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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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AY 2020-21

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## Executive Summary

**Title:** The Influence of China in Brazil: How it can change military cooperation between Brazil and the United States

**Author:** Commander Alexandro de Araujo Baptista, Brazilian Navy

**Thesis:** The implications of growing Chinese influence on Brazil may negatively affect military cooperation between Brazil and United States because China has emerged as the primary US adversary recently.

**Discussion:** There are few studies considering the effects of Chinese influence on Latin America. Brazil is seeking investments to develop its infrastructure and wants access to consumer markets to trade its commodities. In contrast, China has excessive foreign reserves and has a great need to import commodities. In that case, Brazil and China have converging interests making them ideal trading partners. The Chinese influence on Brazil has been growing in the last few decades. China became Brazil's largest trade partner in 2009, and it has become the most important foreign direct investor in Brazil in the last decades alongside the US. Moreover, China has been collaborating in the development of the Brazilian space program since 1988. In the military realm, China and Brazil started military cooperation agreements in mid-2000. Since the US changed its National Security Strategy by focusing on the risks posed by emerging states and threats to US hegemony, especially in the economic, technological, and military fields, the Chinese influence on Brazil has become a relevant topic. This paper's research methodology is based on literature reviews and analysis, based on articles, books, papers, speeches, documents of the Ministry of Defense of Brazil, and many original Brazilian sources. This work studies the influence of the two countries on Brazil, compared them, and inferred what could happen next.

**Conclusion:** This work concludes that growing Chinese influence on Brazil would change Brazil-US security relations in four scenarios of the five considered during the study. In the scenario where the Great Powers are fighting for influence, it would increase. In the scenario where the US would retaliate against Brazil for allowing Chinese influence in its territory, it would decrease. In the scenarios of the great powers demand for each nation choose one side, similar to the Cold War, or in case of a conflict between them, it would change according to the Brazilian decision of which side it would support. In the scenario where the US would no see Chinese influence on Brazil as a threat to its interest, it would remain the same.

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## **Preface**

The United States has been one of the main countries to cooperate in the military field with Brazil, especially concerning naval cooperation. These relations are historical, and nowadays, there are many senior Brazilian Navy officers who have had professional experiences working with the United States military services. Some of them have attended courses, others have participated in exchange programs, and others as liaison officers. For instance, I had the opportunity to attend the Basic Reconnaissance Course in Camp Pendleton in 2011 when I was a Lieutenant. However, as the US's main competitor, China is strengthening its ties with Brazil, which may impact the military relationship between Brazil and the US. To better understand how, or if, growing Chinese influence in Brazil will impact Brazilian-US cooperation I designed scenarios based on current data. Will the next generation of Brazilian Marine officers take the Basic Reconnaissance Course in the US, or will they take a similar course in China? That is a good question that I tried to answer.

Briefly, I would like to express how thankful I am. I want to acknowledge the unrestricted support of my wife, Agatha, who has paused her career in order to set an exceptional environment at our home, allowing me to do a better research. Besides, I want to acknowledge my daughter Camila, thanking her for the support even though she was not close to me during this period. Moreover, I appreciate LtCol Kenneth Jones for being a role model as a military faculty, equipped with strong leadership skills, who has built a unique cohesion feeling in our conference group. I want to acknowledge my colleagues' support and friendship in the Marine Corps University, who has welcomed me in the best way possible. Other than previous acknowledgments, I want to mention all Leadership Communication Skills Center members' help, in particular Mrs. Stase Wells, who has been always available to patient and thoroughly

review my papers and also helped me to overcome the language barrier I have first faced.

Ultimately, I genuinely thank my mentor, Dr. Matthew R. Slater, who has provided me careful guidance, tireless attention and pleasant meetings, which were essential to the accomplishment of this work.

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

This work explores the implications of China's growing influence on Brazil and how that relationship may affect military cooperation between the United States and Brazil. This paper starts with the hypothesis that the increase in Chinese influence in Brazil will have a negative impact on Brazilian military cooperation with the United States.

The United States changed its national security strategy by focusing on the risks posed by emerging states and threats to US hegemony, especially in the economic, technological, and military fields. Thus, the War on Terror has been losing ground to the new great power competition era. Among the states, China stands out as the primary US adversary for three reasons. First, China has the second-largest economy in the world.<sup>1</sup> Second, China has achieved several technological goals, specifically in the space program and telecommunication sector.<sup>2</sup> And third, China has increased investments to improve military capabilities.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the facts presented above, Southeast Asia has emerged as an important economic market. For example, Europe used to possess 45 percent of global gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000, and in 2018 it shifted to 31 percent primarily due to displacement by China.<sup>4</sup>

These facts have contributed to the significant growth of US engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. Issues such as the support of the United States in the Taiwan separatist movement;<sup>5</sup> the Chinese territorial disputes in the South China Sea including the construction of artificial islands;<sup>6</sup> the Chinese infrastructure project known as One Belt One Road (OBOR) or Belt and Road Initiative (BRI);<sup>7</sup> the domain of infrastructure technology of the ultra-fast 5G cell phone network by the Chinese company Huawei;<sup>8</sup> the Trade War between China and the United States;<sup>9</sup> the Chinese technological advances in space, cyber, and robotics; and the growing Chinese investment in its armed forces have gained prominence in specialized defense and international policy periodicals.<sup>10</sup>

There are few studies considering the effects of Chinese influence on Latin America, and specifically Brazil. It is the most important country in the region because it is the largest country in territorial extension and population size.<sup>11</sup> It has the largest economy and the most significant military in Latin America.<sup>12</sup> Brazil is seeking investments to develop its infrastructure and wants access to consumer markets to trade its commodities.<sup>13</sup> Contrarily, China has excessive foreign reserves and has a great need to import commodities.<sup>14</sup> Brazil and China have converging interests making them ideal trading partners. The Chinese influence has been growing in the last few decades. China became Brazil's largest trade partner in 2009 and China has become the most important foreign direct investor in Brazil in the last few decades alongside the US.<sup>15</sup> China and Brazil cooperated in the formulation of a COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, China has been collaborating in the development of the Brazilian space program since 1988.<sup>16</sup> In the military realm, China and Brazil initiated a military cooperation agreement in mid-2000.

This study broadly concludes that the Chinese influence in Brazil could benefit Brazil in the Brazil-US military cooperation. First, it creates opportunities for Brazil to interact with the most significant global military powers since the great power competition era does not compel other countries to choose one side, like in the Cold War. Second, Brazil could significantly improve its infrastructure with the BRI. Third, it may force the US to reconsider increasing military cooperation in sensitive areas such as space and cyber technologies to avoid the Chinese ability to fill the vacuum where traditionally the US limits cooperation.

However, the Chinese influence in Brazil can be negative for Brazilian national interest. First, the Chinese influence may cause Brazil to incur large deficits and negatively impact Brazil's level of corruption. Second, the Chinese influence can negatively impact social and environmental problems. Third, there is a risk that China and the US could find themselves in a military conflict, and Brazil should be ready to choose one side that can affect Brazilian military

power depending on the degree of relationship with the two countries. And finally, it can degrade the Brazilian national industry since competing with the Chinese industry is an asymmetrical fight.

The research methodology for this paper is based on literature reviews and analysis, based on articles, books, papers, speeches, documents of the Ministry of Defense of Brazil, and many original Brazilian sources. This study is divided into five parts. The second chapter will cover the US influence in Brazil, addressing the historical relationship, the relationship between the navies, the trade and financial influence, the tourism influence, and the cultural influence. In the third chapter, the study will address the Chinese influence in Brazil, covering the trade and financial relationship, the cultural influence, and the military influence. The fourth chapter will analyze and assess the Chinese influence in Brazil compared with the Brazil-US relations. And the fifth chapter will conclude the study.

## **Chapter Two: The US influence in Brazil**

Brazil and the US have many similarities. They are physically close, both are the most populous states in their respective continents,<sup>17</sup> each possess the largest economies on their continents,<sup>18</sup> and both are two of the largest states in the Americas alongside Canada.<sup>19</sup> Due to these similarities and the regular economic and social interaction the US greatly influences Brazil. This chapter will address the history of the relationship between the two nations, the cooperation between the two countries' navies, the trade and financial relationship, and the US cultural influence in Brazil.

### *Brief Brazil-US Relationship History*

Brazilian and US relations date back to the establishment of Brazilian Independence and witnessed a great deal of cooperation during key historical events. The US was the first country to establish a consulate in Brazil in 1815.<sup>20</sup> At that time, Brazil was not yet an independent state. The US was the first country to recognize Brazil's independence from Portugal just two years after its proclamation in 1822.<sup>21</sup> Later on, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, foreign ministers of twenty-one states on the American continent created the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) in 1942.<sup>22</sup> Its headquarters is in Washington, DC. Those are the origins of the formal cooperation of American states on security issues.

By the same token as the creation of the IADB, the inter-American peacekeeping conference was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1947, which resulted in the signing of the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty, affirming the unity of the continent in the event of an attack of a third party. The third article states the following:

The High Contracting Parties agree that an armed attack by any State against an American State shall be considered as an attack against all the American States and, consequently, each one of the said Contracting Parties undertakes to assist in meeting the attack in the exercise of the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>23</sup>

One consequence of the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty was the Organization of American States (OAS) creation in 1948.<sup>24</sup> The OAS's purpose is cooperation based on four main pillars: democracy, human rights, security, and development.<sup>25</sup>

During the Cold War, Brazil was linked to the US in both economic and military sectors. There was no space for other great power influence during this period. The Brazilian state kept its capitalist foundation and fought against communist groups who tried to impose their will by force. In 1964, the communists were committed to taking over the Brazilian power; however, the

population and the press asked for military intervention.<sup>26</sup> On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Brazilian Congress told the Armed Forces to temporarily take control of the executive branch.<sup>27</sup> During this period, Brazil had five army military officers who received the title of President of the Republic of Brazil.<sup>28</sup> After the elimination of the communist threat, and due to pressure by Brazilian society, there were presidential elections in 1984 .

During the Korean War, there was an intense debate in Brazil regarding Brazilian participation between the executive and legislative branches.<sup>29</sup> Because of this debate, Brazil and the US signed a new military accord in 1952.<sup>30</sup> The Brazilian Congress approved the agreement but did not support sending Brazilian troops to fight in Korea.<sup>31</sup> This Military Accord lasted until 1977 when Brazil nullified it in response to US President Jimmy Carter's allegations of human rights violations in Brazil.<sup>32</sup> The military cooperation between the two countries was also negatively influenced by the Brazil-Germany nuclear agreement that was not well received by the US and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1975.<sup>33</sup>

The two countries have been cooperating since 1824. In a general overview, some key historical events have shown the cooperation was beneficial to them. The historical legacy continues today. Currently, there are several cooperation mechanisms between the two countries, such as Strategic Partnership Dialogue (conducted by the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the United States Secretary of State); Defense Cooperation dialogue (conducted by the Minister of Defense of Brazil and the United States Secretary of Defense); Permanent US-Brazil Security Forum; Brazil - US Senior Executives Forum; Brazil-US Energy Forum; Economic-Financial Dialogue; Commercial Dialogue; and Commission for Economic and Commercial Relations.<sup>34</sup>

### *Brazil-US Military Cooperation: Brazilian Navy Perspective*

In the military aspect, more specifically in the Brazilian Navy, the US influence was intense and marked with assumed friendship. It began in 1914 when American Navy Commission officers taught Brazilian students at the newly formed Naval War School.<sup>35</sup> After the First World War, the US established itself as a major military power, and in 1922, Brazil asked the US to establish a US Navy Mission in Brazil instead of asking the British. This relationship helped in the development of naval aviation and submarine warfare in the Brazilian Navy. It is the origin of American influence in Brazil.<sup>36</sup>

In 1937, Brazil opened the Brazilian Naval Commission in Washington (CNBW) to facilitate the purchase of naval assets, supplies, and services in the US.<sup>37</sup> The CNBW passed through several reorganizations during its existence and still is functioning today. The only two Brazilian Naval Commissions abroad are the CNBW and Brazilian Naval Commission in Europe, with an office in London.

During 1922-1977, the Brazilian Navy sent officers to attend courses in the US, and it also sent ships to be repaired at US shipyards.<sup>38</sup> Brazil bought US destroyers and was assisted in building its own ships.<sup>39</sup>

In 1942, German submarines sank Brazilian merchant ships along Brazil's coast.<sup>40</sup> So, the Brazilian government entered World War II and declared itself an ally of the US, authorizing it to establish military bases on the country's northeast coast and sending contingents to the European front, specifically Italy.<sup>41</sup> The Brazilian military fought alongside US Army troops against the powers of the Axis Alliance. During the war, Brazil sold raw material such as iron, manganese, tungsten, bauxite, and quartz to the US and allowed it to build military bases on Brazilian soil.<sup>42</sup> The US sold military equipment to the Brazilian armed forces at a low price and the US Navy helped the Brazilian Navy train and equip its ships against German submarine

warfare along the Brazilian coast.<sup>43</sup> The remarkable victories of the USMC in the Pacific influenced the Brazilian Marine Corps (CFN) doctrine.<sup>44</sup> And from that moment the CFN shifted its employment from an internal security troop to an expeditionary amphibious force.<sup>45</sup> That definition was strongly visible and has lasted up to today. The Assault Amphibious Vehicle, first purchased from the US in 1982<sup>46</sup>, is one of the most iconic pieces of equipment for the CFN and a symbol of self-identity.

After the war, the US provided Brazil with spare military equipment at a low price through the Military Aid Program, but to maintain the balance of power in South America, the US provided to Brazil, Argentina, and Chile in similar quantity and quality.<sup>47</sup> The US also supported the development of Naval Artillery ammunition and torpedo factories.<sup>48</sup> During that period, specifically in 1960, the Brazilian, US, and South American navies started the UNITAS maritime exercise. According to the US Navy, UNITAS is the world's longest-running annual multinational maritime exercise that still happens today.<sup>49</sup>

Some authors argue that in the period of the Military Accord of 1952, the US limited its support to Brazil, selling obsolete equipment from World War II instead of providing new technologies.<sup>50</sup> For example, the US did not provide missiles to Brazilian Navy ships during the time the great powers were rebuilding their capability with this new discovery.<sup>51</sup>

After the close of the US Navy Mission in Brazil in 1977, the two navies kept their friendship, participating in the UNITAS exercise, sending officers to exchange programs, and mutually participating in Professional Military Education (PME) programs. Still, the relation between the two countries in military affairs was not the same again.<sup>52</sup> The Brazilian Navy started to think strategically by itself and look for support from European states' navies to establish a role regionally. Some authors argue that the US limited the Brazilian Navy's support to keep a balanced power between Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.<sup>53</sup>

The principal authors on the Brazil-US naval cooperation are Admiral Armando Vidigal and Admiral Mário César Flores.<sup>54</sup> The mainstream perspective on the issue is that the North American influence on the Brazilian Navy was fruitful because it helped build and update Brazilian naval forces' doctrine with what the United States learned during the various conflicts and organize the Brazilian Navy administratively, providing advice and exchanges. It contributed to creating and improving PME and the sale of naval assets, equipment, and armaments. However, both authors are reticent on two points: On the Brazilian side, there was an accommodation in developing their own doctrine, in building and nationalizing their means according to their own needs. There were restrictions on negotiating advanced equipment and systems, limitations on technology transfer, and strategic constraints for continued cooperation on the American side.

Today the two countries benefit from cooperation in the naval realm. Currently, the Brazilian Navy has eight agreements with the US. The oldest one is from 1978 regarding military personnel exchange, and the newest one is from 2008, addressing the acquisition of fuel for torpedoes. The two navies' agreements comprise arms selling, PME exchange, military personnel exchange, and hydrographic research programs.<sup>55</sup> According to the current Brazilian Navy Foreign Courses Program, by 2021, the Brazilian Navy intends to send 55 military personnel to attend courses in the US for example.<sup>56</sup>

### *Brazil-US Trade and Financial Relationship*

Brazil-US trade and financial relationship is very intense and beneficial to both countries. The US had been Brazil's largest trading partner since 1930 when it overtook England.<sup>57</sup> The US is the first-choice destination for manufacturing Brazilian products.<sup>58</sup> In 2019, according to the Brazilian Ministry of Economic data, Brazil exported \$29 billion to the US and in the same year

Brazil imported \$30 billion from the US.<sup>59</sup> Brazil exports to the US basic iron and steel fabrication, aircraft and related machinery manufacturing, extraction of crude oil, refined petroleum products, and manufacture of basic chemicals.<sup>60</sup> And the US exports to Brazil basic iron and steel fabrication, aircraft and related machinery manufacturing, extraction of crude oil, and manufacture of refined petroleum products.<sup>61</sup>

The US and China have been alternating the title of the largest investor in Brazil since 2010.<sup>62</sup> The cumulative inflow of US foreign direct investments (FDI) in Brazil from 2003 to 2019 is \$81.6 billion, accounting for 633 projects.<sup>63</sup> US direct investments in Brazil are concentrated in the service sector, especially in the financial industry, although the industrial sector's presence has been constant over time. The share of investments in other sectors is relatively marginal. It is notable the incidence of projects in telecommunications since 2013 and a reduction in 2017.<sup>64</sup>

Since the Bretton Woods agreement in 1944,<sup>65</sup> Brazil keeps its international reserves in US dollars using the accumulation of international reserves as an essential policy against external vulnerability in financial globalization in spite of being a high-cost solution.<sup>66</sup> However, some authors argue that Brazil's investment portfolio of reserves has undeniable benefits.<sup>67</sup> Currently, Brazil's international reserves in US dollars are \$ 355.5 billion.<sup>68</sup>

### *US Cultural Influence in Brazil*

In the cultural aspect, the US influence is the strongest foreign effect in the Brazilian culture. The English language began to be taught in the Brazilian public education system from 1942, along with Latin, French, and Spanish.<sup>69</sup> Nowadays, by law, Brazilian middle schools must offer English as a foreign language, and the Brazilian high schools must have English as part of the formal curriculum.<sup>70</sup> English is the only foreign language that is mandatory in the Brazilian

education system. However, it is still a considerable challenge for Brazil to have its citizens mastering the English language due to the Brazilian educational system issues, as pointed out by a study by the British Council in 2014, even though English is currently the primary foreign language taught in the public and private education system in Brazil.<sup>71</sup>

Regarding the entertainment industry, the US movie industry also influences the Brazilian lifestyle. The Statistical Yearbook of Brazilian Cinema in 2015 showed that 83.9% of public releases went to films from the United States, 10.6% from Brazil, 2.0% from France, 1.4% from Germany, and 2.1% from other countries.<sup>72</sup> In music, the North American predominance is no different. A study carried out in 2014 with young Brazilians between 16 and 24 years of age revealed that 55% listen to more North American music than Brazilian. However, most listeners do not fully understand the content of the lyrics.<sup>73</sup> According to the study, North American music in Brazil is associated with modernity, technical refinement, and an internationalized cultural environment that enjoys a differentiated prestige.<sup>74</sup> As the study was carried out in 2014, it did not contemplate the recent arrival of the South Korean musical influence carried by the young audience's K-Pop style.

Another interesting point about the Brazilian similarity to the US culture is the number of Brazilians living in the US. According to the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimate, 1.4 million Brazilians live in the US, and only 16,160 Brazilians are living in China.<sup>75</sup> That massive number of Brazilians living in the US reflects the cultural similarity between the two countries.

In the tourism industry, the US is also emerging as the main destination for Brazilians. In 2017, *FORBES* magazine published an article that talked about the US being the main destination for Brazilians when traveling abroad.<sup>76</sup> An article in *Latin American Business Stories* reported that 1.575 million Brazilians visited the United States and spent approximately 2 billion dollars in 2017.<sup>77</sup>

This chapter depicted how the US influences Brazil in a variety of topics relevant to this study. It addressed the history of Brazil and the United States' relationship, the cooperation between the two countries' navies, the trade and financial relationship, and the US cultural influence in Brazil. A general overview of the US influence on Brazil can be rated as very beneficial to Brazil because it is based on core values like freedom, democracy, development, and cooperation. However, the US could help Brazil develop faster, not limiting its access to advanced technologies like cyber and space-development, for instance. The next chapter will address the Chinese influence in Brazil, covering the trade and financial relationship, technological and military cooperation, and cultural relations.

### **Chapter Three: The Influence of China in Brazil**

Brazil and China are very different countries. In addition to their geographical distance, they possess distinct cultural backgrounds and political structures. However, their economic relationship is growing and therefore their common interest. This chapter will cover the Brazil-China trade and financial relationship, the technological cooperation, the Chinese cultural influence on Brazil, and the military cooperation between them.

#### *Brazil-China Trade Relationship*

Chinese maintains influence over Brazil due to their growing trade relationship. That influence is bringing attention to the Chinese presence in Brazil. The US had been Brazil's largest trading partner since 1930 when it overtook England.<sup>78</sup> In 1997, the Brazil-US trade relation was ten times larger than Brazil and China's.<sup>79</sup> However, in 2009, the US became the second trading partner giving way to China.<sup>80</sup> In 2019, according to the Brazilian Ministry of Economic data, Brazil's total exports were \$225 billion with \$63 billion, or 28%, to China.<sup>81</sup> In

the same year, Brazil imported \$177 billion and \$35 billion, or 20%, from China.<sup>82</sup> Figure 1 displays Brazil's export data for 2019.



**Figure 1: Brazil Exports by Country (2019)**

Source: Trading Economics, "Brazil Exports by Country," *Tradingeconomics.com*, accessed in January 16, 2021, <https://tradingeconomics.com/brazil/exports-by-country>

Most items imported by Brazil are manufactured and include basic chemical products; electronic components and plates; communication equipment; construction of ships and floating structures; consumer electronic products; and electric motors, generators, transformers, and electric power distribution devices.<sup>83</sup> Brazil mainly exports primary commodities to China, including, cereals (except rice), legumes and oilseeds, crude oil extraction, iron ore extraction, and meat processing and preservation.<sup>84</sup>

The Brazilian trade relationship with China is asymmetric because Brazil exports raw materials and imports manufactured goods. Dependence on exports of raw materials makes Brazil vulnerable to the volatility of global commodity markets. Besides that, China is overtaking Brazil in selling manufactured goods in the international market and the Brazilian internal market creating a severe challenge to Brazilian industry.<sup>85</sup>

The Brazil-China financial relationship is also significant. Combined with the trade relationship, both of these are creating common interests that form the basis of their relationship. Brazil demands capital to meet its investment and infrastructure needs, while China needs steady

flows of commodities and has heavy financial resources.<sup>86</sup> Due to its massive foreign exchange reserves, economic growth, and high level of savings, China has acquired enough financial power to employ it globally, ensuring it is a top international creditor, a large foreign investment source, and an issuer of an international reserve currency.<sup>87</sup>

China has become the most important foreign direct investor in Brazil in the last few decades alongside the US. The title of the largest investor in Brazil has shifted back and forth between China and the US since 2010.<sup>88</sup> The cumulative inflow of Chinese foreign direct investments (FDI) in Brazil from 2003 to 2019 is \$79.6 billion, accounting for 170 projects.<sup>89</sup> According to the Foreign Investment Bulletin issued by the Brazilian Ministry of Economy in 2019, China invested 32% of total FDI accumulated in Brazil against 33% invested by the US in the same period.<sup>90</sup> That amount corresponds to almost 50% of all Chinese investment presence in Latin America and the Caribbean, making Brazil as the preferred country in the region.<sup>91</sup>

The Chinese investments in Brazil are focused on infrastructure, specifically energy, transportation, telecommunication, and sanitation.<sup>92</sup> According to Anna Jaguaribe, the Chinese are spreading their investment in Brazil. In 2018, there were more than 200 Chinese firms in Brazil.<sup>93</sup> While energy remains the most critical and consistent sector of Chinese investment, transport, finance, and agriculture sectors are grow in relevance.<sup>94</sup>

The perception of Chinese investment in Brazil's private sector is discordant. On the one hand, the agriculture sector sees the Chinese presence as positive since it benefited from soybean exports.<sup>95</sup> On the other hand, the manufacturing sector has not reacted to compete on equal terms with the Chinese presence in the domestic market and abroad.<sup>96</sup>

A critical point about the massive Chinese investment in Brazil is the effect of state ownership on Chinese firms' FDI ownership decisions. That subject was studied by Lin Cui and Fuming Jiang in 2012. They argue that state ownership creates the political affiliation of the

Chinese companies, which increases their resource dependence on Chinese institutions while it influences its image as perceived by host-country institutional constituents.<sup>97</sup> Regarding that point, one can argue that competing with Chinese companies is competing with the Chinese government. That is a fact that must be considered when the topic is Chinese FDI.

Some authors like Clarissa Lins and Guilherme Ferreira argue that FDI related to BRI in Brazil brings three main risks associated.<sup>98</sup> First is that the Brazilian decision-making governance might not be able to decide how the investment will be conducted.<sup>99</sup> Second, the levels of indebtedness might become very high, and the results of it are unpredictable.<sup>100</sup> Third, the environmental and social impacts might be undesirable.<sup>101</sup> Those risks become higher due to the lack of transparency of the BRI and fragile governance structure in Brazil.<sup>102</sup>

Some scholars conducted research and concluded that if China deploys financial statecraft instruments to coax the Brazilian state into including the Renminbi in its currency reserves, the Chinese attempt would likely be successful.<sup>103</sup> It would be a significant step to challenge the US dollar's status quo as the world's dominant reserve currency<sup>104</sup> since the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1944.<sup>105</sup> One method that the Chinese are using to escape from the "dollar trap" is the Renminbi Internationalization Initiative but it can put Brazil in a more volatile currency like the Renminbi<sup>106</sup>

### *Brazil-China Technology Cooperation*

Brazil and China have experience cooperating in three technological areas; the space development, the mobile communication system, and the pharmaceutical industry. The model of economic and scientific-technological development became famous after the rising of the Asian Tigers.<sup>107</sup> It motivated Brazil to expand its partnership with Asian-Pacific countries in the field of science and technology.<sup>108</sup> So, the Sino-Brazilian Earth Resources Satellite Program (CBERS)

started in 1988 due to that motivation.<sup>109</sup> The satellite's purposes were agricultural, forestry, and environmental monitoring; geology; cartography; fire detection, location, and statistics; natural accident management; hydrology; coastal management; and land use.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, since the space technologies have civilian and military applications, Brazil and other emerging countries like China and India suffered technological embargos from the developed nations.<sup>111</sup> The nations that had the space dominance did not trust Brazil's intentions because of its nuclear program and its reluctance in signing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)<sup>112</sup>, which was signed in 1996 and was ratified in 1998.<sup>113</sup> The fact that Brazil had only become a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) as recently as 1995<sup>114</sup> contributed to the suspicion about Brazil's intentions in the eighties.

It must be remembered that in 1988 China was not the same powerful nation as today. So, the Brazilian state started a cooperation with a similar nation in terms of development. At that time, both countries had enormous challenges toward their space programs. Actually, during the eighties, Brazil had a more advanced and complex industry than China.<sup>115</sup>

During the program, the two countries were able to launch six satellites.<sup>116</sup> All of them were launched by a Chinese rocket from Taiyan Launch Center, China. The first CBERS-1 was launched in 1999.<sup>117</sup> The second CBERS-2 was launched in 2003.<sup>118</sup> The third CBERS-2B was launched in 2007. After the three successful satellites, both countries decided to build a second generation of CBERS, keeping the same purpose, changing only the technologies onboard.<sup>119</sup> The fourth CBERS-3 was launched in 2013, but it did not achieve the earth's orbit remaining only a few minutes in space before reentering the atmosphere. During that time, its components worked properly. That was the first accident during the program.<sup>120</sup> The fifth satellite was launched in 2014 using the same Chinese rocket. And the CBERS-4A was launched in 2019.<sup>121</sup> Only the last two satellites are operational today.<sup>122</sup>

Some authors argue that the CBERS Program benefited not only the Brazilian Space Program but also the diplomatic and political realms.<sup>123</sup> Some benefits were strengthening the national space industry and development in the fields like environment, agriculture, mineral resources, and cartography, among other areas.<sup>124</sup> The Brazilian National Space Research Institute (INPE) hosts the Sino-Brazilian lab of Space Climate that will keep its activities going. The lab was a result of the two nations' cooperation.<sup>125</sup> That is a great goal for China. The Brazilian space program was not the only technological cooperation between China and Brazil.

The Chinese have significant participation in the telecommunication sector in Brazil. Brazil's biggest network equipment provider is Huawei, a Chinese telecom company<sup>126</sup> that arrived in Brazil in 1999.<sup>127</sup> In Brazil, Huawei focuses on the carriers market, where 70% of its revenues come from.<sup>128</sup> The Chinese company has contracts with the four major carriers in Brazil: Oi, Vivo, Tim, and Claro.<sup>129</sup> The Brazilian government is preparing for the public sale regarding the 5G, the superfast cellular networks scheduled to end the first semester of 2021.<sup>130</sup> According to Leonardo Euler de Moraes, president of the Brazilian National Telecommunication Agency (ANATEL), it should be the largest auction for the right to use radio frequency in Brazil's history. The Chinese Huawei emerges as one of the main suppliers of equipment for telecommunications operators that might compete against the Swedish Nokia and the Finnish Ericsson in the auction.<sup>131</sup> There are discussions about Huawei participation restrictions in the Brazilian auction due to geopolitical reasons after the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States, Donald Trump, brought concerns about the national security regarding Huawei equipment.<sup>132</sup> Brazilian officials avoid making public statements about the topic.<sup>133</sup> Space development and the mobile communication system are two of the three main areas where China has cooperated in the technological realm with Brazil.

Regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, China and Brazil have cooperated in the formulation of a vaccine. The Brazilian Butantan Institute developed the CoronaVac vaccine with the Chinese company Sinovac Biotech. The vaccine's safety and efficacy was approved by the federal government's National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA) in January 2021. The phase III of vaccine development will be carried out at the Brazilian population.<sup>134</sup> This fact has increased the debate about Chinese influence on Brazil, including manipulating information in the press, since the China Media Group made a deal of cooperation with Brazil's Grupo Globo, the largest media group in Latin America and with the Brazilian Media Group Bandeirantes at the end of 2019.<sup>135</sup>

### *Chinese Cultural Influence on Brazil*

The Chinese culture is not significant in Brazil. In general, Brazilians do not want to learn the Chinese language, which they consider a hard language to learn and with limited benefits. They prefer to learn English instead of Chinese because of cultural factors such as music, movies, and TV shows as well as pragmatic motivation.<sup>136</sup> Since English is used worldwide, it can help in job opportunities, business, tourism, and international education. There are twelve Brazilian universities that host Confucius Institutes and they are located in all five regions of Brazil.<sup>137</sup> Confucius Institutes are non-profit institutions related to the Chinese government to promote Chinese culture around the world.<sup>138</sup> They started their presence in Brazil in 2008, and the number of students is increasing, but it is not significant yet.<sup>139</sup> Confucius Institutes still face the Brazilians' lack of interest in Chinese culture.

The Hollywood actor Bruce Lee helped Kung Fu, the Chinese martial art, become famous in the seventies.<sup>140</sup> However, the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) became one of Brazil's most popular martial arts after the Gracie family started a project to prove that BJJ is the most efficient martial

art in the world.<sup>141</sup> The project resulted in the famous Ultimate Fighter Championship (UFC) created by Rorion Gracie, a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu fighter.<sup>142</sup> For that reason, the Chinese influence in martial arts is not significant in Brazil. The only aspect of the Chinese culture expressively appreciated in Brazil is the Chinese food. However, Brazilians do not enjoy eating exotic or wild animals. So, the Chinese food in Brazil is represented by yakisoba, egg roll, and chop suey, and it cannot be claimed as a serious influence on the Brazilian lifestyle. To summarize, Brazil receives almost no influence from Chinese culture despite the Confucius Institutes' efforts in the last few decades.

### *Brazil-China Military Cooperation*

China established formal diplomatic ties with Brazil only in 1974,<sup>143</sup> and the military cooperation started in the eighties when China opened a defense attaché's office in Brasília in 1985, and Brazil in Beijing in 1988.<sup>144</sup> The Brazil-China military cooperation became stronger in 2004 when the Ministries of Defense of both countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the purpose of promoting exchange and cooperation in a variety of defense-related areas.<sup>145</sup> In the following year, the Joint Commission for Exchange and Cooperation between the Ministry of National Defense of China and the Ministry of Defense of Brazil (JCEC) was created. Since 2010, the JCEC has met six times, and the last meeting took place in 2019.<sup>146</sup> The JCEC focuses on activities that are concentrated in the areas of education and personnel training. President Dilma Rousseff visited China in 2011 and signed a cooperation agreement related to defense areas including military courses and training; exchange of knowledge on defense technology, services, and products; cooperation on military operations, including UN peacekeeping operations; humanitarian assistance; security of major events; and military medicine.<sup>147</sup>

During 2000-2011, thirteen Brazilians attended courses in China while six Chinese attended courses in Brazil.<sup>148</sup> During the same period, 369 Brazilians attended courses in the US, and ninety Americans attended courses in Brazil.<sup>149</sup> Twelve Chinese military officers attended Portuguese language courses offered by the Brazilian Army between 2000-2017.<sup>150</sup> Currently, Brazilian officers attend courses in China offered in English or Spanish. According to the current Brazilian Navy Foreign Courses Program, by 2021, the Brazilian Navy intends to send two officers to attend two courses in China; one of them is the 48-week Naval Command and Staff Program.<sup>151</sup>

In the naval realm, the Brazilian Navy does not have any formal agreement with the Chinese government as it has with the US. However, some recent facts show an increased interaction between the Brazilian Navy and China. For example, in 2009, the Commander of the Brazilian Navy participated in the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the PLA Navy.<sup>152</sup> The Brazilian Navy Ship *Garcia Davila* joined the naval parade as part of the ceremony.<sup>153</sup> In 2015, it was launched *Vital de Oliveira*, the first Brazilian Navy ship built in China.<sup>154</sup> In 2020, the Brazilian Navy launched the Antarctic base built by China Electronics Import and Export Corporation (CEIEC) after a fire destroyed the original one in 2012.<sup>155</sup>

Chinese defense companies started to aim at Brazilian and other Latin American countries' markets. For example, the 2003 Latin America Defentech (LAD) show, staged in Brazil, was the first to include a delegation of Chinese businessmen.<sup>156</sup> In 2005, the PLA hosted the first China-Latin America Forum on Cooperation and Security, which included the participation of a senior Brazilian Army officer.<sup>157</sup> In 2014, during the visit of President Xi Jinping to Brazil, one agreement was signed between the Brazilian defense company Engevix, Chinese bank ICBC and CEIEC.<sup>158</sup> Initiatives on remote sensing, telecommunications and

information technology to protect the Brazilian Amazon region were part of the agreements signed during President Xi Jinping's visit to Brazil.<sup>159</sup>

This chapter addressed the influence of China on Brazil. It covered the Brazil-China trade and financial relationship, the technological cooperation, the Chinese cultural influence on Brazil, and the military cooperation between the two countries. The recent cooperation and agreements between Brazil and China are undoubtedly strong evidence that China is interested in Brazil. Both countries seem to benefit from each other's interests. However, the industrial sector's asymmetrical competition might be a crucial disincentive to the Brazilian national industry. In addition, the massive Chinese FDI mixed with state and private capital due to Chinese companies' characteristics might leverage the advantage of Chinese enterprises against the Brazilian competitors. The next chapter will assess the Chinese influence on Brazil, comparing it to the US influence.

#### **Chapter Four: Analysis and Assessment**

This chapter will analyze and assess Chinese influence on Brazil, summarizing and comparing the US and Chinese influence on Brazil. This chapter will address how will growing Chinese may influence the Brazilian-US military relationship. It also will infer what might happen in case of China continues to increase its influence on Brazil, analyzing the opportunities and the risks for the Latin American country. The table summarizes few numbers and facts covered in the second and third chapters.

**Table 1: Comparative of Brazil-US and Brazil-China relations**

<b>Area</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>China</b>
Trade (2019 data)		
Exports to Brazil	\$30 billion (17%)	\$35 billion (20%)
Imports from Brazil	\$29 billion (13%)	\$63 billion (28%)

Financial		
FDI (2003-2019)	\$81.6 billion (33%)	\$79.6 billion (32%)
Projects	633	170
International Reserve (2021)	355.5 billion US dollar	-
Cultural		
Language	High	Very low
Music	Very high	Inexpressive
Movies	Very high	Inexpressive
Brazilians living abroad	1.4 million	16.160
Brazilians traveling for tourism (2017)	1.575 million (\$2 billion)	Unknow
Professional Military Education		
Brazilians attended courses (2000-2011)	369	13
Foreign attended courses (2000-2011)	90	6
Forecast of Navy officers studying in 2021	55	2

Table 1 depicts that there is a Chinese influence on Brazil in trade and finance but that does not cross over into culture. Chinese influence the military sector is small but growing. China's influence grew in the last two decades, as was demonstrated in the third chapter. The most important factor driving Brazilian and Chinese relations is that Brazil is looking for investment to expand its infrastructure and needs access to consumer markets to export its commodities. Also, China has massive foreign reserves, and it has a great need to import commodities, seeking to develop the BRI. Nonetheless, the US is beginning to perceive a threat coming from the Pacific.

Some scholars write that China has extended the BRI to Latin America since 2018 and has carried out military operations since 2013. They believe that the new global power structure is different from the Cold War when countries had to choose sides. However, they understand that the Chinese influence in Latin America is broader than some other analysts think. They visualize risks for the United States in a hypothetical scenario of armed conflict with China. They recommend some actions for the US policymakers to deal with the problem.<sup>160</sup> Other scholars consider that the Chinese influence in the region is only economic due to the social and cultural barriers.

According to some authors if the US chooses to disengagement with Latin American countries as a penalty for greater cooperation with China, that will likely encourage those countries to become closer with China. The risk for Latin American states is if they increase interdependence with China they may increase unsustainable debts, becoming increasingly dependent on the export of commodities, increase the level of corruption, and fall short of international standards for the preservation of the environment, job security, and work laws.<sup>161</sup>

The recent pandemic caused by COVID-19 has intensified disputes between the United States and China. Trump administration accused the Chinese government of omitting important information at the beginning of the pandemic, causing a precious delay in containing the virus, preparing the health system, treating the disease, and developing a vaccine.<sup>162</sup> Notably, China is the only country to have economic growth during the year 2020 since it was the country that originated the epidemic. Finally, it does not have an independent press, which has caused suspicion in the international community.<sup>163</sup> Some analysts suspect the virus was produced in the laboratory, but there is no scientific evidence regarding the accusation.<sup>164</sup>

The growing Chinese influence on Brazil might change Brazil-US relations. First, the US may realize that China is filling the economic vacuum in the region and decide to change its posture by intensifying relations with Brazil. This scenario would be good for the Brazilian side. While the great powers are fighting for influence, Brazil could benefit from both Chinese and US support.

In the second scenario the great powers may force Brazil to choose between one of the two countries. Brazil would have to take many factors into consideration, including its geographic distance; historical relations; social, cultural, and political identities; and economic and financial relevance. That would be complicated because there are many realms where the two great powers compete for influence in Brazil as this work has shown so far. Depending on

which side Brazil would choose, the Brazilian-US military cooperation might intensify or be terminated.

In the third scenario, the US and China might start a conflict. In this case, the situation would be the same as the previous one, but with more drastic and sudden responses. One interesting point about this scenario is that it calls for Brazil to consider the Great Powers might demand that other nations to choose one side, and Brazil should provide guidance in its national strategy. Since investments in the military cost money, and time to develop capability and train the workforce, it is crucial that Brazil consider getting started to prepare for choosing one side.

In the fourth scenario, the US might not view Chinese influence on Brazil as a threat and keeps its current policies in place with limited cooperation in critical areas. In this scenario, Brazil-US military cooperation would not change, and Brazil should keep trying to engage in military cooperation between the two great powers.

In a fifth scenario, the US might decide to show its soft power by decreasing military cooperation with Brazil because of its involvement with China in economic means. That would be a complicated scenario where Brazil could strengthen military cooperation with China and losing it from the US. Nonetheless, Brazil would fall into a situation of choosing one side.

Growing Chinese influence in Brazil may have both positive and negative consequences for Brazil. Chinese influence in Brazil could increase Brazilian-US military cooperation. First, it creates opportunities for Brazil to interact with the most significant global military powers since the Great Powers do not demand that other countries choose one side. Second, Brazil could significantly improve its infrastructure with the BRI. Third, it could encourage the US to reconsider increasing military cooperation in sensitive areas such as space and cyber technologies to avoid the Chinese ability to fill the vacuum where traditionally the US limits cooperation.

However, previous examples of states increasing economic ties to China demonstrated that there are pitfalls that Brazil should avoid. Some authors call it “debt trap diplomacy” and “predatory loans” such as the cases of the Maldives, Kenya, Tajikistan, Sri Lanka, and Venezuela.<sup>165</sup> For example, in 2013, China started building a base in Argentina to monitor space activities for fifty years.<sup>166</sup> However, it is known that the military runs the Chinese space program. Between 2016 and 2018, Chinese fishing vessels accused of conducting predatory fishing in Argentina's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).<sup>167</sup> These facts may be disconnected. However, they can be an indicator that to extent the dependence on Chinese investments can endanger a country's sovereignty.

China could use its debt-trap diplomacy against Brazil. Chinese influence may cause Brazil to incur large deficits and negatively impact Brazil's corruption problems. Second, the Chinese influence can negatively impact social and environmental problems through unchecked economic growth. Third, there is a risk that China and the United States will become involved in a military conflict. Then, Brazil must be ready to assume a lateral policy considering its degree of relationship with one of the two great powers. And finally, it can degrade the Brazilian national industry since competing with the Chinese industry is an asymmetrical fight.

## **Chapter Five: Conclusion**

This work aims to analyze the implications of China's growing influence on Brazil and how that relationship may affect military cooperation between the United States and Brazil. The hypothesis that the increase in Chinese influence in Brazil will have a negative impact on Brazilian military cooperation with the United States was not proven to be correct.

The growth of Chinese influence on Brazil over the last two decades is based on shared economic interest, especially in the trade and financial sector. Brazil needs investment to develop

its infrastructure and looks for consumer markets to export its commodities while China has foreign reserves. It has a great need to import commodities, and it needs to materialize the BRI. Nonetheless, China exports manufactured goods to Brazil and imports commodities from it. That asymmetric relation is a challenge for the Brazilian national industry that is losing market share compared to Chinese companies at home and abroad.

This work concludes that growing Chinese influence on Brazil would change Brazil-US security relations in four scenarios of the five considered during the study. In the scenario where the Great Powers are fighting for influence, it would increase. In the scenario where the US would retaliate against Brazil for allowing Chinese influence in its territory, it would decrease. In the scenarios of the Great Powers demand Brazil to choose one side, or in case of a conflict between them, it would change according to the Brazilian decision of which side it would support. In the scenario where the US would not see Chinese influence on Brazil as a threat to its interest, it would remain the same.

This work recommends that Brazil should take advantage of the Great Power competition where China is challenging the US in its historical area of influence to develop its military cooperation agreements with the US. Also, Brazil should be prepared to decide if the Great Powers demand that other countries should take a side.

This work identifies that further research could be done in Brazil-US military cooperation agreements to use the Great Power competition era as a lever to negotiate better conditions during those cooperation arrangements. Another point for further study is how one side policy may impact Brazilian military doctrine and means in each service.

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