

THE INTERNATIONAL INSERTION OF BRAZIL ACCORDING TO AMERICAN, GERMAN AND FRENCH THINK TANKS (2003-2014)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the discursive production of the most relevant defense and security policy think tanks from Germany, the USA and France concerning Brazil's foreign policy between 2003 and 2014. During that period, Brazil and other emerging powers sought to increase their autonomy in international relations, whereas great powers struggled to cope with the rearrangement of the global system. In this study, we argue that think tanks formulate ideas, discourses, and practices that might influence great powers' decision-making processes. Considering this, the study reports the main results of a qualitative analysis of 112 publications of 11 think tanks, selected from predefined search filters. We demonstrate how the discourses conveyed by European think tanks generally emphasize the representation of Brazil as a country that should become a "partner at the same level", to balance the influence of Venezuela in South America region. In the US, on the other hand, representations vary considerably so that they not only underscore Brazil's status as a democratic, responsible and reliable emerging power, but also contest certain Brazilian initiatives in the field of international security, such as the Tehran Declaration or the country's leadership in the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

Keywords: Brazilian foreign policy. Think tanks. United States of America. Germany. France.

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INTRODUCTION

The first decade and a half of the 21st century was characterized by substantive changes in the distribution of global power. In addition to the growing role of countries such as China and Russia, the creation of new multilateral forums and the gradual erosion of the legitimacy of the United States of America as the leader of the Global Institutional Order, intermediate countries and emerging powers sought to achieve greater independence in their international relations during this period (HURRELL, 2006; FLEMES, 2010; KAHLER, 2013; VEZIRGIANNIDOU, 2013). In the group of emerging countries, Brazil performed a role of outstanding international activism and diversification of relations during the management of the former President Luís Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010), profile kept — even though with reduced intensity and protagonism — in the first term of the former President Dilma Rousseff (2011-2014).

Between 2003 and 2014, Brazilian diplomacy has undertaken different efforts to seek status and recognition from the major powers and claiming for the leadership among the countries of the Global South⁴. Therefore, Brazil mobilized the international community around possible reforms of the main multilateral institutions, participated in the creation of new international coalitions — such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), G-20 commercial and IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) — and led the creation of regional forums such as the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Moreover, in addition to intensifying its relations with Latin America countries, Brazilian foreign policy in this period also broadened the horizon of political and commercial ambitions, even in security matters, projecting the Brazilian interests to Africa, to the Middle East and East Asia (AMORIM, 2015; CERVO; LESSA, 2014; CERVO 2010; FLEMES, 2010; REIS; ANDRIOTTI, 2012; REIS, 2015; VIGEVANI; CEPALUNI, 2007).

This new stance in foreign policy, associated with other ongoing international transformations, raised in the major Western powers a series of initiatives that sought to understand the new Brazil's positioning in the international system and, consequently, elaborate possible political responses to the renewed Brazilian insertion in international relations. However, the lack of solid political guidelines persisted in these countries regarding the addressing of the new reality that was configured, specially concerning to the relative rise of Brazil to the other emerging powers (SVARTMAN, 2016; VEZIRGIANNIDOU, 2013).

In this context, a set of actors have been established with increasing relevance for the strategic debate of large powers. These actors, whose ideas, discourses and practices precede, inform and intend to influence external, defense and security policies: the think tanks, organizations dedicated to produce and to articulate the knowledge focused on public policies of domestic and international scope. As we will analyze, the discursive production of these actors proves to be an relevant source of analysis of external repercussion on topics in which the Brazilian diplomacy began to engage more actively in the period aforementioned. Moreover, according to diplomats Benoni Belli and Filipe Nasser (2014), it is essential to understand the visions disseminated by the think tanks of strategic countries on topics that interest Brazil – visions that reflect on a large number of actors who have access to the production of these institutes – because, as the authors argue:

[the] question is not more if the Brazil will be or not analyzed and interpreted in this environment, but which product in the marketplace of ideas will tend to achieve sales success. In other words, the question is to know whether the country will be the passive subject of analyses and interpretations in think tanks or if it will be able to become subject defining narratives that affect its international projection (BELLI; NASSER, 2014, p. 166-170).

Thus, this work aims to identify and to analyze a set of politic options prepared and/or conveyed by some of the most relevant think tanks from Germany, the United States of America (USA) and France – countries whose density of relationship with Brazil in areas such as international trade, technical cooperation, defense cooperation, environment, culture

and society, among many others, qualifies them among the most important traditional partners of Brazilian diplomacy. Therefore, the corpus of analysis of this research is composed of 112 publications selected from markers (or filters) with thematic and chronological cut in the online databases of the 11 institutes surveyed (seven from the US, two from Germany and two from France), it comprises reports, notes, articles, event transcriptions and policy papers published by think tanks throughout the 2003-2014 period.

The research design used in this work has as theoretical-methodological foundation the analysis of post-structuralist discourse developed, among others, by Hansen (2006, 2016) based on the tradition of theorists such as Foucault (1970, 1974, 1977), Derrida (1976, 1978), Kristeva (1980), and Laclau and Mouffe (1985). Ontologically, post-structuralism assumes the relevance of language and the inseparability between representations and politics, which are understood as mutually constitutive and discursively interconnected. As an epistemological unfolding, the discourse becomes an instance of fundamental analysis so that one can understand the relational construction of identities and their applicability to study research problems in International Relations. As a discursive practice, this occurs because every foreign policy needs to attribute meanings to the situations it is addressed and also needs to build objects in which its implementation is sustained as legitimate and justifiable.

Discourse in foreign policy, as Hansen argues (2006, p. 1) "articulate and intertwine material factors and ideas to such an extent that the two cannot be separated from one another," structuring themselves based on the representations of identities that legitimize the course of political action adopted. As discursive and political, such representations of identities are constructed by the discourse from specific interpretative optics to the entities that produce their discourses, thus, objective identities are inexistent, located in an extradiscursive space; foreign policy issues are presented according to these interpretative perspectives, which are based on the representations of identity constructed by the discourse to contextualize, to justify and to legitimize foreign policy options adopted or in the process of being adopted.

Therefore representations of identities are originated from a broad set of actors who interact in the social space with collectively articulated codes, which explains their social character. Finally, identities are relational, since they are always built in relation to something that they are not, the

“Other.” Such construction occurs in a double discursive process formed by the juxtaposition of distinctive signs of this identity in positive connection (association process) to the signs diametrically opposed to the “Other” (differentiation process). It stems from this discussion about the discursive, political, relational and social nature of identity the notion that foreign policy discourses are always articulated around a “Self” and “Others.”

Although classic security discourses traditionally articulate in opposition between the national “Self” and the threat of the “Other” enemy, with radically opposite identities, it is possible and also frequent to have different degrees of “Otherness,” i.e., multiple levels of differentiation compared to the “Other.” Thus, discourses on foreign policy generally build more hued and complex identities, which do not fall into the simple and radical juxtaposition between a “Self” and a diametrically opposed “Other.” What is most often found in foreign policy discourses about non-securitized topics is a “less-than-radical Other,” whose representations can be seized from the interpretation of a network of identities of a more ambiguous, multiple, complex, less radical, “less Othering” (HANSEN, 2016, p. 100).

The structure of this work is divided as follows: this introduction is followed by a section about the history and space of activity of think tanks in USA, Germany and France. Then, the discussion focuses on the methodological aspects of the research, so that, finally, the main recommendations conveyed by the discursive production of the analyzed think tanks are presented and discussed. The conclusion section finally summarizes the argument developed throughout the text and proposes the continuity of this line of research and the relevance of the think tanks study for International Relations.

THE ACTION OF THINK TANKS IN THE UNITED STATES, FRANCE, AND GERMANY

The think tanks can be understood, in a generic manner, as organizations that, based on the proposal of “informed analyses” by their experts, operate in the construction, reproduction and circulation of ideas aimed to model public debate and to influence the formulation of public policies with governments, bureaucracies and the Congress.

However, due to both historical aspects and particularities of different systems and political cultures, think tanks have a specific set of characteristics in each country where they act that distinguishes them

from other actors involved in the field of domestic, international, and transnational public policies (ABELSON, 2006; STONE, 2013). The two subsections below are presented to better understand this phenomenon and its relevance in the formulation of public policies in the countries analyzed here. Firstly, we discuss the relevance of think tanks for political debate in the United States; then we analyze the peculiarities of this phenomenon in Germany and France, respectively.

THE THINK TANKS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In the United States, think tanks — including those specialized in security and defense — are composed of organizations with very diverse budgets, number of members/researchers, and distinct ideological views⁵. However, these institutes have common strategies of action and eligibility. Legally, they are recognized as philanthropic institutions framed in section 501 (c) (3) of the US Internal Revenue Service code. These organizations are integrated in the same section as churches, non-governmental organizations, and animal rights groups, therefore, they cannot participate in political activities (such as political campaigns and candidate donations), generate profit for individuals, or lobby (ABELSON, 2006; STONE, 1995; MEDVETZ, 2012). Within this legal framework, the think tanks operate in the construction, reproduction and circulation of ideas aimed to model public debate and to influence the formulation of public policies, specially, by government agents.

As they are very popular in the political, media and business environment of the US, the think tanks position themselves as interpreters of major political issues on the agenda; daily its members/researchers publish articles in major newspapers of national circulation and they are invited for interviews in television and radio programs; they deliver their policy briefings (documents from two reports with political recommendations in the form of topics) to be quickly read and absorbed by advisors, parliamentarians and civil servants; they also participate in debates in the committees of Congress and Senate by public meetings; and they have personal contact with many politicians, to which they present their opinions. They also develop a series of activities at their headquarters,

⁵ In this description, we focus on presenting some of the main current characteristics of this phenomenon in the United States. For a historical and more detailed understanding see Wietchikoski (2018).

where they invite to interact the greatest entrepreneurs, politicians, journalists as well as intellectuals. Furthermore, in each election cycle think tanks welcome politicians retired from their public functions, while providing their members/researchers to work in commissioned first and second-tier positions in the government (ABELSON, 2006; MCG ANN, 2018; MEDVETZ, 2012; SMITH, 1991).

This intense interaction of think tanks with different social and political spaces is a peculiar characteristic of the phenomenon in the United States. Two associated factors explain this dynamic. On the one hand, US politicians exhibit a culture of mistrust towards the government, which leads to the appreciation of private resources on the public sphere for problem solving. Thus, even with a bureaucracy capable of offering technical elements to lawmakers for decision-making, US politicians are generally open to receive pieces of advice from think tanks. In different circumstances, the political proposals of think tanks guide the decisions of lawmakers⁶, making themselves present to lawmakers by the intense aforementioned strategies. Associated to this political culture, the United States present a decentralized decision-making political system. With a multiplicity of bodies involved⁷, whose actions are open to receive ideas from civil society groups, think tanks have wide and diverse space to act (ABELSON, 2006, 2017).

Specifically regarding the think tanks production of ideas related to Brazil, it is important to highlight its broad consumption by members of American diplomacy, consulting firms, credit rating agencies, press and business associations.

In Washington, this occurs because Brazil is far away from the focus of political debate, often eclipsed by other Latin American countries whose reality directly affects the domestic policy of the United States. Considering that both specialized content and experts are not in abundance in relation to Brazil, the idealistic production disseminated by think tanks has wide circulation space in environments aforementioned (SVARTMAN, 2016; WIETCHIKOSKI, 2018).

⁶ In a case study, Donald Abelson demonstrated how a small group of think tanks influenced the formation and advancement of an agenda aimed to develop the Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars) in Ronald Reagan's administration (1981-1989) (ABELSON, 2006, p.182-224).

⁷ For example, the President's Departments of State and Defense, Congress and agencies such as the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) act in association with the foreign policy.

THE THINK TANKS IN GERMANY AND FRANCE

In Germany, contemporary think tanks date back to the post-World War II period, especially from the mid-1970s, having been a “constitutive element” of the political and social modernization experienced by Germany in the last 40 years (SPETH, 2011). Compared to the United States, a relative consensus exists in the literature regarding some distinctive characteristics of the German space of think tanks, highlighting both the absence of a think tanks tradition that fits into the typically American model (with private and independent funding of public resources) as the limited transit of researchers and policy-makers between research institutes and the public administration offices (THUNERT, 2004). Braml (2006) also underscores the concentration of the decision-making process on public policies in federal and executives as a distinctive element of German parliamentary system. However, the *Bundesrat* — the Federal Council composed of the governors’ representatives of the 16 states of the federation — would have great veto power over the decisions of the Executive, which would open space, even according to Braml (2006, p. 238, authors’ translation), “for the think tanks offer their input on – or by means of– state level, especially since many Germans think tanks have a regional identity to the extent that they obtain their mandate and funding from their state governments.”

Another characteristic factor of the German political system refers to the existence of party foundations (*Stiftungen*) linked to the main political parties with parliamentary representation and engaged in political training activities, promotion of values esteemed by the respective parties and, especially in the case of large foundations such as Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, also in activities related to research, production and articulation of knowledge focused on domestic and international⁸ public policies.

Specifically in the case of institutes focused on the topics of interest of this work, factors such as the repositioning of Germany in Europe and in the international system since the end of the Cold War, the reunification of the country and the deepening of the process of regional integration towards the current stage of the European Union would have motivated,

⁸ Weilemann (2002) discusses, more privately, the case of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung as a multidimensional think tank in Germany. Party foundations are also the subject of the Carpentier-Tanguy (2010) discussion in his comparative study regarding the different think tank models found in the US, Great Britain, Germany and France.

in recent decades, the creation of some research centers on topics, regions and countries essential to the Germany's external and security policies (PERTHES, 2007; SPETH 2011). The transfer of the country's capital from Bonn to Berlin, in 1999, would also have influenced the space of operation of these organizations, creating a propitious atmosphere to the proliferation of think tanks around the main governmental agencies (THUNERT, 2004).

We will carefully analyze two institutes occupying prominent positions in their operative areas within the think tanks in Germany: the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP – German Institute for International and Security Affairs) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik e. V. (DGAP – German Council on Foreign Relations). As we explore below, both SWP and DGAP occupy prominent positions among the German institutes specialized in the areas of interest of this work in the reports of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies program from the University of Pennsylvania, used as a reference at the selection of institutes whose publications were analyzed.

Established in 1962 by some groups of the private sector in Ebenhausen, Bavaria, the SWP became, in 1965, a non-profit foundation, subsidized by both German federal government and Bundestag. Currently, the organization employs more than 140 employees, in addition to more than 60 researchers working in the eight research groups of the institute: EU/Europe; Turkey; International Security; The America; Eastern Europe and Eurasia; Middle East and Africa; Asia; and Global Issues. The DGAP, dates back to 1955, following the activities developed since 1945 by Wilhelm Cornides at the head of Europa-Archiv, a pioneering journal dedicated to the international theme published in Frankfurt. Initially hosted in Frankfurt, the organization moved to Bonn in 1960 and, following the migration of the country's capital, to Berlin in 1999⁹.

Turning to the French context, Desmoulins (2002, 2005, 2009) explores the use of the term think tank as a denomination, label and communication strategy whose definition would still be ambiguous and

⁹ DGAP differs, especially in funding, of the characteristics aforementioned discussed regarding the SWP: totaling approximately € 4.8 million in 2017, the budget of this think tank is originated resources from both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany (€876,000 allocated to the institute in 2017), and a broad set of foundations, other state agencies, individual donors and large German and foreign corporations in the banking, financial, automotive, petrochemical, metal-mechanic, defense, communications sectors, among others. The details of funders and the institute budget are in the 2017-2018 annual report. Available at: <https://dgap.org/sites/default/files/static_page_downloads/dgap_annual_report_2017_18_low_res.pdf>. Access on: 25 March, 2017.

conducive to instrumentalization and “profit” or “symbolic benefit.” For the author, a “circuit of media eligibility and expertise” would exist in the country, in which the media uses the concepts, ideas and scientificity emanating from the production of think tanks to base and to make credible the pieces of news it conveys and the positions it takes, while research institutes find themselves in privileged media vehicles to assert themselves as a safe source of information, analysis and expertise (DESMOULIN, 2005).

The great dependence on public resources for the functioning of research institutes is another characteristic of the think tanks in France, as well as the predominantly self-perception decision-making of the French Executive — confining the decision-making process, specially, to the president and his staff and relegating to specialized knowledge a marginal position in the cycle of public policies. Thus, there would be present in France neither the characteristic phenomenon of policy in the US of recruiting members/researchers of the think tanks by governments, nor the intense interaction of former politicians from their activities with these centers.

In this sense, Carpentier-Tanguy (2010) points out the absence of “intermediary agencies” culture (*corps intermédiaires*) in the process of formulating public policies in France, unlike the models of research institute in public policies found in Germany, England and, mainly, in the US, where think tanks constitute “elements structuring of political life” (CARPENTIER- TANGUY, 2010, p. 4, authors’ translation).

In the literature about French think tanks, the notoriety that the *Institut Français des Relations Internationales* (IFRI — French Institute of International Relations) assumes. The IFRI was created in 1979, nowadays it has relative diversity of financing and financial autonomy, in relation to financing from both public resources and private donors, they represent more than 70% of the total (IFRI, 2019). According to Carpentier-Tanguy (2010), France’s own Ministry of Foreign Affairs assigns IFRI a pioneering role, as the first multidisciplinary center created in France under the model of the US think tanks. The *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* (FRS — Foundation for Strategic Research), the second French think tank analyzed in this research is the result of the merger between *fondation pour les études de défense* (FED) — created in 1992 by a grouping of defense industries that depended on public procurement, with the support of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense at the time — and the Centre

de Recherches et d'Études sur les Stratégies et les Technologies (CREST) – created in 1986 by a group of public policy researchers hosted on the campus of an elite university in the suburb of Paris. Therefore, the FRS would be the “half way” between the government – especially the Ministry of Defense – and the private sector in the defense market (DESMOULINS, 2002, 2005; CARPENTIER- TANGUY, 2010).

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The selection of the 11 think tanks whose publications are analyzed in this study occurred in two stages. Firstly, using the Global Go To Think Tank Index Reports (MCGANN, 2015-2016), which is an annual publication of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies program from the University of Pennsylvania, which index the world's most influential institutes by area of research and geographic location. Therefore, we resorted to the rankings of the think tanks of greater relevance in the field of foreign policy, defence and international security of Germany, USA, and France.

In a second moment, we sought to think tanks that presented continued production about Brazil. Hence, we conducted a survey on the online portals of each aforementioned organization through pre-selected markers related to the themes of interest [Brazil, South Atlantic, South America, Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone (ZOPACAS), BRICS and Latin America]. Finally, 112 documents from 11 think tanks were encrypted and their content was categorized. Out of these, seven are American institutes: Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Center for a New American Security (CNAS), Brookings Institution, Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment (CSBA), Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS), Heritage Foundation, Wilson Center; two institutes are Germans: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP – German Institute for International and Security Affairs) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik (DGAP – German Council on Foreign Relations); and, finally, two are French: Institut Français des Relations Internationales (IFRI – French Institute of International Relations) and Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS – Foundation for Strategic Research).

Therefore, the corpus of analysis of this research is composed of 112 publications selected from markers (or filters) with a thematic and chronological cut in the online databases of the institutes surveyed, it

comprises reports, notes, articles, transcripts and policy papers published by think tanks throughout the 2003-2014 period. Out of this set of publications, 77 were published by US think tanks, 22 by the German institutes analyzed and, finally, 13 by the institutes of France. Our objective, while analyzing the collected textual corpus, was to identify the main representations attributed to the international insertion of Brazil based on three aspects: (1) bilateral relations; (2) regional policy; and (3) international defense and security policies, based on, as discussed in the introduction, the theoretical-methodological approach of analysis of post-structural discourse. The basic set of representation identified in the qualitative textual analysis is presented in the following sections, each of them are dedicated to a subset of representation associated with a specific activity area of the country in its international relations.

THE BILATERAL RELATIONS

In American think tanks the representation about the international system and its transformations were quite diverse, however, the rise of new powers and some limitation of the unilateral capacity for action of the US was presented as a consensual discourse. In this reading, due to what the writers pointed as a great economic growth and greater diplomatic activism, Brazil was recognized as one of these intermediate powers (KLIMAN; FONTAINE, 2012; TRINKUNAS, 2014; EINAUDI, 2011; INDYK; KAGAN 2013; MEACHAN, 2014; WASLER, 2010a, b, c, d; 2013). In this scenario, the analyzed publications of the seven U.S. think tanks argued for the need for further approach between the United States and Brazil, excepting for some documents from the conservative Heritage Foundation.

For example, Harold Trinkunas, affiliated with Brookings, defended that the US should seek close relations, for:

[...] disengaging with Brazil as it rises would only increase the distance between the United States and one of the few emerging powers whose citizens share many of the same values as U.S. citizens. If the U.S. bets on cooperating with Brazil as it becomes a major power, then it is in the U.S.'s best interest to encourage Brazil to commit more fully to developing its military and economic capabilities to support global order, much as the U.S. has done with allies in Europe and Northeast Asia (TRINKUNAS, 2014, unpagged).

In defense of this approach, we identified the frequent use of the concept “partnership.” For example, in an extensive report published in 2012 titled *Global Swing States: Brazil, India, Indonesia, Turkey, and the Future of International Order*, the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) reported: “[...] Brazil, India, Indonesia and Turkey represent particularly promising partners” (KLIMAN; FONTAINE, 2012, p. 13).

In this way, the think tanks proposed to reevaluate the traditional US alliance options. For the diplomat and researcher affiliated with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment (CSBA), Eric Edelman, the United States should “[...] developing relationships with countries that might contribute greater capability and utility than the traditional allies” (EDELMAN, 2008, p. 78). Among these countries, the diplomat cites Brazil. According to Edelman, the country would be a valuable US partner in the regional stabilization.

In relation to the policies and actions recommended to the US government regarding to Brazil, all American think tanks analyzed – excepting the Heritage – defended the recognition and support for the Brazilian rise in regional and global contexts, as well as the increase in bilateral relations and dialogue between the two countries. In the discursive productions of CSIS, it was suggested, for example, “to put our ties [of USA] with certain Latin American countries, like Brazil and Mexico, on the same regular, normal and mature basis that we have long maintained with Europe, Japan and other countries” (WIARDA, 2012, p. 2). The Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) also proposed recommendations to this effect. In the article entitled “Brazil and the United States: The Need for Strategic Engagement”, the writer Luigi Einaudi explained this perspective by stating that:

[...] To engage Brasilia as a regional and global partner in the maintenance of peace and prosperity [...] Mutually beneficial engagement requires the United States to welcome Brazil’s emergence as a global power. Brazil is more than a tropical China; it is culturally and politically close to the United States and Europe [...] (EINAUDI, 2011, p. 11).

Meeting this perspective, the Brookings Institution and the Center for a New American Security presented a point of view that some emerging countries, such as Brazil, should be integrated into the liberal international system. For these two think tanks, Brazil shared the same

values as USA, and, based on the communion for democracy would arise the possibility of engagement for the maintenance of a liberal international order (INDYK; KAGAN, 2013; KLIMAN; FONTAINE, 2012). Thus, in a memorandum to the President Barack Obama, the writers Martin Indyk and Robert Kagan recommended:

Strengthening the liberal economic order needs to be a higher priority in your second term [...] Strengthening the liberal political order will require increased efforts to enlist the support of emerging democracies. Nations like Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey have become increasingly influential economically (INDYK; KAGAN, 2013, no page number).

However, the conservative Heritage Foundation expressed very different recommendations compared with other US think tanks. Brazil's external actions — unlike the statements of the other institutes — did not show a commitment to maintain democratic values. In this scenario, Brazil was defined as an international actor little aligned with the principles and interests of the US, which, according to Heritage, limited the possibility of a greater approximation between the two countries. As examples of this lack of commitment, the writers pointed out the Brazilian position in relation to problems in Nicaragua and Ecuador during Lula da Silva's management, as well as Brazil's performance on the Iranian nuclear issue in 2010 (MONTANER, 2005; ROBERTS, 2008; WASLER, 2010a, b, c; 2012).

In the context of the German think tanks analyzed in this research, the reports by Susanne Gratius (2004, 2005), Maria Regina Soares de Lima (2008), Claudia Zilla (2011), Claudia Zilla and Christoph Harig (2012), and Ingo Malcher (2013) explicitly engaged in the construction of a discourse associating the international insertion of Brazil throughout the 2000s to the representations of the originality, innovation, activism and socioeconomic soft power of the Lula's governments. The discursive production of these institutes placed great emphasis on the "conciliatory" and "pragmatic" identity of the country, as well as its role as a crucial partner for European and German interests in South America and as regional leadership to be strengthened by Germany and the European Union (EU).

In Susanne Gratius's study many references to Brazil are repeated, for example, references to Brazil as "factor of democratic stability" in the region considering the "return of populists" and a "Andine space

chronically unstable,” where the country should exercise, in cooperation with Europe, the stabilizer function (*Anker-Funktion*) (GRATIUS, 2004, 6, author’s translation). Cooperation with Europe and, specifically, with Germany, should also address, according to the author, on issues involving “problem states”, such as Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba and Venezuela (GRATIUS, 2004).

Considering Brazil’s strategic partnerships with Germany and the EU, the country should be seen, according to DGAP writer Christian Rieck, as a “serious partner” (RIECK, 2006, p. 114, authors’ translation). Not only economically, but also as an actor “in which greater institutional confidence must be placed,” through which “the Venezuela can be integrated/engaged [*eingebunden*] and conquered in favor of European dialogue” (RIECK, 2006, p. 114, authors’ translation). The author also points out that chances for European interests would be open as a result of anti-American rhetoric by the countries defined by the author as “radicals” and the diminishing influence of the US in the region (RIECK, 2006).

The ability to interact with other states in the region is not the only reason why the publications of German think tanks proposed to increase the relations with Brazil to a new level. The report by Sascha Albrecht, a researcher linked to the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), for example, brought as a policy recommendation a pattern of relationship appropriate to the country’s status as “maritime power in ascension.” According to the writer,

Maritime developments in Brazil seem to occur similarly as in other emerging countries, for example in China and India [...] Brazil can no longer be seen only as a close economic partner and as a recipient of aid for the development, but as a maritime power in ascension and therefore as an partner in the same level (ALBRECHT, 2011, p. 6, authors’ translation).

Despite the potential for cooperation generally highlighted by the publications analyzed, the discursive production of Germans think tanks did not fail to point out obstacles to bilateral relations. According to Gratius, Brazil would not constitute a “natural ally of the European Union,” but a “difficult partner”; according to the author, “[the] strategic partnership with the European Union was faced, from the Brazilian perspective, as means of gaining international prestige and assuming global influence,” and it would be based less on common interests, and

more on the sharing of values (GRATIUS, 2013, p. 28, authors' translation). As we will discuss in the section dedicated to representations about Brazilian action in multilateral institutions, the challenge of creating joint strategies between traditional powers and emerging countries such as Brazil regarding to cost-sharing and allocation of responsibilities in global governance-forums is often pointed out by European think tanks as an obstacle to bilateral relations.

REGIONAL POLICY

The US think tanks were unanimous in identifying Brazil as a regional power and as a leader in South America. This position of authority was associated with some Brazilian diplomatic initiatives of greater insertion and visibility in the Latin American continent, often mentioning the country's role in the coordination of new arrangements, for example UNASUR and CELAC, in conflict mediation during Lula da Silva's second government, such as those in Nicaragua, Honduras and Venezuela, as well as in the intensification of economic and commercial projection (KLIMAN; CASASZAMORA, 2010; EINAUDI, 2011; INDYK; KAGAN, 2013; MEACHAN, 2014; WASLER, 201a, b, c, 2012). However, the assessments about the effect on the maintenance of the liberal order in the region resulting from Brazil's actions were not consensual.

For the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA) and the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), Brazilian leadership —especially in South America—was defined as a moderating political force with great potential to mediate and to solve regional and global conflicts. In this sense, Eric Edelman, of the CSBA, evaluated that: “[...] Brazil has already played a leading role in managing hemispheric security issues like the crises in Haiti and more recently in Honduras [...]” (EDELMAN, 2008, p. 44).“

In the core of this context, these two think tanks recommended to the US government more dialogue and partnership with Brazil for the administration of regional problems. For example, the Center for a New American Security recommended the US to make Brazil an effective partner in maintaining what is considered one of the pillars of the liberal order: the maritime order. For the director of the CNAS at that time, Richard Fontaine, the US government should “reduce existing barriers to transfers of military technology to Brazil, increase the frequency of joint

naval exercises and explore a regional maritime initiative” (FONTAINE, KLIMAN, 2012, p. 38).

However, the other four American think tanks — Brookings Institutions, Heritage Foundation, Wilson Center and Institute for National Strategic Studies — were critical of Brazil’s regional performance. According to these institutes, Brazil’s regional leadership intended to limit the presence of the United States in South America, relativizing traditional Western values of democracy and human rights, and the country abstained from making basic commitments usual to a leader, such as financing and the use of hard power, for example (PICCONE, 2011; TRINKUNAS, 2014; CASASZAMORA, 2010; EINAUDI, 2011; SOTERO, 2014; WILSON CENTER, 2007; STEPHEN, 2003a b; WALSER, 2010a; b, 2010c; 2012).

Ted Piccone (former senior adviser of foreign policy in the Clinton administration and, since 2008, one of Brookings leading experts on the themes of democracy and human rights), for example, pointed out what he identified as the lack of Brazilian engagement with the Democracy. For the writer, Brazil’s diplomatic position towards Cuba and Venezuela during Lula da Silva’s presidency would have revealed this perspective:

If supporting democracy or human rights will help it to further its own goals [...] Brazil generally favors multilateral strategies geared toward pro-reform outcomes. But in the recent cases of Cuba, Iran, Venezuela [...], Brazil has taken a more ideological or “soft-balancing” approach, siding against the United States and Europe by avoiding criticism of human-rights abuses and ducking behind the defense of noninterventionism favored by diplomats in the foreign ministry (PICCONE, 2011, p. 140).

On the other hand, the INSS has made noticeable general statements about the exclusion of the United States from processes of regional integration led by Brazil, particularly the construction of subregional mechanisms in South America as an area of predominantly Brazilian diplomatic and security projection. For example, Einaudi argues that the “[...] Brazilian approach to the ‘South America for South Americans’ does not encourage effective cooperation with the United States” (EINAUDI, 2011, p. 14). According to the writer, Brazil’s assertion of power in initiatives

like UNASUR, without the participation of the US and in cooperation with anti-US governments, “invite uncertainty” (EINAUDI, 2011, p. 14).

At the Wilson Center, we verified a peculiarity in relation to the authorship of its production. Over the years, the vision markedly critical of Brazil’s regional performance was produced not specifically by its writers, but by a group of Brazilians who actively participated in the activities at Wilson’s headquarters in the analyzed period. This group – with great link with the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) and composed, for example, of the former Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Ambassadors such as Roberto Abdenur, Rubens Barbosa and Sergio Amaral – defended a vision in which Brazil conducted an ideological foreign policy, without clear guidance and with few capacities (hard power) to exercise leadership in the region (WILSON CENTER, 2007).

Sergio Amaral, in a conference entitled *Novos Rumos nas relações exteriores brasileiras*, described Brazil’s foreign policy of Lula’s first term as “ideological” and “contrary to US guidelines” and also contrary to traditional organizations in the region, such as the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), guidelines that are classified as contrary to the point of view of the Brazilian business sector itself:

He warned, however, that the ideological policies of President Lula’s first term with his alignment to countries such as Venezuela, China and Cuba, as well as his confrontation with the US at the UN, OAS and the Inter-American Development Bank caused irritation of the Brazilian business community (WILSON CENTER, 2007, p. 5).

On the same occasion, another Brazilian, the political scientist Amaury de Souza, highlighted the lack of a clear policy from Brazil regarding what he considered as a Venezuelan military expansionism, which was defined as a threat to regional stability. For Amaury de Souza:

The government had closed its eyes to Venezuelan’s gun purchases – which was dangerous considering the very sophisticated missiles and the naval capacity that President Chávez was trying to acquire. Instead of assuming a global reach, the leaders of Brazil’s foreign policy needed to better understand changes in

the hemisphere and devote more attention to relations with their neighbors (WILSON CENTER, 2007, p. 5).

Especially in the reports of the two German think tanks the discourse about the recent international insertion of Brazil and its role in South America is built by a set of key representations that, repeatedly, oppose the Brazilian “moderate reformism,” “cooperation” and “pragmatism” to the “radicalism,” “socialism” and “populism” that would define the identity of international insertion of the Venezuela – and, to a lesser extent, also from Bolivia. Hence, Brazil is portrayed not only as the sole actor capable of stabilizing the region, containing “centrifugal tendencies” in processes of regional integration and the “erosion of democratic structures” in the Andean sub-region, but also including (*einbinden*) Venezuela under the Chávez government. Thus, according to the discursive production and the options of political action suggested by the publications of Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik (DGAP), Brazil would accept a central relevance to German and European interests in Latin America and South America.

Christian Rieck (DGAP) articulated similar representations about the potential in the energy sector open to the interests of the EU and Germany after the “left-wing rise” in South America. In this scenario of strong Brazilian and Venezuelan diplomatic projection, Brazil would position itself as the main intermediary of European and German interests in the region, as a “(...) ruling power regionally accepted, which (...) represents a valuable anchor of stability and identification pole (RIECK, 2006, p. 113, authors’ translation).”

In the Andean region – whose “decline” or “decay” (*Niedergang*) would be “of great political-security interest” – the engagement of Germany and the EU should fall, according to the author, on projects of cooperation for development, fight against poverty and efforts to democratize institutions. In this case, the insertion of Brazil in its regional environment appeared again as an instrument for the feasibility of European interests in the region and as the object of the German think tanks discourse:

As the left-wing countries in the region present higher political authority than a non-hemispheric power like the EU would ever have, the engagement of radical left-wing governments in Venezuela and Bolivia could be promising by in-depth ‘strategic partnership’ with Mercosur and, particularly, with Lula’s Brazil – even

more so, in any case, since he has direct contacts with Chávez or Morales (RIECK, 2006, p. 116, authors' translation).

In a SWP publication, Maihold and Zilla presented similar recommendations: "it will depend precisely for Germany and Europe that Brazil continues to pursue its active neighbour policy [...] Brazil thus becomes increasingly responsible for protecting European interests in Latin America (MAIHOLD; ZILLA, 2006, p. 4, authors' translation)."

In another SWP publication, Maihold pointed out that after the death of the former Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez, the main interest of Brazilian and Mexican leaders in the foreign policy would be to avoid instability in Venezuela and Cuba. According to the author, this was a task in which Germany and the EU should engage "energetically", "not only politically, but also in some programme to encourage democracy, institutional (re)construction and legal advice [*ordnungspolitische Beratung*] (MAIHOLD, 2013, p. 4, authors' translation)."

INTERNATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY POLICIES

Regarding the development of defense technologies, central point of the Brazilian strategy of international insertion in the theme of security, three American think tanks – Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) and Center for a New American security (CNAS) – produced analysis and recommendations. For these think tanks, the US should increase the transfer of military technology. Although the theme was addressed in few publications, the tone of this publications reflected the general discourse of opportunities to partnership (FORMAN; SUNI, 2012; DOWNES, 2012, HAKIM, 2012 apud DOWNES; KLIMAN; FONTAINE, 2012).

Johanna Forman and Stephen Suni (2012, p. 2), CSIS, argued that "questions over what technology (defense) can be shared need a careful review and updating in light of our respective security needs." Brazil and its growing industrial defense base were able, according to the authors, to "[...] help extend US influence in an unobtrusive way" (FORMAN; SUNI, 2012, p. 2) in a region of little penetration of American industry.

In an article published by INSS, entitled Trust, Engagement and Technology Transfer: Underpinnings for US-Brazil Defense Cooperation, Richard Downes even defended Brazil's engagement in security issues,

arguing that the transfer of technology in the defense sector could be the basis for a process of building trust with the United States. The broad expertise of the US productive sector and the experience with institutional innovations would contribute to the technological development of the country, one of the core objectives of the 2008 National Defense Strategy, as well as increase the opportunities of US to “[...] collaborate with an important new global actor on a range of international security issues [...]” (DOWNES, 2012, p. 2, authors’ translation). Moreover, the author argues that “among emerging powers, Brazil is politically and culturally the closest to the United States [...]” (DOWNES, 2012, p. 1).”

However, US would present doubts about the long-term intentions of Brazil regarding the use of advanced nuclear technology, these doubts are motivated by Brazil’s refusal to sign the additional protocol of the Treaty on the Not Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, by ambiguous language present in the National Defense Strategy lamenting the deprivation of the use of nuclear energy for non-pacific purposes, as well as other statements considered suspicious. Washington’s refusal to cooperate with Brazilian space and nuclear programs – “an important irritant” (DOWNES, 2012, p. 10, authors’ translation) to Brasilia – was originated from memories “not-so-dormant” of the Brazilian role in modernizing Iraqi missiles before the invasion of Kuwait in 1991 (DOWNES, 2012).

Overcoming mutual mistrust by political leaders, diplomats, bureaucrats and military personnel from both countries should be based on “a more fluid transfer of US Defense technology by understanding the Brazilian terms” (DOWNES, 2012, p. 14, authors’ highlight). Security cooperation between the two countries could encompass the nuclear and energy sectors, “could contribute a great deal to accelerate Brazil’s development of a world class nuclear energy industry—and could, over time, help increase Brazil’s support of non-proliferation” (HAKIM, 2012 apud DOWNES, 2012, p. 13).

In a publication about emerging democracies and the future of the international liberal order, the Center for a New American Security analyzes the rise of four regional powers, evaluating it in five axes, among which one deals specifically with maritime security. The discourse is articulated around Brazil’s representation as a moderate reformist country, aiming to change maritime rules for its own interest (the expansion of its Exclusive Economic Zone), however taking “modest steps toward supporting maritime security” (KLIMAN; FONTAINE, 2012,

p. 18). More than supporting the transfer of military technology to Brazil, recommendations to the United States government include:

[...] increase the frequency of joint naval exercises and explore a regional maritime initiative [...] Washington should help to accelerate Brazil's maritime emergence by providing training and equipment. Looking farther out, the defense establishments of both countries should begin to evaluate the feasibility of a Brazilian-led, U.S.-backed South Atlantic Initiative that would bring together regional navies and coast guards to address drug trafficking, human smuggling, piracy and other forms of maritime-based transnational crime (KLIMAN; FONTAINE, 2012, p. 29, authors' translation).

Out of the 35 publications selected in the online databases of the four European think tanks analyzed, a set of recommendations based on a discourse that characterizes Brazil as regressing in the circle of producers and exporters of advanced war technologies and with the potential to project power, competing with traditional powers. Such recommendations are, especially, in reports of the French think tank *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* (FRS), articulated around the notion of "entrant."

Furthermore, the motivations behind different foreign policy, security and defense initiatives received attention, an example of the field of nuclear technology and its use in the Brazilian Nuclear Propulsion Submarine project (SPNB). They are represented as "instrument" or "medium" employed by successive Brazilian governments – and, particularly, by Lula's government – to raise the country to a global status, making it enjoy the "prestige" of traditional powers, exerting greater influence in international politics. For example, the reports of Michel Picard and Bruno Tertrais (2006) and Yves Boyer and Patrick Hébrard (2013) are dedicated to these aspects.

Picard and Tertrais (2006) analyzed the preeminence of Launcher Ballistic Missile Nuclear Submarine (SSBN) and the Nuclear Attack Submarines (NAS) as deterrent instruments, foundations of French strategic autonomy and "savoir-faire indispensable to national sovereignty." For the authors, Brazil's voluntary waiver of nuclear weapons would constitute a "exceptional fact in History", observed in a very limited set of cases (PICARD; TERTRAIS, 2006, p. 11, authors' translation).

In final section of the report, the authors assert: “All countries today endowed with nuclear attack submarines [...] intend to maintain that capability. Others (India, Brazil, South Korea) wish to acquire it”; the possession of a nuclear navy, the report adds below, “is one of our rare and ‘strongest trump card’” (PICARD; TERTRAIS, 2006, p. 92). The report also pointed to the possibility that Brazil could enter, in the future, in the group of countries exporting nuclear-powered submarines, which would mean “an unsettling development for the Western countries marine, which depend, to a large extent, on its dominance to maintain the preeminence (PICARD; TERTRAIS, 2006, p. 56-57, authors’ translation).”

The concern about maintaining preeminence and dominance of France’s deterrent capacity vis-à-vis the increase in naval capacities of emerging countries was also found in the Report by Boyer and Hébrard (2013). Considering the increasingly relocation of US naval power towards the Pacific Ocean, motivated by Chinese military buildup, the study was also questioned in the preamble:

Would president Obama’s enhanced U.S. naval presence in the Pacific Ocean represent a significant decrease in submarines presence and ASW [anti-submarine warfare] in the Atlantic ? Russia, but also China, India or Brazil would not be tempted to strengthen their presence near the European coast? (BOYER; HÉBRARD, 2013, p. 6, authors’ translation).

In the section of the study in which the authors pointed out the “consequences for France,” the recommendation was that French decision-makers should not only observe the increase in capabilities by China and actively participate in ongoing developments in the Pacific, but also to consider the consequences of the global repositioning of submarine forces to the Atlantic, where the credibility of French deterrence could be threatened:

This follow-up, in fact, cannot be limited to China: Russia, the United States and tomorrow Brazil will be present in the Atlantic. Unless we accept the risk of tracking of our submarines, maintaining the credibility of our Deterrence leads to a particular effort to ASW [anti-submarines warfare] fight (BOYER; HÉBRARD, 2013, p. 72, authors’ translation).

Among the publications of the German think tanks, the report by Sascha Albrecht (2011) is highlighted by defense matters, published by Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP). In this report, which is dedicated to the analysis of the “maritime ambitions of an emerging power in the Atlantic South,” the attention has turned, mainly, to understand the motivations that would explain “the significant increase in military capabilities” by Brazil and chances and inherent risks in these developments for transatlantic, European and German interests (ALBRECHT, 2011 p. 5, authors’ translation). According to the study, the buildup of military power in the South Atlantic should attract the attention of the EU and Germany, as this is a region of commercial interest and a region located on the border of NATO’s environment of interest – with whom Brazil would maintain an “ambivalent” relationship, often assuming openly critical positions regarding its “global character”, strengthened after the end of the Cold War (ALBRECHT, 2011, p. 30-31, authors’ translation).

The Brazilian interest, understood also as possible “engine for greater cooperation,” expanding its maritime capacities would open the opportunity for traditional powers to “share the burden” (Lasten teilen) of maritime security, which, in practice, could be translated into a possible participation of Brazil in activities to combat piracy in the Horn of Africa, as suggested by the report (ALBRECHT, 2011, p. 33, authors’ translation). A less optimistic reading of the ambitious project of increasing military capabilities released at the time of publication of the first *Livro Branco da Defesa Nacional do Brasil* in 2012, is offered by Bélanger’s et al (2012) report. Questioning Brazil’s “assumed global ambitions,” the authors state:

A simple look at the list of the main platforms that Brazil intends to buy also raises serious doubts about Brasilia’s strategic intentions in the medium and long term [...] what is targeted by Brasilia is a place at the negotiating table when the costs of fossil energy and the scarcity of other mineral resources exacerbate competition between regional economic blocs. In other words, what Brasilia wants is its part of the African cake [...] (BÉLANGER et al., 2012, p. 133, authors’ translation).

CONCLUSION

In general, the discourses produced and published by Europeans think tanks discussed in this research emphasize the recommendation that the relationship with Brazil should be raised to a new level. According to the analysis of these institutions, it would be up to the German, French and European Union leaders to establish a relationship with Brazil as an “partner at the same level” and channel of feasibility of European interests in South America.

Brazil’s search for leadership in the region, pragmatism, moderation and predictability attributed to Lula’s governments are factors that, on the one hand, would justify this new relationship. This stance is put in contrast to Venezuela, whose regime is regarded as “radical,” “populist” and “incalculable.” On the other hand, however, several publications of the think tanks analyzed support the need for a new level of relations with Brazil based on the diagnosis of the “global projection claim” – aspirations of Brazilian diplomacy for greater prominence in the region and global multilateral forums, as well as Brazilian projects to increase military capabilities.

Among the benefits of an “partnership at same level” would be a) to balance Venezuela’s influence in the region, b) to make relations with Brazil serve more than ever as the gateway of these countries and the EU to Latin America and South America; c) to distribute the costs inherent in the guarantee of public goods and for a counterpart in terms of “duties” to Brazilian aspirations for more “rights” in the multipolar system; and d) so that the dimension of “competition” and even “threat” that Brazil’s programs of military capabilities increase could represent at the time – especially due to maritime capabilities.

The American think tanks presented divergent discourses about Brazil’s actions in the period under analysis. We found that the majority of representation of Brazil and its foreign policy was homogeneous and positive, related to the status of democratic, responsible and reliable emerging power. Associated with this, several proposals state for the approximation between the US and Brazil. The formation of a broad partnership is indicated as strongly potent, which requires a rise in the bilateral relationship. Even in terms of security and defence – a critical area for the national interest of any country – deep cooperation is called for.

Therefore, it is possible to affirm that the prevailing discourse among the institutes of the U.S. is to defend the recognition and to support the emergency of Brazil, at the regional and global levels. Although only two U.S. institutes propose consent to the a permanent seat to Brazil on the UN Security Council, Brazilian action in multilateral bodies is positively represented. However, the Heritage Foundation delivered a very critical statement on the intentions and actions of the Brazilian government. From 2009, with Brazilian involvement in the Iranian nuclear issue, there has been a radical inflection in the analyses of institutes, distancing themselves from the tone of praise to diplomatic initiatives until then, such as Brazilian action ahead of MINUSTAH¹⁰.

Regarding the Brazilian regional policy, discourses are sometimes divergent in relation to the general representation of Brazil converge in its criticism of initiatives such as the UNASUR and the CELAC, that exclude from participation of the United States. The creation of regional bodies of more restricted scope than those of the OAS is a point negatively represented by all. Still, excluding the Heritage Foundation, the representation of Brazil as a regional power, with positive leadership in America South, was unanimous.

An effort to update this research, extending it in time and space and expanding the number of think tanks and publications analyzed, is a possible way to continue research on the role and influence of think tanks in foreign policy. Similarly, deepening the reflection on the analytical potential that the theoretical-methodological foundation of analysis of post-structural discourse offers for the study of foreign policy themes is an indispensable task of future research. By paying attention to the discourses of the authors and organizations aforementioned, tracking their circulation and proximity to governments, civil bureaucracy bodies, representatives of the armed forces or supranational institutions, we seek to expand the analysis about the pieces of advice that reach the eyes and ears of decision-makers in countries with which Brazil shares a dense history of relations. Far from being a futurology exercise, the study of the discursive production of think tanks complements the analysis of official discourse and enables the assessment of the Brazil's international insertion in the eyes of thinkers and foreign policy formulators of the great powers.

¹⁰ The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was a peacekeeping mission created by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Led by Brazilian troops throughout the term, the mission began in September 2004 and was closed in October 2017.

A INSERÇÃO INTERNACIONAL DO BRASIL SEGUNDO OS THINK TANK DOS ESTADOS UNIDOS, ALEMANHA E FRANÇA (2003-2014)

RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo é analisar a produção discursiva dos principais *think tanks* especializados em temas de defesa e segurança da Alemanha, dos EUA e da França a respeito da inserção internacional do Brasil nos anos de 2003-2014 a partir de três aspectos: (1) relações bilaterais; (2) política regional; e (3) políticas de defesa e segurança internacional. Nesse período, potências emergentes como o Brasil buscaram adquirir maior autonomia em suas relações internacionais, o que suscitou interesse nas grandes potências em compreender o seu novo posicionamento no sistema internacional. No presente estudo, argumentamos que os think tanks formulam ideias e discursos que pretendem influenciar a tomada de decisão das grandes potências e reportamos os principais resultados da análise qualitativa decento e doze publicações de onze think tanks, selecionadas a partir de marcadores pré-definidos. Demonstramos como os discursos veiculados pelos think tanks europeus enfatizam, sobretudo, a representação do Brasil como um país cujo relacionamento deveria ser elevado a um novo patamar, como “parceiro à altura dos olhos”, sobretudo em contraposição à Venezuela. Nos EUA, por outro lado, identificamos divergências marcadas, com representações que ora ressaltam o status de potência emergente democrática, responsável e confiável do país, ora questionam iniciativas brasileiras no campo da segurança internacional, como a Declaração de Teerã ou a liderança brasileira na Missão das Nações Unidas para a Estabilização do Haiti.

Palavras-chave: Política Externa Brasileira. Think tanks. Estados Unidos da América. Alemanha. França.

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