

## INTRODUCTION

*Denis Rolland*

Why this book? “Debates about the relationship between regime type and foreign policy are, of course, hardly new”, notes Andrew Hurrell. So we need working and reflection instruments, with theoretical and history approaches.

As the same author adds carefully, “a theory of foreign policy might explain why a state attempted to do x or y at a given point in time; but the evolution of its policy (and any evaluation of its success) depends on the nature of its external environment and the responses of others. Foreign policy outcomes, then, cannot be understood in terms of the attributes and preferences of a single country, but only by examining the interaction of states within an evolving international context”<sup>1</sup>. So we need on one hand some definitions about what is a ‘political regime’ and how the theoretical literature analyses the links between regime type, foreign policy and international relations. And, on the other hand we need pragmatic analyses, historical cases. That could be the best definition of the main purpose of this collective work.

“Foreign policy presupposes the existence of a national project, that has distinct names in different historical experiences, as the American manifest destiny, the French *grand dessein* of De Gaulle, the national project of development in Brazil since the 1930s”, as Amado Luiz Cervo writes in the final chapter of this work. However, the political regime’s influence “can be attenuated to the point of its submergence under the influences of the national project and the components of society, such as culture, demography, ideology and economy”<sup>2</sup>.

In this way, each contributor of this book focuses on the necessary care required in this type of approach. Andrew Hurrell emphasizes: “all foreign relations are understood through the prism of history and through the mutual images that have been created and reinforced over time, and then institutionalised within dominant foreign policy ideologies”. In the same way, Robert Frank proposes three remarks: “First of all, the international reality is too complex to fall into a single grid of interpretation. [...] Those who carry out foreign policy have visions which are both realist theories and theories which emphasise the influence of ideology, including liberal theories. Historians may add that it is necessary to integrate other explanation schemes: in particular the “constructivist” interpretation, according to which all reality is constructed or reconstructed by its actors, and that international relations are also the product of perceptions, right or wrong, of the reality, by decision-makers. The result is that the foreign policy of states concerns both national interest, or considerations which have no relation to their institutions, as well as factors which are completely inherent to their political regime. Secondly, it is obvious that an international democratic logic has been taking shape and been reinforced during the twentieth century [...]. The third conclusion is precisely that the victory of democracies does not automatically lead to international democracy or to the end of history. To make the transition to this international democracy easier, it is not enough to reflect on the relationships between national political regimes and foreign policies; we must begin to conceive of a competent political regime which would devote itself to the international community, and to the organisations which represent it”<sup>3</sup>.

Theoretical analysis, general approaches and case studies, likewise political scientists and historians, all together converge in this book in two specific ways. First, as Amado Luiz Cervo observes, in the particular case of Brazil: “The multiple causes analysis of Brazil’s international relations and the paradigmatic analysis of its foreign policy allow us to isolate variables that explain

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<sup>1</sup>. Chapter 2 of this book.

<sup>2</sup>. Chapter 12.

<sup>3</sup>. Chapter 3.

both the prevalence of the foreign policy's continuity over the change of regimes and the change of the foreign policy in a situation of continuity of the regime. In other words, there is not necessary causal linkage between political regime and foreign policy". And, as José Flávio Sombra Saraiva remarks, in the first chapter of this book, "it is hard to find a straight and mechanical nexus between foreign policies and political regimes as a general abstraction". Second, and I quote once more José Flávio Sombra Saraiva, "the new path of knowledge, which must be developed, will imply a new methodological attitude. Historians are looking towards theories of International Relations, while theorists are rediscovering the "vast laboratory of history".

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