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Latin America's Middle Powers in the United Nations: Brazil and Mexico in Comparative Perspective

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Abstract

This study is about the comparative behavior of Brazil and Mexico in United Nations (UN) security affairs. It examines why these two Latin American states vary substantially in their commitment to the UN Security Council (SC) and international peacekeeping, despite having similar structural capabilities. In order to analyze this puzzle, this article argues that policy differences between countries are unrelated to the general willingness to cooperate internationally. Most foreign affairs departments probably do tend to have a strong interest in active engagement of their countries in the UN, as it will surely increase their role in government and abroad. Nevertheless, diplomats in foreign ministries across the world face different types of institutional and social constraints, which in turn affect their ability to cooperate with the UN. In this sense, the major difference between Brazil and Mexico is their bureaucratic setting and the role exercised by their respective diasporas. In the former case, the foreign ministry has relative bureaucratic autonomy and is less concerned for developing formal ties with their nationals living abroad. This bureaucratic setting enables Brazilian diplomacy to focus on global issues, where commitment towards UN security affairs plays a key role. By contrast, the Mexican diplomacy is constrained by a highly fragmented foreign policy decision-making process and by their continuous attempts to reach-out diasporas; thus leading diplomats to focus on bilateral affairs, at the expense of security cooperation with the UN. The findings of this study contributes to understand the politics of UN peacekeeping burden-sharing, by providing an explanation of why some middle-powers supply troops and resources in favor of UN peace efforts, while others potential contributors prefer to free-ride.

Resumen

Este trabajo presenta un análisis comparado sobre el comportamiento de Brasil y México en la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU), especialmente en el área de seguridad. Se examina por qué estos dos Estados contribuyen de manera desigual al Consejo de Seguridad y a las operaciones de mantenimiento de la paz, a pesar de poseer estructuras y capacidades similares. Para responder a este enigma, el artículo argumenta que las diferencias entre ambos países están disociadas de la voluntad general por cooperar internacionalmente. La gran mayoría de los ministerios de política exterior probablemente suelen estar interesados en involucrarse activamente en el sistema de la ONU, ya que dicha medida incrementa su presencia en el gobierno y en el exterior. No obstante, los diplomáticos en

los ministerios de asuntos exteriores enfrentan diferentes tipos de limitaciones institucionales y sociales, las cuales pueden afectar su habilidad de cooperar con la ONU. En este sentido, la mayor diferencia entre Brasil y México está dada por el contexto burocrático y el peso ejercido por sus respectivas diásporas. En el caso brasileño, el ministerio de política exterior posee relativa autonomía burocrática y está menos ocupado en desarrollar lazos formales con sus conacionales en el exterior. Por el contrario, la diplomacia mexicana está limitada por una toma de decisiones fragmentada en materia de política exterior y por los continuos esfuerzos por vincularse con su diáspora. Esta condición lleva a los diplomáticos mexicanos a enfocar su atención en los asuntos bilaterales, a costa de la cooperación multilateral con la ONU. Los resultados de este estudio contribuyen al entendimiento de las políticas de compartición de costos en operaciones de paz, al proveer una explicación del porqué algunas potencias medias suministran tropas y recursos a favor de los esfuerzos de paz de la ONU, mientras que otros contribuyentes potenciales prefieren gorronear.

Introduction

For the first time, since the collapse of the Argentine economy in 2002, it is now evident that there are only two giants in Latin America: Brazil and Mexico. The two regional powers have structural similarities: large populations, territorial density, massive poverty coexisting with high concentrations of wealth, large armies, analogous economic indicators, industrial capacity, and regional influence. Yet, Latin America's giants have traditionally practiced very different international roles and foreign policies. Nowhere are these differences more evident than in the United Nations (UN), where both Brazil and Mexico have followed very different paths. For instance, Brazil has contributed troops for peace operations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Brazil's active role in peacekeeping (PK) provides a solid foundation for its zealous aspiration to become a permanent member of the Security Council (SC). Conversely, Mexico has been resistant to engage its armed forces in any international operation under the UN flag and has rarely occupied a non-permanent seat on the SC. In fact, Mexico, unlike Brazil, does not aspire to have a permanent seat in the exclusive council. What explains these differences among these two middle-powers? If the two countries have similar domestic conditions, face analogous international and regional constrains, and have undergone transitions to democracy, then what explains their divergent policies in the UN, especially with regards to the SC and PK operations?

Systemic explanations, such as middle-power, hegemonic and normative theories, cannot explain Brazil's and Mexico's divergent policies in the UN. The literature until now available argues that middle-powers can be trusted to use their power responsibly in the interest of the world community, and should therefore be given special status in the UN. According to Laura Neack, "middle powers do this through so-called 'middle-power diplomacy', an approach to diplomacy aimed at mitigating interstate tensions and conflicts in order to prevent the possibility of war between the great powers." (Neack, 1995: 183) Although this literature acquired a normative and moral imperative in UN studies, it provided very few explanations as to why the diplomacy and behavior of those middle-powers has varied throughout time. In particular, it did not take into account the domestic factors that provide the basis for the so-called middle-power diplomacy. As a result, it did not respond to important questions, such as what countries are more likely to be engaged in international affairs or which states are more likely to be *good citizens* of the international community. The literature assumed that middle-power behavior would be similar across regions and countries, regardless of their domestic politics.

In the effort to avoid the weaknesses of the existing explanations, this article focuses on the role of foreign ministries and diasporas in shaping UN policies. It argues that different forms of foreign-policy decision-making, ranging from highly diffused to highly centralized processes, affect states' commitment to the UN. Activism by middle-powers in the UN system is more readily seen where the foreign ministry and diplomacy centralizes the decision-making process, but rarely observed where its role is increasingly questioned by the intervention of other non-diplomatic and governmental bureaucracies. Middle-power diplomacy is constrained where foreign ministries have been joined and restrained by other bureaucratic players traditionally regarded as having purely domestic policy remits. This divergence of view about diplomacy in general and the role of the foreign ministry in particular is echoed in the specific context of the UN, where diplomats are usually key players in dealing with UN affairs, but their influence is dependent on the domestic constraints they face at home. Hence, foreign ministries differ considerably in terms of their place in their respective political and administrative settings. From this perspective, Brazil and Mexico vary in their UN behavior in part because the former has a highly centralized decision-making process, while the latter has a highly diffused foreign policy. This condition is convoluted by the fact that diasporas have transformed the working practices of many foreign ministries. A growing diaspora demands more attention and resources from diplomatic bureaucracies themselves, and poses questions regarding the nature of the diplomatic role in bilateral and multilateral affairs. With the largest diaspora in North America, Mexico's UN policy is constantly challenged by the insatiable demands and requirements of its large emigrating population, leading Mexican diplomats to focus more on US bilateral affairs and less on UN issues. By contrast, Brazil's smaller diaspora (and the fact that it is more diffused around the world) enables this South American power to focus its energies and resources on global issues, where the UN is the center-point of its diplomatic efforts.

The study of middle-power behavior in the UN is important, especially when the organization is undergoing a reform process that will probably include an expansion of the SC by incorporating countries with middle-range diplomatic capacity. In fact, an emerging debate in international relations is the rapid growth of regional powers (Brazil, Russia, India and China, also known as BRIC's) that could transform themselves into world powers. Yet, the constrains imposed by domestic and external factors (including the role of bureaucracies and diasporas) could mean that the so-called BRIC's and many other countries with similar capabilities (like Mexico) will not live up to their promise; thus impeding them from delivering the expected returns to the UN system. This study also contributes to earlier analyses of UN peacekeeping burden-sharing, by providing an explanation of why some middle-powers

supply troops and resources in favor of UN peace efforts, while others potential contributors prefer to free-ride.

In developing the main argument, this paper will proceed with a discussion of the empirical puzzles raised by the Brazilian and Mexican cases. Then it will critically review the alternative explanations; namely, middle-power, hegemonic and normative theories. Finally, it will discuss how the two causal variables, bureaucratic politics and diasporic demands operate in the Brazilian and Mexican cases. Similarly, this paper will employ the method of difference, analyzing cases with similar general characteristics and different values in the dependent variable, seeking causes by asking if values on the study variable correspond across cases.

Similar structures and divergent policies: Empirical Puzzles

A comparative analysis of Brazil's and Mexico's policies in the UN system reveals two sets of puzzles. First, given that Mexico and Brazil are both middle and regional powers in Latin America, why do they perform dissimilar international roles in the UN? In other words, why does Brazil assume its middle-power identity, while Mexico maintains a low international profile?

According to Andrew Cooper's model of middle-power foreign policy behavior, intermediate powers constitute a category of states that have the ability and willingness to adopt an activist, initiative-oriented diplomatic approach to effectively engage the international system through international institutions and other non-military means. Hence, it is expected that such countries should be active in using diplomatic capabilities, relying on highly professional foreign policy bureaucracies and international coalitions in multilateral fora (Cooper, 1997: 1-24).

In theoretical terms, both Brazil and Mexico have similar capabilities to exercise middle-power roles in world politics. For example, in 2005, Brazil was the fifth most populous country in the world and had the tenth largest economy with a Gross National Product (GNP) of 794 billion dollars. Mexico was the eleventh most populous state and had the thirteenth largest economy in the world, with a combined GNP of 785 billion dollars. In fact, Mexico seems to be in a stronger economic position than Brazil, since it has the highest income per capita in Latin America; although the World Bank classifies both, Mexico and Brazil, as upper-middle-income countries (World Development Bank, 2006).

Military force levels for the two countries are also similar. Both Brazil and Mexico concentrate the largest number of soldiers in Latin America. Force levels for the three branches in Brazil number 302,909; while Mexico's armed forces total 192,770. In both cases, the military (particularly the Army) is mostly dedicated to internal missions; such as safeguarding the Amazon (in Brazil) or countering drug trafficking (in Mexico.) Likewise, Brazil and Mexico

continue to rely on conscription, so a substantial number of forces are made of non-commissioned officers and conscripts (Jane's Sentinel for Central America and South America 2006, IIS-Military Balance 2005-2006).

BRAZIL AND MEXICO IN COMPARATIVE TERMS, 2005

Indicators	Brazil	Mexico
GNP (in US billion dollars)	794,098	785,468
GNP per capita	3,460	7,310
Foreign direct investment (in US billions)	18.2	17.4
Population (millions of inhabitants)	186.1	106.2
Exports measured in terms of % of GNP	22.7	29.9
Exports (in US billons)	96.4	189.
Number of armed forces	302,909	192,770
Number of conscripts	189,000	60,000
Armed forces per 1000 inhabitants	1.8	1.8

Source: The World Bank Group Data Querry, World Bank, 2006. http://devdata.worldbank.org/data-query/; Jane's Sentinel for Central America and South America 2006, IIS-Military Balance 2005-2006).

In the UN system, Mexico and Brazil are among the top financial contributors. According to the Global Policy Forum, in 2005, Mexico was the tenth largest financial contributor to the UN system, with 32 million dollars, accounting for 1.82% of all the assessment. Similarly, Brazil was the fourteenth largest contributor, with 26 million dollars, accounting for 1.48% of the UN budget. Likewise, the two Latin American countries are among the 15 largest financial donors to the UN PK budget (Global Policy Forum 2005).[1]

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[1] According to Global Policy Forum, the top financial contributors to UN PK operations are the US, Japan, Germany, UK, France, Italy, Canada, Spain, China, Mexico, South Korea, the Netherlands, Australia, Brazil, and Switzerland.

UN Regular Budget Payments of Largest Payers, 2006

Country	2006 Assessment	Percentage of Assessment
US	424	24.47%
Japan	332	18.81%
Germany	148	8.36%
UK	105	5.93%
France	103	5.86%
Italy	83	4.7%
Canada	48	2.6%
Spain	43	2.4%
China	35	1.95%
Mexico	32	1.82%
Republic of Korea	31	1.75%
Netherlands	29	1.6%
Australia	27	1.5%
Brazil	26	1.4%
Switzerland	20	1.1%

Source: Global Policy Forum, http://www.globalpolicy.org/finance/tables/reg-budget/large06.htm

In sum, Brazil and Mexico have structural similarities and could practice middle-power roles, given their capabilities and resources. Although providing funds for the UN system implies a relatively high level of international commitment , Mexico's policy in the UN does not properly fit Cooper's model of middle-power behavior. First, because UN assessments are based on the size of the economy and although countries could choose not to pay, few do this (except for the US and Russia). Second, as Guadalupe González argues, "Mexico's internationalism and multilateralism have been erratic and ambivalent. Mexican political leaders have only occasionally defined the country as a middle-power with a proactive global focus" (González, 2001: 151; González, 1983). For instance, Mexico has only joined the UN SC as a non-permanent member in three periods (1946-1947, 1982-1983, and 2002-2003.) The country has never sent troops to a UN PK operation, although it did send police forces to the UN mission in El Salvador. Mexico does not have any relevant staff members in the Secretariat; the last time a Mexican diplomat occupied a key position in the UN system was a decade ago, when Rosario Green (former Minister of Foreign Affairs) served as UN Deputy Secretary General for Boutros-Boutros Ghali. This is an interesting finding, because according to the middle-power explanation, the UN SC and PK should be the preferred areas of action for most middle-powers, precisely because in these fora they can perform an activist, iniatiative-oriented and internationally engaged role in world affairs. Yet, Mexico has rarely assumed such position.

Conversely, Brazil is Latin America's most active player in the UN system and does act as Cooper's model predicts. Since 1946, Brazil has been in the SC nine times (1946-47, 1951-52, 1954-55, 1963-64, 1967-68, 1988-89, 1993-94, 1998-99, 2004-05), more than any other non-permanent state-member, with the exception of Japan (Wrobel and Herz, 2002). Furthermore, Brazil has had representation and staff in the senior ranks of the UN Secretariat and in a number of UN specialized agencies, including the International Criminal Court and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Historically, Brazil has been one of Latin America's major UN troop contributors.[2] From 1957 to 2003, Brazil deployed more than 11,850 soldiers in support of 20 UN peace operations. By far, Brazil's largest troop contributions have been in support of UN missions in Africa and Asia, including the peace operations in Mozambique, Angola, and East Timor. These contributions reflect Brazil's zone of regional projection. With regard to a commitment for troop presence, Portuguese-Africa and Asia are preferred, although the country is currently involved in a major PK mission in Haiti (Guedes da Costa, 1998: 232; Sotomayor, 2004). In sum, Brazil and Mexico have middle-power capabilities, but practice dissimilar foreign policies, especially *vis-à-vis* the UN. Why is Brazil an active player in the SC, while Mexico is not? Why does Brazil contribute to PK, while Mexico does not?

The second puzzle raised by the Brazilian and Mexican cases is linked to the relationship between democratization and foreign policy. According to the literature on regime change and foreign policy, democratizing countries sometimes pursue cooperation strategies and deepened engagement with international institutions. This may be the result of several factors, such as the need for international credibility during times of transition, the desire to implement domestic reforms via international commitments, social pressure from pro-liberalization groups, or spillover effects from economic and political liberalization (Kahler, 1997: 18-19; Moravcsik, 1999).

In fact, new research on UN troop contributions has found a correlation between the type of regime and the level of commitment to peace operations. It appears that democracies are more likely to cooperate with institutions such as the UN and even commit troops for peacemaking in order to establish peace among themselves and in support of other democratic regimes (Andersson, 2002). As Bruce Russett, John R. Oneal and David R. Davis argue, the perpetual peace tradition anticipates that democracies, sharing common norms and institutions, would form a federation with other democracies. "From there it is an easy step to hypothesize that democracies may be especially likely to join international organizations populated by other democracies" (Russett *et al.*, 1998: 459).

In terms of political democratization, both Brazil and Mexico are new democracies, emerging from authoritarian rule in 1984 and 2000,

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[2] Argentina and Uruguay are Latin America's top UN troop contributors. From 1990 to 2005 Argentina deployed more than 15,904 troops, Uruguay sent 15,955 blue helmets, and Brazil contributed with 7,449 soldiers.

respectively. Therefore, it is expected that the two countries would support democratic efforts abroad via PK, especially since they underwent transitions to democracy. However, Brazilian and Mexican doctrines towards the UN SC and peace operations were developed previous to the transitions to democracy. In both cases, the change of regime from authoritarian to democratic government altered foreign policy, but only slightly and in very specific issue areas, which do not include the SC and PK contributions. Therefore, this poses another puzzle; the transition towards democracy should have provoked a critical juncture in favor of multilateralism, as democratization processes generate new demands for international credibility and commitment. However, Brazilian and Mexican commitment levels towards the UN SC and PK have remained constant, with few radical or dramatic changes, despite their new democratic status. Why? If the two countries are supporters of democracy why does their level of international commitment vary? This raises questions about the posed relationship between democratization and international cooperation. The Brazilian-Mexican study case may reveal that the link between those two political processes may not be linear or automatic. As Jack Snyder argues, democracy takes time to consolidate and become stable and mature (Snyder, 2000: 25-27). Yet, even if we accept that democratization processes can have a slow pace, the question still remains as to what prevents some democratizing countries from engaging world affairs, while others seem too eager to embrace it.

Alternative explanations: Hegemony, ideology and norms

A number of explanations are available in the literature to explain different patterns of state behavior in international relations. These arguments can be classified in terms of hegemonic, ideological and normative explanations. Nevertheless, they can be ruled out because their causal claim of reasoning does not properly explain variation in middle-power behavior.

a) Hegemony and middle powers

Balance of power theory provides a powerful explanation to determine alignment behavior among powerful states. Many theorists would argue that this approach holds even for smaller states in the developing world (Walt, 1987). According to this perspective, Third World leaders tend to ally with those who seem most dangerous and aggressive. This occurs because weak states add little strength to defensive alliances, although they incur the wrath of the more threatening states. The nearer a weak state is to a powerful and aggressive state, the greater the tendency for bandwagoning. As Stephen Walt argues, "weak states are also likely to be especially sensitive to proximate power. Where great powers have both global interests and global capabilities,

weak states will be concerned primarily with events in their immediate vicinity" (Walt, 1987: 30).

From this approach, it is somehow easy to dismiss the policy differences of Brazil and Mexico in the UN. Variation in behavior is simply explained in terms of geography and power. Mexico is reluctant to pick fights with the United States (US) in the UN SC essentially because as a smaller state it can suffer a political defeat from its northern, stronger neighbor. In the presence of US hegemony, Mexico has not much choice but to bandwagon with its neighbor, particularly on issues that are very sensitive for Washington (Fernández de Castro and Lima, 2005).

Hegemony not only restrains Mexico's international behavior, but imposes a foreign policy dilemma. This is so because Mexico wants to maintain its autonomy, but simultaneously it cannot outright oppose Washington in the UN. Mario Ojeda summarized Mexico's conundrum as follows: "The US recognizes and accepts Mexico's need to dissent from US policy in everything that is fundamental for Mexico, even if it is important but not fundamental for the US. In exchange, Mexico cooperates in everything that is fundamental or merely important for the US, though not for Mexico" (Ojeda, 1981: 93). This, in turn, means that Mexico simply cannot aspire to play a key role in the UN SC, because in so doing it might find itself opposing US global interests in issues such as non-nuclear proliferation, peaceful settlement in the Middle East, and terrorism. As Peter Smith describes, "Mexico's strategic position has been severely restricted by the hegemonic power of the US. The simple fact is this: Those places where Mexico might exert the most impact are also well within the US sphere of influence, so Mexico's performance as a pivotal state is continually subordinate to the overwhelming presence of the US" (Smith, 1999: 217).

By contrast, Brazil is a continent away from Washington and has more options, such as aligning with Europe, China, India, Russia or South Africa. As Peter Hakim argues, "Brazil has sought to serve as a counterweight to the US. At times, it has appeared intent on establishing a South American pole of power in the western hemisphere" (Hakim, 2002: 153). Since Brazil is further away from hegemony, its foreign policy has relative autonomy and has more alliance choices than those who are proximate to Washington. In other words, geographic distance allows Brazil to project its power, while geographic proximity diminishes Mexico's ability to influence UN politics.

Indeed, there is some evidence suggesting that Mexico restrained from participating in the UN SC during the Cold War era in order to abstain from making its pro-US alignment explicit. Diplomats in the Mexican *Cancillería* reasoned that joining the council would encourage high political burdens, as Mexico would become involved in conflicts and places where its national security was not at stake. For this reason, Mexico has only been involved in the UN SC in three periods: in 1946-1947, during the early stages of the Cold

War; in 1980-1982, at the peak of the Cold War era, during Ronald Reagan's presidency, and again in 2002-2003, during the Iraq crisis. Many Mexican analysts believe it is a mistake to be involved in the UN SC because it puts the country in a potential face-off with Washington (Serrano and Kenny, 2006; Benítez, 2004: 56; Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, 2001: 57; Pellicer, 1994 and 2003).

Nevertheless, it is unclear why hegemony, in and of itself, would limit state behavior, since proximity to the hegemon affords an opportunity to cooperate in other issues that are not fundamental for Mexico, but relevant to the US. Mexico could well make its US alignment explicit, cooperate with Washington and still play an active role in world affairs (Canada is the archetypical model of a middle-power with close ties to the US). If anything, US hegemony has been a constant factor for Mexicans and the American power has not always constrained the southern country to behave in determined and predictable ways.

Conversely, Brazil has not always balanced against the US, even though it is farther away from hegemony. This southern country had a "special alliance" with the US from the 1930s to the 1970s and received significant support from Washington. In exchange for its strong support for US priorities in the Latin American region, Brazil played a more than proportionate role. For instance, in 1945, "Brazil was the US candidate for a permanent seat in the UN SC together with the USSR, China, the United Kingdom, and the US itself, but it was vetoed by the USSR and replaced by France" (Albuquerque, 2003: 272).

Therefore, proximity to powerful states and geography does not provide a good explanation as to why Latin America's middle powers behave differently in the UN system. The presence of a near-by hegemon con boost a nation's ambition to play a more active role in world affairs, as it happened with Brazil in 1945. The problem with systemic and structural theories is that they cannot account for variation in behavior among smaller states. Middle powers have several options available when confronted with hegemony; such as supporting the strongest state (bandwagoning), remaining neutral, and actively opposing the hegemon (balancing.) As David Mares argues, "lesser power may or may not accept the regional hegemon's definition of security and often actively dispute its intra-alliance significance… what is clearly needed is a theoretical explanation for that diverse behavior" (Mares, 1988: 454).

b) National identity and political attitudes

A second source of explanation is based on public opinion and national ideology. From this perspective, political preferences are assumed to reflect policy decisions. So, for example, nationalism is one of the key enduring driving forces which have shaped Latin American foreign policy over the period. Nationalism in this case would be a strong psychological bond that motivates an entire population to support certain external policies even if

they cause a great deal of social pain and bring few feasible rewards. Although all nations possess to some degree a national identity, these identities vary greatly in their intensity and origin. Consequently, foreign policy preferences would be shaped by the way each country interprets its own history and defines its national identity (Keohane and Goldstein, 1993; Pritzel, 1998: 12-37).

For this approach, Mexico and Brazil diverge in terms of UN policies because of their distinct national identities. As Peter Hakim argues, "Brazilian political leaders and thinkers, and even ordinary citizens, have long believed that their country should be counted among the world's most important states. Mexicans, meanwhile, historically have been less concerned about their place in the world than about their relations with the US" (Hakim, 2002: 148).

Indeed, there is a vast literature that considers Mexico as an inward-oriented and nationalist country. Mexico's history has countless stories of attacks, invasions, and occupations that have come from external forces since its independence and which, to a certain extent, provide the sources for xenophobia. Alan Riding, for example, has argued that Mexican nationalism has served as a mask to hide the country's internal doubts. Instead of performing a self-confident and activist foreign policy, the Mexican government prefers to defend the twin pillars of nationalism; namely, "strengthening a sense of national identity at home and stressing the country's independence abroad" (Riding, 1984: 19).

Conversely, Brazil's identity is outward-oriented because of its size and relative isolation from the front line of international tensions. Its territory was never subject to international invasions, even though it is surrounded by nine neighbors. Similarly, its population is internationally diverse, encompassing several nationalities and cultural heritages. As Celso Lafer argues: "Brazil is a confluence of various racial matrices and distinct cultural traditions that, in South America and under the Portuguese, gave rise to a new people. This new people is not quite a transplanted people that reconstructs Europe in other lands, nor is it like the witness-people of Mexico and of the Andean highlands who today live in a dual culture, facing the problem of integration to Western culture… Brazil is 'Another West' –poorer, more enigmatic, more problematic West, but no less the West" (Lafer, 2000: 5-6). Hence, advocates of national ideology and its impact on foreign policy would argue that Brazil has always been conscious of its size and has been governed by a general policy to project its power outside the country.

Until very recently, it was very difficult to trace and identify national attitudes towards foreign policies given the absence of national polls. Although there are no comparable surveys available, national polls conducted in both countries show that, in opposition to the general wisdom, Mexicans and Brazilians seem to have positive attitudes towards the UN, even though

different national identities prevail in both countries. For example, in 1998 the *Centro Brasileiro de Relações Internacionais* (the equivalent of the US Council on Foreign Relations) conducted a survey among 149 political leaders, including ambassadors, legislators, entrepreneurs, scholars, and journalists. While this survey is not representative of Brazil's political, business, and cultural leadership, it does reliably capture a significant sector of these leaders with an interest in Brazilian foreign policy. One of the interesting results that the survey disclosed was that a vast majority of the respondents (99%) believe the country should be more actively involved in international issues. Consistent with Brazil's national identity, 76% of the interviewers believe Brazil should have a permanent seat in the UN SC, while a substantial majority (88%) considers that their country should participate in UN PK operations. Nevertheless, when asked if Brazilian soldiers should be trained for external missions, only 49% believe that such policy should be a priority in the nation's foreign and defense policies (Souza, 2002: 5).

Even more interesting, however, are the findings of the national survey on Mexican foreign policy, consisting of 1,500 interviews (González, Minushkin, Shapiro, 2004). Against expectations, Mexicans are not as inwardly-focused as advocates of national identity have come to believe. Mexicans have very favorable feelings towards the UN. In fact, Mexicans feel more warmly toward the UN than toward any other international institution. From a scale of 0 (cold feeling) to 100 (very warm feeling), the organization that received the highest score was precisely the UN, with 75 points. When asked how important the foreign policy goal of strengthening the UN should be, 60% of the interviewers believe that it should be a very important goal, 24% say it should be somehow important, and only 8% think it is not important at all. Even more surprising is that 79% of those interviewed believes that the UN should be able to authorize the use of force to prevent severe human rights violations and 63% think the UN should interfere to restore democracy. Furthermore, a plurality of respondents (48%) think Mexico should participate in a UN PK operation, while a minority (36%) believes it should not. Against the conventional wisdom, the Mexican national identity does not translate into passive and isolationist attitudes. On the contrary, 57% support an active role for Mexico in world affairs, although one-third (34%) do think that Mexico should stay out of world politics. However, among national leaders (members of the Mexican Council of Foreign Affairs, COMEXI), which include scholars, journalists, politicians, ambassadors, entrepreneurs, and legislators, 94% say Mexico should be actively engaged in world affairs, versus 4% who think it should not. This last number is similar, although not statistically comparable (since no comparative survey is yet available), to Brazil's support for activism among political leaders. Similarly, 55% of the Mexican leadership believes Mexico should join a UN peace operation and 35% think it is better not to be involved in those missions (González, Minushkin, Shapiro, 2004: 21-25).

In sum, both Mexicans and Brazilians seem to believe that involvement in international affairs and in UN issues should be part of the nation's foreign policy, despite differences in national identity. Clearly, national identity is not driving Mexico towards isolationism nor is it necessarily pushing Brazil towards activism in UN. The surveys on foreign policy attitudes available in Latin America suggest that, in some cases, as in Mexico, the political elite is simply not following the national identity or is neglecting the nation's will.

c) Norms and principles

A third alternative explanation to understand Mexico's and Brazil's external behavior in the UN is based on normative arguments. For this perspective, norms provide states with understanding of their interests. Constructivists argue that norms are collective understandings that make behavioral claims on states. Norms help states constitute their identities and identify their interests; thus shaping and regulating state behavior (Checkel, 1998: 325-328). Although, most constructivists focus on how international norms influence and constrain the behavior of states, nothing proscribes us from using this very same line of argument to understand foreign policy behavior by focusing on domestic norms. Similar to international regime norms, one can argue that domestic norms serve as a regulative function that can help countries identify their identity and interests *vis-à-vis* international regimes, such as the UN.

It is often argued that Mexico's cautious action abroad is the result of its fine-sounding norms and principles that guide its foreign policy. The norms are believed to be so important that in 1988, paragraph IX of article 89 of the Mexican Constitution was reformed. According to the aforementioned decree, the holder of the Executive Power, in the conduct of foreign policy, should observe the following normative principles: non-intervention in domestic affairs, self-determination of nations, the peaceful resolution of controversies, the non-use of force in international relations, the legal equality of states, international cooperation for development, and the struggle for peace and international security (Mexican Constitution). These normative principles are not merely a juridical abstraction; Mexican jurists believe they comprise Mexico's principle guarantee against repetition of its history and when applied to other countries exposed to intervention, they are seen to protect Mexico as well. As Ana Covarrubias explains, "support for non-intervention, in turn, has served two purposes: to protect Mexico from excessive and direct US intervention and to underline Mexico's independent foreign policy" (Covarrubias, 2003: 23).[3]

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[3] For an analysis of Mexico's principles of foreign affairs see Gómez Robledo, 1966; González, 1989; and Valero, 1986.

Consequently, Mexican norms regarding non-intervention have become entrenched in institutions and practices, and even promoted by state structures. A strict adherence to these principles over the years made Mexico's international behavior predictable, while providing a source of moral force abroad. Although these norms have been widely lauded for their altruist nature, they have been criticized for being predominantly legalistic and defensive. A rigorous observance of these principles has forced Mexico to abstain from actively intervening in world affairs, since any action to pacify, stabilize, restore democracy, or prevent conflicts from emerging would undoubtedly lead the country to intervene in the domestic affairs of other states and thus violate the principles of self-determination and non-intervention. According to principle-based explanations, Mexico should place international laws and norms of sovereignty above any other possible objective or consideration. Indeed, one of the reasons often mentioned to justify Mexico's reticent policy to participate in UN PK forces is that the Constitution (and thus its norms) prevents the country from sending troops abroad. As Olga Pellicer explains:

> Mexico stands firmly by the principle according to which the consent of the parties involved in a conflict is required in order to initiate an operation. Mexico also maintains that, when designing the mandate for an operation, the principles of the sovereignty and internal jurisdiction of the states concerned must be taken into account. Finally, Mexico is interested in counteracting, as much as possible, the tendency to reach decisions concerning PK within the circle of a limited number of states.

(Pellicer, 1991: 207)[4]

Since most third-generation UN PK operations now involve missions sanctioned by the SC and entail operations where the consent of the parties is not granted, Mexico has abstained from deploying troops abroad, precisely because the normative conditions (non-intervention and the non-use of force) for deployment are absent. As a result, there are reasons to believe that domestic norms restrain Mexico's external behavior and provide the country with a defined identity as a non-interventionist, defensive, pacifist, and isolationist country that does not deploy troops for UN PK.

The normative research agenda is not without weaknesses, however. While constructivists have demonstrated that social construction is socially important, they have failed to specify why norms diffuse differently, "that is, why they have so much greater impact in some countries but not in others" (Checkel, 1998: 332). For example, Brazil has a similar constitutional

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[4] Olga Pellicer served as Mexico's deputy permanent representative to the UN in the early nineties. Her position regarding PK operations has changed over the past years. She is now supportive of Mexico's involvement in UN peace operations and has argued that it is time for Mexico to change its traditional standpoint and begin to participate more actively.

arrangement regarding foreign policy. Analogous to Mexico, Brazilian foreign policy is guided by ten normative principles, all stipulated in Title 1, article 4 of the Brazilian Constitution: national independence; prevalence of human rights; self-determination of peoples; non-intervention; equality among the States; defense of peace; pacific solution of conflicts; repudiation of terrorism and racism; international cooperation for the progress of mankind; granting of political asylum; and economic, political, social, and cultural integration of Latin America (Brazilian Constitution). Similar to the Mexican case, it is often argued that these principles not only guide Brazil's international behavior, but provide the country with a constructive, peaceful and internationally involved identity. As Gelson Fonseca Jr., former ambassador of Brazil to the UN, argues: "such constructive moderation is influenced by a Groatian assessment of international reality –that is, by a concentration on the value of diplomacy and law in international course as appropriate ways to deal with conflict, foster cooperation, and reduce the impetus of power politics" (Fonseca, 1998: 356).

Nevertheless, normative arguments cannot explain why Mexico gives such a constraining value to its foreign policy norms, while Brazil perceives them as affording international opportunities for activism. Why similar domestic normative arrangements lead to such different patterns of behavior in the UN cannot be answered by simply focusing on norms. Moreover, if normative variables can explain policy variations, then who decides what norm or set of norms will guide foreign policy decisions?

Bureaucratic politics and the decision-making process in Mexico and Brazil

In the effort to avoid the weaknesses of the existing explanations, two mechanisms figure centrally in this account; namely, bureaucratic politics, involving mostly domestic political power balances and decision-making processes, and diasporic pressures, involving mostly interests groups from abroad.

a) Bureaucratic politics and foreign policy decision-making

In Latin America, the study of foreign policy decision-making has focused on the individual level, including the role of the executive branch and presidential systems (Domínguez and Lindau, 1984). As Jeanne A.K. Hey and Frank O. Mora argue, "Latin America's political culture, specifically its tradition of personalism and authoritarianism rule, has accentuated the role of the executive. Latin American foreign policy, more so than domestic policy, has traditionally been the preserve of the executive and the narrow elite" (Hey and Mora, 2003: 4). Curiously absent from this work, however, is another

set of institutions vital to political systems: bureaucracy. With a few notable exceptions (Pion-Berlin, 1997), there has been little systematic effort devoted to understanding the causes and consequences of bureaucratic structures in foreign policy decisions. While the study of comparative bureaucratic-organizations within the advanced, powerful, and developed states has made significant progress in recent years (Moe and Caldwell, 1994), we have a much thinner understanding of the causes and consequences of bureaucratic structure in the developing world and among middle-powers.

The tendency to focus on individual-level explanations seems to be driven by the belief that developing states have underdeveloped institutions and bureaucracies, especially when countries undergo transitions from authoritarian to democratic politics, where the rules of the game are often redefined by elites (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986). There is also the conviction that domestic entrepreneurs have primacy because they play a central role in brokering and organizing coalitions. Weak political leadership may ultimately induce unstable and precarious domestic coalitions; thus, the unit of analysis preferred by scholars of foreign policy analysis in Latin America is either the system or the individual.

However, as Terry Moe reminds us: "in democratic polities, public authority does not belong to anyone. It is simply 'out there,' attached to various public offices" (Moe, 1990: 227). Hence, there is very little justification to neglect the study of bureaucracies among developing states, because middle-powers also have public offices and bureaucracies where policies are formulated. The organizational-bureaucratic model, first developed by Graham Allison, asserts that international foreign policy is often the result of pulling and hauling among competing bureaucracies with divergent interests. Their actions are diverse and divided, sometimes contradictory. Therefore, from a complex of authorities ensues a complex of state-actions through complex political and organizational processes (Allison and Zelikow, 1999; Posen, 1984).

For the purposes of this paper, decision-making processes within bureaucracies can be characterized at the broadest level in terms of diffusion and centralization. Variation in state behavior can thus reflect different forms of decision-making, ranging from highly diffused to highly centralized processes. On one extreme, diffused decision-making means that within states the conduct of foreign affairs has long since fractured into very different elements spread across most of the functions of governments. Similar issue-areas are dealt by different functions of governments, each office dealing with an equivalent part of the topic being analyzed. One challenge posed by this particular form of decision-making is how to overcome the coordination problems that arise from the diffusion of policies. In the absence of control and coordination mechanisms, diffusion can lead to contradictory policies or paralysis and lack of activism, in which states fail to adjust to international

and domestic changing environments. On the other extreme, a centralized decision-making processes is characterized by a tendency to focus the management of international politics on a specialized unit associated to the head of government offices, such as the ministry of foreign affairs. These specialized units are relatively free to become the sole managers of foreign policy and can, to a certain extent, exercise control over the domestic-international interface (Hocking, 1999). Although these systems are often criticized for their lack of accountability and transparency, since bureaucratic checks and balances are absent, they offer the advantage of implementing changes with less pulling and hauling among competing bureaucracies, precisely because decisions require less coordination between diffused units.

Mexico and Brazil have similar political systems, but divergent decision-making and bureaucratic processes. The two countries are organized as a federal system, with executive, legislative and judicial branches. In both cases, the president is constitutionally vested with the power to conduct foreign policy and the ministry of foreign affairs —or secretary of foreign affairs for the Mexican case— is the administrative body entrusted with the implementation of foreign policy. Brazil and Mexico also have a hierarchically organized career foreign service, complemented by an intermediate number of political appointments, named by each president for a limited period of time, usually not exceeding his/her administration. The bureaucratic decision-making process is what clearly distinguishes Brazilian and Mexican foreign policies: the former is highly centralized, while the latter is highly diffused.

b) The Mexican foreign policy decision-making process: Decentralization and fragmentation

Although the Mexican president and *Cancillería* often set the agenda for foreign-policy making, the day-to-day conduct and administration of Mexican foreign policy are vested in a large federal bureaucracy. In Mexico there are structures and agencies of the federal government that can outlast members of Congress, who serve for a limited time, since re-election is not permitted, and lack capacities to engage in long-term foreign-policy issues. Bureaucrats in federal agencies are vested with limited resources, but have expertise to implement policies. The Mexican foreign-policy bureaucracy can be described as having four issue complexes: diplomatic, security, economic affairs, and intelligence. Each of the four complexes faces challenges and constraints on its mission that arise from institutional-bureaucratic factors. This is so because each issue area has actors and agencies that are not always in agreement or on the same page. This makes Mexican foreign policy decision-making highly fragmented and decentralized.

Theoretically, the main institution in the diplomatic complex is the Mexican *Cancillería*, headed by the secretary of foreign affairs, who is responsible for advising and guiding the president on diplomatic affairs as well

as providing citizens with information and access to foreign countries. However, the missions led by the *Cancillería* are often hampered by the intervention of other federal bureaucracies. Indeed, since the economic liberalization process began in the early 1980s, two decades before the democratization process began, the Mexican *Cancillería* lost control over three issue complexes: economic, intelligence and security. This has created serious institutional challenges, not only because there are competing bureaucracies dealing with compatible issues, struggling for scarce resources and budgets, but because there is an absolute lack of coordination between offices and specialized units, leading to contradictory and at times divergent policies. In other words, functions and responsibilities have been diffused to different agencies, without properly identifying a principal that will monitor their implementation. Hence, there are virtually no principals that can observe or monitor bureaucratic subordinates, while some bureaucratic agents often know more than their political bosses do; thus generating what is often referred to as principal-agent problem (Huber and Shipan, 2000). As Andrés Rozental, former deputy Secretary for Foreign Affairs argues:

> Frequent differences arise between trade negotiators and foreign policy operators which cannot be resolved within a single ministerial structure and require arbitration form a higher level. The problem is more acute in the field, where trade offices separate from the embassies have a tendency to operate in their own, rather than under the overall supervision of the Foreign Ministry.
>
> (Rozental, 1999: 137)

Although this pattern of policy fragmentation is not unique to Mexico, it has affected the way the country deals with the international and security agenda. For instance, Mexico's military bureaucracies have a virtual monopoly on the use of force in foreign affairs. In Mexico, there is a tacitly agreed division of labor between soldiers and diplomats. The *Cancillería* abstains from interfering in national security debates, such as anti-drug trafficking campaigns or safeguarding Mexican borders, as long as the military refrains from meddling in diplomatic affairs. Although this division of labor is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, it is so institutionally embedded in bureaucratic practices that Mexico is quite possibly the only middle-power that has yet to appoint a military *attaché* to its UN missions in New York, Geneva or Vienna, where issues such as PK, trans-national crime, nuclear proliferation, and humanitarian intervention are often discussed among generals and diplomats. In other words, since the UN agenda is strictly a diplomatic issue, military participation in the Mexican foreign policy decision-making process is tacitly banned and military officers will abstain from being

involved. In other words, integration between foreign and defense policies is simply non-existent due to bureaucratic differences.

Hence, when dealing with UN PK operations, the will and policy preference of the *Cancillería* are, as a matter of fact, irrelevant. The decision on whether Mexico will join a UN peace mission relies on two strong federal bureaucracies, the Ministry of Defense (Army and the Air Force) and the Ministry of the Navy, not the Foreign Ministry. The armed forces, however, do not have a unified voice on the matter. The Navy, with more international exposure than the Army, but with fewer personnel, seems to be supportive of Mexico's involvement in peace operations. A plan within the Navy has already been devised to allow soldiers from that military branch to join a PK force by 2007 (Arellano, 2004). Nevertheless, PK requires intensive manpower that only large armies can provide and in this respect the Mexican Army has led the opposition to such an engagement. For instance, in June of 2005, Patricia Olamendi, the then deputy foreign secretary for multilateral affairs and human rights, resigned in protest after President Vicente Fox's spokesman Ruben Aguilar flatly contradicted her statement that Mexico might someday contribute personnel to PK missions. Apparently, the Defense Ministry complained that a civilian in a non-military bureaucracy was meddling in the affairs of the armed forces, who have traditionally opposed any engagement abroad. Soon after the military commanders complained, President Vicente Fox made it clear that his administration would never authorize sending Mexican troops on UN missions, thus siding with the Ministry of Defense and the military establishment, much to the chagrin of the *Cancillería* (Ramírez and Merlos, 2005).

The bureaucratic competition and division of labor between the *Cancillería* and the Ministry of Defense goes back to the 1930s. In 1929, when the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) was founded, a pact was agreed between soldiers and civilians whereby the former accepted the demilitarization of politics and the latter conceded institutional autonomy. This pact facilitated the division of labor and made possible the emergence of a consensus, placing special emphasis on civilian supremacy, since there was nothing above the party. To counterweight and politically neutralize the power of the military in the PRI, the peasant and labor sectors were incorporated into the party itself in 1938. By 1946, when the first civilian president was elected, the military institution had not only been unified and disciplined, but had also been successfully subordinated to the civilian power. To ensure that the armed forces would remain loyal to the hegemonic party, PRI rulers maintained limited budgets, reorganized military zones, and imposed education programs explicitly focusing on developing loyalty and discipline towards the party and civilian leadership. In other words, military-party links regulated, managed and co-opted the military's political behavior. In exchange, the armed forces were given institutional autonomy to decide

promotions, doctrine, strategy, and, of course, military operations (Camp, 1992; Serrano, 1995).

Hence, the Mexican armed forces have their own domestic priorities and although they are part of the society, they have sufficient institutional autonomy to craft their own missions. The Air Force and especially the Army are naturally concerned with the maintenance of domestic order and national security. As Fredrick M. Nunn summarizes, "in the absence of police capabilities they have responded to the internal imperative by participating directly or indirectly in internal affairs. Riots, strikes, rebellions, long-term insurgency, and rescue missions" (Nunn, 1984: 43). Therefore, the rationale and justification that drives the Mexican armed forces is their role in national development, consisting essentially of maintaining control of the intelligence community, providing public services in rural communities, containing revolutionary movements (such as the Zapatista movement in Chiapas and elsewhere), and halting trans-national organized crime —mostly drug-trafficking— (Benítez and Wager, 1998).

Externally, the armed forces have never had the appetite to project power abroad, in part because since World War II, the Mexican soldiers have not dealt with any concrete military enemies. Mexico is too small to fight a war against the US and too big to battle its small southern neighbors. Even if the large boarder with the US is increasingly problematic due to drug trafficking and now terrorism, the peril is seen as consisting not of the extreme event of an armed invasion, but of the daily socio-economic interaction with the northern and powerful neighbor.

The idea of deploying a large number of soldiers to UN operations is troubling for the Ministry of Defense because these are not seen as part of their domestic mission. Some members of the Army perceive peace operations as weakening the military's ability to respond to its primary domestic roles. Others feel that joining a force abroad might make them even more vulnerable to accusations of human rights violations by the international media and non-governmental organizations. The reasons advanced by Army generals to abstain from joining a UN force are multiple. First, it is argued that most Mexican soldiers do not fulfill the foreign language requirements established by the UN for observational posts, since English courses have never been part of the mandatory military curricula. Second, there is a serious concern about over-stretching missions when the military is already engaged in multiple operations at home. Third, the military has shown anxiety about an increased involvement of US military forces in UN PK operations and regards diplomatic efforts as attempts to de-nationalize Mexico's defense strategy. Finally, there are questions about budgets and PK associated costs, since it is expected that the Ministry of Defense and not the Foreign Ministry would be responsible for supplying troops, vaccines, uniforms, gear, and

equipment for the missions —none of which are subsidized by the UN— (Sotomayor, 2006).

For these reasons, the military did not participate in the peace processes in Central America in the early nineties, although the *Cancillería* engaged actively in the conflict-resolution process via the Contadora Group and a formal request for troops was made by the UN and the Central American republics. Instead, members of the Mexican judicial police, the least prestigious force in the country, were sent to El Salvador to instruct the newly formed Salvadoran national police in the finer points of corruption. Consequently, although the democratization process would seem to signal a demise of the national security state and mitigate against the traditional isolationist position, the bureaucratic division of labor, highly embedded in the military establishment, has survived and prevented any engagement of the Mexican military in international affairs.

A similar bureaucratic debate has taken place on the issue of Mexico's involvement in the UN SC. In this regard, a bureaucratic division exists between the Foreign and the Finance ministries. Each year the UN General Assembly elects five states to serve as non-permanent members of the SC for a two-year term. Countries eager to serve in the Council must be willing to bargain for votes if necessary in order to win a place among a handful of chosen countries. This means that middle-powers are subject to intense pressure from smaller states that use such an opportunity to extract concessions, development aid and promises for future cooperation. Certainly, this scenario took place in 2001, when Mexico made official its intention to serve in the SC, after 20 years of abstention. As a diplomat involved in the process argued, "we needed to rectify a position given the transition to democracy… we needed to express commitment and international credibility."[5] Therefore, the *Cancillería* engaged in a public relations campaign to win as many votes as possible in the UN General Assembly (the rule is that a simple majority is needed to become a SC member.) This is consistent with Kalher's hypotheses about increased international engagement during liberalization and democratization processes (Kalher, 1997).

Nevertheless, the Finance and Economics ministries opposed releasing funds to obtain votes in the UN, arguing that such policy would create unintended consequences, such as having small countries permanently demanding for resources every time Mexico would join an international body. The economic establishment then successfully lobbied the executive branch and convinced the President to abstain from granting funds, debt relief and foreign aid to Mexico's allies in the UN.[6] In the absence of substantial *carrots* for bargaining, Mexico was unable to win a majority of votes in the General

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[5] Personal interview with a member of the Mexican Foreign Service and former ambassador of Mexico to the United Nations. CIDE, Mexico City, November 13, 2004.

[6] *Ibid.*

Assembly and had to go for a second round against the Dominican Republic, who, interestingly enough, won almost as many votes as the Mexican delegation. In the end, Mexico did prevail in a second round of votes, not without a sour note given the lack of support provided by the Finance Ministry.

Therefore, the Foreign Ministry, per se, is unable to mobilize a candidacy for a non-permanent seat in the SC, unless it has an explicit support from the finance and economics ministries. This has only happened in two previous occasions, 1946 and 1982, when the two agencies were willing to provide resources for diplomatic bargaining. Most of the time, however, economists in these two ministries rarely visualize the benefits of a SC membership campaign. Instead, they tend to support Mexico's activism in other international economic bodies, such as the World Trade Organization and the Bretton Woods system, where economic benefits are more tangible.

Given the diffusion of policies and responsibilities among different bureaucracies, it is not surprising that Mexico sometimes seems to practice a middle-power role on economic issues, while it implements a more passive role on security fora, such as the UN SC. The *Cancillería* can be diplomatically active only in those areas where it has a relative monopoly and control over policies *vis-à-vis* other bureaucracies. For this reason, Mexico is an active player in the international human rights regime, where it actually chairs the newly created UN Human Rights Council, but passive and isolationist on UN peacekeeping and security issues. The *Cancillería* has far more policy leverage on human rights issues, but it is at its weakest position in dealing with military affairs. In the former case, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has policy control and less bureaucratic intervention than in the latter case, where the military and economic bureaucracies limit diplomacy.

c) Brazilian foreign policy decision-making process: Centralization and integration

Conversely, the singular feature of Brazil's foreign policy is the central role of the country's diplomatic bureaucracy and decision-making. Brazil has a tendency to centralize the management of international politics within the Foreign Ministry, also know as Itamaraty. It is a very specialized unit of government that is relatively free from non-diplomatic bureaucratic constraints and can exercise control over the country's international agenda. The success of Itamaraty's performance is related to the consistency of its multidimensional goals: sustain peace, expand Brazilian territory without relying on military force, and linking foreign policy to the general goal of economic and social development (Domínguez *et al.*, 2002: 33). These broad goals have ensured that the three issue complexes, diplomatic, international security and international economic affairs, remain firmly in the hands of Itamaraty's bureaucracy. Unlike any other country in the region, Brazil's

diplomacy has experienced a process of professionalization and rationalization which points to increasing levels of centralization and integration of the foreign policy decision-making process (Borges Cheibub, 1985 and 1989).

In Brazil, the Senate rarely challenges foreign policy decisions, limiting itself to exert its constitutional functions, such as confirming appointed ambassadors, ratifying international agreements, authorizing troop deployments for UN operations, but with almost no political contestation (Almeida, 2000). As Guilhon Alburquerque argues, "party politics is generally far away from foreign policy, and the official agenda of major parties either ignore or simply mirror Itamaraty's views" (Alburquerque, 2003: 270). This enables the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to coordinate and set the foreign policy agenda with relative autonomy from party and bureaucratic politics. The Rio Branco Institute, the school of Foreign Service, is responsible for institutionalizing Itamaraty's bureaucratic preferences among Brazilian politicians. Itamaraty's international strategy has been very consistent, even at times when the country has undergone political and economic transitions (Hirst, 1998 and 1996; Hirst and Pinheiro, 1995). Since the institutionalization of the foreign service began in the 1930s, Itamaraty has contributed to de-politicize foreign policy by isolating international issues from the constant struggles of Brazilian domestic politics (Borges Cheibun, 1985 and 1989; Lima, 2000: 289; Fernández de Castro and Lima, 2005: 116).

Since the foreign policy agenda is not subject to the constraints of term limits or re-election campaigns, Brazil has been able to take a more long-term and ambitious view in its diplomatic policymaking and to focus on developing international priorities. Itamaraty is thus a reminder of the extent to which officials and indeed the machinery of the state constrain and shape the goals of politicians. The Foreign Ministry's policy leverage is enhanced by the fact that other bureaucracies, such as the Ministry of Industry and Commerce lack international experience. Also, Itamaraty is relatively isolated from domestic pressures, such as business interests and other domestic clienteles, and is usually more successful in forming bureaucratic alliances with other key ministries (Lima, 1999).

Another factor that greatly contributes to strengthen Brazil's foreign policy agenda is the fact that Itamaraty has more diplomats than posts overseas and in Brasília. Hence, diplomats frequently fill key positions in other ministries, state enterprises, and the president's office. This in turn facilitates the coordination policies between the Foreign Ministry and other bureaucracies. Itamaraty plays, *de facto,* the role of the principal, coordinating bureaucracies, monitoring members of the Foreign Service in other agencies, and implementing policies, due to its expansive network of diplomats located in other federal bureaucracies.

Given Itamaraty's relative autonomy and centralized decision-making, it is not surprising that the theme that dominates much of the discussion about

Brazil's policy in the UN is its constant claim for a permanent seat in the UN SC; a measure that would not only increase the diplomats leverage at home, but also its prestige abroad. Although there is room for debate about the relative importance of such policy, few would deny that there is an apparent agreement between party leaders and bureaucracies to conceal policy divisions regarding Brazil's historical claim in the UN system. To some extent, this consensus represents an advance for Itamaraty's international initiatives. It also illuminates the factors that explain the continuity between different administrations and governments in the past decades. The consensus is built on a very strong bureaucratic foundation in which Itamaraty leads the way and fights for international primacy. Indeed, Fernando Henrique Cardoso's policy towards the UN is almost identical to Luis Inacio Lula's approach. Lula has shown commitment for UN peace operations in Haiti as much as Cardoso supported PK initiatives in East Timor and Ecuador-Peru. Cardoso fought for a permanent seat in the UN SC in the 1990s against Argentina's will (Wrobel and Herz, 2002). Lula was willing to do the same thing in 2005. In this sense, the most relevant difference between Lula's foreign policy and the one pursued by the Cardoso administration is related not to the objectives or priorities embraced, but the willingness to act in a more assertive and proactive way (Lampreira, 1995; Costa Vaz, 2004; Hristoulas and Herz, 2005). Therefore, in opposition to Mexico, Brazil has seen a notable tendency to centralize, not diffuse, the management of international policy within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the face of political and international change, the Brazilian governments (regardless of their ideological orientation) have sought to prioritize foreign policy goals by expanding the size of its foreign ministry and diplomatic networks.

In terms of PK, Brazil is not the largest UN troop contributor in Latin America (a position occupied by Uruguay and Argentina); yet, since 1957, it has deployed a large number of blue helmets abroad. Historically, Brazil has been among the world's top 32 contributors, supplying regular personnel for a substantial share of UN operations, although it has done little to finance them (Bobrow and Boyer, 1997; Fortna, 1993; Sena Cardoso, 1998; Tarisse da Fountoura, 1999; Shimizu & Sandler, 2002; Hristoulas and Herz, 2005: 281-282). Brazil's PK commitment has varied from decade to decade, but the country has consistently supported UN peace missions, regardless of the type of domestic regime. Even during dictatorial rule, Brazilian soldiers were deployed to various missions in places such as the Suez Canal and the Caribbean —mostly an OAS mission in the Dominican Republic in 1965. From 1957 to 2005, Brazil deployed more than 15,111 soldiers in support of 20 UN PK missions. Only in the past three years, PK participation has increased substantially from 100 blue helmets in 2003 to more than 1000 in 2005. Currently, Brazil is commanding the UN force in Haiti and is a member of the recently created UN Peacebuilding Commission. The mission in Haiti has a

huge symbolic significance, given the number of people involved and the difficulty of the operation. Since 2004, Brazil has sent three battalions with 1,200 men each. At this rate, Haiti could become the country's biggest foreign military deployment since the participation in Suez in the early 1960s and since World War II. Brazilian generals are now commanding a UN PK force of 6,700 mainly Latin American troops and 1,600 police (The Economist, 2004).

In dealing with UN PK matters, however, the military is perhaps the strongest bureaucracy capable of affecting the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. As Carlos Antonio Pereira, a leading journalist who works for the Brazilian newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, explains, "the Army does not have a voice or a vote on foreign policy issues, but they certainly have the last word if they do not want to commit troops... Sure, they will never openly express their rejection, but they will elaborate other arguments in order not to go."[7] For instance, when the UN requested Brazilian troops for a PK force in Namibia during the delicate, pre-election phase of transition in 1991, Brazil refused, saying that the Army was not prepared and the government lacked resources for such venture. It is now widely known that Itamaraty was favorable to such engagement, but the Army vetoed the initiative. (US Department of the Army, 1998) Likewise, there are cases when Itamaraty has maintained its reluctance to endorse military intervention in UN missions. For example, the foreign ministry abstained from sending troops to Haiti in 1994, because the mission entailed the enforcement of sanctions, which, at the time, was against Brazil's preferences (Herz, 2000: 23).

Nevertheless, unlike the Mexican Army, the Brazilian armed forces do tend to behave as a disciplined corps that follows Itamaraty's international leadership. This is so because decisions on PK contributions are exposed to a minimum degree of negotiation between the foreign service and the armed forces. In other words, foreign and defense policies are far more integrated in Brazil than in Mexico. The Brazilian military and the Ministry of Defense do not have a monopoly over PK matters, since Itamaraty plays an important role in the decision-making process. For instance, UN resolutions and troop requests go through exhaustive diplomatic scanning in the Brazilian mission in New York before PK operations are assessed by policy-makers and generals at home. This helps reduce information asymmetries between soldiers and civilians, as Brazilian diplomats have more information than the military from UN headquarters. Ultimately, the decision-making process is not exclusively controlled by the armed forces, as it is in Mexico.

An interesting observation about Brazil's PK contribution is the fact that diplomatic and military bureaucratic interests converge, leading to high levels of defense and foreign policy integration, as well as policy consensus. Just

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[7] Personal interview with Carlos Antonio Pereira, Journalist at the *Estado de São Paulo*, São Paulo, Brazil, April 18, 2002.

like Brazil's diplomatic *raison d'être* has focused on international primacy in the UN SC, the single dominant feature of Brazilian military thinking has been its perennial focus on becoming a major world power. As a well-known expert on Brazilian military politics argues, "ever since the early 1920s, and in a sense ever since the first Portuguese arrived, Brazil has been embarked on a Latin American version of Manifest Destiny" (Child, 1985: 34). A major theme of the armed forces doctrine has been to develop means to project power abroad. Projection in the Brazilian military thinking is often associated with deterrence; that is, the deployment of military power so as to be able to prevent an adversary from doing something that one does not want him to do. It is in this sense that Brazilian commanders have often linked PK participation with a form of power projection that allows for a greater visibility of Brazil's military might abroad and thus increased deterrence. For Brazilian military experts, a military force that can deploy its soldiers to various missions abroad can equally mobilize them to counter a threat from a near-by enemy.

Although the Brazilian commitment to UN peace troops has not yielded the expected returns, such as a permanent seat in the SC or world military power and status, both generals and ambassadors perceive potential benefits in deploying troops abroad. As a Brazilian military officer argues, "given the remaining relevance of PK operations as a consequence of many latent conflicts spread throughout the globe, Brazil's enhanced participation in UN operations, if it does not contribute directly to gaining the objectives established in the current National Defense Policy, at a minimum will help to keep the prestige of the country as a distinguished contributor of UN peace efforts" (Cunha Velloso, 2002: 50).

Diasporas and their Effects on Multilateral Diplomacy

Another factor that differentiates Brazilian and Mexican foreign policies is the attention both governments give to their respective diasporas. Every diaspora is a transnational collectivity whose members maintain sentimental, material and symbolic links to their country of origin. As such, homeland governments have strong incentives to maintain diasporic identities in order to promote among emigrants and their descendants a sense of belonging focused around the country or culture of origin. In so doing, they can use significant diasporic resources to influence recipient states' polices, while staying in touch with emigrants (Esman, 1986).

Brazil and Mexico are not exceptional in the effort of promoting disasporic identities, even though their diasporas show important differences and affect their multilateral policies in different ways too. Perhaps the most evident distinction between Brazilian and Mexican diasporas is their concentration in the US. A disproportionate number of Mexicans have emigrated to North

America, forcing Mexico to focus its diplomacy on catering the Mexican-American communities in the US, while overlooking its multilateral policy in the UN. By contrast, Brazil has a much more diffused diaspora around the world, which enables the country to focus more on global issues, while it uses its large network of diplomatic embassies to support simultaneously Brazilian multilateral initiatives and diasporas.

a) The Mexican diaspora: Strong Ties to the US, Weak links to the UN

According to a 1997 bi-national study on migration and the US Census Bureau, approximately 19 million people in America identify themselves as of Mexican origin, of which one-third (7.01 million) are first-generation immigrants who were born in Mexico (Binational Study on Migration, 1997; Census Bureau, 1997). At least since the 1970s, the Mexican government has tried to reach out the Mexican-American population by various diplomatic and political means. In 1990, the Mexican *Cancillería* created the Program for Mexican Communities Abroad, now known as the Institute for Mexicans Abroad, which coordinates efforts by different governmental agencies to tighten ties with people of Mexican ancestry living abroad. Its principal mandates are to raise awareness among Mexicans in the US and implement development projects offered by Mexico for the benefit of its diaspora, of which 98.5 percent is concentrated in the US.

There are many reasons that explain the Mexican government's focus on its diaspora in the US. As Carlos González explains, Mexican-Americans constitute an extraordinary market for exports of Mexican products and are an important source of foreign currency through the remittances that migratory workers send to their families. Likewise, the Mexican government recognizes Mexican-Americans as an ethnic group whose influence on US politics is growing. The expectation is that the Mexican diaspora will one day lobby in favor of Mexican interests in the US, just like the Jewish-American diaspora supports Israel's interests in Washington (González 1999).

But Mexico's efforts to reach-out Mexicans abroad come at a cost. The *Cancillería*, which is usually under-funded because of the strong federal, bureaucratic fights for resources and budgets, has had to use its limited assets to support diasporas, while overlooking other foreign policy issues, such as the UN. Mexico's projects in support of its diasporas are administered through a large network of forty-seven Mexican consulates in the US, the world's largest network of consular representations in America. All of these consular offices sustain various projects targeted directly to the Mexican-American community, such as buttressing community organizations, promoting formal education programs in Spanish for US public schools, arranging meetings with leaders of immigrant clubs and Mexican politicians, and fostering various cultural and folklore programs to enhance "Mexicanness" (*mexicanidad*)

(González, 1997). It is important to note, however, that Mexico's emphasis on its bilateral relationship with the US is not necessarily influenced by bandwagoning motives or power considerations, as most realist and hegemonic theories would claim. Instead, Mexico's pro-US position is driven by the demands of diasporas, who are becoming increasingly visible in both American and Mexican politics.

Hence, Mexico has almost as many consulates in the US as embassies abroad (63 consulates, of which 47 are in the US, and 70 embassies worldwide). Personnel, resources, money, and infrastructure go directly into North American consular offices, while diplomatic missions in Africa, Asia, and Europe are poorly funded and lack staff members. In some cases, it is more costly to maintain a consulate in a US city than an embassy in Africa or Asia. In some regions, such as Africa, Mexico has barely four embassies, leaving Mexican diplomacy with no formal links or networks with the strong African community in the UN General Assembly. For this reason, it is not surprising that Mexico lacks information about various UN PK missions in Africa and the Middle East, while it has serious challenges to promote Mexican initiatives in the UN system, including membership in the very competitive SC. With no formal contacts in African, Middle-East and Asian capitals, Mexico is clearly in a disadvantage in the UN General Assembly, where the G-77 and the Non-Alignment Movement —made mostly of African and Asian states— have a majority of votes. In practice, Mexico does not exercise what is often referred to in the UN system as "capital-to-capital diplomacy"; that is, diplomatic contacts between the world's most important capitals to foster UN initiatives. Instead, Mexico's efforts are concentrated in implementing a strong consular diplomacy in the US, while leaving its permanent representative in the UN headquarters with the tough task of negotiating multilateral agreements and treaties with virtually no diplomatic support.

EMBASSIES AND CONSULAR OFFICES ABROAD: BRAZIL AND MEXICO

Embassies in:	Brazil	Mexico
Latin America and the Caribbean	25	23
North America	2	2
Europe	26	25
Asia	14	12
Africa	23	4
Middle East	10	4
Total embassies	100	70
Consulates		
Worldwide	42	63
US	7	47

Source: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores de México (Cancillería mexicana) and Ministério das Relações Exteriores do Brasil (Itamaraty), 2006.

b)The Brazilian diaspora: Strong Ties the world,
Strong links to the UN

In contrast to Mexico, Brazil's diaspora is smaller and less concentrated in the US, which enables Itamaraty to focus more on global issues and less on Brazilians living abroad. With regards to migration, Brazil has been historically a recipient state. However, since the 1980s the Brazilian diaspora has increased substantially driven mainly by the country's poor economic and social conditions. It is hard to estimate Brazil's emigration flow, mainly due to data limitation. Using data from the Brazilian consulates abroad and published by Itamaraty, Débora Azevedo reports that there were around 2 million Brazilians living abroad in 2002. This represents roughly more than 1% of Brazil's total population of 182 million people (Azevedo, 2004). Yet, Brazil is Latin America's second recipient of remittances, amounting to 5.2 billion US dollars per year, 8.1 billion less than Mexico (BBC, 2003). The highest concentration of Brazilians living abroad is in the US (750,000 or 38.36%), Paraguay (350,000 or 29.54%), Japan (250,000 or 12.89%), Portugal (65,000 or 2%), Switzerland (45,000 or 1.25%), and the United Kingdom (30,000 or 0.53%). While major concentrations of Brazilians can be found in US cities such as Boston, Los Angeles, Miami, and New York, and equal number of them live in major world cities, such as Tokyo, London, and Asunción (Rios-Neto, 2005). Hence, Itamaraty does not need to exercise a strong consular presence in the US; in fact, it can use its vast network of embassies to serve both Brazil's national interests and its expanding diaspora.

Indeed, Brazil's diplomatic advantage consists of its more than 100 embassies around the world, Latin America's largest diplomatic network. This allows Itamaraty to reach-out a large number of countries whose votes are strategic for the UN system, especially in the General Assembly. More than any other Latin American country (with the exception of Cuba), Brazil places a considerable importance on Africa. Its active presence in the continent can be traced in the 1970s, when it took an active stand against colonialism and signed bilateral economic agreements with several new African republics, mostly Portuguese-speaking countries. Economic reasons drive Brazil's foreign policy in the African continent. The country was badly hit by the 1973 oil crisis and explored African oil markets to supply itself with petroleum. Africa also provided an ideal market to buy manufacturing goods and export weapons produced by the Brazilian military industry. Thus, Brazil has more than twenty embassies in the region and trade is an important issue in the diplomatic agenda (Guedes da Costa, 2001).

Brazil's diplomatic networks enables Itamaraty to implement a "capital-to-capital diplomacy", bargaining effectively among different world allies, brokering deals directly with world leaders; thus strengthening its UN permanent representative in New York. For instance, unlike Mexico,

information on PK missions comes directly from the field, where Brazilian *envoyés* report directly to Itamaraty and all its different missions, facilitating the centralization of the decision-making process. If votes are necessary to pass a UN resolution promoted by Brazil, Itamaraty can use its diplomatic missions worldwide to foster support and ensure passage. In the past years, Brazil has used its diplomatic muscle to foster support among developing countries for a permanent seat in the UN SC, using mostly two-level games; that is, bargaining bilaterally and directly with capitals, while negotiating multilaterally in New York. Brazil, however, has been less successful in convincing Washington about the benefits of having a Latin American country permanently represented in the SC. Consequently, Brazil is in a far better position to exercise a strong multilateral policy, in part because it has strong bilateral relations with the rest of the world (mostly developing countries) and its economic affairs are less concentrated in the diaspora living in the US.

Conclusions

This research has suggested a series of theoretical and empirical puzzles regarding the behavior of Latin America's middle powers in the UN system. While this project focuses on the Brazilian and Mexican cases, the argument here developed emphasizes domestic and international political factors that might also apply to other middle-powers and democratizing states. In other words, this research is touching on larger comparative politics and international relations questions and using Latin American cases as a good test.

First, this paper argues that countries similarly located in the international system and with analogous state capabilities behave differently in the UN, especially *vis-à-vis* the SC and PK. Similarly, states experiencing democratizing processes express divergent forms of international commitment. Hence, contrary to the conventional wisdom, transitions towards democracy do not necessarily create policy convergences in international organizations nor do they generate incentives for higher or lower international commitments. The comparative study of Brazil and Mexico indicates that, to a certain extent, the role of democracy in affecting foreign policy decisions has been overemphasized by the literature, while other factors, such as domestic institutions, bureaucracies and diasporas have been overlooked. In this sense, the present study strongly supports the skeptical view about the role of democracy and their effects on foreign policies (Snyder, 2000; Snyder and Mansfield, 2005). The cases here analyzed show that democratizing states are made by officials, whose actions and policies, including foreign and military policy, are constrained by non-democratic features; thus impeding fundamental changes and reinforcing continuities in foreign policy behavior. For this reason, foreign policy experts should not expect policy convergence among countries with similar political regimes, since even democracies vary in the type of institutional arrangements, bureaucratic procedures, and division of labor within governments.

Second, this article has also analyzed and compared the willingness of two middle-powers to engage in international security affairs. It shows that while many middle-powers share structural features, their behavior in world politics is often divergent and errant. This divergence, however, is unrelated to the general willingness to cooperate internationally. In fact, most foreign affairs departments in many of these middle-powers probably do tend to have a strong interest in active engagement of their countries in the UN, as it will surely increase their role in government and abroad. Nevertheless, diplomats in foreign ministries across the world face different types of constraints, which can ultimately undermine or boost their willingness to engage in international security fora. The distinction between centralized and

integrated versus diffused and fragmented decision-making thus offers heuristic tools to understand when and how potential middle-powers will in fact assume a pro-active and initiative-oriented role in world affairs. Bureaucratic decision-making can help explain why, for instance, South African and Indian foreign policies seem to be so successful and highly reputed in the UN system, especially *vis-à-vis* Nigerian and Pakistani diplomacy. In the former cases, the foreign affairs departments have relative autonomy and tend to centralize the decision-making process, while in the latter, diplomats are limited by other bureaucratic interests, such as the military establishment. Hence, UN politics is not merely reduced to a world of ambassadors engaged in diplomatic negotiations, since the preferences and policy options of other bureaucrats, such as the armed forces, are equally important in assessing the level of commitment among middle-powers. While the UN itself does not have any control over these domestic processes, it can observe the evolution of civil-military relations among middle-powers to get a better sense of who might increase or decrease its commitment towards issues such as PK.

Third, diasporas have only recently come to the attention of foreign policy scholars and tend to elude the established theoretical frameworks available in international relations. This article explores the role and increasing importance of diasporas in international relations in general and for foreign policy-making in particular, especially among middle-powers. Interestingly enough, diasporic sending countries' policies towards their emigrants and their effects on multilateral policy are not exclusive to Brazil and Mexico. In fact, most middle-powers and BRIC's have large diasporas around the world and their governments have initiated policies aimed at institutionalizing the relationship between the homeland and the emigrant community. This creates vast foreign policy opportunities, but poses important challenges for countries with mid-range diplomatic capacity. The major risk involved is that of bilateralizing relations with the main recipient country at the expense of multilateral and UN policies. Countries such as Mexico, South Korea and even Israel, often find themselves in a foreign policy dilemma; that is, the weight and importance of their economies and their political status provides the basis for an active and initiative-oriented role in the UN, but the pressures from their respective diasporas often forces their diplomacy to remain strongly committed to their US bilateral relationship, thus sacrificing activism in multilateral fora. By contrast, countries such as Brazil and, most importantly, India —the world's largest recipient of remittances— have the ability to perform active roles in the UN context, in part because their diasporas are spread and diffused around the world, which further reinforces Brazilian and Indian strong diplomatic presence in world affairs.

Finally, the findings in this paper matter at a policy level too and may have implications for the UN reform process. In recent years there have been

strong pressures to modify the composition of the SC in a way that better reflects the contemporary distribution of power in the world. Some advocates of the Council reform believe that a new category of permanent membership should be included in order to accommodate regional and middle-powers. However, as the Latin American cases here analyzed show, it is unclear whether regional and middle-powers have the aspiration for a permanent membership simply because they possess some sort of power capacity in the region. For this reason, a SC that mirrors the international and regional balances of power may be problematic since a criteria that is based on power capacity alone may favor states that have resources, but are incapable to put them at the service of the UN. On the other hand, selecting countries that are willing to supply diplomatic and military assets to the UN but lack power capacity may lead to serious problems of regional representation and legitimacy. This is one of the main reasons why so many countries in Latin America seem systematically unable to agree on a candidate for a non-permanent seat in the SC —as recently seen in the Guatemalan-Venezuelan dispute— and are equally opposed to Brazil's candidacy for a permanent seat in the Council (Romero, 2006). Either way, regional considerations for membership status in the SC pose a serious challenge for the UN reform effort.

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