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ROLE EXPECTATIONS AS FOREIGN POLICY: SOUTH AMERICAN SECONDARY POWERS' EXPECTATIONS OF BRAZIL AS A REGIONAL POWER¹

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This article sets out how secondary powers in South America—that is, Argentina, Chile, and Venezuela—see Brazil as a regional power, as well as Brazil's strategy of using its regional powerhood to further its own ambitions of becoming a global power on the international stage. The article assesses the expectations of these three countries, specifically in terms of what kind of roles they attribute to Brazil. Following this empirical interest, the article develops a role theoretical framework for understanding the importance of Others' expectations for the role conception and enactment of the Self. The article also elaborates on the interplay of master roles and auxiliary roles in which Others become key shapers of those roles, as well as on how the role interaction between a regional power and the secondary powers is bound to their differing notions of "region," as strategically used by each as part of their foreign policy.

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This article establishes how secondary powers in South America—that is, Argentina, Chile, and Venezuela—see Brazil as a regional power. It also assesses how these states perceive Brazil’s aspiration to becoming a global power.¹ Brazil has, by mediating in crises and leading regional groups, been proactive in its quest to secure a predominant position in South America. Brazil has also sought to lead multilateral institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2005, and again in 2013.² It has made claims along with India, Japan, and Germany (G4) for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Brazil has thus tried to consolidate its regional position, from where it seeks to build a global role (Brands 2010). The country’s rise has, however, triggered among its regional relevant Others a certain set of expectations, ones which have thus far remained neglected in the studies on this emergence.

The article thus analyzes the expectations of secondary powers vis-à-vis Brazil and develops a symbolic interaction role theory framework to understand the importance of Others’ expectations for a state rising on both the regional and international scene. The article advances the argument that Others can shape and affect the way the master role and its auxiliary roles are being conceived and enacted. Status is considered synonymous to a master role, which is the most salient attribute of an actor in an asymmetrical social system, following both its material and social constitutive elements (Sandstrom, Martin, and Fine 2010, 180–81). “Regional power” and “secondary power” are thus considered master roles. The article also shows that the role-based interaction between the regional power and secondary powers are bound to these actors’ different understandings of what the region they interact in is.

Role theory has recaptured scholarly attention in foreign policy analysis (Thies 2010; Harnisch 2011; McCourt 2012). However, role theory remains “thin” in some of its theoretical assumptions. The underdevelopment in question is the importance of Others’

expectations for the enactment of a master status and its auxiliary roles. Master roles are sustained through the enactment of specific functions; that is, auxiliary roles casted in a relational way. Others may accept or reject, and compete with or follow, these roles by voicing their expectations.

Status is at the center of the definition of roles, as the latter encompasses the social position of an actor in a group and its meaning as a social category bestowed by Others (Elgström and Smith 2006, 5; Thies 2010, 2–3). This perspective brings together a positional understanding of actors within social groups, and the making of groups through their interactions. The importance of Others' expectations is key for the role conception of a state, as the latter emerge in the interaction of the self-conception side and the role expectation dimensions—the latter understood as the expectations that the Other (Alter) ascribes and expects the Self (Ego) to enact (Kirste and Maull 1996, 289).

A regional power is a state with superior material capabilities that also has a self-perception—and Others' recognition—as holding that master role within a region (Nolte 2010, 889–94). Thus, secondary powers are the second top-tier of states in a regional hierarchy. Their secondary position is determined by their relative material and social dimensions, which make possible their self-perception (and Others' recognition) as being part of a group of secondary states vis-à-vis a regional and minor powers (Flemes 2010, 103).

The underdeveloped work on expectations in role theory matches the lack of empirical studies conducted to date on Brazil's rise. Most works neglect the importance of Others' views for Brazil's ability to enact the role of regional power (Flemes 2010; Schirm 2010; Christensen 2013). Brazil needs recognition from its regional neighbors, among whom uncertainty about the potential risks of Brazil's rise are more pronounced (Malamud 2011a). Moreover, focusing on Others' expectations may illuminate whether Brazil's is a

regional power playing auxiliary roles consistently across security and economic issue-areas.

Elgström (2007) sheds light on why it is beneficial to study external views: First, Others' views can help to elucidate how far states esteem a particular state as an international actor. Second, the impact of the Ego's foreign policy depends on how the targeted state (Alter) receives and evaluates Ego's action. Finally, role expectations toward other states should also be considered an important aspect of a state's own foreign policy-making. As such, they should also reflect those relevant Others' foreign policy goals and behaviors.

The remainder of the article proceeds as follows: First, the interplay of master roles, auxiliary roles, and role expectations is presented, as is the connection between roles and regions. A description of methodology and of how the data was gathered is also provided. Second, Argentina's expectations toward Brazil are first studied with regard to what definition(s) of the region both countries hold (Latin America or South America), and how they are used in their role interactions; second, regarding regional integration initiatives; third, regarding crises in the region; and, fourth, regarding Brazil's role in the UN and the G20—that is, the Group of Twenty Finance Ministers and Central Banks Governors. The period of study for the Argentinean case covers the presidencies of Néstor Kirchner (2003–2007) and in part that of Cristina Fernández (2007–present).³ Third, the case of Chile is introduced along the same lines as that of Argentina, therein covering the presidencies of Ricardo Lagos (2000–06), Michelle Bachelet (2006–10), and Sebastian Piñera (2010–present). Fourth, Venezuela's expectations of Brazil are then analyzed, focusing on the era of the presidency of Hugo Chávez (1999–2013); specifically, following the failed coup d'état of 2002.⁴ This section also addresses Brazil's role in the relationship between

Venezuela and the United States. Finally, a comparison of the three cases is presented as part of the conclusion.

Master and Auxiliary Roles in a Region

Roles and Master Roles

Roles are the patterns of appropriate or expected behavior of an actor, which are drawn from its social position within an organized group (Elgström and Smith 2006). Roles are constituted in an interactional way. This means that the identities of actors are the products of a social process, because “*meaningful* identity affirmation does not occur outside *social* categories, such as roles” (McCourt 2011, 1605). This assignation of social identity to actors is based on the information that Alter has about Ego. One important criterion for locating a state within a social structure is its master role (Thies 2001, 2012, 2013).

Master roles are overarching positions in the international system (Thies 2001). Thies (2001, 708; 2012, 34) develops a taxonomy of states positions such as “emerging states,” “minor members,” “major members,” and “great powers.” These are ideal-types that also serve as master roles. As Thies seeks to contribute to the debate on the socialization of states within the international system, the regional level is not included in his assessment. Nevertheless, his taxonomy is a good starting point for conceptualizing regional power as a master role, and in that way capturing the dynamics of interaction between the regional and the secondary power(s) within a region. If the regional level is a key component of the international system (Hurrell 2007), then regional powerhood should be also considered as a status position of and on its own—and hence not as an auxiliary role.

(Figure 1: HERE).

Although this article follows Thies' work—which gives more weight to the importance of material structure and capabilities for enacting a master role—it differs from it in two important regards, ones that serve to complement these approaches to master roles. First, the article elaborates on the interplay of master status and its auxiliary functions from the perspective of the Others' expectations. Second, the focus is not exclusively on the process of locating a master role within a material structure, but rather on the social process of role conception. Role conception involves the Ego's own perception of its social position vis-à-vis Alter('s) position(s) and expectations (Kirste and Maull 1996).

However, a symbolic interaction perspective does not neglect the importance of structures. Not any role can be played by a state, and this choice is still partly limited by its material capabilities (McCourt 2012, 381; Thies 2012, 29). Instead, a symbolic-interactionist approach brings up to the fore the social nature of the structure, the nonreification of it, and the importance of the actors' agency capacity to cast and change roles based on the interaction Ego–Alter (McCourt 2012).

Therefore, Brazil's master role does not exclusively depend on this state's self-awareness of its predominant material position in South America. It is also about whether or not the actors of the region recognize Brazil as holding a specific status, as well as about whether the secondary powers either favor or hamper its strive for global powerhood. “Brazil can and must contribute to the construction of world order (...) conscious of its demographic, territorial, economic, and cultural weight, and of being a great democracy undergoing social transformation” (Celso Amorin, former minister of foreign affairs, in Spektor 2010, 199). However, this self-conception is also attributed by Others. For example, the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently highlighted that “Brazil is transiting from regional power to global power” (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Chile 2012). However, the recognition of Brazil's master role and its global aspiration may

differ from the type of auxiliary roles that the regional Others attribute to Brazil, depending on the issue-area at stake.

Brazil is also depicted as a “consensual hegemon” (Burgess 2008), as it seeks to downplay the use of coercion so as to reduce regional contestation in order to gain support in its quest for global powerhood (Christensen 2013, 272). Thus, the category of consensual hegemon implies that Brazil does not impose its interests on Others. Brazil rather seeks to attract South American states to a common goal, which further validates the study of Others’ expectations—despite these emanating from states positioned beneath Brazil in the regional hierarchy. If Brazil’s self-conception is regional power, then others must have attributed this social quality to Brazil as well. What others expect from Brazil matters for enacting both the master role and its auxiliary roles of leader, mediator, and coordinator, as well as for the way in which Brazil is trying to enact a global power role.

Therefore, studying Others’ role expectations helps to offset the structural approach of role theory, as inspired by Realism in international relations (see, for example, Walker 1987; Thies 2001).⁵ Instead, a symbolic interaction role theory approach connects with those social constructivist perspectives highlighting the states’ ability to constitute social identities relationally (Harnisch 2011; McCourt 2011).⁶ In fact, material capabilities are not enough for establishing a hierarchical order, as Others’ acceptance is a key precondition for a hierarchy to even exist.⁷ Otherwise, the relationship between Ego and Alter—if explained in terms of pure material power—will be informed by primacy and not by hierarchy, as the latter has to be conceived in a consensual format. Actors underneath the hegemon need to manifest some form of acceptance of the hierarchy (Clark 2011). However, acceptance does not exclude the fact that regional powers face suspicion—and even hostility and verbal resistance—at the regional level, typically in the form of fear and jealousy (cf. Prys 2010, 492). Thus, states situated beneath the top-tier state may aspire to

shape the nature and membership of a regional hierarchy—and, consequently, the lead state's master and auxiliary roles.

Auxiliary Roles and Observations

Role expectations are also relevant for understanding the process of attributing or resisting the auxiliary roles of the Self. Auxiliary roles are embedded in the master role, and as such enacting auxiliary roles is made possible by the social and material conditions of the actor (Thies 2012, 33–34)—as well as by the Others' attribution of the auxiliary roles. Likewise, the enactment of auxiliary roles is also dependent on the context wherein the actor holding a master status is expected to act (Elgström and Smith 2006, 5). Thus, secondary powers should attribute and recognize the master role of regional power to Brazil as being an achieved role.

As Brazil is recognized as having regional powerhood yet framed under the umbrella of being a consensus-seeking actor, Others' expectations are that the auxiliary roles should show signs of this concurrent technique for enacting the master role being present. Thus, secondary powers should expect Brazil to enact a leadership, mediator, coordinator, and/or security provider role, but within regional groups where the playing out of a specific auxiliary role can be shared with those Others.

If a regional group in which to interact does not exist, then secondary powers are likely to opt for the dual or shared playing of these auxiliary roles with the regional power. If these expectations are not met, then contestation of the auxiliary role dominates the interaction regional power–secondary power. Moreover, role attributors might tend to see Brazil's global role as an aspirational status (not achieved), although some may also welcome Brazil's greater involvement on the international level.

Therefore, when speaking of master roles it is also possible to understand why the same actor can enact other roles that make full use of the social identity that the master role has provided to the state in question. The master role becomes the mold for these auxiliary roles. It also possible to understand how a master role such as regional power emerges in the process of differentiation between Ego and Alter, which may create different counter roles for those Others (Harnisch 2011, 8). A lot of what it is communicated from secondary powers depends on their most salient auxiliary roles. The secondary power master role is linked to the enactment of the soft-balancer auxiliary role.⁸ In fact, Argentina, Chile, and Venezuela tend to engage in forms of soft-balancing. An example of this is institutional binding, done for the purpose of limiting Brazil's role enactments and reducing the risks of a potential excessive level of growth on its part—achieved especially by creating or supporting the formation of regional institutions (Nolte 2010, 895).

Region and Roles

The interaction between a regional and secondary power unfolds within a regional space. Even when a regional power aspires to a global power role, the importance of the region in terms of acceptance/rejection from Others may affect the constitution of the new master role. Thus, regional powers' interactions with secondary powers are bound up in the social construction of a region. In fact, the political behavior of states is the main force delineating and revising the limits of a region (Prys 2010). Region is not an objective category; it is a politically contingent phenomenon, and thus a contested one (Hurrell 2007, 241). Yet, the master roles of regional and secondary powers are built from and within a regional space. Thus, “[a] region (...) consists of two or more members in geographical proximity, is characterized by regular interactions between them, and is perceived by both internal and external actors as a distinct regional space” (Prys 2010, 485).

The aforementioned conceptualization builds on others' understandings of regions defined by their boundaries, anarchic nature, polarity, and social construction (Adler and Barnett 1998; Buzan and Waever 2003). This notion of region—in which the social interactions between Ego and Alter are key to its evolutionary form, and limits—allows for the possibility of actors having different regional narratives to choose from (Prys 2010).

In fact, Brazil traditionally depicted itself as a Latin American power, but has recently enacted a South American narrative. This choice, designed to depict a new sphere of influence for itself, actually shows the limitations of Brazil's power projection to the rest of Latin America (Spektor 2010). Nonetheless, the three secondary powers contest this narrative, and play a power game by promoting their own regional conceptualizations.⁹

Methodology and Data

Symbolic interaction relies on interpretative methods (Denzin 1990, 111). The interpretative process of role conceptions and playing takes place discursively (McCourt 2011). For this reason, the article explores the rhetoric of secondary powers in South America.

Argentina, Chile, and Venezuela are secondary powers as they have more material and social power than the region's minor powers—such as Ecuador and Uruguay—but less than that of Brazil. The latter also recognizes these three countries as secondary powers. Additionally, the secondary powers are proactive countries vis-à-vis Brazil, which makes the three of them relevant Alters.

Colombia is excluded as secondary power. The relationship with Brazil has previously been described as nonexistent, and only recently has evolved into one of mutual rediscovery under the mandate of Juan Manuel Santos (2010–present). Mexico, meanwhile, is considered a potential regional competitor to Brazil when the focus is on

Latin America. The role of the former is analyzed here from the perspectives of the three secondary powers, as Mexico offers the three secondary states a means to curb the effects of Brazil's rise.

The article focuses on the foreign policy elites from the secondary powers as they speak on behalf of each respective state. It pays attention to the voices of presidents, ministers of foreign affairs, defense, and international trade, as well as diplomats and policy advisors within the Executive. These are the key actors in the foreign policy-making of these three countries, which are all strong presidential regimes in which, consequently, the influence of the legislature remains low.

The article relies on those governmental declarations that reflect the positions of the three countries with regard to UNSC reform, their view of informal institutions such as the G20, and their initiatives and policies concerning regional cooperation groups such as the ALBA, CELAC, MERCOSUR, Pacific Alliance, and the UNASUR.¹⁰

The research also relies heavily on 84 interviews that were conducted with current and former top officials from the ministries mentioned above.¹¹ The interviews are interpreted as a whole, to recreate the narrative of each country's expectations of Brazil. Some specific interviews are also quoted, but only when needed to illustrate a particular point. The interviews were conducted in an open-ended format to give the interviewees the freedom to elaborate on their own experiences with regard to their country's relationship with Brazil.

A benefit of using interviews is having a better grasp of how foreign policy-makers have adapted the type of narrations when internal or external changes to the state took place. However, interviews also have their limitations. In fact, actors tend to recall past events in a nonlinear order, and give more importance to some facts than others. In order to counterbalance this possible bias, interviews should be contrasted with written sources. Yet there are internal aspects of the foreign policy decision-making process that may be relevant but for which written

materials do not exist. If this is the case, one needs to make sure that these facts are corroborated by other oral testimonies as well. If more testimonies do not confirm a fact, then the episode in question should be considered invalid and dispensed with accordingly.

Interviews have rarely been used by role theorists, but when treated carefully they can allow the capturing of the specific context and the specific reasons behind decision-makers' choices to enact and attribute to others a particular role. Furthermore, interviews can also supplement some of the general governmental or regional groupings' documents, as well as the rationale behind some of the fragmented declarations that have been made to the media.

Argentina's Role Expectations of Brazil

Overview of the Role Relationship

Brazil's attempt to attract Argentina to follow its leadership is "tantamount to sleeping with the enemy" (Malamud 2011a, 11). In fact, Argentina still sees itself as Brazil's (soft-)balancer in the region (Russell and Totaktlian 2003). These states' relationship has been captured by the term "competitive-partnership" (Malamud 2011b, 92). However, Argentina faces limitations on the competitive side of this relationship. "The difference between our past and present is that now we have to balance by establishing links with other countries, whereas in the past we could do this pretty much on our own."¹² The competitive-cooperative relationship makes Argentina skeptical when speaking about Brazil as a regional power. Yet when it does, it specifies the limits of regional powerhood, since "it is not a concept with unlimited plasticity (...) it is not a condition for sitting at the table with the big guys."¹³

(Figure 2: HERE)

Role Expectations in the Definition of the Region

Argentina is both a Latin and a South American country. Brazil, however, prioritizes South America (Malamud 2011a). Argentina attributes Brazil a Latin American regional power role. It does so to play on the concept of multiple regions, thereby hoping to prevent Brazil from becoming a too strong power in South America. By showing the openness, and different possible levels, of regionality—that is, Latin and/or South America—Argentina tries to position itself as being similar to its neighbor, as well as the natural (soft-)balancer to Brazil in South America. “For us, a regional power should be for the entire Latin American region and not exclusive to South America (...) and there is no such actor in the region who has the capabilities to cover the whole of Latin America.”¹⁴

Argentina plays the role of soft-balancer by making tacit alliances with other actors using a similar regional conceptualization. The use of such alliances to limit Brazil’s regional powerhood demonstrates Argentina’s secondary power master role, since it uses its relations with Chile and Venezuela—as well as with Mexico, which it is seeking to further incorporate into South America—when it communicates its expectations to Brazil as a Latin American regional power. Mexico is seen as a strong competitor to Brazil (Malamud and Gardini 2012). Hence, this role attribution to Brazil is in no way a benign act, as the intention is to hamper its exclusive exertion of the regional power role—as well as to create options beyond South America and Brazil, so as to prevent the latter’s possible exertion of regional domination. Moreover, Argentina’s playing of the role of soft-balancer, specifically with its invocation of the Latin American region, has invigorated a geographical space that aligns with the social constructions of new regional schemes, such as the CELAC.

Role Expectations in Regional Integration Initiatives and Regional Crises

Brazil has embraced the CELAC with relative skepticism, whereas Argentina has become increasingly more enthusiastic about the grouping because it brings together Mexico and Brazil under one institutional umbrella (Tokatlian 2013, 28). In fact, Argentina recognizes that Brazil will not benefit more than other countries in this group given that Central America is a disputed area of influence. Thus, Brazil's projection in Central America within the CELAC is where it might reveal its limitations as a regional power, specifically in its difficulties to perform the leader auxiliary role. Moreover, the situation tends to enable Argentina to play on the need of Brazil to include, and cooperate with, its neighbor if it wants to advance some issues within this institutional setting.

Argentina sees Brazil as a partner in the sustenance of the MERCOSUR (Taiana 2006, 12), which involves a symmetrical view of Brazil (Malamud 2011b). While Argentina continues to recognize Brazil's leading role in this integration scheme, it is nevertheless a role expectation voiced in anticipation of reciprocity—as Argentina, in return, expects recognition of a leadership role for itself in the MERCOSUR. In fact, both countries exerted dual leadership and mediator roles within the MERCOSUR to impede the breakdown of democracy in Paraguay in 1996, 1999, and 2000. As Argentina attributes a similar role to Brazil as it does to itself, it seeks to hamper any action by Brazil that might displace Argentina from its sharing of the leader and mediator roles. As the MERCOSUR has become a political platform that may serve Brazil's own power aspirations, Argentina has seen in the further inclusion of Venezuela in the group the emergence of a potential ally whose presence could help balance any possible displacement by Brazil (Malamud 2011a, 11). In this sense, the differentiation between Argentina and Brazil is on the master role that both have, as they exert similar auxiliary roles. Yet, it is at Brazil's discretion to create and give Argentina the space for sharing functions in the MERCOSUR.

The UNASUR has been recognized as a Brazilian project intended to be used for advancing its global aspirations (Brands 2010). Instead, Argentina communicates to Brazil the need to share the leader role in this regional group, and reciprocity from Brazil is a sine qua non condition for Argentina to validate the former's leadership role within this institution. "It seems that Brazil also allows us to be leaders where we have the expertise for the good functioning or institutionalization of the UNASUR."¹⁵

Reciprocity also occurs regarding the role of mediator in the region. Most responses to crises have been managed within the UNASUR—such as those of secessionist movements in Bolivia (2008), the issue of U.S. military bases on Colombian soil, the border tensions between Venezuela and Colombia (2010), and Ecuador's police crisis that would jeopardize the country's democratic stability (2010) (Nolte and Wehner 2013). Argentina recognizes the importance of Brazil when it comes to calling for the peaceful resolution of such conflicts, and to bringing opposing factions together to talk, but these are seen ultimately as being joint ventures with other countries.

We are all leaders when it comes to solving conflicts and crises, as it is the institution which acts as a mediator (...) it is the institution, and not Brazil the mediator, as we [Argentina] are as active as Brazil in mediating.¹⁶

Role Expectations at the International Level

Argentina speaks of Brazil as a regional power. However, such a master role is delimited only to the region, and is not seen as being equivalent to global powerhood. In fact, it is considered beyond Argentina's reach to bestow the recognition of such status, as Argentina sees the U.S. as the main attributor of whether a state holds a global role.

We were extremely astonished by Brazil's attempt to play a role globally when it tried to mediate between Iran and the rest of the UNSC (...). It is clear that

the response from the U.S. was “go back to your regional affairs as this is not your place.”¹⁷

However, Argentina continues to deny its neighbor the global power role so as to hamper its rise, especially given that Argentina itself has not been incorporated into the bigger picture by Brazil. Argentina is thus seeking to prevent an increase in their already asymmetrical relationship. Moreover, Argentina’s fear is that Brazil will no longer need the region—and thus Argentina—if Brazil achieves global power status. Hence, Argentina’s strategy toward Brazil is to try to restrain its emergence, as well as to ensure that mutual dependency between them is always strong (Malamud 2011b, 92–93). “We want a powerful Brazil that benefits all of us, but we see sometimes Brazil wanting to benefit only itself when it wants a permanent seat in the UNSC.”¹⁸

In the G20, meanwhile, Argentina sees Brazil as an ally—as both countries jointly coordinate positions (Petrella 2011, 90). However, Argentina sees the G20 as a U.S.-driven enterprise. The view within this informal institution is one of cooperation, as both countries defend similar governance principles in light of the existing Global North–South divide. Argentina sees Brazil as acting in the role of an ally, as there is a structural symmetry given by the setting. Moreover, Argentina also makes clear it has other partnership options within the G20 (Petrella 2011), so that Brazil is more inclined to incorporate and listen to it within this institution.

Chile’s Role Expectations of Brazil

Overview of the Role Relationship

Chile is a reliable partner for Brazil, as it follows the principles of respecting and abiding by international law and contracts (Malamud 2011a). This view is also aligned with Chile’s global trade role whose first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) priorities were established

outside of South America—that is, in Europe, North America, and Asia. In fact, Chile prefers to pursue its FTA policy in a bilateral way and not within regional groupings (Wehner 2011a).

Chile's bilateral preference also permeates its relationship with Brazil, as it is also how Chile approaches its dealings with this country—the latter, however, would prefer Chile's stronger commitment to Brazil's initiatives for regional integration. Chile attributes to Brazil a leadership role in the region, whose main quality should be consensus. This type of leadership has dual effects as, on the one hand, Chile expects from Brazil inclusion in leadership initiatives in the region, but, on the other, it also gives Chile enough room to pursue its own strategy of preventing “regional” entrapment in the different integration schemes of South America—with the purpose of creating extra-regional options so as to reduce the existing asymmetry with Brazil (Wehner 2011b). Nonetheless, ultimately it is at Brazil's discretion whether or not to incorporate Chile into its leadership initiatives in the South American region.

(Figure 3: HERE).

Role Expectations in the Definition of the Region

Chile tries to prevent itself from falling into an exclusive South American region, mainly because of its difficult bilateral relationships with Bolivia and Peru. Yet, this Latin American emphasis is also a way of keeping its options open with regard to Brazil. Chile has, especially under Piñera's government, sought to incorporate Mexico as a partner (Gobierno de Chile 2011), and also sees that country as potentially playing a balancer role vis-à-vis Brazil in Latin America. In fact, Chile feels that it has more in common with Mexico than with Brazil regarding its foreign economic policy agenda.

What Chile has also done is to employ different regional views—including a hemispheric one so as to maintain a good relationship with the U.S.—rather than opting exclusively for South America. “There are more regions than South America, such as the Americas and Latin America. We are part of all of them, though Brazil would rather prefer that we have a more salient South American vocation.”¹⁹ In this way, Chile has distanced itself from Brazil’s notion of South America while also recognizing the regional power role of that country—as well as, potentially, of Mexico. In this sense, Brazil wants exclusivity in this role prescription. Chile’s role attribution to Brazil alongside incorporating Mexico as a possible important player in the region suggests that its strategy is to soft-balance Brazilian regional foreign policy interests.

Role Expectations in Regional Integration Initiatives and Regional Crises

The necessity for regional groups is a Brazilian notion; Chile would instead prefer a region without groups that restrict its economic sovereignty. Chile prefers regional organizations that only coordinate political and security issues, but which do not involve the economic integration or trade negotiations that it considers a hindrance to its own development—such as is the case with the attempt by Brazil to negotiate the Free Trade Association of the Americas (FTAA) as one block, a process which has stalled since 2005. In these negotiations, Chile ascribed a leadership role to the U.S. rather than to Brazil.

Role ambiguity emerges in the case of Chile regarding its expectations of Brazil, as it downplayed the latter’s leadership role when it created the MERCOSUR and then invited Chile to become a full member of the group. Nonetheless, Argentina and Brazil accommodated and accepted Chile’s desire to have an associate status within it. Moreover, Chile recognizes the MERCOSUR as an Argentinean and Brazilian initiative. Yet, Chile

also seeks to reduce its economic and political dependence on Brazil and the MERCOSUR by broadening its trade options beyond Latin America (Wehner 2011a).

This skeptical view of regional initiatives, one that results in ongoing ambiguity in terms of expectations and attributions of a leadership role to Brazil, is concordant with the prioritization that Chile gives to its bilateral relations in South America. Chile's reservations about integration schemes were well expressed by former minister of foreign affairs Mariano Fernández (2009–10) after leaving his post,

The multilateral efforts for integration in Latin America do not have a happy destiny. For this reason, from the beginning of the *Concertación* governments, and without abandoning the integration spirit, [Chile] also uses the practical and effective way of bilateral accords on the Latin American continent; like, for example, the ambitious Treaty of Integration of Maipú signed between Chile and Argentina (Fernández 2010, 4).

More recently, Chile has become an active member of the UNASUR as it is not a binding project (in terms of restricting this country's sovereignty). During Michelle Bachelet's government, Chile held the first pro tempore presidency of this institution. "For Chile it was not an option to be outside of the UNASUR (...) we wanted to be able to shape the institutions of the UNASUR from within."²⁰ Yet, Chile is still rather skeptical about the direction that the UNASUR may take in the future under Brazil's leadership (Gamboa 2011, 13). "We are an important ally for Brazil in the UNASUR (...) but we are also including other regional initiatives in order to diversify our options."²¹

Regarding the UNASUR's security agenda, Chile works—as its main partner—together with Argentina by exerting a dual leadership role in this issue-area. However, Chile also perceives that this leadership role is aligned with Brazil's own security agenda

and thus is made possible by that country. Hence, Chile is willing to recognize Brazil's auxiliary role in the UNASUR if it allows in return a sharing of the stage on security issues.

Chile was also an active country in the formation of the Pacific Alliance. This initiative has created distance between Chile and Brazil because it has brought Mexico into South America, does not include Brazil in the project, and because it attempts to soft-balance Brazil to prevent its possible regional hegemony (Malamud-Rikles 2012). Working together with Argentina—as well as Colombia and Mexico—is also a means for Chile to constrain Brazil's power within the CELAC. Thus, Chile recognizes Brazil's position at the top of the regional hierarchy, yet seeks to prevent their social asymmetry from increasing—done by resorting to tactics of institutional binding in the UNASUR and the CELAC at the same time as investing in the building of alternative regional groups like the Pacific Alliance.

In addition, Chile recognizes, without many “buts,” Brazil's auxiliary roles of mediator, facilitator, and crises manager in cases of regional strife. Brazil is seen as the main actor when it comes to resolving regional crises in South America. However, Brazil's mediation role would perhaps not be recognized by Chile if it was to be exerted outside of the UNASUR.²² Whereas Chile sees Brazil as the main mediator in regional crises, it does not recognize the same role when Chile is part of the problem—such as in the dispute between Bolivia and Chile (2003) over access to the sea for the former. Brazil offered to mediate in what Chile considers to be a bilateral and not a regional problem (Tokatlian 2013, 30).

In addition, Chile's view of Brazil's role in the peacekeeping operation in Haiti (MINUSTAH) is one of symmetry. In fact, Chile sees this mission not as an exclusively Brazilian initiative, but as a U.N. initiative wherein the responsibilities for coordination and management lie predominantly with South American powers, mainly Brazil and Chile

(joint leadership), while also including the participation of other countries like the U.S., Canada, and France as well as of Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, and Uruguay.

There are many countries contributing with forces to the peacekeeping operation (...) there is a myth here that this is an initiative solely led by Brazil. The main responsibility is with all the Latin American countries involved in this operation.²³

Role Expectations at the International Level

Chile supports Brazil's claim for a permanent seat at the UNSC for bilateral and strategic reasons, as part of the recognition of the latter's regional power role. Yet, it is not exactly clear whether this support is entirely explained by the relationship with Brazil or rather by the relationships with the other G4 member states. Chile supports the G4's claim for a permanent seat at the UNSC, in line with the interest of deepening the good relationships built in recent decades with Germany and Japan. Moreover, Chile has also granted such support to India as a way of creating the conditions for a possible FTA negotiation. In fact, Brazil's claim for a permanent seat at the UNSC is seen by Chile as not being realizable in the near future because of the existing veto players. Hence, the costs of supporting Brazil's claim are low for Chile, and the gains—in terms of keeping up the good relationships with the G4 members—high. What Chile expects in return from supporting Brazil's claim for a permanent seat is that the latter listens to its regional peers—and thus to Chile—on the future steps it might take, especially on those matters regarding the Latin American region (Piñera 2011).

Chile recognizes Brazil's regional power role and its economic importance, yet both countries have different perspectives on economic governance issues given Chile's quest to preserve its independency in this domain from the rest of the South American countries.

In the context of the G20, of which Chile is not a member, it does not recognize Brazil as holding the leader, mediator, or voice of the region auxiliary roles. Instead, Chile voices its expectations about G20 governance issues through Mexico. Chile feels that it could be a G20 member due to its expertise on global trade and the strength of its national economy. In fact, Chile sought, with the support of France, an invitation to the G20 presidential meeting in November 2010 in South Korea (but did not succeed). Recently, Mexico invited Chile as an active participant to the G20 meeting in Los Cabos, Mexico (*La Tercera* 2012). Thus, Chile denies Brazil the role of being the voice of South America in this forum, and it attributes the role of leader and agenda-setter to the U.S., and that of communication channel to Mexico.

Venezuela's Role Expectations of Brazil

Overview of the Role Relationship

Venezuela is a revolutionary and an anti-status quo country, not necessarily for its methods but ultimately for its objectives. One of these goals is to offer a leadership alternative in South America (Trinkunas 2011, 17–24). This ambition shapes the ambivalent relationship holds with Brazil, one that oscillates between cooperation and competition. Venezuela attributes to Brazil the regional power master role, but that does not exclude the possibility that Venezuela could also enact the same role and the leader auxiliary role, whose outcome would be the redefinition of South America's order. As Hugo Chávez stated, "Brazil's leadership is important, but there should not only be one leader. We need many leaderships in Latin America" (*Diario Las Americas* 2008). On the cooperation side, Venezuela sees Brazil as being a communication bridge with those states inside and outside the region who are opposed to the global projection of the Bolivarian revolution.

(Figure 4: HERE).

Role Expectations in the Definition of the Region

The South American dimension has always been a latent part of Venezuelan thinking, but one which became salient when Chávez came to power. The key turning point in enacting a South American narrative was when Venezuela became an associate member of the MERCOSUR (2004).²⁴ In fact, the process of becoming an active member of South America was part of the National Plan of Socioeconomic Development 2001–2007 (República Bolivariana 2001).

As Venezuela's rhetoric against the U.S. increased (Bonfili 2010), the idea of having a closed region became part of its maneuvering. For the Bolivarian regime, the U.S. is the main security threat (Trinkunas 2011, 20–30). Venezuela's prioritization of South America and the Caribbean, rather than Latin America, is designed to exclude the U.S.—as Central America is a disputed zone of influence where the U.S. still carries strong weight despite Venezuela's relationship with Nicaragua under Ortega and its decisive support for the launching of the CELAC.

In fact, an important foreign policy goal is to support social movements in Central America so as to contest those governments following the U.S. and its free trade policies. Furthermore, priority is also given to the Caribbean region, and especially Cuba, as well as to South America—in order to protect national sovereignty from external intervention (República Bolivariana 2007, 137, 143). In this sense, Venezuela's priority for a closed South American region matches Brazil's dominant South American discourse, and also shows that Venezuela's fear of possible hegemony concerns the U.S. and not Brazil. However, divergence still exists between Brazil and Venezuela over what South America

is for, with both presenting different alternatives for regional integration—and thus competing with each other for the exertion of a more attractive auxiliary leadership role.

Role Expectations in Regional Integration Initiatives and Regional Crises

Venezuela has postulated that regional groupings in South America should have a clear social component for the Bolivarian revolution to successfully grow regionally. In fact, Venezuela expressed its desire to join a new MERCOSUR, and not the old one driven by neoliberalism. The Bolivarian idea creates competition for Brazil's economic and political positions on regional integration schemes. When then president Chávez stated that “the MERCOSUR is our destiny” (*The Economist* 2005), or “this is our place, our essence” (*El Tiempo* 2012), he also expected an accommodating policy from Brazil, so as to help the country develop a pillar in the institution—upon the basis of a strong commitment to develop social policies.

This pattern of competing visions between Brazil and Venezuela also unfolds within the UNASUR. In fact, Venezuela has tried to seize control over this group (Brands 2010, 37), which has hampered Brazil's goal of using it as a platform from which to redefine its own sphere of influence (Malamud 2011a, 8). However, Venezuela expected more regarding defense issues from those cooperating within this forum, specifically through its South American Defense Council (CDS). Venezuela wanted a CDS that replicated a NATO-like alliance, although Brazil's goal of having a forum in which to jointly discuss and coordinate on how best to tackle security challenges in the region would ultimately prevail (Nolte and Wehner 2013).

Venezuela expects that Brazil creates the necessary space for the former to play a leadership role in the UNASUR, specifically within its different existing subgroups. In this group, Venezuela attributes to Brazil the coordinator role as a way to lessen Brazil's

projection of its leadership role. Moreover, Venezuela's support for the UNASUR is not only because it can use it as an umbrella under which to shelter itself from the U.S., but also as a way to project its secondary power status in the region—and thus can exert leadership from within this regional organization.²⁵

Brazil needs us and we need Brazil in the UNASUR, it is a matter of mutual dependency, yet we were encouraged to create our own spaces of integration from the beginning of the Revolution (...) other spaces of integration create more leaderships.²⁶

Venezuela's ALBA project competes with Brazil's regional leadership aspirations, and is where Venezuela does not have a direct competitor over the leader role. The ALBA promotes the "virtues" of the Bolivarian revolution in Latin America. Venezuela challenges Brazil's regional position by courting and gaining support from, as ALBA members, countries such as Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, and Nicaragua (Gerbasi 2012). Recently, Venezuela would lead the launching of the CELAC as another arena in which to exert leadership and institutionally bind Brazil (Tokatlian 2013), as well as in which to create a forum for dialogue over political and strategic issues with Central American states and Mexico. Venezuela thus attributes the regional power role to Brazil, but it also contends the functioning of it by offering alternatives for regional integration—with the purpose of reducing its existing social asymmetry with Brazil.

Venezuela recognizes the UNASUR as the mediator for regional crises, wherein Brazil is also an actor. In fact, the UNASUR had to mediate in the Colombia–Venezuela crisis of 2010 (Nolte and Wehner 2013).

It means a lot that the new regional organization (...) prevented the possibility of a fratricide war. [Néstor Kirchner, as the UNASUR Secretary-

General] deserves all our gratitude and our recognition for its patient, diligent, and efficient mediating role (Chávez in *El Universal*, 2010).

Thus, Venezuela sees Brazil as a mediator in cases where its intervention is the last resort, either within the UNASUR framework or on its own—especially in its relationship with Colombia and the U.S., which means Venezuela’s validation of Brazil’s master role.

We expect from Brazil that it mediates, especially if we have serious or extreme problems with Colombia, as everyone knows that behind Colombia is the U.S. (...) Brazil’s actions could ameliorate tensions with the Americans.²⁷

Role Expectations at the International Level

Venezuela supports Brazil’s claim for having a permanent seat in the UNSC, as a reflection of Brazil’s regional status. Venezuela also perceives that an agreement on permanent seats will be difficult to achieve because of the different interests at the U.N. However, this support does not involve attributing to Brazil the role of being the exclusive voice for the region or the recognition of a major power role for it. Venezuela has also other reasons to support a permanent UNSC seat for Brazil. First, Venezuela believes that if Brazil does eventually gain a seat in the UNSC it will not allow external interference in the region. Second, Brazil would possibly be able to hamper the U.S.’ interests in the UNSC if regional affairs were discussed there (Chávez 2011). Third, Venezuela sees Brazil as a reliable member and a trustworthy communication channel with the moderate states belonging to the UNSC.

When it comes to Brazil’s participation in the G20, Venezuela does not have any significant expectations. It simply does not see Brazil as fulfilling a role there, as this

setting is seen as the expression of U.S. hegemony. However, the picture changes in the context of the bilateral relationship Venezuela–U.S. In Venezuela’s attempt to build a multipolar system, Brazil is seen as being a key actor. Venezuela has developed a foreign policy of alliance-building with antisystemic states, which is concordant with the policy of vilifying and depicting the U.S. as a threat (Malamud 2011a, 12). Rather than perceiving it as a military guardian, Venezuela sees Brazil as a communication channel should tensions escalate with the U.S. Within this context, it also attributes to Brazil, as a last resort, the potential role of mediator with the U.S.

Conclusions

This article analyzed the importance of Others’ expectations for the constitution and enactment of the master role and auxiliary roles of the Self. This analysis is conducted in light of the interplay of the regional power and secondary powers in South America, the latter as communicators of expectations to the regional power. The article conceptualizes regional power as a master role bringing together a positional and interactional understanding of status at the regional level.

Further, the article connected master and auxiliary roles, as the former become the mold for performing the set of auxiliary roles. It also demonstrated how the role-based interactions between regional power and secondary power are also bound to their respective conceptual understandings of their region. In fact, it shows that actors used their regional identities strategically—via roles—to contest the rise of the regional power.

Moreover, the three cases highlight some interesting similarities and differences in the expectations voiced. The secondary powers recognize for Brazil the regional power master role, as an achieved status. They also attribute and expect from Brazil that it conceives and performs a set of auxiliary roles at the regional level, such as leader, mediator, crises manager, and/or coordinator. However, these roles are (except for coordinator) to be

exerted in joint ways or under the umbrella of regional institutions, where diffusion on “who” really leads is projected. These expectations are welcomed and incorporated by Brazil, especially when it comes to regional crises and to the making of security concepts for regional groups like the UNASUR.

The three secondary powers also behave according to their own expectations, as part of their tactics for binding the regional power within regional institutions. Whereas Brazil fulfills the expectations of secondary powers by sharing the regional stage with them when it comes to the performance of auxiliary roles in regional settings or bilateral contexts, this also indicates the importance of their social interaction as much as of the inevitability of social structures. Brazil is in part the actor allowing Others to enact auxiliary roles in a joint manner. Brazil enacts the master role and its auxiliary roles through the technique of depicting itself as a consensus-seeking power. In fact, the way it enacts—and is expected to perform—regional duties show traces of this concurrence. This particular way of conceiving and enacting both the master and auxiliary roles are also consistent with the expectations voiced by secondary powers. Whenever Brazil seems to be leaving behind its consensus-seeking ethos regional Others react, and consequently contest the roles.

Although the cases all talk about Brazil as a regional power, the differences in their role expectations are also significant. Argentina and Chile reveal Brazil’s power limitations because they attribute such a master role to the whole of Latin America, wherein Mexico may also compete for this leadership. Venezuela is the only country that attributes the master role in a closed regional space, done due to its own security concerns.

Venezuela has also created its own regional group from where it can exert leadership without internal disputation. Like Venezuela, Chile has also created along with others a regional group that excludes Brazil and brings Mexico into the latter’s sphere of influence as a possible balancer to it. Yet, Chile does not seek to use the Pacific Alliance to exert

leadership, given its own symmetry with Colombia and Mexico's higher status. Interestingly Argentina, in holding in a more salient way the role of Brazil's soft-balancer, does not develop regional initiatives independently from the latter; Venezuela, meanwhile, is the only country that attributes a mediator role of last resort to Brazil.

In addition, Argentina's and Venezuela's recognition of Brazil's regional powerhood are not correlated with a recognition of Brazil's global master role, although they are receptive to the stronger presence of Brazil in the international arena. Chile, in contrast, does ascribe a global role to Brazil. However, the major differences between the secondary powers on this point are regarding the performance of auxiliary roles at this level. Chile and Venezuela recognize Brazil's right to join the UNSC, whereas Argentina rejects such an option. At the same time, Chile and Venezuela are aware of the veto players involved, making any agreement on new permanent seats seem to them liable to be a long-term and protracted process.

Argentina sees Brazil as an ally in issues of global economic governance. However, Venezuela does not have expectations with regards to Brazil in the G20, as for it this is solely a U.S. enterprise. Whereas Chile recognizes Brazil's economic weight, it attributes the leader role to the U.S. and that of communication channel to Mexico within the G20—since these are the states with which Chile has greatest similarity vis-à-vis its economic model. Thus, Chile does not recognize Brazil as the voice of South America in economic matters, and Argentina and Venezuela do not recognize such a role in both security and economic issues—that despite Venezuela's support for Brazil's claim to a permanent seat in the UNSC. For Venezuela, this attribution is designed to keep the U.S. away from South America, thus ascribing to Brazil more a role that resembles that of potential veto player should the U.S. undertake any initiatives against Venezuela.

The role expectations of these three secondary powers also indicate that Brazil is not—or at least not seen as—a consistent regional power performing the regional and auxiliary roles in a balanced way across the security and economic domains. This is partly because of Brazil's own limitations, and partly because of the expectations of the relevant regional Others. The secondary powers do not allow Brazil's rise to simply unfold in an unrestricted manner. In fact, the three countries seek to prevent a future in which Brazil will have a diminished need for regional partners, an outcome likely if its aspiration to being heard by great powers increases and starts to be accepted at the global level.

As a result the secondary powers, aware of the existing social asymmetric system, are keen to prevent the emergence of Brazilian regional hegemony—while they also do not want the gap in the social regional hierarchy to increase further. Moreover, the three states perceive that attributing or not major powerhood to Brazil on global issues is outside of their own reach. It is mainly the U.S. and the other permanent members of the UNSC that are able to assign this master role. In this sense, one aspect that needs further inquiry is whether this master role not being granted by countries such as Argentina and Venezuela has negative consequences for Brazil at the global level—that is, whether the great powers see Brazil as lacking “regional” legitimacy for its global power status aspiration.

Although this article has focused on the interaction of secondary powers and regional power in South America, it has also advanced generally the importance of the relationship between roles and status theoretically—something that has not been consistently articulated in the role theory literature on foreign policy analysis. Moreover, role theory also offers the possibility to capture the transition from one master role to another, since it adds to status an interactional—and thus dynamic—dimension. Finally, role expectations as developed in this article open up a potentially fruitful avenue of research for the regional powers research agenda. Role expectations can be a useful analytical tool for determining

the extent to which a regional power is seen by other states as holding this particular master status also in other regions—be the regional context more conflictive or amity-based than the case presented here—as well as the reasons and processes through which other states accept or reject the master and auxiliary roles (or new ones) in both the regional and international systems.

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NOTES

¹ I refer to Brazil as an aspirant to global powerhood because regional others show skepticism toward Brazil's global ventures, and thus it lacks recognition from regional Others (Malamud 2011a).

² Brazil's candidate for the WTO in 2005 was not elected. Most countries of South America supported the Uruguayan candidate (Malamud 2011a). In 2013 Roberto Carvalho de Azevêdo was elected as the director general.

³ The years 2012–13 are excluded from the analysis; the same applies for the other two cases.

⁴ Hugo Chávez died March 5, 2013. President Nicolás Maduro has kept the foreign policy goals of the Bolivarian revolution, despite the economic difficulties at home. Maduro also sees the U.S. as a threat. Recently Maduro proposed to revitalize the group the Bolivarian Alternative for the People of Our America (ALBA) as an attempt to reassert Venezuela's leadership in Latin America (*El Nuevo Herald* 2013).

⁵ In fact, in his seminal contribution to role theory Kalevi Holsti (1970) criticizes realist accounts for placing restrictions on the number of roles that a state can enact—one can, in fact, empirically observe the existence of a broader role-set among decision-makers.

⁶ For a discussion on the positioning of role theory in the grand theory debates, especially within realism and constructivism, see Breuning (2011).

⁷ On regional hierarchies and orders, see Lake (2007). On the interplay of hierarchy, hegemony, and legitimacy see Clark (2011).

⁸ On the connection between balance of power and role theory, see Holsti (1970); on soft-balancing and its tactics, see Saltzman (2012).

⁹ This does not mean that Brazil has completely left aside its Latin American vocation, which is invoked whenever it is considered useful for the achievement of its goals.

¹⁰ The ALBA (2004) is led by Venezuela and brings together left-oriented countries such as Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, and Nicaragua. The CELAC (The Community of States of Latin America and the Caribbean), established in 2011, involves all Latin American and Caribbean countries. It is a political organization to discuss political and security issues. The MERCOSUR (The Common Market of the South), created in 1991, includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay (currently suspended), Uruguay, and Venezuela. The MERCOSUR is an imperfect customs union. The Pacific Alliance, legally launched in 2012, brings

together the states (Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru) with a free trade vocation. The UNASUR (The Union of South American Nations), constituted in 2008, involves all South American countries plus Guyana and Surinam. The UNASUR's main area of activity is to address issues of security.

¹¹ 26 interviews were conducted in Argentina, 28 in Chile, and 30 in Venezuela in 2010/11. The interviews were conducted on the guarantee of anonymity, so as to allow current and former high-level officials to speak in a sincere way about their country's relationship with Brazil.

¹² Personal communication with the Ambassador (I), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 9, 2010.

¹³ Personal communication with the Ambassador (II), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 3, 2010.

¹⁴ Personal communication with a former undersecretary of foreign affairs, December 7, 2010.

¹⁵ Personal communication with the Undersecretary at the Ministry of Defense, November 26, 2010.

¹⁶ Personal communication with the Ambassador (IV), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 1, 2010.

¹⁷ Personal communication with the Director of Unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 10, 2010.

¹⁸ Personal communication with the Ambassador (V), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, December 6, 2010.

¹⁹ Personal communication with a former minister of foreign affairs, April 13, 2011.

²⁰ Personal communication with the former undersecretary (I) of foreign affairs, April 18, 2011.

²¹ Personal communication with the former undersecretary (II) of foreign affairs, April 21, 2011.

²² See the episodes of crises in the section on Argentina.

²³ Personal communication with a former minister of foreign affairs April 13, 2011.

²⁴ Full membership of the MERCOSUR was achieved on August 1, 2012.

²⁵ In fact, Alí Rodríguez, a former top official of Venezuela, was the UNASUR's general secretary from May 2012 until August 2013.

²⁶ Personal communication with a high-level official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 18, 2011.

²⁷ Personal communication with a high-level official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 6, 2011.