words of the author “foreign policy officials in all states go through a similar process, even though the resulting grand strategies tend to be quite different from one another due to a function of the different capabilities that states possess and other factors determining national power” (SCHIMIDT, 2008).

However, grand strategy is much more than the pursuit of security. If one takes for instance Colin Gray’s claim that GS acts for the “purposes of policy as decided by politics”, then it is possible to assume that politics would require the pursuit and defence of a country’s national interest, and such interest vary accordingly to cases and situations. Thus, Hastedt (2009) is correct in saying that

“Deciding goals is only the starting point for having a foreign policy. [...] Grand strategy is concerned with harnessing all of a country’s military, political, and economic resources so that they work together at the highest level to advance national interest” (HASTEDT, 2009, p. 25).

Therefore, since each nation has a national interest of its own, an understanding of a grand strategy for the middle powers becomes more feasible. James Rosenau (1980) defined national interest as a set of political actions and propositions in order to achieve the common good for the national society (ROSENAU, 1980). However, according to Hans Morgenthau (1985), a country’s national interest can be understood through the pursuit of power. Since all states seek to accumulate some level of power, the author claims that this characteristic is responsible for the rational understanding of politics. In turn, Edward Luttwak highlights that the idea of national interest usually describes the rationality of governing regarding a sovereign state’s goals and ambitions. Moreover,

Luttwak draws our attention to the fact that what is meant by national interest arises in a political process, often reflecting the interests of the political leadership (LUTTWAK, 1987).

Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that since the focus of this dissertation is on countries characterised as middle powers, Morgenthau's definition of national interest will be the rule of thumb. Middle powers amongst other things seek to increase their status and relative position under the power hierarchy of the international system. Therefore, for a middle power guarantee its security and pursue its interests in relation to the system, it needs to develop power to do so. However, even though it became common to identify power through the lenses of the military might, as already mentioned in this chapter, it goes way beyond that (WALTZ, 1979).

Another essential factor to take into account in the grand strategy of a middle power is its strategic environment and regional surroundings – this is one of the reasons why middle powers are often called 'regional powers'. According to Buzan and Waever (2003), regional security dynamics are more intense to middle powers. This is because, within the logic of the regional security complex theory (RSCT), relations are as much more intense as the geographical proximity between the actors involved. Therefore, when devising a grand strategy, a middle power should always take into consideration: i) its relationship with neighbouring countries and; ii) extra-regional powers that project power in their strategic surroundings. In this context, a grand strategy for a middle power would have as a conditioning factor risks and opportunities emanating from their regional surroundings.

In a work about grand strategy in Latin America, Russell and Tolkatlian identified that two logics of grand strategy have persisted amongst "medium-sized states", in the region and other parts of the globe since the 1990's: "the logic of autonomy and the logic of acquiescence" (RUSSELL; TOLKATLIAN, 2015, p. 61). The former, grand strategy as autonomy, is characterised by its aims to increase a country's capacity to make decisions alone, the multiplication of the country's external ties and relations, the quest for the redistribution of power by restricting the power of the major powers, and the construction of a more equal and peaceful system. Usually, the ends of autonomy are achieved through regionalism, posturing within international organizations, and diverse forms of soft power (RUSSELL; TOLKATLIAN, 2015).

According to the authors, the autonomy model can be more thoroughly conducted through four different strategic options: soft balancing, diversification, hiding, and collective unity. Soft balancing means the usage of international institutions and coalition building to restrain abusive behaviour and use of power by the great powers. Diversification is the attempt to expand a country's external ties in order to compensate its dependency of a powerful country. Hiding means a more critical and resistant thinking towards commitments of military nature that might generate high costs. Collective unity is the pursuit for integration and cooperation aiming the strengthening of negotiation capacity (RUSSELL; TOLKATLIAN, 2015).

Grand strategy as acquiescence, in turn, focuses on middle power relations with major countries (here considered only the great powers). This model seeks the support of great powers – especially the United States – in order to achieve material gains, or even symbolic ones, like the mere recognition as a “strategic partner”. Moreover, it seeks peaceful coexistence with the hegemon and deposits high trusts on its protection. This grand strategic model is implemented through a wide range of means, from assisting the hegemon in armed interventions (military means), to voting in favour of the hegemon in international forums (diplomatic means).

Nonetheless, the authors have identified that at the beginning of the 21st century, Latin American and other mid-sized (middle powers) countries developed a different model that they entitle “small grand strategy”. The small grand strategy has a limited geographical scope, focusing on neighbouring countries mainly motivated by border disputes or competition for influence in their region. The main objective of a small grand strategy is the defence of a territory and preserve – or expand – a country's influence in the sub region determined by its neighbours. Therefore, according to the authors, the countries will opt – always taking into account the available resources – for balancing, pendular behaviour, neutrality, mediation, arbitration, and war.

2.4. Final Remarks

Central to the realist argument, power, initially restricted to the scope of material capabilities translated into the military sphere, at the end of the twentieth century also includes elements such as economic structure. The review of this concept also repositions the understanding that realism starts to have about the concept of average powers. This reinterpretation ends up affecting another important concept dealt with here, that of grand

strategy. If, at that time of solely military power, the concept only applied to the great powers, its new outline came to include it as a constitutive part of the action of states that, in a realistic understanding, occupy the international position of middle powers.

Based on what has been exposed, it is possible to affirm that, even with the great powers having greater availability and capacity to mobilize the various resources of national power, no limitations nor constraints were found in the theory to justify the "non-application" of the concept of grand strategy to middle powers reality. It is a fact that, given the low degree of concentration of power in these countries, the way to devise and implement a grand strategy is different from that of the great powers. Something very common, in this way, is that countries considered as middle powers distribute the weight and relevance that they will give to each constituent element of a grand strategy in order to best attend their national interests.

In this way, it is also possible to propose some of which would be the main characteristics of the grand strategy of a medium power. They are the focus on, and the pursuit for economic development; the usage of coalition building and international cooperation as a soft balancing tool against the hegemon or the great powers; the pursuit for defence and military objectives in consonance with the country's foreign policy.

The first one, economic development, is the foremost characteristic of a middle power's grand strategy. An underdeveloped country is found in a deep dependency situation, with limited options to promote its own interests. Therefore, middle powers seek to develop their economies in order to break the chains of dependency and to achieve a good level of industrialization. Since development is the root of all power, a country with a developed economy will find it easy to develop other forms of power, including but not limited to the military.

Coalition building as tools for soft balancing are also important features of a middle power's grand strategy. With limited power resources and limited systemic impact, these countries often seek to form coalitions or to use international forums to strengthen their room for manoeuvre when promoting their particular interests. Moreover, since their power is limited, it would be almost impossible to balance the hegemon or any great power alone, in this sense, they rely on their lateral strategies to influence their peers and act together on the pursuit for absolute gains.

Regarding the matters related with military and defence objectives, middle powers rarely rely on the use of force to solve international disputes. Even though the use of force

by these countries vary according to their geopolitical context, military force as means of action is applied only as a last resource. Usually, middle powers defence policies are implemented in convergence with the country's foreign policy interests and in most cases are focused exclusively on the defence of the national territory or participating in peacekeeping, building and making operations.

3. CHAPTER

3.1 Case Assessment: Brazil from Cardoso to Lula

3.1.1 Brazilian Grand Strategy in the 20th Century: an overview

Unlike the United Kingdom and the United States, Brazil does not have a consolidated tradition of thinking and theorizing about grand strategy. It is a fact that political leaders have always believed that the country has always been destined for great things, and at times actions were taken in favour of such interests. However, identifying the dynamics through which Brazil mobilised its power resources to pursue its interests in the world has always been a complex task for academics¹⁷.

Since the Empire¹⁸ until the first decade of the 21st century, Brazilian grand strategy took over a wide range of forms and names other than grand strategy. Moreover, it became almost a common ground among scholars in Brazil that the country only had two clear periods which a grand strategy could be identified: the military regime (1964-1985), and the government of president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010). However, if one takes a closer look into the foreign policy history of Brazil, it is possible to identify key moments where a grand strategy was clearly in course.

According to Alsina (2015), one of the first and foremost fruitful moments regarding the devise and implementation of a grand strategy in Brazil was the decade in which the Baron of Rio Branco served as minister of foreign affairs (1902-1912). At the time, Rio Branco managed to mobilise all resources of power available to Brazil to redefine the country's borders in favour to its national interests. Moreover, he was the *spearhead* of one of the greatest naval reforms in the Brazilian Navy. Rio Branco saw the military power one of the most important foreign policy features and was eager to establish Brazil as the greatest naval power in South America. The naval rearmament process culminated in the commissioning of two *dreadnoughts* – the Minas Gerais and the São Paulo – as the Brazilian fleet flagships (BUENO, 2018; ALSINA, 2015). In this sense, Brazil was able to counter Argentina, project power in South America, and maintain security on the South Atlantic.

¹⁷Brands (2010; 2011), Alsina (2014; 2018); Amorim (2016), Milani & Nery (2019).

¹⁸The history of Brazil is divided into four general periods: pre-discovery (before 1500); colonial period (1500 – 1822); empire (1822 – 1889); republic (1889 – present day).

During the 1930s, on the administration of Getúlio Vargas, Brazilian grand strategy started to focus on the industrialization process, although with a great focus on obtaining foreign capital – one of the reasons that lead Brazil to join the allies on the Italian front during World War II. Although development and industrialization were the core of Brazilian grand strategy in the period, there was still a strong military component present due to the influence of General Góes Monteiro (Chief of Staff of the Army and later Minister of War). According to Góes Monteiro, a strong and established industrial base would provide a strong military apparatus, therefore

“General policy, economic policy, industrial and agricultural policy, the communications system, international policy, all branches of activity, production and collective existence, including the instruction and education of the people, the political-social regime – everything, finally, must contribute to the military policy of a country (MONTEIRO, 1932, p. 133)”.

During the same period, political and military leaders such as Pandiá Calógeras – predecessor of Góes Monteiro on the Ministry of War – and Army Generals César Obino and Cordeiro de Farias also contributed to the thought the Brazil needed a doctrine or a plan to guide the progress of the country. In this sense, during the administration of President Marshal Eurico Gaspar Dutra (1946-1951), Brazil created the Brazilian War College¹⁹ under the Law nº 785 in August 25th of 1949.

The College's mission was to develop and consolidate the knowledge necessary for the exercise of management and planning advisory functions at the highest governmental level, with a view to formulating a National Policy and Governmental Planning that could unite all the resources of national power to favour the interests of the nation (BRASIL, 1949b). Therefore, in the mid-1960s (already between the Jânio Quadros administration and the beginning of the military regime, 1961 - 1964) the Brazilian War College published the first version of a doctrine that became known as ‘Expressions of National Power’.

This doctrine was “five-layered”, dividing the national power in five expressions – hence the name: i) political expression; ii) economic expression; iii) psychosocial expression; iv) military expression and; v) scientific/technological expression. Its objective was to enable a practical application for national development and state security, identifying national objectives and establishing how each expression could be better used

¹⁹From the Portuguese ‘Escola Superior de Guerra’.

in the application of a great Brazilian strategy in the international system (FNP/ESG, 2020).

Brazil had a very close relation with the United States at the time, which was considered as a behaviour of automatic alignment. Notwithstanding, during the same period a group of Brazilian diplomats began to think of a series of policy guidelines to guide Brazil into "a foreign policy of its own". These guidelines were called Independent Foreign Policy (IFP), and were more a process than a detailed conceived project (CERVO; BUENO, 2015). In a period of great ideological strife, a strong pragmatic character marked the Independent Foreign Policy, mainly because it pursued the country's interests without ideological prejudices. Briefly summarised, the IFP comprised the idea that sovereignty and 'national interests' should be defended, even if this could generate potential conflicts with the United States (VIGEVANI; CEPALUNI, 2007).

However, after the beginning of the military regime in 1964, the national security doctrine put forward by the Brazilian War College guided the entire understanding of the national leaders about strategy and grand strategy (ARRUDA, 1980). During the 1970s, the head officers who took over the direction of the College were heavily influenced by Liddell Hart's book '*Strategy*'. In this sense, according to directive documents 150 and 154 of the Brazilian War College, they adopted the concepts used by the author to develop a grand strategy for the military regime, using instead 'national strategy' to refer to grand strategy, and military strategy to refer to strategy strictly conceived

With the end of the military regime in 1985, Brazil went through a moment of democratic turn, which led to a period of some oscillation in its domestic and foreign policy. During the early 1990s, the country began to guide its national strategy according to the neoliberal matrix of international insertion at the time due to the influence of the Washington Consensus, especially in an international context marked by the end of the Cold War and by the acceleration of integration and globalization processes (SILVA, 2012). This posture was intensified during the administration of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC; 1995-1998), when Brazil implemented a model of grand strategy as acquiescence. Thus, even though there has been a certain degree of 'relativization' of the automatic alignment with the United States, the unilateral adoption of the neoliberal paradigm of the Washington Consensus meant that the country's interests were defined according to its relationship with the hegemon.

Nonetheless, a major paradigm shift was to be seen during the Lula administration (2003-2010). At the time, Brazil changed radically its grand strategic posture from that of an 'acquiescent' to a posture of an autonomous nation. Lula and his staff were influenced by the later Independent Foreign Policy, and implemented what Brands (2011) called a "multifaceted grand strategy". Brazil then started to leverage its image on the international scene, establishing itself as an indispensable country. From the use of soft balancing to an increased role on international security, Brazil maintained a good relationship with the United States but always putting its own interests first, making its way to become a major player within the international politics chess.

In this chapter, the author brings together the previous discussions on grand strategy and middle powers to analyse the case of Brazil. It will be used the models of grand strategy as acquiescence and grand strategy as autonomy developed by Russell and Tolkatian (2015) to assess two different periods of the Brazilian grand strategy. The administration of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002), that due to the adoption of neoliberal policies, it ended up being understood as a government that aligned itself with the interests of the great powers, will be tested against the GS as acquiescence. The administration of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010), which developed of mutual respect but with clear distance from the main centres of power, will be tested against the GS as autonomy. Moreover, the characteristics explained on the last chapter will be also identified.

3.2. In search of a role on the International Stage

Since the beginning of the 20th century, one of the greatest aspiration of the Brazilian foreign policy was that of being recognized as a great power. Throughout history, the Brazilian foreign policy community have differed on how Brazil should emerge in the international stage and the country oscillated between moments of greater and lesser exposure on the international system. With the end of the Cold War and the advent of the emergence of the new developing countries, Brazil saw in the complexity of the international order, an important opportunity to achieve its so desired global power status. In this sense, from the end of the 20th to the beginning of the 21st century, the Brazilian desire to influence the dynamics of the international balance of power, rules and regimes made the country avoid the accumulation of raw power (especially military) at the expense of soft power (LIMA & HIRST; 2009, p. 43).

This was a scenario where Celso Amorim (2010) – former Brazilian minister of foreign affairs and defence – claimed Brazil would be able to play a great role as an 'indispensable player' in international politics.

The Brazilian foreign policy went through a period of great transformation and involvement during most of the 1990s. This moment coincides with the pinnacle of the neoliberal model of globalization, when the prevalent idea was that Brazil should be inserted in the new international scenario through the ways of trade and market opening, as well as intensified international financial flows. The main agent of such transformation was the President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who had easily won the 1994 elections against Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, thanks to the success of the 'Real Plan', which will be explained below (VIZENTINI, 2005).

Fernando Henrique Cardoso took office as the President of Brazil in 1995. Nonetheless, the political project of his administration began even before, during the previous administration when President Itamar Franco, in 1993, nominated Cardoso - at that time occupying the office of Minister of Foreign Affairs - to the Ministry of Finance. Endowed with the great international prestige from its academic standing and creator of the dependency theory in Latin America, Cardoso was the 'perfect fit' to regain legitimacy for the government in case he succeeded in obtaining a good performance in his new position.

Brazil had been going through an intense economic crisis since the oil shocks of the 1970s, which resulted in a scenario of severe hyperinflation in the country. In this sense, Cardoso had the mission of putting together a team capable of devising a plan to fight hyperinflation and achieve economic stability in the country. As Brazil had a history of thirteen (13) heterodox economic plans that had failed to deliver positive results, this model was then avoided. On the other hand, an orthodox plan to fight inflation could bring significant losses to the Brazilian GDP. In this sense, Cardoso's team drew up a plan entitled 'Plan Real', endowed with a set of orthodox measures to fight inflation, which included reduction in spending on public accounts and an increase in interest rates, divided into three phases: fiscal adjustment, deindexation and nominal anchor (BACHA, 1995; 1997). The plan proved effective after the implementation of the first phase, and macroeconomic stability was achieved, increasing Brazil's credibility with the international community.

In this sense, the main axis through which Brazil sought to secure its international presence were democracy and economic stability. Therefore, for a nation that was still ‘living under the ghost of the military regime’, the promotion of democratic values and economic stability as the core of its behaviour made it for the country to become more visible and more active on the international system (LAMPREIA, 1998).

The initial project of the Brazilian international insertion throughout the 1990s took on the phenomenon of globalization and the adoption of a set of neoliberal measures proposed by the Washington Consensus, since there was an understanding that they could be an important asset for the country to achieve its economic development. This model of international insertion passed through the administration of Fernando Collor de Mello (1990-1992) – stopped with his impeachment -, Itamar Franco (1992-1994), and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002) (SILVA, 2012). One of the main characteristics of the Brazilian strategy during the early 1990s was the unconditional and automatic alignment with the United States. Notwithstanding, although during the administration of Cardoso this alignment were reconsidered, it was his administration that the neoliberal project of economic insertion was resumed in a more stable and articulated manner since the entirety of his ministerial body was fully identified with the IMF and World Bank program as expressed in the Washington Consensus (VIZENTINI, 2005).

During the first term of the Cardoso administration, the trend of trade liberalization made Brazil one of the main recipients of direct investments; surpassed only by China among the middle powers/emerging nations of the time. Although, in part, it helped in the resumption of accelerated growth and in the consolidation of price stability, the wave of liberalization subjected the national industry to a certain pressure never before experienced - that is, deindustrialization (LAMPREIA, 1998). Nonetheless, this did not stop Brazil to “fight” against protectionist measures and the application of asymmetric trading rules. With an average share of 1% in international trade, Brazil was interested in consolidating a set of rules that opposed the establishment that benefited strongest countries.

The process of adapting the Brazilian foreign policy to the international scenario did not take place in a simple way. Due to the period of political instability Brazil was going through, a number of actors began to dispute the formulation and orientation of the decision-making process of Brazilian foreign policy. Between 1990 and 1995, Brazil had one president impeached (Fernando Collor) and five ministers occupied the Foreign

Relations adjutancy (CERVO; BUENO, 2015). The Ministry of Foreign Relations was composed of a diplomatic corps mostly influenced by national developmental ideas showing the high degree of heterogeneity and instability of foreign thought and strategy in Brazil. Therefore, one of Cardoso's first actions was to "empty" the institution of its functions, as it represented a strong opposition to the neoliberal insertion model (VIZENTINI, 2005). He took the political role of the institution, which became known as 'presidential diplomacy', leading to a management centralization of Brazil's international strategy, giving greater coherence to its external actions (SILVA, 2012).

With a democracy still in its infancy, the success of the Plano Real associated with Cardoso's presidential diplomacy were fundamental factors in the reconstruction of Brazil's image before the international community. This solid image brought a series of favourable changes to Brazil. Among the most important result were "the reliability aroused by the country abroad, making it possible to attract foreign investments significantly important for the success of macroeconomic stability, and the support of multilateral organizations and developed countries in times of financial and economic crisis" (VIGEVANI, 2003, p. 41). In this sense, adhering to some norms and regimes meant the strengthening of Brazilian soft power, obtained through the positive return with the improvement of the country's image abroad.

The foreign policy developed under President Cardoso was signalling the establishment of new projects and new partnerships. However, there were little clarity regarding what strategy ought to guide the Brazilian foreign actions (VIZENTINI, 2005). Nonetheless, according to Luiz Felipe Lampreia – Cardoso's Minister of Foreign Relations -, the Brazilian strategy should focus on "expanding the country's ability to act in the international environment with sufficient margin of choice and manoeuvre to follow the paths outlined by its national interests" (LAMPREIA, 1998, p. 08).

Therefore, the adoption of institutionalism as an insertion strategy came to be seen as favourable to Brazilian interests as there was an understanding that it promoted respect for the rules of the international game. In an international environment "dominated" by a superpower, this was crucial because, in theory, once the rules were established, they should be respected by all countries, including the most powerful. According to Vigevani, this was especially "useful to boost Brazil's global insertion as a global player" (VIGEVANI, 2003, p. 32).

According to Vigevani (2003), the foreign policy guidelines of the Cardoso administration followed traditional parameters of a pacifist posture, respect to the international law, defence of the non-intervention and auto determination principles, and the adoption of pragmatism an effective instrument in the defence and promotion of the country's national interest. Based on the adoption of this "new" posture, Brazil was supposed to exercise greater control over its destiny, mainly due to its active participation in the processes of drafting guidelines and norms of conduct on the international stage. Thus, this active participation in the organization and regulation of international policy would be of great importance for the establishment of a scenario that favours one of the country's greatest objectives, economic development (FONSECA, 1998; VIGEVANI, 2003).

However, Brazil's participation in major international debates, such as the constant attempt to regulate international financial flows, showed that the country faced great difficulty in advancing certain issues on its global agenda that were not desired by the great powers. In this sense, the maintenance of good relations with the US was something of constant concern for Brazil during the Cardoso government, which dedicated an intense effort to improve and intensify them.

Between October and December 2002, Cardoso and his successor Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva led what became known as the most intense cooperative process of democratic transition in the contemporary history of Brazil. Among the main objectives of this operation was the desire not to revert Brazil's image abroad, especially vis-à-vis the United States. Considering that Lula represented a strong union leader, and his proposals for international insertion were strongly influenced by the doctrine of Independent Foreign Policy, fear and distrust ended up occupying the minds of political and intellectual leaders in much of the world. José Dirceu (who would become Minister Head of the Civil House/Chief of Staff of the Presidency) and Condoleezza Rice began to build rapprochement between Lula and Bush as early as October, leading to the meeting between the two leaders on December 10 of that year. The meeting represented the end of American mistrust and the establishment of a relationship of maturity and respect (SPEKTOR, 2014).

At the beginning of President Lula's administration, Brazil were a country that have overcame a long period of struggle against its dictatorial past, the hyperinflation and its situation as an international debtor. In Zakaria's words, during the Lula administration,

Brazil was on the track to become a “stable democracy with impressive fiscal management, a roaring economy and a wildly popular president”²⁰ (ZAKARIA, 2010).

When Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva took over as the newly elected president of Brazil, the South American country witnessed the usher of a new era in which its foreign policy, more than never, aimed to be understood as a part of a Grand National Project and an important lever for the Brazilian development process (ALMEIDA; 2006, p. 1). The fact is, at that moment, the Brazilian image - both domestically and abroad – was changing due to an audacious foreign policy that reflected the confidence and the desire of the Brazilian diplomatic class to break with its older constraints

Faced with an international scenario of great transformations, the administration of President Lula maintained objectives traditionally stated by Brazilian foreign policy regarding the transformation of the Brazilian society into a more thriving, fairer and more democratic one. In the international stage, these objectives took shape through the defence of the reformulation of international rules and a better distribution of the international power (BECARD; 2009).

Thus, the full realization of the Brazilian foreign policy aspirations involved overcoming two main challenges: narrowing disparities between countries in the international system and, overcoming the Brazilian vulnerabilities.

According to Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães (2006)²¹ – Itamaraty former Secretary General - Brazil would not be a middle power forever. Thus, to overcome its situation of developing country and achieve a status of a great power, the government deemed it necessary to participate actively and consistently in the major decision-making centres of the international system.

Since the end of the Cold War, the middle powers encountered a series of restrictions to develop a more autonomous foreign policy. In this context, Brazil emerges as an indispensable partner for other middle powers, given that Brazilian diplomats were increasingly seeking an independent voice on the international stage (LIMA & HIRST; 2009, p. 44).

²⁰ Available in: <https://fareedzakaria.com/columns/2010/09/25/step-up-to-the-plate>.

²¹ Speech by the Secretary General Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães during the 1st National Conference of Foreign Policy and International Politics (2006), event organised by the Alexandre de Gusmão Foundation (FUNAG) and the International Relations Research Institute (IPRI) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Available in: <http://livros01.livrosgratis.com.br/al000118.pdf>

With an unwavering motivation, Brazil started to use its foreign policy tools as an important lever to defend and achieve its national interest in the international stage, in addition to serving as a “spearhead” for many middle powers that also sought greater space in the international system. Thus, in the words of Lima & Hirst, Brazil “has also shown a clear intention to expand its role and the responsibilities it assumes in regional politics, in Third World agendas and in multilateral institutions”²² (LIMA & HIRST; 2009, p. 44).

One of the primary strategic objectives of Brazilian foreign policy under the Lula administration was, then, the claim for the reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Brazil “fought” alongside India to occupy a permanent seat on the council. According Itamaraty former Secretary General Samuel Pinheiro Guimarães (2006), the reason for insisting on such an objective is that the Security Council is the main international body which decides “who will be hit by force or not”²³.

The Lula administration also maintained as a strategic objective preserving its ability to conduct economic policy and foreign trade, meaning that Brazil was willing to use its foreign policy as an instrument to promote economic and industrial development (AMORIM; 2010, p. 216). Therefore, it was deemed necessary to strengthen the multipolarity and regional integration processes underway in South America (BECARD; 2009, pp. 136 – 137).

In general, it is possible to say that the Lula government put into practice a multifaceted foreign policy, although always seeking to balance the rules of the game in favour of the interests of Brazil. This multidirectional Brazilian foreign policy can be seen on how the country strengthened its ties with other middle powers like within IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa), and after within BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and, South Africa). Other evidences such multifaceted foreign policy includes the Brazilian engagement in international security matters, intensifying its participation on the UN Peacekeeping Operations, its important role on the Nuclear Deal with Iran and Turkey. The country’s global economic presence and role within the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Development Bank (IDB). Finally, strategic

²²**Free translation of the original in Portuguese:** “[...] tem também demonstrado clara intenção de expandir esse seu papel e as responsabilidades que assume na política regional, nas agendas do Terceiro Mundo e em instituições multilaterais.”

²³**Free translation of the original in Portuguese:** “[...] quem será atingido pela força ou não.”

intensified cooperation with African countries as a matter of exerting strategic influence, and the search for the status of a leader in a more united South America and so on.

In the words of Celso Amorim, former Brazilian chancellor

“Creativity and assertiveness were essential elements in some key foreign-policy decisions that had been taken [...]. From day one, President Lula chose to adopt a clearly independent attitude – fearless, but not reckless – commensurate with Brazil’s size and aspirations” (AMORIM; 2010, p. 217)

In short, it is possible to say that Brazilian foreign policy during the Lula government sought to guide all of its actions regarding the development of new rules on the international system making them favourable to Brazilian national interests.

Throughout the period in analysis, the Brazilian strategic standards sought to make the country an indispensable actor, to achieve international credibility and to act as a balancing part between the great powers and the middle and smaller powers. In all the fields that foreign policy has been involved, Brazil presented a new range of proposals, ideas and commitments. Therefore, for reasons of feasibility and given the characteristics of a middle power, Brazil's international insertion from Cardoso to Lula, in this work, will be explored from three perspectives: I) Brazil's role in South America (regional level); II) Brazil's global engagement (international role) and; III) Brazil’s role on the international security field.

3.3. The Brazilian International Engagement under Cardoso

3.3.1. Role in South America and the Regional Level

With the exception of Baron of Rio Branco's administration at the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (who went through the term of five presidents²⁴), regional policy has never been central to Brazil's foreign action strategy. In this sense, the Cardoso administration consolidated a strategy that gave more importance to the geographical environment, which became a constant in Brazil's foreign actions (VIGEVANI, 2003). During the period as minister of foreign relations, Cardoso began a process that went from emphasizing Latin America to focusing only on the importance of South America as a sub-region, delimiting what would come to be the geographic sphere of regionalist action in Brazil. In this sense, the Common Market of the South (Mercosur) became an important

²⁴Campos Sales (1898 – 1902); Rodrigues Alves (1902 – 1906); Afonso Pena (1906 – 1909); Nilo Peçanha (1909 – 1910); Hermes da Fonseca (1910 – 1914).

asset in the country's foreign action strategy. One of the main reasons was that between 1991 and 1997, the trade dynamics within the zone showed positive accelerated growth rates, reaffirming the character of the group as a South American customs union (VIZENTINI, 2005).

A clear example was the redirection of the energy matrix. Brazil had been highly dependent of the Persian Gulf imports, especially from Saudi Arabia and Iraq, countries that have always enjoyed a privileged relationship with Brazil, especially regarding defence issues. Notwithstanding, Cardoso in a clear effort to pivot to the Brazilian strategic environment, redirected the imports mostly from Argentina and Venezuela (VIGEVANI, 2003). The political-strategic character, which was focused on deepening joint decision-making mechanisms, also saw relative progress in the period. Nonetheless, these aspects were not completed, leading Mercosur to exhaustion after the financial and exchange crisis of 1999 (VIZENTINI, 2005).

In the regional context, the Brazilian strategy was articulated on three fronts: Mercosur; the South American continent itself; and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). It was during the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government that Mercosur gained a new strategic sense, representing the hard core of Brazilian projection, first in Latin America, and then worldwide. During his mandate, Cardoso prioritised the regional surroundings of Brazil like no previous president, although with a certain regard towards the bilateral relations with the United States (SILVA, 2012)

Through South American integration initiatives, Brazil was able to achieve convergence between trade and investment policies to strengthen itself in the FTAA negotiations. In this way, Mercosur was the perfect 'counterbalance' in a scenario of a realist projection for Brazil on the international system, especially because Brazil imprinted a vision in which the difference of power ought to be considered as a primordial factor in regional relations (SILVA, 2012). For the Brazilian foreign policy interests, the Mercosur articulated a regional space, configuring itself as an important interlocutor in multilateral forums, especially in negotiations with the FTAA.

One of the main pressure vectors over the Mercosur was the proposal to create the FTAA along with the intense privatization and dollarization process of the Argentinian economy. Reluctantly, Brazil therefore agreed to start the rounds of negotiations for the creation of the FTAA, mainly because if the country sought to 'block' the process, it would find itself in an isolated position within the continent, and directly confronting the

US, which was something that the Brazilian decision maker did not want. In the post-Cold War international scenario, the American grand strategy started to present a strong aggressive character in the trade sector, which eventually would bring a deficit balance to Brazil. Therefore, at the same time Brazil sought to intensify its multilateral relations and establish regional integration in order to ‘counterbalance’ the FTAA without the need to oppose it directly. The constant search for the strengthening of bilateral relations and the intensification of multilateralism became known as a posture of *global trader* (VIZENTINI, 2005).

After the crisis of 1999, the international scenario over which Brazil based all of its insertion strategy began to disarticulate. In this sense, the second term of the Cardoso administration represented a paradigmatic change of posture, replacing the early ‘subordination’ to the neoliberal globalization process for the criticism to the ‘asymmetric globalization’. This happened at the same time that Argentina began to invest heavily against Mercosur, starting to bet on the FTAA's hemispheric integration proposal. However, Argentina suffered a political and economic collapse in 1999, highlighting the problems of the deliberate adoption of the neoliberal model (VIGEVANI, 2003). In this scenario, the Cardoso government's external action moved away from a careless market opening without compensation to a strategy focused on articulating alternatives to the Mercosur crisis and maintaining the integration process. Thus, the last years of the Cardoso government also represented the adoption of a posture that sought a comfortable margin of autonomy vis-à-vis the United States (VIZENTINI, 2005).

3.3.2. The global engagement and International Role

During the Cardoso administration, there was an understanding, shared mainly among academics, that Brazil should reassess the way in which it positioned itself vis-à-vis the international community, increasingly seeking a transformative rather than a conservative stance. In other words, a critical posture towards the great powers. This critical dimension of the Brazilian posture was bounded by the idea that a greater integration to the international economy would decrease the expectations of an effective national development, especially inspired by the thought of Raul Prebisch and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The ECLAC approach claimed that if the conglomerate of countries known as the “Third World” acted together, they would be able to obtain favourable decisions from the ‘centres of

power' that would take their interests into account, which was not always a reality (LAMPREIA, 1998).

Notwithstanding, Lampreia claimed that adopting a critical posture towards the international status quo and its main players would make little sense because Brazil identified itself with the dominant values of the international environment, especially the neoliberal agenda. Therefore, Brazil had to be willing to deal with the costs and the benefits of its international insertion. In his own words, "a greater autonomy [...] would not be achieved through an alleged self-sufficiency" (LAMPREIA, 1998, p. 09).

At the global level, Cardoso adopted the concept of 'strategic partnerships', establishing relationships of intense privilege with other countries, exercising universalism as a way to defend national interests. The core of the strategic partnerships were middle powers characterised as 'in development countries', such as China, Russia and India, reflecting the beginning of a Brazilian 'niche diplomacy'. In addition, Cardoso also established good relations with Cuba, Mexico and the countries from the Community of Portuguese Language Countries.

Cardoso's international insertion strategy always took into account the preponderance of the United States. According to the president himself, the US was Brazil's key partner due to its central position in the international system (CARDOSO, 1995). However, bilateral relations with the country were developed in a way that gave Brazil enough room for manoeuvre to organize the South American space through Mercosur (CARDOSO apud VIGEVANI, 2003). Maintaining good relations with the US has always been a significant variable when thinking about expanding Brazil's role in international politics based on an integrated South America, as this would be the main platform for negotiation with other centres of world power.

Brazil did not discuss the American hegemony in the international system, and even though many of the interests were in 'perfect alignment' due to the strong neoliberal component, Brazil sought to increase its freedom of action by inserting itself in other spaces. A good example was the way through which Brazil conducted the negotiations for the implementation of the FTAA. With the aim of negotiating articulated bargains with the European Union, Brazil worked so that the FTAA negotiations could proceed as slowly as possible, so that the country could negotiate in other regions (SILVA, 2012). Therefore, in a clear intent to bypass the weight of the American unilaterality, Brazil also sought to intensify its relations with other middle powers such as India, China, and Russia.

Nonetheless, during the Cardoso administration Brazil failed to comply with important items agreed with these countries, heading its commitments mostly to 'first world' countries (VIZENTINI, 2005).

The relations outwards the American continent also represented an important foothold for the Brazilian diplomacy after the Cold War. In an attempt to offset the growing dependence on both the US and regional partners, Brazil took advantage of the multipolar trend during the end of the Cold War to expand its relations with other power poles. The Brazilian multilateral relations at the time, however, were characterised by strong pragmatism and selectivity (SILVA, 2002). Therefore, although Brazil have reached the global level with its diplomatic range, the focus of the country' strategy were Europe and Asia.

For the Brazilian interests, the European continent constituted an important option within the strategic framework post-Cold War. The dimensions of what Brazil considered the 'strategic axis of Europe' were centred on the promotion of multipolarity, economic liberalization and scientific and technological cooperation (SILVA, 2002). Europe was a great source of technological resources and even surpassed the US in trade relations with Brazil for a period, when the European Union represented 28% of Brazilian exports against the US 23% (SAVINI, 2001). Within bilateral relations with European countries, Brazil sought to untie itself from Mercosur and seek support in matters of national interest, such as its candidacy for the United Nations Security Council. Since other South American countries – especially Argentina – did not see the candidacy kindly, it was with countries such as Germany, Portugal and Spain that Brazil found an important 'stronghold' to promote its interests within the UNSC.

Even if to a lesser degree of relevance, relations with Russia were also present in Brazil's national interests. The Brazilian diplomatic discourse sought to approach Russia through the concept of 'whale countries' - which arose in contrast to the Asian tigers - which referred to countries with large population sizes, territory, natural resources and great growth potential (SARAIVA, 2006; MACEDO; 2006). In this sense, Brazil saw a great opportunity for cooperation in the space and nuclear areas, and signed several agreements involving the exchange of technical expertise with the Russian Federation during the Cardoso government (BACIGALUPO, 2000).

By its turn, Asia started to draw more and more attention from Brazil, which began to refer to the continent as the "new epicentre of world development". The size of the

Asian markets and the fact that they have capital and state-of-the-art technology were essential factors in the Brazilian interests in the region, which saw there an opportunity to replace the traditional American partnership. Brazil already had a history of bilateral relations with Japan, but the Cardoso administration was able to expand to India, China and South Korea, and later with countries from Southeast Asia.

In this scenario, the role of China for the Brazilian strategy was the only one that had a significant increase beyond the interests with the USA and the European Union. Cardoso saw in China an excellent opportunity to maximize its advantages in different areas beyond the commercial sphere, mainly to lead Brazil towards a position of a global player. In this aspect, Brazil's main interest in strengthening relations with China was in the technological issue, as technical cooperation agreements were being developed for the development of satellites, essential to boost the Brazilian space program. China also reached the position of 'second trading partner' of Brazil during this period (VIGEVANI, 2003).

Nonetheless, Cardoso's universalism was still somewhat diffuse. This is reflected in the failure to develop a lateral strategy effective enough to catch up with its middle power peers, as well as to impact countries with less expressive power. There was great potential for relations with India; however, they did not translate concrete results due to Brazil's failure to comply with some agreements, in addition to unilaterally denouncing the country when it carried out nuclear tests (*Ibid.*).

Regarding the African continent, the changes were more significant. The traditional 'African policy', which has always been a fundamental element of the Brazilian grand strategy, was replaced by the selectivity and pragmatism of the Cardoso government. This new practice identified petrol and southern countries as the priority interest of Brazil in the region. Moreover, with the creation of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries²⁵ (CPLP) in 1996, a new relationship dynamics with some African countries was generated, but unfortunately, it did not yield good results. The end of apartheid in South Africa made possible for both countries to develop closer relations, especially in a moment where the strengthening of democracy was a key axis for international insertion. Nonetheless, since the African Policy of Cardoso's administration received low priority, focusing specifically on oil producing countries

²⁵An organization that brought together Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Saint Thomas and Prince.

(such as Nigeria), what ended up damaging relations with South Africa. (SILVA, 2012; VIGEVANI, 2003).

An interesting point, however, was Brazil's position in relation to the Cuban situation. Even though Cardoso has sought an international insertion for Brazil closely linked to the centres of world power, he decided to adopt a position of constant criticism of the economic embargo imposed by the USA. Even though this generated some discomfort with the American president Bill Clinton, Cardoso was a strong supporter of a Cuban reinsertion in the hemispheric community, free of any restrictions (VIGEVANI, 2003).

3.3.3. The Role in the International Security Field

Throughout the Cardoso administration, the foreign actions were especially focused on economic matters, which affected in some degree matters of international security. Nonetheless, even though security issues have not received as much attention, some actions are worth mentioning.

In the year of 1995, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations announced that Brazil would be joining the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), which prompted the country to shelve all of its ballistic missile and space vehicle programs. Moreover, since 1991, with the creation of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC), Brazil was already on the path for the pacific use of nuclear technology, disarmament, and non-proliferation. In this sense, after almost thirty years of resistance, Brazil joined in 1998 the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), however it did not signed the Additional Protocol under the argument that it could affect industrial secrets.

In addition, Brazil also took part in two peacekeeping and protection missions of the United Nations. In 1995, a contingent of Brazilian military and diplomatic observers participated on the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), in Croatia and later in Bosnia Herzegovina. In 1997, the Brazilian army joined the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA), a peacekeeping operation to support peace and reconciliation efforts after a civil war in the country (MD, 2020).

3.4. The Brazilian International Engagement under Lula

3.4.1. Role in South America and the Regional Level

After Lula's inauguration as president, Itamaraty became much more explicit in its desire and determination to achieve a leadership position in South America, strongly insisting that South America should be promoted to the top of the list of priorities of Brazilian foreign policy. The Lula administration presented a set of important changes on the Brazilian pivot to its strategic environment, especially South America. According to Saraiva (2010), with the misfortune of the 9/11 attacks and the consequent end of Bush's Pan-American policy for the hemisphere, Brazil found the perfect scenario to build and establish a leadership position in South America (SARAIVA, 2010). In the words of Lessa

“[...] the regional insertion was also conceived as a natural space for the extension of the notion of international status. Thus, the Brazilian government sought to ‘relaunch’ the idea of South America as a political concept to give meaning to the quest for greatness of the Brazilian diplomacy” (LESSA et al; 2019, p. 77).

Therefore, in order to gain international standing and more international clout, Brazil followed the route of integration with its neighbouring countries in an approach that have already begun under Cardoso, however with a different weight to the leadership variable. This ended up implying a closer relationship between domestic politics and diplomacy. In the same way, it was possible to perceive a greater effort on the part of Brazil to manage and influence domestic political results in South American countries, as in the case of the creation of the Group of Friends of Venezuela²⁶.

The administration of President Lula tried to establish a foreign policy pattern marked by great pragmatism and great motivation by the will to preserve and sponsor the expansion of Brazilian interests in the region (ALMEIDA; 2010). One of the main elements of this project was the strategy to consolidate the South American Community of Nations (SACN), a merging of the two major South American blocs: the Mercosur and the Andean Community. The group's agenda revolved around things such as “power asymmetries, physical and energetic integration, environment, financial mechanisms, and the promotion of social inclusion and social justice” (SARAIVA, 2010, p. 160). However,

²⁶See: https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/noticias/2003/030116_quitodi.shtml

the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) succeeded the SACN from 2008 and beyond.

The general approach within UNASUR was more of cooperation than that of a strict physical integration. Brazil led the establishment of a set of ‘thematic committees’ within the organisation, from Health and Drug Control to Defence and military issues (AMORIM, 2010). Notwithstanding, the Union was an extremely consistent asset and an important instrument for effective responses during moments of crisis in the region. For Brazil in particular, the organization became its main axis of action in the multilateral sphere. In addition, UNASUR proved to be the main mechanism through which Brazil made its policy for the region viable, always building common positions between the countries while also maintaining its leadership position (SARAIVA, 2010).

Critics to the Brazilian insertion strategy decried that the UNASUR was nothing but a ‘stronghold’ of anti-Americanism in the region. However, it became evident that the regional organisation was in fact a part of the Brazilian project to use coalition building as a soft balancing tool against the US, which did not imply the adoption of an anti-American posture. In addition, as mentioned before, the organisation played an important role when addressing conflicting issues in the region, e.g. the polemics about the establishment of new US military bases in Colombia and the rising tensions between Venezuela and Colombia when Bogotá accused Caracas of harbouring fugitive guerrilla fighters in 2009 (AMORIM, 2010).

Lula conducted the most successful process of integration in the region during his administration, leading the UNASUR to achieve the status of a political actor. This step influenced not only South America, but also the whole Latin American and Caribbean region. The Brazilian regional impact at the time was such that Lula managed to convene in 2008 for the first time in 200 years a “multisummit” including the “Mercosur Summit, the UNASUR Summit, the Rio Group Summit, and a summit including all 34 states from the Latin American and Caribbean region” (AMORIM, 2010, p. 230). The great result of this impact was that Brazil installed an embassy in each of the countries in the region until the end of the Lula administration, establishing the country as the second most important and powerful nation in the American hemisphere.

Another relevant indicator of the Brazilian regional impact was the level of its technical and financial cooperation with its neighbours. Brazil, through the National Development Bank, funded countless infrastructure projects in other countries of South

America, showing that the country had become the regional player it was always supposed to be (SARAIVA, 2010).

The international community have started to identify Brazil as the natural leader of South America, what created a few points of friction with the United States. When it comes to issues related to the South American continent, Brazil always kept a steady position of autonomy towards the American intentions in the region. Brazil started to get involved with a greater level of autonomy in international politics, especially promoting a set of reformist trends, showing that it was not willing to hand over the devised coordinated actions with the US.

3.4.2. The global engagement and International Role

The Brazilian engagement in the international arena regarding multilateral issues during the Lula years was enormous. One of the concepts that guided Brazilian foreign policy through the complex new world order was the idea of reciprocal multilateralism. Due to the Brazilian economic weight during the first years of President Lula's mandate, when one thinks about reciprocity, one tends to relate usually to international trade. However, when Lula talked about reciprocity back in 2006 during the World Economic Forum in Davos, he was talking about all areas of the international order: economy & trade, security issues, health, environment and so on (CERVO; 2010, p. 11).

The Brazilian quest towards a reciprocal multilateralism in the international stage were also a quest to ensure that the rules of the multilateral order benefit all nations and not only the Brazilian national interest. Otherwise, the international order would remain at the complete mercy of the great powers. According to Lima & Hirst (2009; p. 50), "active involvement in multilateral institutions and arenas has been a constant feature of Brazilian foreign policy since the end of the 19th century". Thus, the main "battlefields" of Brazil's quest towards international reciprocity and parity were the United Nations Organisation (UN), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Organisations of which Brazil is a co-founder.

At the level of the WTO, it is possible to perceive with certain clarity how Brazil used its foreign policy agenda to pursue economic development and a more just and democratic world. According to Lessa et al. (2019; p. 75), "the energy with which Brazil under Lula da Silva pursued a new profile in international trade negotiations might be one of the most interesting facts in the PT cycle". Brazil had an enormous agenda regarding

the international economic relations and foreign trade and its greatest activism inside the WTO was alongside the G20, especially India, trying to articulate a common position among the developing countries. In this context, inside the Uruguay and Doha Rounds, as well as in Cancun, Brazil led discussions on topics such as free trade, the adjustments of the architecture for agricultural negotiations and the battle against the asymmetries in trade negotiations (AMORIM; 2010, pp. 218 – 220; LIMA & HIRST; 2009, p. 53).

Brazil also had a great role concerning the environmental issues. At this level, the Brazilian positions came one more time connected to a great ambition of being recognized as an indispensable actor to this matter as well as an actor with political and negotiation abilities (LESSA et al.; 2019, p. 76). When it comes to environmental issues, Brazil is a country completely committed with the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”²⁷. However, on its “biggest appearance” as an environmental protector during the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (2009), in Copenhagen, Brazil made an ambitious offer on good levels of emission control, which ended up followed by another group of nations (AMORIM; 2010, p. 220; LESSA et al.; 2019 p. 76).

Within the United Nations, Brazil along with India, Germany and Japan, campaigned for a reform in the structures of the UN’s most relevant part: the United Nations Security Council. Brazil's campaign for reform in the Security Council mainly referred to the inclusion of new permanent members. However, according to Lima & Hirst

“Brazilian attention regarding UN reform has focused on three aspects, all reflecting long-standing interests: the strengthening of multilateral principles and norms, particularly with regard to the authorization for the use of coercive instruments, as provided for in Chapter VII of the UN charter; the need to re-establish the conceptual boundary between peacekeeping and peace enforcement (imposition of peace) and; the reformulation of the Security Council's decision-making structure in order to increase its representativeness and legitimacy in the post-Cold War order” (2009, p. 55).

The Brazilian aspiration to become a permanent member on the Security Council was officially announced in 1994 by Chancellor Celso Amorim, during President Itamar Franco’s mandate. However, it was only with the Lula administration made the issue one of the priorities on its foreign policy agenda. In general, the expansion of the council has been justified by the need to adapt institutions to the new reality of the post-Cold War world and by the argument that an extension of representations would increase the

²⁷See: <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf>

organization's legitimacy and the effectiveness of its collective decisions (AMORIM; 2010, pp. 221 – 222).

A high point of Brazil's international performance, which showed the reach of its influence and the power it had been developing – in other words, its systemic impact -, was its role as the main conductor and negotiator of the nuclear agreement between Iran and Turkey in 2010. During the period, the great powers (permanent countries of the UN Security Council), were already trying in various ways to reach an agreement with Iran on how the entire cycle of nuclear energy and uranium enrichment should be conducted. The United States, that had been applying sanctions against Tehran, in fact, guided many of the demands. The possibilities of reaching an agreement were already nil, as the parties were not willing to compromise in several aspects.

In this sense, since Lula have developed good relations with Tehran and was willing to make of Brazil a player in Middle Eastern politics, he decided to mediate the negotiations. The Brazilian attempt was not well regarded by Washington. Brands (2011) says that was “an effort to derail the U.S. drive for a new round of sanctions against Tehran” (p. 33). In the same stance, the other powers had great doubts regarding how Brazil would perform, especially when Russian President Dmitri Medvedev stated that would be a failed attempt even before its conception. Nonetheless, Lula proved them wrong and conducted one of the most successful negotiations of the Brazilian diplomatic history, convincing Tehran to adhere to terms proposed by Brazil and Turkey (LAMPREIA, 2014).

All this pattern of behaviour in Brazilian foreign policy shows that Brazil sought to insert itself on the international scene as a relevant actor without using force or projection of power. Nevertheless, Brazil played an important role in international security through “non-traditional” means.

3.4.3. The Role in the International Security Field

When it comes to military power, Brazil is quite an “ambiguous” country. It possessed at the time the world’s 13th most powerful military (according to data extracted from The Military Balance 2011). However, Brazil’s history of military conflicts since the beginning of the 20th century is short; the country only fought the two World Wars as belligerent. If we look at the history of military interventions abroad, the number drops

almost to zero, since Brazil only took part in the military coup in Honduras, and peace operations are a different instrument than pure military intervention.

This situation finds a plausible explanation in the National Defence Strategy (NDS), an official document that establishes guidelines for the adequate preparation and training of the Brazilian Armed Forces, in order to guarantee the country's security both in peacetime and in critical situations²⁸. However, the Brazilian NDS offered the first glimpses of what Lula and his staff had in mind as a long term policy for Brazil since the document brought not only the main defence and strategic determinants for the Brazilian insertion, but also how they could be used as feasible assets for the country's foreign policy conduction.

One important issue of the Brazilian international security agenda was the nuclear non-proliferation. Although the country maintained its position towards nuclear disarmament, some differences began to emerge regarding the need to adhere to the Additional Protocol. For the Brazilian statecraft, the expansion of IAEA inspection and control activities was considered intrusive, which leading the country not to sign. Brazil has always had an unblemished character with regard to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but decided to show that to sign any additional document, it would depend directly on the effective action by the nuclear-armed States for complying with Article VI of the NPT, that is, effective actions to reduce their nuclear arsenals.

During the eight years of President Lula's government, the Brazilian foreign policy community has devoted itself to the most varied topics involving security and defence issues. Among them, the already known vast defence cooperation in South America under the South American Defence Council (CDS), role specialisation defence cooperation with African countries and a strong activism regarding the denuclearization agenda (ESTEVEES & HERTZ; 2019, p. 113)

However, Brazil became the protagonist in 2004, when it started to lead the peacekeeping operation in Haiti, under the chapter VII of the United Nations charter. The deployment of an operation abroad was, undoubtedly, a turning point for the Brazilian international insertion.

According to Esteves & Hertz (2019, p. 113) "the 2004 Haitian crisis represented an opportunity for the intersection of its two main concerns regarding international peace: intervention and development", thus, the "commitment to MINUSTAH meant a decision

²⁸See: <https://www.defesa.gov.br/estado-e-defesa/estrategia-nacional-de-defesa>

to accept a new security vocabulary developed in documents such as 'An Agenda for Peace', 'Responsibility to Protect' or 'In Larger Freedom'."

The Brazilian experience leading international troops in Haiti proved, at some point, that the country was getting ready to enter the game of 'use of force' through its own conditions. In this context, Brazil augmented its role in the international stage mainly regarded to Peace Operations under the scope of the United Nations. Thus, the Brazilian military played important commanding roles in operations such as UNIFIL in Lebanon and MONUSCO in Congo.

CONCLUSION

In a period in which countries that once achieved great international status and prestige have become pariahs, reflecting on the possibility of middle powers implementing a grand strategy becomes extremely important for Brazilian and world science. Especially for allowing an appreciation of the path that the country has travelled throughout its history, and being the guide to where the country wants to go.

It was possible to identify that during the period studied, Brazil had been trying to establish something close to a long-term state policy. Starting from a scenario where the middle powers began to gain relevance in international chess, Brazil established as its main national interest to become a developed country and to establish itself as a global player. Therefore, the country sought to mobilise its resources in order to become an indispensable actor for the conduction o global order dynamics.

The success of the economic stabilization plan devised by Cardoso and his staff gave Brazil the perfect opportunity to fulfil its lifelong dream of becoming a global player with relevant regional and systemic impact. However, the lack of focus and the diffuse manner through which Cardoso conducted his foreign actions affected the outcomes the country expected. In some level, the Cardoso administration ranked positively when checking if the characteristics of a middle power grand strategy were present. Cardoso in fact sought to bring economic development to Brazil; however, the adoption of conditions from the Washington Consensus showed a complete disregard to the country's economic idiosyncrasies. Moreover, Cardoso also initiated in Brazil the tradition of using coalition building and multilateral institutions as a soft balancing tool against the wills of the hegemon or the great powers. Notwithstanding, the lack of focus presented by the Brazilian foreign policy were associated with a constant concern with possible American

reactions to the Brazilian behaviour. When negotiating between Mercosur and the EU to mitigate the effects of the FTAA, Brazil was merely changing from one dependent relation to another. The joint action between foreign policy and defence policy in the scope of international security was the only one that showed more consistency with the main objectives of nuclear disarmament and the peaceful solution (however polemic) of conflicts.

Not enough evidence were found, however, to claim that Cardoso implemented an acquiescent grand strategy. On one side, Cardoso indeed sought the support of major power such as the US and the EU, especially in order to guarantee material gains and recognition. Since Brazil and the US never had a conflicting history, it would be farfetched to say the country sought peaceful coexistence with the superpower. Nonetheless, Cardoso always made his big picture decisions taking into consideration the possible responses of the US. Cardoso also never trusted the safety of Brazil in the hands of the US and never voted major international decision in accordance with the American ones. Therefore, the final assessment of the Cardoso administration is that the level of diffuseness of the country's actions points towards the absence of a grand strategy in the period (1995 – 2002).

During the Lula administration, the lines along which Brazil traced the path of its international insertion were clearer, and the Brazilian posture more assertive. Strongly influenced by the independent foreign policy doctrine, Lula reinforced his strategy of defending national sovereignty and the national interests, even if disagreements with the great powers - especially the US - could arise from this endeavour. Regarding the characteristics of a middle power grand strategy, Lula's actions ranked positively on the three of them. The pursuit of development was constant on Brazilian foreign actions, from its role within the WTO to the rapprochement with other emerging economies creating the BRICS, which led Brazil to tank among the eight largest economies in the world. Lula also the tendency initiated by Cardoso by building coalitions on the regional level and also on the global level as a tool for soft balancing against, specifically in this case, the United States. Lula was willing to end its historic dependency of the global north, therefore, acting on the multilateral forums, implementing South-South cooperation, promoting the reform of the UN among others showed that Brazil increased its systemic impact, what yielded good results for the country's interests at the time. As for the combined action of foreign and defence policy, there was a certain continuity of what had

already been done in the previous administration. However, given that Lula reinforced the speech that Brazil should become a permanent member of the Security Council, Brazil expanded its scope of action in international security, mainly by being the great model country, and leader, in the conduct of peace operations.

Therefore, it is possible to claim that Lula not only sought, but also succeeded on increasing the country's capacity to take decisions alone. Lula succeeded in following all the strategic options established by the autonomy model. He successfully used coalition building as a tool for soft balancing to restrain abusive behaviour and use of power by the US. In the same way, Lula expanded the country's external ties to all the continents, increasing the Brazilian international presence and systemic impact through diversification. He adopted a more critical approach towards the use of force and showed a high level of responsibility when accepting military commitments by 'hiding'. The Brazilian pursuit for regional integration establishing itself as the leader of a united South America, as well as the rapprochement with other emerging economies showed the presence and relevance of collective unity to promote the country's national interests. Therefore, is not only possible to say that Lula indeed had a grand strategy and a long-term policy plan for the country, but also a grand strategy that fits within the criteria of an autonomous one.

Lula's grand strategy can be qualified as strategic amalgamation, or strategic weaving. This classification is based on the way in which Lula moved with great skill and effectiveness among countries in the international hierarchy. Lula managed to implement a "lateral strategy" establishing himself as a consensual leader among the middle powers. Likewise, Lula managed to establish a privileged relationship with the great powers through its upward strategy without creating any kind of tension among them, becoming a strong link between the great and the middle powers, as well as gaining the trust of the small powers through its downward strategy, making it possible to exert influence over them. This grand strategy was therefore essential for Lula to pave the way for making Brazil a global player.

Therefore, based on what has been presented on this dissertation, the evidence suggests that there is a good probability for middle powers devising and implementing a grand strategy of their own. Even though the more traditional approaches to theory limit its application only to the reality of great powers, it was possible to find that the need to take comprehensive decisions by mobilising limited resources in order to attain an

objective is not exclusive to these countries. Thus, when it comes to theory, no strict impediments were found that would contradict the hypothesis. Due to the relevance of Brazil during the period studied, the case offered good prospects for replication, hence the empirical application suggests the possible reinforcement of the hypothesis. Although to make a categorical inference that encompasses all middle powers needs a thorough comparative analysis with a selected sample of countries, a middle power grand strategy is a real possibility.

Therefore, middle powers can have a grand strategy provided that a series of conditions and criteria are met in advance. The search for economic development, the use of coalition building as a soft balancing instrument and the coordination between foreign and defence policy are the main characteristics. However, the country needs to conduct its comprehensive policy coherently in order to classify a grand strategy. Coherence intrinsically depends on a clear definition of the national interest, which will guide the path to be followed and which will define which resources and in what ways should be used to achieve this interest. In the case of Brazil, during the period analysed (1995 – 2010), the requirements were consistently fulfilled only in the Lula government, through the implementation of its strategic amalgamation/weaving grand strategy.

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