

# **CURRENT THEMES IN AFRICAN HISTORICAL STUDIES**

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*A Selected Bibliographical Guide  
to Resources for Research  
in African History*

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## PART IIIB

### BRAZIL AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

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By virtue of size, geographical location, historical antecedents, economic potential, and population characteristics, Brazil has the prerequisites to play a larger role in Africa than any other Latin American power. Of all of the areas of the developing world outside the Western Hemisphere, Africa stirs up greatest interest and controversy when foreign relations are discussed, both in Brazil's popular press and among intellectuals. This essay proposes to illustrate briefly the nature of the domestic debate about Brazil's policy toward that region of Africa below the Sahara, as well as to chart the actual course of relations and to venture some prospects for the future.

Brazil's response to the independence of the former colonies across the South Atlantic was heavily conditioned by previous alliances and associations with Latin America, the United States, and Western Europe since its own independence in 1822 and the proclamation of the Republic in 1889. In 1910, after most boundary disputes with neighboring South American countries had been peacefully settled, Brazil entered a period of moderate activity in extra-Hemispheric affairs, marked by participation in the Second Hague Conference and the League of Nations as well as by her roles in the two World Wars. Relations with the rest of the world were predicated upon a close partnership with the United States and effective cultural links with London, Paris, and Lisbon. This traditional diplomacy, in part based on emulation of metropolitan centers by the rather closed Brazilian elite, was increasingly challenged after 1945 by growing nationalism and political participation, the demands of economic development, and greater integration of the foreign policy process into the domestic political system. Brazil was becoming aware of its potential, undergoing what the social critics called a tomada de consciencia, or national self-awakening, in which the image of international events accepted by important sectors of the national leadership was being refocused. In the early 1950's writers began to speak of the necessity for Brazilians to think in global rather than continental terms and to formulate an aggressive foreign policy designed to change the country from a mere bystander to a protagonist on the world scene, with ambitions of becoming a middle-range power.

As a by-product of this intensified exchange of ideas about national goals, the first defense of closer relations with newly independent countries appeared. Previous studies about the Negro in Brazil, racial relations, and mutual influences between

Brazil and Africa had invariably remained on the levels of anthropology, sociology, or folklore, so their political and cultural implications for Brazilian-African relations were very seldom considered. An excellent review of these and subsequent studies of the same type has already been done by Manuel Diégues Junior (1967), so they will not be extensively treated here.

Bezerra de Menezes, a member of the diplomatic corps and Brazilian observer at the 1955 Bandung Conference, was the first to assign an important place to Africa in the general scheme of Brazilian foreign policy and in the expansion of Brazil's presence outside the Western Hemisphere and Western Europe (Bezerra de Menezes 1956). In approximation with Africa, Brazil would have the advantages of being a tropical civilization with a widely respected racial democracy and no colonialist past, valuable assets when dealing with peoples long subjected to inferior status. In this position, mixed in terms of race, culture, and economic development, uniting both European and African sources, Brazil is uniquely able to serve as a bridge between Africa and the West and to make a contribution to humanity in the area of race relations by belying the myth of racial superiority. Although such an example is difficult to impart to other cultures because of the particular historical circumstances that gave rise to Brazilian miscegenation as opposed to, say, South African apartheid, this theme became a leitmotiv in Brazilian writings on Africa (Flusser 1966; Melo Franco 1964; Portella n.d.).

As Bezerra de Menezes wrote in 1956, however, Africa, for Brazilians, was "more remote than the lunar craters," except for a few scholars or businessmen interested in cacao and coffee (1946-50). In the ten years following the end of World War II, no official visits had been exchanged, while interchange at any level was almost entirely restricted to South Africa and the Portuguese colonies, in addition to a modest consulate in Dakar. Brazilian ideas about "Darkest Africa" were reduced to stereotypes engendered by safari films produced in the metropolitan areas to which Brazilian attention was directed. Conversely, Brazil had done nothing to make itself known in Africa, much less to elaborate a coherent policy concerning either that continent or the Afro-Asian world in general. To remedy this deficiency, Bezerra de Menezes suggested a program including the establishment of new diplomatic posts in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, cultural exchanges, official visits, and increased trade relations; it is generally believed that his evaluation of the coming importance of Afro-Asia for Brazil had a decisive effect on presidential candidate Quadros and his advisers as they planned his campaign statements on foreign policy four years later.

Several general articles on the need for a favorable Brazilian response to rapidly moving events in Africa and Asia appeared toward the end of President Juscelino Kubitschek's administration (Fischlowitz 1960; Viana 1959), but efforts centered around the United States, Western Europe, and the Pan American Operation, proposed by Kubitschek as a multilateral economic assistance program to facilitate Latin American development. In 1957 the Foreign Ministry studied the establishment of diplomatic relations with additional Afro-Asian states, the negotiation of treaties, and the sending of special missions. Although Brazil received a delegation from the independent African states in 1958 and a visit from Emperor Haile Selassie two years later and created a legation in Accra and a cumulative legation in Addis Ababa, most of its few ventures into the Third World at this time were confined to South Asia. During the terms of Presidents Quadros and Goulart, from 1961 to 1964, openings to Africa were

initiated as part of the dynamic independent foreign policy conceived by Quadros to project Brazil's presence into Eastern Europe and build upon the efforts begun in Afro-Asia by his predecessor. In public statements and in an article in *Foreign Affairs*, the innovating chief executive declared that Brazil had decided to "reap the consequences" of the position it had achieved as a nation, identifying itself in solidarity with other developing nations and pursuing what it interpreted to be its national interests, free of membership in any bloc (Quadros 1961). In the maintenance of diplomatic relations with all states, Brazil had a special mission in Africa--to serve as a mediator between former colonial powers and newly independent peoples. Quadros emphasized that, in spite of Brazil's ideological position among the countries of the Western tradition, it was joined to Africa by common cultural and ethnic roots to such a degree that no amount of cooperation with Africa could ever repay the immense national debt contracted through the sufferings and labors of former Africans in the evolution and enrichment of Brazil's distinctive culture. Without disregarding its Western political, philosophical, and social traditions, Brazil would henceforth vigorously support anticolonialism, nonintervention, and economic development as shared aspirations of all underdeveloped nations.

Within the next year embassies were set up in Accra, Dakar, Lagos, and Porto Novo, with cumulative embassies in Addis Ababa, Niamey, and Nouakchott, and consulates in Nairobi and Salisbury, soon followed by a cumulative embassy in Bamako and increases in the number of consulates in Portuguese Africa. Whereas personnel at posts in sub-Saharan Africa represented only 0.57 percent of all Brazilian diplomatic staff in embassies and legations abroad in 1960, by 1964 that percentage had grown to 2.38, while the corresponding figures for personnel working in Brazilian career consulates in that region were 1.2 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively.<sup>1</sup> This intensification of bilateral relations was accompanied by the inauguration by the Brazilian Lloyd of a regular sea route to West Africa and a government-sponsored fellowship program for African students to receive graduate training at Brazilian universities. The latter measure, financed by deductions from diplomatic salaries over a certain level, ultimately benefited twenty-two students from Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Cameroun, who arrived in 1961 and 1962--after which the program was suspended, ostensibly for lack of funds.

On the administrative level, an area desk for Africa was created in the Foreign Ministry (but subordinated to the Western European Division), and a special study group was charged with formulating concrete programs to develop greater economic, political, and cultural relations between Brazil and Africa. After Quadros' dramatic resignation in August, 1961, President Goulart continued the principles of his bold approach to foreign relations, especially in the United Nations with the defense of the "3D issues": Disarmament, Decolonization, and Development. Although several fact-finding and ceremonial missions were sent to Africa, as well as observers to African conventions, the spurt of Brazilian attention to Africa soon spent itself, as, with the resignation of Quadros, the Goulart government became increasingly beset by domestic instability and inflation, which drastically reduced its efficiency and its interest in Africa (Souza Dantas 1964).

The rather sudden interest in African affairs and the repercussions that events

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Figures from publications of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations.

there were producing for world politics led to the creation of Afro-Asian study centers in the cities of Salvador and Rio de Janeiro. Both of these organizations have tended to direct more of their resources to the study of Africa than of Asia or the Middle East. The Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais, created at University of Bahia in September 1959, has maintained an active program of association with African institutions since its foundation; it specializes in anthropological, sociological, and linguistic courses and research on both Africa and African cultural patterns in Brazil. Its publications include several essays on Africa and the semiannual review Afró-Asia. Many of the Brazil-Africa cultural exchange programs that did come into being have been handled and coordinated by the Centro. The Instituto Brasileiro de Estudos Afro-Asiáticos was created in April 1961 by Quadros and subordinated to the Federal Executive (later to the Foreign Ministry), with the objectives of stimulating and distributing studies about the Afro-Asian world, promoting research comparing the developmental processes of Afro-Asian countries and those of Brazil for the purpose of mutual benefit, and increasing the whole range of relations between Brazil and Afro-Asia. The Institute published about ten books concerning the Third World and development, sponsored several conferences, and circulated a bulletin, but it suffered setbacks, first from Quadros' resignation and then from the revolution of 1964. Almost extinguished by the military government of Castello Branco, it now exists in a dormant, privately financed state, hoping for renewal of funds and activities.

As part of the lively debate on each component of the new foreign policy orientation, most of the polemical, theoretical, or analytical material concerning Brazil's relations with Africa dates from the 1961-64 period; articles are most commonly found in such nationalistically oriented, and often short-lived, journals as the Revista Brasileira, Tempo Brasileiro, and Política Externa Independente (which dedicated the January 1966 issue to Africa), as well as scholarly reviews exemplified by the Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional and Cadernos Brasileiros. The most complete, thorough work on the topic has been done in the books and articles of the historian José Honório Rodrigues. In Brasil e África: Outro Horizonte, which originally appeared in 1961 and was later translated into English, he makes a case for approximation with Africa, based on historical ties dating from the seventeenth century, the resultant Africanization of Brazil and the mixed nature of its population, and the identity of aspirations of the African and Brazilian peoples (Rodrigues 1964a). Besides providing a lengthy history of Afro-Brazilian relations from 1500 to 1960 and a study of racial relations in Brazilian society, Honório examines policies toward Africa as pursued by the Quadros and Goulart administrations, using the occasion mainly as an opportunity to denounce both Brazil's lack of anticolonialist fervor and the colonialist policies of Salazar, linked together in the idea of mutual consultation and cooperation embodied in the Luso-Brazilian Community idea, which he feels is a sentimental stumbling block inimical to the furtherance of Brazilian interests in Africa. Since Portuguese Africa will not become a new Brazil and since, in view of obvious African hostility to colonialism, Brazil cannot approach Africa in company with Salazar, Honório recommends complete disassociation from, and condemnation of, Lisbon's activities in Guinea, Angola, and Mozambique.

Another historian, Yedda Linhares, analyzed the African policy within the context of Brazilian foreign relations and found three basic motives for action there (Yedda Linhares 1962). The first is economic, that of industrialists searching for new

markets or agriculturalists fearing increased competition. The second is based on historical romanticism, which contends that the miscegenated population of Brazil is the most African to be found outside Africa and hence should contribute in an important way to the modernization of that continent. The final rationale is that of the Marxists, who support anticolonialism as a device to weaken the capitalist powers. Professor Yedda Linhares appropriately warns that much of what is written about Africa and possible Brazilian leadership there is founded on a meager knowledge of Africa and an illusion that ignores the realities of power politics. It is rather a projection of ideological notions about Brazil, fabricated completely within Brazil, and based on Brazilian wishes, problems, and points of view. Since there are many African connections lie with the Gulf of Guinea and Angola, its wisest course of action, according to Professor Yedda Linhares, would be to pursue bilateral trade, aid, and cultural agreements in the first area and to mediate between Portugal and the Angolan nationalists to bring a rapid but constructive end to Portuguese colonialism.

As can be seen from the distribution of Brazilian diplomatic representation, West Africa and Portuguese Africa have in fact been the regions with which Brazil has had closest recent contact and greatest cultural exchange across the South Atlantic. The influence of Africans from these areas on Brazilian life, especially in the Northeast, has been fully documented for the fields of religion, arts, music, folklore, language, literature, and family life (Bastide 1960; Carneiro 1964; Cascudo 1965; Freyre 1956 and 1963; Mendonca 1935; Ramos 1956; Rodrigues 1965). Yoruba and Ewe peoples brought as slaves to Bahia introduced their system of deities and rites, which are still worshipped and practiced in cults of candomblé, umbanda, and macumba throughout Brazil, interwoven with reverence of the Catholic saints to the point of popular confusion; Yemanjá, Ogun, Shango, Nanã Buku, Oya, and others blend with the Christian figures of Santa Barbara, Santo Antonio, and the Virgin Mary (Valente 1955). The famous samba, the maracatu, and the baile are of African origin, as are such musical instruments as the cuiça and reco-reco (particularly in evidence at carnival time), and the berimbau, whose twanging notes signal the start of the capoeira fight-dance imported from Angola. Bahian recipes based on coconut, dende palm oil, shrimp, rice, pepper, spices, and other typically West African ingredients have come to symbolize the Brazilian culinary art. These and other contributions far too numerous to cite were invoked by scholars, writers, and humanists to justify reactivation of what they believed to be cultural ties unjustly relegated to inferior status.

One of the less familiar aspects of the association is its reciprocity, that of Brazilian influence in Africa, particularly along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea, to which former slaves returned during the 1800's after winning their independence in Brazil, bringing with them some of the language, skills, and religion which they had acquired during their stay in the Western Hemisphere (Freyre 1962a; Helfritz 1964; Verger 1953). Brazilian diplomats and visitors in Nigeria, Dahomey, Togo, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, and Cameroun found Catholic families with such Brazilian names as Silva, Borges, da Rocha, and Souza. The Brazilian Quarter of Lagos, with architectural styles reminiscent of Bahian sobrados, the existence of a small Union of Brazilian Descendants, the survival of Brazilian customs, dances, and festivals among these descendants, and the important role assumed by some of them (such as Sylvanus Olympio and Joseph Modupe Johnson) in the creation and government of their

republics suggested that these nearly forgotten cultural ties could be expanded for the growth of future political and economic relations (Olinto 1964; Penna 1967, p. 148; Souza Dantas 1967; Verger 1960). As a step in this direction, in 1963 Portuguese-speaking Romana da Conceição, originally from Recife and living in Nigeria for sixty-three years, visited Brazil for three months under the joint sponsorship of a Brazilian industrialist and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and received great attention from news media, writers, and politicians.

Sociologist Gilberto Freyre has been among those who believe that Brazil can best approach Africa through Portugal in an Afro-Luso-Brazilian Community based on the phenomenon he terms Lusotropicalism--the interpenetration of race, language, and culture that is peculiar to Portuguese colonization and which finds its highest expression in Brazilian racial democracy (Freyre 1960 and 1962b; Galvão de Souza 1957). This view, which also finds its exponents in official circles, asserts that Brazil must support Portuguese activities in Africa to avert the racial extremisms of Negro exclusivists and white segregationists, the end of Portuguese culture in Africa, the complete de-Europeanization of the continent and the danger of absorption of the Africans by either Communist or capitalist imperialism. Brazilian opinion on the question of the future status of Portuguese Guinea, Angola, and Mozambique is seriously divided. Some aver that the Portuguese interpretation of the situation is essentially correct, that its colonial policies are sound and similar to those which produced Brazilian culture, and that the uprising is entirely externally provoked (Iglezia 1961; Pinheiro 1961). Other activists, for ideological or cultural reasons, feel solidarity with the rebels and contempt for Brazil's vacillating position (Amado 1962; Chacon 1963). The largest body of opinion recognizes the complexity of Brazil's bonds to and interests in both Portugal and Africa as well as the fact that Portugal has managed to regain a semblance of law and order in the "Overseas Provinces," hence deducing that Brazil's task is to mediate tactfully in such a way as to avoid a deep future split among Brazil, Portugal, and the independent Portuguese-speaking nations that may emerge from what are presently the Portuguese colonies (Neves 1963; Portella 1961).

Economic preoccupations were among the first stimuli that brought Africa to Brazilian attention in the postwar period, although at first even official reports doubted the possibility of serious agricultural competition in the near future (Paiva 1952). Within a few years this skepticism vanished as increased African cacao and coffee production began cutting into Brazil's formerly privileged markets, and Brazil found it necessary to endeavor to coax Africa into the World Coffee Agreement and promote the organization of the Cacao Producer's Alliance. As Brazil gained confidence in its ability to compete and continued industrializing, economists and businessmen looked at Africa as a substantial new market for manufactured and semifinished goods presently produced in factories running under less than optimum capacity because of a limited internal market (Rangel 1962; Reis 1963). Trade missions and surveys revealed the potential sales list to include fabrics, shoes, chemicals and pharmaceutical products, refrigerators, stoves, lathes, household appliances, and canned goods, at prices competitive with those of traditional suppliers. In return Africa would offer petroleum, phosphates, aluminum, natural rubber, copper, cobalt, asbestos, and food and industrial oils (Fonseca 1965). Trade with Mid-Africa has in reality fluctuated without pattern but has remained at low levels, while 95 percent of Brazil's total exports to sub-Saharan Africa from 1960 to 1963 were shipped to the Republic of South

Africa, where Brazil maintains a legation in Pretoria and a consulate in Cape Town. Although Nigeria has shown greatest interest and potential as a new trade partner, several general difficulties stand in the way of Brazilian economic penetration into the Mid-African markets, principally preferences from the European Common Market enjoyed by the Associated African and Malagasy States, the dominance of established trading firms (largely European), and the partially noncomplementary nature of the economies reflected in the fact that Brazil's exports to Mid-Africa have consistently been much higher in value than its imports from that source (Ministry of Foreign Relations, African Division 1965). This imbalance restricts trade expansion because most African countries prefer bilateral exchange agreements to convertible currency arrangements.

Military sectors of Brazilian thought are not indifferent to the significance of Africa in national security, as West Africa falls within the first semicircle of defense from conventional attack and possible subversion from outside Latin America. As the largest power bordering on the South Atlantic, and given the strategic importance of the Natal-Dakar strait, Brazil has the responsibility to cooperate in the development of Africa and in keeping the continent free from Communism (Silva 1967, p. 137). In this mission of watching over the South Atlantic, the Overseas Provinces of Portugal appear as excellent bases of operation and also points of support in Brazil's attempt to increase its radius of action throughout the entire world. This is one of the key advantages for Brazil in the proposed "Afro-Luso-Brazilian Community," which spokesmen of the Salazar government have repeatedly tried to foster and which an important segment of Brazilian officialdom finds attractive and difficult to repudiate in spite of unfavorable reaction from several African nations. For this and other reasons it is impossible to separate completely Brazil's relations with Portugal from its objectives in sub-Saharan Africa.

Since the idea of national interest as the guiding principle of foreign policy led to desires for independence in international politics, and since neutralism was the predominant philosophy of disengagement from the struggle between the superpowers at his turning point in Brazilian foreign policy, an ideological discussion ensued about whether or not the Quadros-Goulart policy represented a form of neutralism, and, if so, what consequences for relations with Afro-Asia would follow. Defenders of non-alignment identified Brazil's political and economic similarities with the Afro-Asian bloc, criticized its position as a neglected ally trailing along in the wake of the industrialized West, and urged recognition of level of economic development as the watershed in international relations (Bezerra 1961; Castro 1963). Conservative opponents argued in favor of the predominance of the capitalism and Christianity-Communism and atheism dichotomy, reaffirmed the supremacy of Brazil's moral, cultural, and economic interdependence with the West, and denounced recent political dealings with the Third World as capricious, demagogical, and conducive to the extension of Communist propaganda to Brazil (Galvão de Sousa 1965; Paiva 1962). Even if Africa was usually included as part of the Third World in controversies of this type, the central issue at stake was Brazil's relationship to the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, and Cuba.

Although wide support existed among civilians and military officers for some sort of nationalistic foreign policy, uncertainty over the form it should take, uneasiness about relations with the Communist bloc, and domestic factors (including spiraling



inflation, popular unrest, and growing fears of an imminent syndicalist state) led to the coup of April 1964. The military government chose to reject the concept of independence as previously formulated and returned to close support of the United States, with emphasis on the conditional character of national sovereignty and the need for interdependence within the Free World. The philosophy of nonalignment was considered a flight from international reality, if not immoral duplicity. Diplomatic relations with Cuba were broken, but trade and representation in Eastern Europe were maintained and then increased. At first, routine and neglect overcame any hope for dynamism in the African policy, but soon favorable signs could be noticed on the part of the Foreign Ministry, if not on the part of the President of the Republic. On the occasion of the official visit to Brazil of President Senghor of Senegal, in September 1964, cultural and commercial accords were signed and Brazilian-Senegalese relations were strengthened on the basis of common bonds, both Negro and Latin (Senghor 1964). At a Rio de Janeiro university, President Senghor suggested and approved a community between Portugal and Brazil, within which the problem of autonomy of the Overseas Provinces could be discreetly and constructively handled (IBEAA 1965, p. 64). This suggestion was officially ignored by the Brazilian government, which at the time was courting Lisbon.

For the First Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, in April 1966, the Ministry of Foreign Relations (1966) prepared a special publication highlighting the Negro contribution to Brazilian culture. Brazil sent exhibitions and also judges (Valladares 1966). From August 23 to September 4, 1966, Brazil hosted the United Nations Apartheid Seminar, in which the Brazilian delegate again invoked the strong bonds uniting Brazil with Africa but declined to support mandatory sanctions against South Africa.

If the 1961-64 African policy was based on both sentimental-cultural ties and ideological-political objectives, and the 1964-65 period was characterized in the main by indifference, the policy from 1966 to the present seems to have a pragmatic, medium- and long-range economic objective as part of Brazil's drive to win new markets and increase the value of its industrial exports. Another dimension of this new phase is the promotion of unity among the developing nations in negotiating for concessions regarding terms of international trade and aid for development, as can be deduced from Brazil's energetic leadership in the second United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 1968. This latter theme has been a constant from the days of Goulart, but in the question of trade with Africa, it is instructive to note that the only two trade missions Brazil sent to Mid-Africa after the revolution of 1964 were those of 1965 and 1966. The first mission visited Senegal, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroun, and the Ivory Coast, while the second included in its itinerary South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Ghana, and the Ivory Coast. Both missions were sponsored principally by the Foreign Ministry, the Bank of Brazil, and the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the first one being made up as well by representatives from private enterprise and having as its objectives the exploratory study of increased commercial exchange between Brazil and Africa, discussion of possible governmental measures to facilitate it, and the establishment of contacts between Brazilian and African import-export firms. Since lack of regular transportation across the South Atlantic was pointed out as a factor inhibiting the growth of trade, the Brazilian Lloyd restarted the line to West Africa, previously suspended because of insufficient cargo. Also as a result of these missions, a commercial accord with Cameroun and a cultural accord with Liberia were signed.

Brazil established an honorary consulate at Abidjan in June 1966 and another in Monrovia in September 1967. Also in late 1967, embassies were installed in Addis Ababa and Nairobi, Brazil's first in East Africa. At the same time the Divisions of Africa and the Near East at the Foreign Ministry were separated from the Western European Bureau to form a Bureau of African and Near Eastern Affairs. Other indications of renewed interest in Africa in 1968 included an official visit to Brazil by the Secretary-General of Senegal's Foreign Ministry, the inauguration of an exhibition of Ghanaian art, which is to tour Brazil, and negotiations with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa) to initiate diplomatic relations.

In the preceding description and analysis, some of the intricacies and contradictions surrounding Brazilian-African relations can be discerned. Brazil's global dilemma could perhaps best be understood as a conflict among the multiple memberships to which it subscribes: Latin America, Western Hemisphere, the Western World, Luso-Brazilian World, the group of underdeveloped countries, etc. Judging from recent actions and statements of the Costa e Silva government, and Foreign Minister Magalhães Pinto in particular, Brazil can be expected to widen its scope of activity in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as in Afro-Asia as a whole. The exact form this future policy will assume is difficult to determine, because Brazil, historically speaking, is just beginning to appear as an actor in international politics and has not elected a definite, clear course of action. In addition, its aspirations and potentials as the long-heralded "Land of the Future" and rising middle-power further complicate the matter, even without delving deeper into the domestic sources of its foreign policy. Thus Brazil almost simultaneously received the South African Secretary of Industry and Commerce in Rio de Janeiro and held the Apartheid Seminar in Brasília--just as, in 1968, it is opening new embassies in Black Africa while standing alone to defend Portugal's colonial policy at the Human Rights Convention in Tehran. It has been suggested by some of the more impatient purists that Brazilian diplomacy's traditional bent for compromise solutions, for "muddling through," and for institutional, juridical means for solving international problems has been a hindrance to the achievement of its goals. Paradoxically, given the presently conflicting nature and level of priority of Brazil's interests in Africa, that tradition may in this specific case prove to be Brazil's strongest point in the medium and long run.

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