

REFLECTIONS ON THE CHINESE EMERGENCE

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Introduction

In May 2015, Brazil received a delegation from the People's Republic of China (PRC) led by the Prime Minister Li Keqian. The immediate result was the signing of a Joint Action Plan for the period 2015-2021, composed of 35 cooperation agreements². Several sectors were covered: agriculture and livestock; science and technology (S&T); commerce; communications; energy; sports; infrastructure; environment; planning; and foreign affairs. Probably the agreement that will require more resources and denser studies refers to the rail project, through which it is intended to connect the port of Açu, in northern Rio de Janeiro with the one from Ilo, Peru. Their achievement can provide the flow of low unit value cargo, such as grain, from the producing areas of central-western Brazil to the Chinese ports, such as Shanghai. To this end, it has been signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the feasibility study for this Transcontinental Railroad Project.

Three other relevant agreements for this article are those concerning: the export of Brazilian livestock products; the financing for the company *Petróleo Brasileiro Sociedade Anônima - Petrobrás*; and the export of iron ore. The first allows the resumption of Chinese imports of Brazilian beef through the adoption of more accepted rules in the field of animal health. The second finances the Brazilian oil company to explore offshore fields under deep waters. In this case the contribution may be the supply of oil to the PRC, if we

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² According to Portal Planalto of 05/20/2015 with an entry dedicated to the expansion of Chinese investment in Brazil.

take as model the previous agreement signed in 2009: Chinese financing of US\$ 10 billion and in return the supply of 150,000 barrels per day (bpd) in 2009 and 200,000 bpd over the next nine years³. The third agreement concerns the financial and operational cooperation in the mining sector, involving Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (Vale) and Chinese entities. The total value of Chinese investment in the 35 projects is estimated at about US\$ 53 billion for an unsettled time frame.

It is not trivial to have bilateral agreements with economic reach of such magnitude. Regardless of the time period for the maturing of projects, the expenditures certainly will happen as different studies show its viability, especially the economic. The design of the transcontinental railroad, for example, will require cautious environmental impact studies and the preparation of the following environmental impact reports (EIA). Such studies may determine change of originally estimated paths, population transfer (even Indian tribes, some not yet studied), and engineering works of art to make possible the transposition of broad rivers of the Amazon basin. Considering also that the work will be carried out largely in the Amazon biome where, according to Diegues (2002, 73) the climate is hot and humid with an average annual temperature of 24° Celsius (C) and 26° C and an average annual rainfall precipitation between 2000 millimeters (mm) and 3000 mm. These characteristics shall require specific technical solutions for the implementation of a secure and stable permanent way, and with a realistic budget.

Although not detailed the financing agreement concerning Petrobras, the model adopted by the PRC commits foreign companies to provide oil to the PRC in the period that is settled. Visentini (2013, 72) identifies an “Angolan model” that was adopted by other African states. Also, it is determined the compensation in raw materials to the investment made. Following this model, the implementation of this agreement on the Petrobrás shall help the Chinese to obtain fossil energy for their various purposes. The model implementation methodology is bureaucratically simple and emphasizes sectors such as infrastructure, production and vacancy rate for college students in Chinese institutions. According to Brautigam (2009, 11), in the case of infrastructure works, Chinese aid usually signals with the opening of low-skilled job positions for local nationals. The positions that require qualified training are destined for the Chinese to the management of the works and the use of Chinese machinery and equipment. This is the model adopted by the PRC in African countries. Taking in mind the methodology applied in these countries

3 According to the article Latin America and China's 'New Normal'- Analysis, published on the Eurasia Review website, and by Patrick Howlett-Martin in his article Chine-Brésil, une alliance fragile, published in Monde Chinois.

that are poorly endowed with industrial parks, would such model be also used by the Chinese in Brazil?

In the case of Vale, the continued supply of iron ore to the Chinese shall guarantee them the raw materials necessary to maintain the operation of its industrial park. And this industrial park requires energy so that the ore is processed into various products. The concern of the Chinese government with the iron ore supply is not new. Howllet-Martin, in the previously cited article, reminds of the Chinese investment in 2005 of US\$ 1.5 billion from the Baosteel Group in Maranhão; and another one of US\$ 3 to US\$ 4 billion from China International Trust and Investment Corporation to the extension of the port of Itaqui, also in Maranhão, along with rail infrastructure to transport soy from the states of Piauí and Maranhão. That is, the Chinese initiatives aim to provide the regions of interest an appropriate infrastructure for the flow of commodities required to meet domestic demand in the PRC. To what extent are these initiatives strategically useful to Brazil? To what extent do they differ from the other former ones held by Europeans during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries?

This article intends to answer these questions by analyzing the Chinese motivation in search of commodities: grain, oil and iron ore. To do so, it will identify data sources that might point to elements that help to explain this search. After that, it will be fixed on the recent Chinese government initiatives that contribute to the construction of arguments necessary to demonstrate the Grand Strategy⁴ adopted by the PRC in its relations with international partners. To this end, it is necessary to identify the Chinese national strategic objectives that justify this Grand Strategy. Any Chinese interpretive asymmetries relating to neighbors will be acknowledged, especially in maritime areas. And here, only briefly, will be addressed constraints and partnerships experienced by the PRC related to exogenous powers to the region that can contribute to the analysis.

Since the political system of the PRC is characterized by a hegemonic party⁵, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), strategic decisions are taken at State level, which is being used as a reference point in this article. It will follow, however, a string that favors political realism founded in power. This is because the Chinese search for the satisfaction of basic needs - food and energy (iron ore depends on energy for processing) - through agreements

4 Grand strategy can be defined as a "long-term national project dedicated to national security aspects", as in Moura (2014, 112). It appears, therefore, that the grand strategy involves a complex of initiatives linked to national goals vital to the survival of a nation.

5 The term Hegemony means the sense of supremacy of intellectual and moral capacity, in reason of the CCP being formally accepted as legitimate guide to the people.

seeks to commune common interests with partners. Therefore, this quest has placed in cooperation a cornerstone to the building of partnerships. After all, a politically stable external environment is crucial for the PRC to continue to receive vital products for their survival. Cooperation determines reciprocity, which usually requires the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers⁶. The complementarity may be acceptable, even if the cooperation is asymmetric qualitatively - for example, manufactured products for commodities. But it may be perceived as unacceptable if one side understands that its industrial base is neutralized by the partner's competition. Thus, it motivates the examination of the Sino-Brazilian relations. Finally, here are presented the concluding remarks.

Genesis of Emergence

The Chinese are an ancient civilization. Chinese history teaches that the greatest concerns of the rulers were in the food supply and its distribution to the population, besides the territorial protection against neighbors. Confucius⁷, in the *Analects* (1997, 91) recommended: "Whoever administrates public affairs must ensure that foodstuffs are not lacking, that military forces are sufficient and that the people trust him." Probably, this recommendation from Confucius would be related with food shortages that often occurred by reason of natural disasters and wars. And, despite being a thinker who cared about peace in social relations, he was not unaware of the importance of defense. After all, part of his life corresponds to the Warring States era, between 403 before Christ (BC) and 221 BC when there were political instability and food shortages afflicting the population.

Understandably Swaine and Tellis (2000, x) defend that, throughout Chinese history, the Grand Strategy has been pursuing three interrelated strategic objectives: preservation of domestic order and well-being of the people in face of various social constraints; defense against persistent external threats to the sovereignty and territorial integrity; and obtain and maintain geopolitical influence along the extensive border. It can be said that a powerful source of social instability is the lack of food. Due to a continuous high quantity

6 The non-tariff barriers relate to restrictions on international trade, usually taken unilaterally, such as import quotas and licenses, sanitary and phytosanitary measures and social or technological antidumping measures. There is extensive literature on the subject; it may be suggested Foschete (2001) and Thorstensen (2001) for objectivity in approach.

7 Confucius would have lived from 551 BC to 479 BC, according to Fairbank and Goldman (2006, 64) and Cheng (2008, 65). The last one states that the name Confucius is a latinization made by the Jesuits in China from ideograms that have the sound of Konfuzi (Master Kong).

population, the concern of governments with their food production is special. In addition, there is the limitation factor of agricultural land, that is approximately 12% of the territory of the PRC, from which the total is 9,600,000.5 square kilometers (km²)⁸. The arable land is the same for millennia, which requires an increasingly more accurate soil management.

Indeed, the analysis from Naughton (2007, 35 et seq.) on the Chinese economy between 1127 and 1911 identifies, for part of that period, sophisticated initiatives that resulted in high agricultural productivity. During the period, he said, about 90% of the Sinic population lived in rural areas. Thus, the production was extensive in hand labor employed in small lots⁹. The sophistication was based on three factors: varieties of selected seeds; organic fertilization; and irrigation. During the Song Dynasty (1127-1279) it was achieved a faster growth of rice, so that it would be obtained two or three harvests per year per area unit. The organic fertilization employed animal and human manure, mixed with mud and algae. The irrigation system allowed workers to properly control the amount of water, so as to obtain good yields. A network of artificial canals was developed to enable efficient distribution of both agricultural inputs and production for public silos. Contours were used in lands of irregular topography.

Naughton advances stating that, for 400 years, the Chinese agricultural production system met the domestic demand. He informs that the population was 72 million people in 1400 and in 1820 it reached 381 million, which corresponds to 32% of the world population. At the time, the gross domestic product (GDP) of China was about 1/3 of the world GDP. The quantitative increase in population associated with the deterioration of the agricultural system over time, because of insufficient maintenance, generated a persistent reduction in the grain supply. The historical concern returned to occupy the agenda of governments, at the same time as another factor: the arrival of European merchants in the nineteenth century, in besides the Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch that already were related to China since the sixteenth century. The British, especially, expressed dissatisfaction with the traditional cash-and-carry method¹⁰ adopted by China, with the payment through silver. According to Babones¹¹, since the 20s of the sixteenth century until 1640, the Iberian ships carried about 100,000 tons (ton.) of silver to China¹². It should

8 According to the National Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

9 The lots, as Fairbank and Goldman (op. Cit., 167), have an area of approximately 2428 square meters (m²).

10 *Cash-and-carry* can be translated as the process of buying goods and cash payment.

11 Article published in *Foreign Affairs* June 2015.

12 Chinese economy would then be transformed into a monetary economy, based on market,

be pointed out that China had not developed an industrial economy¹³; this was only implemented from 1912, already on the Republican period. From these observations two partial findings are taken in consideration: the silver internalized in China served basically to boost agricultural activities; and the Chinese population increase over the last 500 years cannot be attributed to industrialization, as it is usually done in the analyses relating to European countries.

The Opium Wars are known in history. The sophisticated and proud Chinese civilization settled to the Nanjing Treaty of 1842. According to Spence (1995, 169), the Treaty stipulated several compensations to the British: the Article 3 postulated the transfer of Hong Kong Island to the British “in perpetuity”. Chinese military forces showed themselves unprepared to deal with the weaponry of the European powers and the US. The Middle Kingdom has failed to maintain the country’s defense and the integrity of its territory¹⁴. It can be said that the European presence in the Chinese territory has strongly contributed to the collapse of the Qing dynasty, the last in a long list. The proclamation of the Republic of China was in 1911. Most of the nineteenth century was of deprivations for the Chinese: restrictions on travel by all urban areas and limitations on providing their food. These deprivations help explain the growing number of rebellions throughout the nineteenth century.

China experienced a phase of internal dissensions in the decades following the proclamation of the republic. Domestic political division between nationalists and communists contributed to weaken the nation. The Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 is milestone which added to the European occupations of the previous century. The overcome occurred after Japan’s defeat in the Second World War, particularly from October 1st, 1949 with the inauguration of the Peoples Republic, when the Chinese experienced a new political and social stage. It was reaffirmed at the time the determination of the leadership to restore the old pride. But the historical concerns about foreign invasions proved once again present with the Korean War and in the late 1960s, with the Sino-Russian border litigation. In agricultural production, the initiative of Mao Zedong’s Great Leap Forward, in 1958, dismantled the Chinese agricultural economy. The result was the generalized lack of food. The number of recorded deaths from hunger between 1959 and 1961 varies.

instead of being a non-monetary based on feudal obligations and exchange.

13 There were rudimentary domestic industrial process for cotton weaving and the benficiation of tea and silk.

14 Previous historic episodes are the mongol invasion, that led to the implementation of Yuan and Qing dynasty, that was indigenious to Manchuria, a region that was not a part of China until 1644.

Gipouloux (2005, 64) replicates quantities from different sources ranging from 16.5 million to 30 million people.

Therefore, the development of a strategy regarding the production and distribution of food for a historically high contingent as the Chinese one always constituted a preoccupation for the rulers. Eventual disarticulations of the agricultural system either by natural effect or caused by wrong measures generated hunger; consequently, social constraints.

The challenge of food safety

Since 1978, with the arrival of the group led by Deng Xiaoping, the extraordinary growth of China's GDP per capita¹⁵ allowed the population to obtain an increasing purchasing power over the next decades. There is, from that date until today, the raise in the purchasing power has been uneven at two levels: coastal-inland; and rural-urban. The coastal urban population has achieved higher incomes. The four modernizations implemented by Deng Xiaoping - agriculture, Science & Technology (S&T), defense and industry - were initiated in selected sites on the coast. That is, the process of modernization of the PRC happens in the vicinity of the so-called special economic zones (EEZ) nearby the sea. Although the *hukou*¹⁶ is in effect, domestic migration has become increasing. At the two levels mentioned above, two sets of oppositions appeared within the Chinese society: local (permanent *hukou*) x strangers (temporary *hukou*); and peasants (agricultural *hukou*) x townspeople (non-agricultural *hukou*). These distinctions help to deepen the qualitative income difference. The old flat equality sought by Mao was all abandoned. But in general, there is increasing purchasing power of the Chinese population, both urban and rural¹⁷. Yang, in an article published in China Daily of 04/22/2015, announces that the income of China's rural population reached in 2014 10,489 Yuan (US\$ 1,693) and the urban population 29,381 Yuan (US\$ 4,743).

It should be recognized, however, that agricultural modernization

¹⁵ The growth of the GNP from 1978 till 2005 was 8,5% (NAUGHTON, p. 140), 8,7 (Yasheng 2008, 254); from 2008 till 2013, 8,3, in accordance with the OECD, chapter 5, 2015. Lau (2015) indicates a growth of 8,6% from 1978 till 2014.

¹⁶ According to Gipouloux (op. cit., 118), it is about a residential record. When this system was implemented at the time of Mao Zedong, the person would get food and work only where he was registered. Over time, there is less efficiency in its control, as to legions of migrants left the field, attracted by better working conditions in the cities.

¹⁷ In Gipouloux (op. cit. 216) and Naughton (op. Cit. 210) analysis, between 1978 and 2004, the increase in the average income of rural households was 587.2%, and of urban families 553.9%, prices in reference to 2004.

achieved good success. The Deng Xiaoping's initiative to return the historic production plant of the field to the family one - revoking the implementation of agricultural production with fulcrum in communes - proved successful. The mere possibility that households may sell in the markets of the villages and towns the surplus delivered to the State increased the Chinese agricultural production. To illustrate this statement, Gipouloux (2007, 70) shows that China's grain production rose from 304.77 million tons in 1978 to 469.47 million tons in 2004. The Chinese production of cereals in 2014 was estimated at 492.8 metric tons (ton³), according to the US Department of Agriculture.¹⁸

It is observed, therefore, an accelerated process of urbanization of the Chinese people¹⁹. However, it should be noted that is not correct to attribute the process of urbanization only to rural-urban migration; it is a resulting from particular resets on the urban limits determined by population growth in the PRC. The first result of this process is the reduction of arable land fringes of urban environments, reducing the area of food production. In other words, there is competition from three confluent factors putting pressure on domestic food production in the PRC: population growth; reducing of planted areas; and the increased purchasing power of people, who start to diversify their diet²⁰. It reinforces thus the argument that pressures on governments to offer food follow a historical line, with the magnitude of the population, in 2014, of 1.36782 billion, according to the National Bureau of Statistics of the PRC.

18 The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) is equivalent to the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture. The document that informs the value of China's grain production also notes the productions of others: USA, 439.3 tons; India, 238.7 tons; Russia, 100.1 tons; Brazil, 99.1 tons; others, 744.2 tons. So for these quantities, Brazil is the fifth largest grain producer in the world. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in its 2013-2022 Highlights predicted 478.8 tons for the PRC.

19 This information can be graphically displayed on the United Nations website, on the page of Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Through this, it can be noticed the intersection of the curves of the rural and urban population in 2015, when the population in the cities begins to supplant the rural; it changes, from then on, the Chinese historical demographic paradigm.

20 The website of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations show graphics that clearly illustrate the search for diversification of food consumption, contemplating higher percentage of animal protein.

The energy security challenge

The modernization of industry constituted virtuous corollary to the establishment of the special economic zones. The absorption of new technologies and processes arising from abroad transformed the PRC in the “world factory”. Indeed, the Chinese developed the secondary sector of its economy over the past 37 years with unusual efficiency. The Chinese manufactured products are found in many different markets. And its quality is gradually captivating the consumers. The Chinese manufactured products already compete with other sources not only for the traded prices, but for reliability and durability. This was a learning developed from the modernization, already cited, guided by Deng Xiaoping and Zhou Enlai and announced by Enlai at the Fourth National People’s Congress in January 1975 (Bergère, Bianco and Domes 1990, 81; Mazzetti 2000, 81; Marti 2007, 281; Gao 2011, p. 321) and practiced in the government of Deng Xiaoping since 1978.

However, the energy matrix of the 70s of the twentieth century, based on the intensive use of coal, proved to be increasingly unable to support the industrial development of the country. The flexibility of the use of petroleum products over the coal began to demand greater domestic oil production. It is true that coal is still the most widely used source for generating electricity and thermal heating in the interior of the buildings, according to the Energy Information Administration of the US government²¹. But the progressively more sophisticated industrial park consumes oil products. Accruing to this, there is the increase of transport modes which also consume these products. Currently, the demand and domestic production curves deviate more and more²². According to this source, in 2014, the Chinese oil production was 4.23 million bpd, for a consumption of 10.7 bpd. Concerning to the liquefied petroleum gas production, in 2013 it was of 4.1 trillion cubic meters (tcm) compared to the consumption of 5.7 tcm.

The solution sought by the PRC government has been importing oil and gas. Three regions are suppliers to the RPC: Middle East and Central Asia (including Russia); Africa; and South America. The Chinese leaders have diversified, thus, the sources of supply in these three regions. In 2014, the largest oil suppliers, in percentages, were: Saudi Arabia (16%), Angola (13%), Russia (11%), Oman (10%), Iran and Iraq (9%), United Arab Emirates and Venezuela (4%), Colombia and Kuwait (3%), and Brazil, Congo, South Sudan

21 US Energy Information Administration. The analysis presented in the report, from May 2015, shows that 65% of the energy consumed in the PRC comes from the coal.

22 Idem.

and Kazakhstan (2%); other vendors complete the remaining 10%²³. A partial conclusion emerges from this Chinese search for fossil fuels abroad: there is a potential vulnerability face of the eventual political instability in some producing region; and there is difficulty in providing security to the supply lines of varying lengths.

The main modes of imported oil and gas transportation by the PRC are pipelines and maritime waterways. The pipelines connect the producing countries of Central Asia and Russia to the PRC. Most of the suppliers countries of oil and gas are part of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). This organization brings together Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the PRC, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Extended oil and gas pipelines from Central Asia and Russia are linked to the existing ones inside the PRC. The Organization reinforces the political and commercial ties with the member countries. It is an essential instrument to contribute to the energy security in the PRC, since it comprises the maintenance of political stability in the region. After all, the States accompanying the PRC in the Organization were part of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR); still, there is a special bond of those countries located in Central Asia with Russia. Through SCO, the RPC is also able to project its influence on Central Asia.

Maritime waterways - or sea lines of communication (SLOC) - feature two vulnerabilities for RPC: extension; and bottlenecks, or choke points. They are: the Bab el Mandeb Strait, connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden; the Strait of Hormuz, between the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea; and the Malacca Strait that connects the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea. According to the US Department of Defense, using the Annual Report to Congress, referring to the military development and security in the PRC, year 2014, 82% of all the oil and 30% of all the gas that transits the Indian Ocean towards the South China Sea (SCS) passes through Malacca. An interruption in that strait would force ships to cross one of the two southernmost passages in Indonesia, Lombok or Sunda, an increase of about three days on the journey. If these passages are also blocked, the ships would have to get all around Australia, with an average increase of fifteen days in transit. This would result in augmented costs in the transport of cargo and its insurance.

A Chinese initiative to mitigate the vulnerability in the Malacca Strait was the partnership with Myanmar: a set of pipelines carrying oil and gas from the coast of the latter to the Chinese province of Yunan. Consequently, the Chinese ships transfer cargo to the facilities in Myanmar coast without requiring to transit through the Strait. Through domestic pipelines, the PRC

23 US Energy Information Administration.

distributes the raw products or some already benefited in the provinces' refineries for the whole territory. Another Chinese initiative is in the agreement with Pakistan: the RPC fits the port of Gwadar to receive oil and gas cargo ships and then transport it by pipeline to the PRC. It would, once again, prevented the Indonesian passages, that can be easily blocked by opposing military forces or navigation accidents.

The RPC also uses the SLOC to import iron ore, critical to its industry. The domestic production reached 1.32 billion tons in 2013, while the Australian, in the same year, reached 530 million tons, and the Brazilian, 386.27 million tons that year, according to the summary of the Brazilian National Department of Mineral Production, elaborated by the technician Carlos de Jesus. However, according to him, Brazil may be the second largest producer if considered the average content of iron ore, i.e., the amount of ore obtained in a ton of extracted material. Consistent with this criterion, the real Chinese production would be of 390 million tons. It is explained, thus, China's hunger for imported iron ore, particularly from Australia and Brazil.

Chinese defense forces

To ensure the supply of imported oil and gas, the PRC has been developing its defense industry. To the extent that domestic energy supplies need increase, imports grow. The Report to Congress mentioned above analyzes the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of the PRC in their naval, ground and air aspects. With an official budget of US\$ 136.3 billion²⁴, the PLA seeks to provide itself with the means to contribute to China's energy security. After all, these days, the historical Chinese concerns about the invasions of the surrounding barbarians transformed to the permanent concern about the availability of energy supplies for its industrial park and transport. Therefore, it is about the PRC's attention to avoid possible restrictions on oil and gas imports.

It should be noted, however, the distinction between the operationalization of the security of land supply lines from Central Asia and the SLOC. The pipelines run by territories belonging to almost all the members of the SCO. In this case, it can be said that security is achieved through this Organization; the responsibilities assumed by its members connotes the inference that Chinese security in the supply of oil and gas lies in this institutional environment. A partial conclusion is that the energy transport through pipelines does not require permanent ready use of military force. The institutional en-

²⁴ It is worth noting that the official quantitative budget is supplemented by revenue from non-military activities, such as, for example, investments in hotels and in telephone companies belonging to the military forces.

vironment provided by SCO points firstly to the use of non-military Chinese instruments in case there are any problems in Central Asia.

In the case of the SLOC, the characteristics and degree of protection imply the PLA contribution. States that coast the SCS have different postures towards the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)²⁵, also known as the Convention of Jamaica, from December 10th, 1982²⁶. Convention is an important international regime, but the initiatives of some States in the region show that the environment in the SCS is instable. By the SLOC of that sea transit carriers which demand to the ports of different countries of Southeast Asia and the Far East. Concerning the PRC, 85% of all imported oil and 33% of all gas pass through their SLOC, according to the aforementioned Annual Report to the US Congress in 2014. And there are confirmed oil reserves, especially in the vicinity of Paracel and Spratly archipelagos.

Although the PRC has ratified the Convention on June 7th, 1996 (Austin 1998, 54 et seq.), Beijing has insisted that the PRC has sovereignty²⁷ over most of the SCS. The claimed sovereignty is based on history. According to Austin, the cartographic survey during the trips of the Chinese admiral Zheng He in the 15th century would be argument to validate such claim. The research of Pinotti (2015, 43) suggests that the Chinese demand for sovereignty in the SCS had an earlier origin, on the Chinese Xia dynasty, that ruled between 2100 BC and 1600 BC. Pinotti also asserts that Vietnam evokes history to defend sovereignty over the Paracel and the Spratly. It should be noted that Vietnam also ratified the UNCLOS, on July 25th, 1994, according to the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea²⁸.

Other coastal states to the SCS also rival the PRC regarding to that sea. The claims based on history challenge the observation of UNCLOS. And the sovereignty claimed by those is cause of disputes that generate frequent frictions with the PRC. But the Convention suggests peaceful ways to resolve disputes, especially in Articles 287 and 298. The PRC stated on August 25th 2006 that it keeps its interpretation on the sovereignty of the Paracel and Spratly archipelagos' islands as it is in the document of the Division of Ocean Affairs cited above. In fact, the UNCLOS suggests that disputes concerning

25 United Nations Conventions on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

26 The UNCLOS came into force on November 16th 1994, as it is in Art. 1 of Presidential Decree No. 1530 of June 22th 1995. This Decree also states that Brazil ratified the Convention on December 22th 1988.

27 The term sovereignty used in this article is of the Westphalian type, a concept presented by Krasner (1999, 9) to mean that the decisions of the domestic authorities do not accept influence of external actors on area only subject to national laws.

28 Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.

the overlapping of maritime areas need to be addressed at first bilaterally; if there is no agreement, independent instances should be consulted as set out in the Art 287 of the Convention. Accordingly the UNCLOS guides the parties to resolve their disputes by peaceful means. But frictions have been noted. Only in 2014, the PRC generated tensions with the Philippines because of the presence of nationals of both at the Spratley, in particular in the so-called Second Thomas shallows. With Malaysia, the litigation is due to the shallows Reed Bank, near Borneo. And with Vietnam, in the same year, the Department of Defense Report to the US Congress, in 2015, counts nine tensioned events in the Paracel.

In addition to the coastal States of the SCS, the PRC experiences discomfort with the US. The US Congress has not ratified UNCLOS. Besides, the US maintains military agreements with countries in the region, as the Republic of Korea and Japan. They are two more oil importers using almost exclusively the SLOC from the SCS for transportation. The presence of US Navy ships and aircraft in its waters has generated tensions in the region. The report cited in the previous paragraph mentions a People Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) fighter plane which intercepted a maritime patrol aircraft of the US Navy, putting both at risk conditions.

Another State which appears on the SCS is Russia. The Russian Navy uses the SLOC in that sea so that its ships can transit between the bases of Sebastopol, in the Crimea, and Vladivostok in the far east part of the country. The deputy defense minister of Russia said in Singapore on May 30th this year that its Navy will participate in naval exercises in the SCS in 2016, with the Brunei Navy. Reportedly, he stressed that the existence of the Russian navy in those waters is to mark its presence, show its flag and thus counteract the presence of the US Navy. The minister also said that the US adopts policies contrary to Russia and the PRC²⁹. The Russian presence in the SCS cannot be seen as a threat. The PRC is an importer of Russian military technology. The Navy of the PLA (PLAN) and the Air Force of the PLA (PLAAF) have Russian-made aircraft in its inventory³⁰ and Mizokami (2015) reports the acquisition of new submarines of the Yasen class by the PRC from Russia. So, the PRC depends, in part, on the acquisition of Russian defense material.

The SCS is, thus, important for the countries of the region. The SLOC vital for them, the prospect of oil and gas exploration, and fishing, food supply to the Asian populations, enhance the interest of all for therein waters and islands. The PRC aligns the PLA as a tool to use in this sea area if necessary.

29 News published on the Sputnik news website.

30 There is extensive literature on the subject. It can be accessed the article by Felix Chang in the Foreign Policy Research Institute page.

And the naval arm, i.e., the PLAN is the most suitable to operate in the sea, backed by the aircraft when necessary. Thus, PLAN has three squadrons which bases are: the Northern Fleet in Qingdao, the nearest of Beijing; the Eastern in Dinghai; and the Southern in Zhan Jiang, opposite to the island province of Hainan. Nuclear submarines are concentrated in the Northern Fleet; the others have conventional submarines. The squadrons also have frigates, destroyers, ships proper to launch Marines ashore, and patrol ships equipped with missiles. The PLAN still has in their inventory an aircraft carrier. It has worked so far in order to successfully integrate the ship-aircraft binomial.

The terrestrial part of the PLA has its major units stationed in the east and middle east of the country. This placement follows from the lesser concern with threats originating from the neighboring states. On the domestic level, the eastern region has the largest economic wealth in the PRC, both industrial and agricultural - the agricultural lands are located east and south - and the majority of the population is in that part of the territory. The habitual discourse targets the island of Taiwan, considered by Beijing as a rebel province. Shudders are increasingly sparingly, probably due to more intense dialogue of authorities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. The positioning of ground forces in the eastern part of the country still reflects long-standing concern with possible strengthening of the Japanese defense forces.

The PLAAF, just as the land side, has its bases located in the east. The concerns that guide this positioning are the same for ground forces. The PLAAF aircraft tune their operations with those of PLAN, which bases are located in the vicinity of the stations. The PLAAF is prepared to support naval operations over a part of the SCS and its closest rival the is Air Force of the Republic of China, i.e. Taiwan. The local air superiority over the Strait, even nowadays, belongs to the island's Air Force. It starts from the assumption that any invasion of Taiwan could only start from the sea; hence, the difficulty for attackers would rest on the actions of the island's airspace. There is discreet US logistical support to the military forces of Taiwan, according to Taiwan Relation Act, from April 1979.

It can be stated that, from the PLA strands, the PLAN has, in fact, the greatest responsibility for the provision, by the government, of food and energy security. The nearby SLOC crossing disputed areas, such as the SCS, and the ones outside this sea, increasingly extensive, show that the Navy has to be prepared to defend the interests of the PRC and the security dimensions. It is not without reason that there is a more intense effort to provide the PLAN of naval and air-naval means for the mission. The engagement of PLAN in protecting the SLOC that run along the East African coast against pirates, nearby the African Horn, is a way to train the trimmings to perform more

complex tasks. The hypothesis that a Chinese naval base should be installed in Djibouti can be an indication of the distant support expansion. Visits to countries bordering the South Atlantic, with long journeys and stays in the sea strengthen the argument.

Also in the field of defense, it should be remembered that the terrestrial nuclear inventory is the responsibility of the Second Artillery Force. There are the conventional missile of 200 kilometers (km) range that protect the Chinese territory, to those who reach 3300 km reaching all the Indonesian islands, much of India, Iran, Russia and the Bering Strait. Also included, ballistic intercontinental missiles which ranges are from 1750 km to 13000 km, covering up to South America. Of course, this entire nuclear device has these ranges in project. It is of fundamental importance the control of these missile systems which reliability is unknown. Equally, there is no reliable information on the range of design, design and local manufacture of all components.

Xi Jinping's strategic project

Xi Jinping is aware of the food and energy import dependency to meet the domestic demand in the PRC. Their interpretation of the term "security" approaches the understanding of Barry Buzan *apud* Mutimer (1999, 79). Buzan decomposes security in five dimensions: military; political; economic; social; and environmental. One can prove this statement with the speech of the Chinese president at the first meeting of the National Security Council, on April 15th 2014 (Xi Jinping 2014, 242). The title is suggestive: "Persisting in a holistic view of national security and developing national security with Chinese characteristics". He states that

we must persist in a holistic view of national security, having the security of the people, the political security and the economic security as a principle, essential point and base, respectively. We also need to take military, cultural and social security as a guarantee, supporting us in promoting international security and opening a national security road with Chinese characteristics.

And further, Xi Jinping reinforces his arguments recommending to "establish a national security system that integrates the political, territorial, military, economic, cultural, social, scientific and technological security of resources and nuclear energy." Considering the range of security dimensions pictured by Xi Jinping, the economic one provides conditions so that, for example, military and social security can be obtained. That is, the guarantee of food and energy imports depends on economic security. But without military

security, even with economic security, the PRC could experience constraints to ensure the satisfaction of domestic demand complemented by imports, especially products transported by sea. Indeed, security dimensions are inter-dependent.

It is reasonable, then, the development of PLA, especially of its navy. In the Party-state political system, Xi's statement³¹ is emblematic: "We should adopt as top priority the ideological and political education so the conception of the absolute Party leadership over the armed forces takes root in the minds of the officers and soldiers." And further asserts "It is necessary to strengthen Party building in the military, ensuring the Party's command over the troops in the ideological, political and organizational sense." Those relating to military decisions are the responsibility of the Party Central Committee and the Central Military Commission. The mission of the PLA is to defend the country and the CCP. Xi Jinping's speeches accurately reflect the design of the Chinese political system.

The idealization of the Silk Route was presented by Xi Jinping³² in 2013. In September, he introduced the Economic Belt of the Silk Road, in a speech at the Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan. It does not fail to emphasize the strengthening of mutual trust provided by the SCO. This Economic Belt therefore aims to contribute so the pipelines that transport oil and gas to the PRC are not affected. Also in 2013, in October, Xi spoke at the Indonesian National Congress suggesting the joint construction of the Maritime Silk Route in the 21st Century.³³ The institutional reference on which the construction would rely would be the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)³⁴. In other words, institutional instruments - SCO and ASEAN - would offer legitimacy to the Chinese multinational policy; but in order to contribute to ensuring food and energy security. It can be said that the Sea Route will not be limited to the SCS, but will extend to the Indian and Atlantic Ocean.

As an infrastructure financing source in the regions of interest, in line with the Sea Route, it was created the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the New Development Bank of the BRICS³⁵. The first may help the PRC to create links in the ASEAN +1 configuration. And it will assist to alle-

31 Xi Jinping op. cit. p. 262.

32 Idem, p.345.

33 Ibidem, p. 351.

34 ASEAN is a free trade zone, with a vocation for the common market, which comprises Brunei, Cambodia, Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

35 Acronym created by Jim O'Neill, English economist at Goldman Sachs, to refer to Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

viating the litigation in SCS, where there are interests related to oil exploration, fishing and monitoring of maritime traffic. The New Bank of BRICS will foster the implementation of useful infrastructure projects in the outflow of raw materials of the PRC's interest in African and Ibero-American countries. And the PLAN is being strengthened to contribute to protecting the SLOC of interest to the PRC, even the most extensive.

It can be affirmed, therefore, that the two Silk Routes constitute the strategic objectives of the PRC; and the Grand Strategy for achieving these goals is based positively: on the SCO for the vast land area of Central Asia; and on the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Bank of BRICS to further meet the Chinese necessities on the transportation by sea. The strength of the establishment of agreements and the speed with which the Chinese investments enable the infrastructure works seem to demonstrate a determination to Beijing in maintaining internal satisfaction without any prevarication. The CCP certainly comprehends nowadays the historical challenges of previous rulers of the Middle Kingdom. And President Xi Jinping knows his Grand Strategy must provide instruments for the PRC's partners to commune with an essentially cooperative dialogue. This is vital for the PRC.

The Sino-Brazilian Relations

Brazil and PRC established diplomatic relations on August 15th, 1974 (Cervo and Bueno, 2002, 425). The concept of diplomacy adopted by the Brazilian government was called "responsible diplomacy." This concept, according to Oliveira (2005, 149), "started to be designed as a pragmatic, ecumenical and responsible", i.e., with the non-interference in others' affairs, seeking to observing the international situation as it presented itself, and depositing liability in ethics. The concept also directed the opening of diplomatic relations of our country with many newly independent countries, among them the former Portuguese colonies. In this occasion, it was recaptured a vocation manifested in Jânio da Silva Quadros government, when the Foreign Minister Francisco Clementino San Tiago Dantas fixed the concept of independent foreign policy (IFP, or PEI in Portuguese). Nowadays, both policies have a South-South version.

Despite being in the cold war, the scope of the establishment of the Brazil-PRC relations proved to be successful. After all, the two states share foreign policy principles closely. Cabral (2010, 195) says that Brazil defends the principles of self-determination, equality and mutual benefits between states, independence, non-intervention and national sovereignty. From its

side, the PRC emphasizes the “Five Principles of Coexistence”, i.e. peaceful coexistence, equality and mutual benefit, non-aggression, non-intervention in internal affairs and respect for sovereignty and integrity. So, there are objective conditions for the two countries to deepen their relations because they use a diplomatic language guided by similar principles.

Over time, it was instituted the China-Brazil Business Council (2004); in 2006, the China-Brazil Commission of High Level of Agreement and Cooperation (COSBAN); the Strategic Dialogue (2007); and in 2008 it was created the Financial Dialogue Brazil-China and the China Agenda for the commercial area. The developments have been occurring with increasing speed, according to mutual interests and the emerging opportunities. The creation of the aforementioned Bank of BRICS is an important financing vector and can leverage initiatives in different fields, such as infrastructure, S&T and implementation of new industrial plants. Possibly it will contribute to boosting ventures as the factory of the Brazilian Aeronautics Company (EMBRAER) installed in the PRC and developing new versions of China Brazil Earth Resources Satellites (CBERS).

But it is in the commercial field that a greater asymmetry between the two countries can be verified. According to the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Brazil was the 17th destination of Chinese exports between January and September 2014, totaling US\$ 37 billion and the seventh in the origin and source of imports from the PRC, with US\$ 40 billion in same period. The asymmetry lies not just in the amounts involved or the balance/deficit. The source of concern of the Brazilian government and the national private sector is in qualitative asymmetry of the trade agenda. The level of technology inherent to the products points to a sharp primarism of the items exported by Brazil. The result is the shrinking of the national industrial sector in the face of competition with Chinese products. The tables below show these trade relations between both countries.

Main products sold to the PRC, in millions of US dollars, January - September 2014. (continues)

Description	2013 Value	2013 part. % in total	2014 (jan./ set.) value	2014 part. % in total
Soybeans and seeds	17.148	37,3%	16.616	40,9%
Ores	16.394	35,6%	12.709	31,3%
Fuels	4.035	8,85%	3.474	8,6%

Wood pulps	1.582	3,4%	1.711	4,2%
Sugar	1.433	3,1%	880	2,2%
Furs	643	1,45	826	2,05%
Iron and Steel	597	1,3%	530	1,3%
Meats	446	1,0%	521	1,3%
Fat and oils	625	1,45%	421	1,0%
Tobacco and substitutes	454	1,05%	334	0,8%

Source: MRE/DPR/DIC based on data from MDIC/SECEX.

Main products imported from the PRC, in millions of US dollars, January - September 2014.

Description	2013 Value	2013 part. % in total	2014 (jan./ set.) value	2014 part. % in total
Electrical Machinery	10.869	29,15%	10.898	29%
Mechanical Machinery	8.132	21,85%	7.151	19,1%
Organic chemicals	2.184	5,9%	2.232	6,0%
Iron and Steel	978	2,6%	1.388	3,7%
Plastics	1.006	2,7%	1.070	2,9%
Cars	1.034	2,8%	1.002	2,7%
Iron and steel construction	1.017	2,75%	978	2,6%
Clothing not knitted or crocheted	884	2,4%	935	2,5%
Man-made filaments	745	2,05%	809	2,2%
Precision tools	789	2,15%	780	2,1%

Source: MRE/DPR/DIC based on data from MDIC/SECEX.

Is it true that the modernization of the Brazilian countryside demanded better training of hand labor and technological sophistication and better management in the trade of Brazilian commodities. The harvest mechanization implied, on the other hand, the quantitative reduction of rural workers.

But the displayed tables show that the list of Brazilian imports of manufactured competes with and presses our industry. It is about this the challenge set a few years ago for the Brazilian government-private initiative binomial. Chinese manufactured occupy a wide range of products, from simple home appliances to automobiles. The sophistication of our agricultural production and ore mining brought to the Chinese represents two-thirds of the export basket; and the agricultural product is practically one.

Final Thoughts

The existence of a reasonably sophisticated industrial sector in Brazil points to a differentiation in relations with the PRC in comparison to those that the Chinese exercise with African states. The Angolan model, which was adopted by other countries from that continent, is not suitable for our country. We cannot regress to a *status quo ante*, from the nineteenth century and the early decades of the last century, when it was said that Brazil was a country of agricultural vocation. The infrastructure was installed aiming at the export of primary goods. The injection of Chinese resources in the execution of projects that include export of primary goods seems a throwback. We know this to be of direct interest to the PRC, in view of its shortcomings. The Chinese government has shown that it has clear strategic national goals and pursues a Grand Strategy to achieve these goals.

The development of initiatives in the Brazilian infrastructure has to commune interests of both sides. It is not reasonable that they have as their main purpose the transport of commodities. Even the Chinese example of the past, when the exported products did not generate industrial progress, should - kept the distance of time - be aware of what is happening today in Brazil. The PRC will seek what it needs backed in cooperation. Therefore, it is interesting to extend the Brazilian horizon to uncover the diversification of the agenda in our relationship with the Chinese. It seems clear that it will require a Herculean effort to cover the technological gap, so that we reduce the imbalances that we observe face towards the Chinese. Within the cooperative environment, we must be creative in order to balance the quality of the relations in different dimensions.

Evidence shows that the PRC needs to be cooperative, in a not always stable international environment. The Chinese search for exercising sovereignty over disputed maritime areas explains the care of the CPC in developing the PLA, especially the PLAN. Indeed, the search for food and energy is more complex because of distance. In the South Atlantic environment, it is believable to infer the future presence of PLAN ships. There is a cooperative

exercise of the PRC with African states and South American countries. But it must recognize that there are some differences of analysis between the PRC and the US, as seen in the SCS. The development of any instability in the South Atlantic is not useful to the PRC or to Brazil. Given the proximity of the guiding principles of both foreign policies, within the South-South relations, it is useful that we anticipate in order to avoid disputes in the region. It is a task to be performed by diplomacy.

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the fundamental challenges perceived by the People's Republic of China: food security and energy security. They become evident through the higher demand over the domestic production. This relation compels the Chinese Communist Party to establish agreements with other countries to balance the supply and demand. The People's Republic of China's tools put in use to secure the agreements are institutional and military. Military tools are necessary to exercise the Chinese sovereignty over the South China Sea, and to keep safe the sea-lanes of communication. Consequently, the PRC-Brazil relations are examined, especially the latest.

KEYWORDS

Popular Republic of China; Food Safety; Energy Security.

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