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This is one of the few articles on Brazil's role during the Cold War. Relying on United States, Chilean, Brazilian and Polish records, Tanya Harmer, a lecturer at the International History at the London School of Economics, analyses Brasilia's participation in the wave of coups that characterized the Southern Cone in the early 1970s. Harmer's article focuses on Brazilian support for a counterrevolution in Chile after Salvador Allende's election, and shows an episode of what the author calls the Inter-American Cold War.¹ Brazilian generals were particularly concerned with the spread of left-wing governments in the region and somehow agreed with Washington to contest them. Nevertheless, as noted by Matias Spektor, a historian of Brazilian diplomacy, Brasilia never transformed itself into a U.S. sheriff of the area.² Actually, starting in 1974, with a change at the head of government, Brazil abandoned ideological motivations for its foreign policy and embraced 'pragmatic' diplomacy that avoided a further involvement in the Inter-American Cold War.

Harmer pays special attention to Brazil's reaction to Allende's election and to the policy of the Chilean military regime before and after the coup. According to recently declassified Chilean diplomatic reports consulted by the author, between 1970 and 1971 the Brazilian government, headed by the hardliner general Emílio Garrastazu Médici, was particularly concerned not just with a possible alignment of Santiago with Fidel Castro's Cuba but also

¹ Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011). On Brazil's role in the Inter-American Cold War, see Harmer, 125-132.

² Matias Spektor, 'Brazilian Assessments of the End of the Cold War', in *The End of the Cold War and the Third World: New Perspectives on Regional Conflict*, eds. Artemy M. Kalinovsky and Sergey Radchenko (Abington/New York: Routledge, 2011), 17.

with the shift of Chile to “the other side of the Iron Curtain” (665). During Allende’s years, Chile, a traditional ally of Brazil, drew the attention of the Brazilian foreign minister, Mário Gibson Barboza. Since a huge community of Brazilians exiles was protected by Allende, Brasília’s intelligence operations in Chile increased exponentially. The Brazilian government, which was at that very moment repressing a rural guerrilla insurrection, had the goal of impeding any external attempt at modifying the status quo in the country and in the region. Cooperating actively with the repressive strategy of the military regime, Brazil’s embassy monitored the exiles in Santiago.³ Despite the Brazilian concern for the leftist Chilean government, particularly after the rapprochement between Santiago and Havana, the idea to overthrow Allende or to break the diplomatic relations with Santiago had never been taken seriously. Actually, as Harmer writes, support for these possibilities was limited to few high-ranking military officials. (665-6) Nevertheless, Brasília shared with Washington the mission of containing any possible new ‘revolutions’ in Latin America, and above all in the Southern Cone. In Bolivia, in 1970, and in Uruguay, in 1971, Brazil played a crucial role in impeding the rise of left-wing governments, and supporting military or conservative regimes.⁴ This action was recognized by the United States. During a presidential meeting in Washington, Brazil’s president Médici and Richard Nixon dealt with the Chilean and Bolivian issues. As reported by the author, Médici “underlined the continuing urgency of the Cold War ideological struggle in Latin America [that was] an internal, regional variant [...] as opposed to one theatre of a superpower struggle.” Consequently, Harmer points out, “if this were the case, its solutions lay in the region, and not in superpower negotiations” (669). Médici, during personal meetings and through his correspondence with Nixon, insisted on the need to coordinate Brazilian and American efforts in contesting revolutionary movements within the region. The Brazilian president backed Washington’s financial support to the Brazilian military and to Bolivia’s new and weak military government headed by General Hugo Banzer. In 1972 Médici gained the assistance needed for Banzer’s government and celebrated the disappearance of the Tupamaros guerrilla group in Uruguay. However, the U.S. Secretary of State and Brazil’s minister of foreign relations did not establish a special channel of communication, as proposed by the Brazilian President. The two governments signed a formal agreement several years later, in February 1976, in a deeply modified political context.⁵ Until Augusto Pinochet’s coup, Brazilian generals and military hoped for the overthrow of Allende. According to U.S. diplomatic sources, Harmer notes, Chilean oppositionists were receiving substantial economic and military support from Brazil. (673) Making an analogy between Chile in 1973 and Brazil in 1964, the result of the domestic crisis was similar: a military coup that founded a long military regime. Even if Brasília waited for two days before recognizing Chile’s new military government, Brazil’s government and Brazil’s ambassador to Santiago

³Pio Penna Filho, ‘O Itamaraty nos anos de chumbo – O Centro de Informações do Exterior (CIE) e a repressão no Cone Sul (1966-1979)’, *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 52, no. 2 (2009)

⁴ Hal Brands, *Latin America’s Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 157-8.

⁵ Matias Spector, *Kissinger e o Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2009), 135-141.

strongly supported the new regime. The Brazilian representative was recognized as the “fifth member of the [Chilean] junta” (674) and in the first weeks after the coup, the Brazilians offered lines of credit to Santiago. When in March 1974, Pinochet, , in his first international trip as Chilean president, visited Brazil on the occasion of the new president Ernesto Geisel’s inauguration, Brasilia looked like the center of a new ‘anti-Marxist axis’ composed of Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay and enriched later on by Argentina.

Although Santiago and Brasilia agreed to cooperate on tracking down their countries’ exiles, for both diplomatic and political reasons their relationship did not remain on the level that had existed at the beginning of Pinochet’s regime. As a result, in 1973 during a regional dispute at the UN over the Paraná River, Chile in fact supported Argentina rather than Brazil. Politically the Brazilian and Chilean military regimes were experiencing different phases of their trajectories. President Médici, a hardliner of the military regime, was replaced by General Ernesto Geisel who began a process of slow and gradual opening at home and abroad. (676) This process consisted of a relaxation of the political limitations imposed by the military regime and in the “diversification of relations across ideological divides” (677). The elevation of President Geisel, who was one of the key actors of the military coup in 1964, began a long period of democratization that led to the end of the military regime in March 1985.⁶ The new President, along with his new Foreign Minister, Antônio Azeredo da Silveira, established relations with Communist China, recognized Angola’s independent Marxist government, and improved Brazil’s relationship with Western Europe and Japan, abandoning the traditional partnership with the United States. It was not a new policy, since the seeds of this attitude were visible also during the previous government. Brazil, in line with the rhetoric of ‘responsible pragmatism’ of its new foreign policy, distanced itself from Cold War’s logic.⁷ The Chilean dictatorship immediately perceived the new Brazilian attitude and became suspicious of it. Although Santiago and Brasilia maintained good relations, Brazil distanced itself from the Chileans’ repressive methods. At that moment Brazil ended its role as a leading Cold Warrior in the area.

In 1974, at the peak of the first oil crisis, Brazil, being the ninth economy of the world, was more interested in protecting its interests in the global arena. Brazilian foreign policy shifted from an East-West to a North-South logic. As an emerging actor Brasilia was projecting itself as a new player in the international scene. The country was no longer interested in fighting Marxism, a threat that had been eliminated domestically, but aimed at expanding its international influence.

Harmer provides a clear picture of Brazil’s foreign policy in those years. The Brazilian military regime, especially between 1970 and 1973, was committed to counterrevolution

⁶ Elio Gaspari, *A Ditadura Derrotada* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003).

⁷ Spektor, 78.

and to Washington's Cold War goals. Brazil's primary aim was to avoid a hostile environment in the region. Brazil's diplomacy, however, aimed to distance itself from Washington on many crucial issues, as evidenced by other descriptions of the Médici-Nixon meeting in 1971.⁸ It is necessary to note that despite the convergence between Brazil and the United States that is presented by the author, the two governments had several points of contrast which impeded a frank dialogue. Brazil's Foreign Minister, Mário Gibson Barboza, and his ambassador to Washington, José Augusto de Araújo Castro, refused to include on the agenda of conversations between Médici and Nixon crucial issues like Brazil's opposition to the U.S.-sponsored Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Brazilian unilateral decision to extend its territorial sea up to 200 miles, and above all the U.S.-Brazilian agreements on coffee. Neither in 1971 nor in 1975 was Brazil completely aligned with Washington's foreign policy. The United States' support for conservative governments in the Southern Cone was functional to Brazil's regional policy. It is, however, necessary to highlight the growing distance between the two governments on many other issues of the global agenda.

Important studies on Brazil's role in the Cold War are still to be written but Harmer's article is a good start. As the author notes, her piece relies on Chilean diplomatic records and, partially, on Brazilian primary sources. (663) Confidential, secret, and top secret records were not opened for the research until May 2012. Up to two years ago, conducting research in the Brazilian public archives was a frustrating experience. This clearly explains the scarcity of academic works on Brazil's international history. Previously historians of international relations could only rely on precious primary sources that were available in the personal archives of several Brazilian presidents and foreign ministers that are hosted by the Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação de História Contemporânea (CPDOC) at the Fundação Getúlio Vargas in Rio de Janeiro. The new Brazilian Information Act (*Lei de Acesso à Informação*) now grants free access to files that were previously considered sensitive. According to the new law, researchers can consult top secret, secret, and confidential records after, respectively, 25, 15, and 5 years.⁹ It is a Copernican revolution for the historiography on Brazil and for the civil society. Many dark or unknown aspects of the Brazilian recent past, above all of the years of the military regime, can now be unveiled.

Carlo Patti is post-doctoral fellow at the Fundação Getúlio Vargas in Rio de Janeiro and earned his Ph.D. in History of International Relations at the University of Florence in 2012. As an international historian he has a deep interest in the history of nuclear proliferation and Brazilian foreign policy during and after the Cold War. Based on multi-archive research and oral history, his doctoral dissertation, "Brazil in

⁸ Carlos Fico, *O Grande Irmão: da Operação Brother Sam aos anos de chumbo. O governo dos Estados Unidos e a ditadura militar brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2008), 241-243. Spektor, 47-49.

⁹ For detailed information on the new Brazilian legislation see <http://www.acessoainformacao.gov.br/acessoainformacaogov/acesso-informacao-brasil/legislacao-integra-completa.asp#8>.

Global Nuclear Order” analyzes the Brazilian nuclear ambitions in the last sixty years and its repercussions on the international regime of nuclear non-proliferation. Patti’s recent publications include analyses of the former Brazilian president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s nuclear diplomacy and the Brazilian nuclear history. His current research focuses on Brazilian-German cooperation in the nuclear field at the beginnings of the 1950s.

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