Understanding International Partnership: The Complicated Rapprochement between the United States and Brazil

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THE TERM "PARTNERSHIP" HAS BECOME UBIQUITOUS in foreign policy discourse. Presidents and diplomats from many countries, not just the United States, invoke the term to describe the kind of relationship they have—or wish to have—with other, presumably more special, nations. What does it mean to be a partner, and, most important, what are the conditions for the successful construction of international partnerships? This article looks at the recent rapprochement in U.S.–Brazil relations to answer these questions.

Perhaps the most noteworthy development in intrahemispheric relations since the mid-2000s has been the dramatic increase in Brazil's foreign stature.[1] What is remarkable about the Brazilian rise is not just its suddenness but also, contrary to what some versions of realism would predict, that relations with the leading power in the hemisphere—the United States—have been improving rather than deteriorating.[2] As the

[1]Riordan Roett, *The New Brazil* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2011); and Larry Rohter, *Brazil on the Rise: The Story of a Country Transformed* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
[2]Monica Hirst, "Brazil–U.S. Relations: Getting Better All the Time," in Jorge I. Domínguez and Rafael Fernández de Castro, eds., *Contemporary U.S.–Latin American Relations: Cooperation or Conflict in the 21st Century?* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 124–161.

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Web site of the U.S. Embassy in Brasília states, and President Barack Obama has often repeated, the two countries "have a strong, dynamic, and growing *partnership*."[3]

No doubt, Brazil and the United States have a long history of disagreements, and new disagreements have recently emerged.[4] The allegation by Edward Snowden that the National Security Agency (NSA) had been spying on Brazilian firms and even the president and her personal advisers—prompting Brazil's president to postpone a high-profile state visit to Washington in October 2013—is a perfect example. Notwithstanding these episodes of discord, the overall trend since the 1990s has been more rather than less cooperation.

From an empirical point of view, this collaboration has been both fruitful and frustrating. It has been fruitful in that arenas of cooperation have expanded to historically high levels, and frustrating in that tensions and mutual suspicions still linger. From a theoretical point of view, this path to partnership—steady progress with some lingering roadblocks—is difficult to explain by standard theories of international relations.

To fill this theoretical gap, I suggest a theory of regional partnership. Contrary to traditional strands of realism, which see the rise of a new power as a source of friction with an existing power,[5] my theory of partnership contends that power transitions offer new opportunities for rapprochement when the potential contributions of the growing power dovetail with the *needs* of the established power. This theory of partnership differs from realist views on bandwagoning in that it recognizes that not only the weaker but also the stronger party may have an interest in deepening the rapprochement. Of course, in order for a partnership to form, the rising nation will need to pass some tests of reliability. If the rising partner lacks the capacity to deliver collective goods, trust declines. The regional security environment also needs to meet certain conditions. If it is too peaceful, the status quo power will have no incentive to seek a rapprochement. If it is too dangerous, the stronger power will be reluctant to delegate too much authority to the rising power. But if conditions are satisfactory, then the

[3]"U.S.–Brazil Priorities," U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Brazil, accessed at http://brazil.usembassy.gov/topic-of-interest.html, 25 November 2013 (emphasis added). "Obama–Rousseff Joint Statement on U.S. and Brazil," 9 April 2012, accessed at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/04/09/joint-statement-president-obama-and-president-rousseff, 29 November 2013.

[4]Peter Hakim, "U.S.–Brazil Relations," mimeo, Chatham House, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2013.

[5]A.F.K. Organski, *World Politics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958); Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Ronald L. Tammen et al., *Power Transitions: Strategies for the 21st Century* (New York: Chatham House, 2000); and John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

status quo power may see the rising nation as a potential partner that can share some of the costs of regional leadership. The less powerful nation views association with the existing power as a mechanism for making the greater power more trusting. This allows the rising power greater latitude in implementing a more independent foreign policy.

In a way, this demand-based theory of partnership is a modified version of the concept of bandwagoning. Under the traditional view of bandwagoning, smaller nations join forces with powerful nations to avoid being injured or sidelined and become predominantly "rule takers" that accept the terms imposed by the larger nation.[6] I argue that partnership differs from this traditional view of bandwagoning in that the less powerful, nonthreatened nation values the benefits of association with a greater power not just as insurance against injury but also as a way to obtain more autonomy in foreign policy. The weaker new partner will not necessarily become a mere rule taker—it can also demand and obtain concessions from the larger partner. My argument is that the U.S.–Brazil rapprochement is being driven by two forces: the United States's incentive to seek regional partners to share the costs of providing collective goods in a region of declining security importance and Brazil's desire for greater latitude to act internationally. Brazil is slowly recognizing that closer ties with the United States can offer more, rather than less, autonomy of action. I will support this argument by invoking a historical analogy—the famous Anglo-American rapprochement of 1895–1914. This analogy helps illustrate the systemic forces that are pushing the United States to grant greater freedom of action to Brazil.

Likewise, the analogy illustrates major differences that help explain the factors that stand in the way of a deeper partnership. Specifically, issues such as state capacity (low for Brazil), mistrust (high for the United States), and misplaced expectations (high for both) keep the U.S.–Brazil partnership limited.

THE U.S.–BRAZIL RAPPROCHEMENT (2005–PRESENT)

Putting behind years of financial and macroeconomic disarray, Brazil has emerged since the mid-2000s as an active and respected international actor.[7] While many countries, including the United States, closed foreign missions in the last decade, Brazil opened 40 new embassies abroad.[8] In

[6]Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987); see also Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics,* 162–163.
[7]See Roett, *The New Brazil*; and Rohter, *Brazil on the Rise.*
[8]Jorge Heine, "Latin America Goes Global," *Americas Quarterly* 7 (Spring 2013): 38–44.

September 2013, Robert Carvalho de Azevêdo, a seasoned Brazilian ambassador, became the head the World Trade Organization, arguably the most powerful multilateral international organization in the world.[9] Brazil's economy now ranks sixth or seventh in the world, up from twelfth or thirteenth in 2004, and it has become more export oriented, with powerful multinationals such as Gerdau, Embraer, Petrobras, Odebrecht, AmBev, InterCement, and Vale. Five Brazilian firms were among the top 100 companies on the 2013 *Forbes* list of the world's biggest public companies, which included only one other Latin American company (at number 100).[10] The airplane manufacturer Embraer is the third largest in the world, after Boeing and Airbus. The Brazilian 3G Capital has managed to acquire iconic U.S. corporations such as Burger King, Heinz, and is in the process of acquiring Kraft.

Starting in 2005, most observers noticed a qualitative change in Brazil's foreign policy: greater "geographic scope," meaning an interest in global affairs rather than just South America, and greater "assertiveness," meaning an interesting in claiming leadership positions, even if that entails open clashes with the United States.[11] For some, Brazil's status as a stable democracy—committed to poverty alleviation and openness in governance—grants the South American giant a "soft power" advantage over other rising powers such as China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia.[12]

In the context of this rising stature, the United States and Brazil unexpectedly attempted to accelerate the process of rapprochement. With regard to Brazil, a decade that began with efforts at soft-balancing the United States[13] gradually gave way to a period of more frequent cooperation, albeit with significant bumps along the way. While not all scholars are convinced that things are improving, the signs are there, as the following description of the key events demonstrates.

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[9]Federico Steinberg, "Al final todo llega", *Infolatam*, 5 May 2013, accessed at http://www.infolatam.com/2013/05/07/al-final-todo-llega-un-brasileno-dirigira-la-omc/, 12 July 2013.

[10]*Forbes*, "The World's Biggest Companies," accessed at http://www.forbes.com/global2000/, 12 July 2013.

[11]Rafael Antonio Duarte Villa and Manuela Trinidade Viana, "Security Issues during Lula's Administration: From the Reactive to the Assertive Approach," special issue, *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 53 (December 2010): 91–114.

[12]Alfred P. Montero, *Brazil: Reversal of Fortune* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2014); and Gregory Michener, "Brazil's Great Opening?," Al Jazeera, 23 April 2012, accessed at http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/04/201242111185482690 9.html, 29 November 2013.

[13]Jorge I. Domínguez, "The Changes in the International System during the 2000s," in Domínguez and Fernández de Castro, eds., *Contemporary U.S.–Latin American Relations*, 1–16; and Harold Trinkunas, "Rising Brazil: Seeking Influence on Global Governance," Latin America Initiative, Brookings Institution (Washington, DC), April 2014.

The United States Drops the FTAA (2005)

The first consequential step in the U.S.–Brazil rapprochement began in 2005, when the United States stopped promoting the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), an idea it had supported since the 1994 Summit of the Americas. This reversal in U.S. strategy was seen in Brazil as a major victory, although, in reality, it also reflected the United States yielding to domestic pressure. The idea behind the FTAA was to create a hemispheric free trade agreement among 34 nations (all except Cuba) modeled on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Brazil was one of the co-chairs of the Trade Negotiations Committee and led the resistance to this plan. Even President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who was otherwise perceived as friendly to the United States,[14] openly clashed with the United States on free trade.[15] Brazil opposed economic issues embedded in the FTAA, such as subsidies to U.S. farmers, but mainly opposed the FTAA because it saw the plan as undermining Brazil's position as a regional leader and diminishing the importance of Mercosur (Southern Common Market).

The United States had begun to acknowledge Brazil's new position in the early 2000s. First, it accommodated Brazil's demands in the negotiations. It added a common set of rights and obligations for all countries along with optional obligations that could be entered into on a plurilateral basis. The United States also made the risky decision to support Brazil and not Argentina in the complex negotiations with the International Monetary Fund during the 2001 currency crisis, when conservatives and liberals in the United States were pressing for a harsher stand toward debtor nations, including Brazil.

While U.S. support for Brazil during this early period may have helped moderate then-candidate Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's attitude toward the FTAA, it still did not convince him to support the proposed framework for the agreement. In conjunction with India and China, Brazil famously led the charge against the United States during the 2003 ministerial meetings of the World Trade Organization in Cancún, which led, embarrassingly for the United States, to no agreements. FTAA negotiations reached an impasse between 2003 and 2004. The United States was furious with Brazil's leading opposition. Eventually the timeline for FTAA creation expired in

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[14]See Rohter, *Brazil on the Rise*.

[15]See Luiz Alberto Moniz Bandeira, "Brazil as a Regional Power and Its Relation with the United States," *Latin American Perspectives 33* (May 2006): 12–27; and Carlos Gustavo Poggio Teixeira, "Brazil and the Institutionalization of South America: From Hemispheric Estrangement to Cooperative Hegemony," *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 54 (2011): 189–211.

2005. The United States tried to introduce the topic at the 2005 Summit of the Americas, and Brazil (with the help of Argentina, the host nation, and Venezuela) blocked the initiative entirely.

Thereafter, the United States shifted its focus to creating bilateral free trade agreements with interested countries and blocs (Chile, Peru, Colombia, Panama, and DR-CAFTA—the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement, which includes Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic). Brazil, for its part, continued to pursue its strategy of competing with the U.S. quest for bilateral trade agreements by trying to deepen Mercosur and the notion of greater South American unity under Brazil's leadership.[16]

The U.S. decision to drop the FTAA did not end its disagreements with Brazil over trade (in fact, these disputes continue today[17]) but rather compelled the United States to begin to recognize Brazil as a leader in the region. Rather than react punitively, the subsequent response of the United States was to seek greater rapprochement.

Formal Agreements: Energy and Security (2007–2010)

The real turning point in U.S.–Brazil relations took place in 2007, when both countries began to sign unexpected cooperation agreements. The first was a collaborative agreement on biofuels, primarily ethanol (the United States and Brazil account for 80 percent of the world's production of ethanol). In March 2007, following two meetings between Presidents Bush and Lula, the United States and Brazil signed a historic memorandum of understanding (MOU) to foster technology sharing between the parties and feasibility studies for biofuel use, expand the biofuels marketplace globally, and establish joint cooperation to develop ethanol among third countries.[18] The program was expanded to the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Guinea-Bissau, and Senegal. This MOU was a turning point in U.S.–Brazil relations because it addressed Brazil's long-standing complaint about competition with U.S. corn ethanol, which is less productive and more harmful to the environment than Brazil's sugarcane ethanol.

In terms of implementation, these biofuel agreements have not lived up to expectations. Obstacles to Brazilian ethanol penetration in the U.S.

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[16]Poggio Teixeira, "Brazil and the Institutionalization of South America," 189.

[17]Abraham F. Lowenthal, "Brazil and the U.S. Are Becoming Increasingly Important to One Another," *Folha de São Paulo,* 9 April 2012, accessed at http://www.thedialogue.org/page.cfm?pageID=32&pubID=2929, 12 July 2013.

[18]"Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. and Brazil to Advance Cooperation on Biofuels," 9 March 2007, accessed at http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/158654.htm, 17 June 2013.

market still remain, creating tension between the two nations (compare tariffs of 54 cents per gallon on Brazilian ethanol to subsidies of 51 cents per gallon paid to U.S. producers). Nevertheless, the MOU constitutes an important economic and scientific agreement between the United States and Brazil in an area of competition that one would not have expected given the state of U.S.–Brazil relations in 2005.[19] From the point of view of the United States, it represents an effort at making concessions to a potential rival, and from the point of view of the United States, it is an example of what Monica Hirst describes as the new "affirmative bilateralism," whereby Brazil seeks to achieve more "strategic and pragmatic dialogue" with the United States.[20]

The next landmark agreement was a series of security agreements addressing long-held concerns of the United States. The MOU on Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (2008) established cooperation to strengthen Brazilian institutions in the fight against the drug trade. Security cooperation had already begun in 2004 when Brazil led the United Nations (UN) mission to Haiti, freeing the United States from the need to occupy Haiti. But the MOU on drugs is more significant because it focuses on the drug war, which is an important security concern for the United States that Brazil had often historically criticized. Brazil is the second-largest cocaine consumer in the world (the United States is the first) and a major transit country for illicit drugs on their way to Europe. The U.S. government committed funds for, among other things, specially trained police and security intensification in airports.

Thereafter, security agreements with Brazil expanded. In 2010, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and Brazil's defense minister Nelson Jobim signed the two countries' first major military agreement since 1977. The Defense Cooperation Agreement concerns cooperation in research and development, information exchanges, and joint military exercises and training. This agreement was particularly significant because it demonstrated Washington's regard for Brazil as a strategic partner and helped lay the foundations for Brazil's defense industry. Later in the same year, Gates and Jobim signed the General Security of Military Information Agreement, which facilitates the sharing of classified defense and military information between the United States and Brazil.

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[19]Mauro Vieira, Brazil's ambassador to the United States, remarks at the Eighth Annual Latin American Symposium, Center for Hemispheric Policy, University of Miami, 5 April 2013.

[20]Monica Hirst, "Understanding Brazil–United States Relations: Contemporary History, Current Complexities and Prospects for the 21st Century," Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão (FUNAG), Ministry of Foreign Relations (Brazil), 2013, available at http://funag.gov.br/loja/download/1043-Understanding_Brazil_-_United_States_relations.pdf.

Brazil Pushes Back

Despite this rapprochement, by the end of the 2000s, the Brazilian government did not entirely abandon its famous "quest for autonomy."[21] Serious disputes lingered regarding Brazil's role in the G-20, policy stand during the 2008-09 global financial crisis, decision to formalize BRICS into a political outfit in 2008, vocal criticisms of U.S. anti-drug trafficking efforts in Colombia and Latin America more broadly, and continued amicable relations toward anti-American governments in Venezuela, Cuba, and Honduras. These lingering disputes show that despite increasing agreements, full cooperation on regional and global affairs remains unattained.[22] But no dispute proved more angering to the United States than Brazil's 2009 overture to Iran.

In November 2009, President Lula received Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the first Iranian leader to visit Brazil in 44 years. The visit was touted as a Brazilian effort to appease tensions between Israel and Palestine, although public attention focused instead on Lula's support of Iran's right to develop nuclear technology for energy generation. Brazil's position defied plans by the United States and its European allies to limit Iran's nuclear technology. The U.S. government did not directly criticize Ahmadinejad's visit, but President Obama sent a letter to his Brazilian counterpart. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, at a joint press conference in March 2010 with the Brazilian minister of foreign affairs, Celso Amorim (1993–1995, 2003–2010), called on Brazil to support new sanctions against the Iranian nuclear program.[23] Yet Lula defended Brazil's relationship with Ahmadinejad, arguing that the world should engage with, not isolate, Iran.[24] Then, in May 2010, Brazil took a more defiant step, when it helped finalize an agreement with Turkey and Iran, whereby Iran would send uranium enriched at a low level abroad to be turned into fuel (similar to the nuclear fuel swap deal proposed by the UN in October of the previous year). The White House, again, was furious. Secretary of State Clinton condemned the actions from the start, and as soon as the deal was reached, the United States opposed it as a delay tactic

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[21]Vigevani, Tullo and Gabriel Cepaluni, *Brazilian Foreign Policy in Changing Times: The Quest for Autonomy from Sarney to Lula*. Translated by Leandro Moura. (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009).

[22]See Hakim, "U.S.–Brazil Relations."

[23]"Clinton Tells Brazil Sanctions Necessary for Iran Nuclear Deal," Voice of America, 2 March 2010, accessed at http://www.voanews.com/content/clinton-tells-brazil-sanctions-necessary-for-iran-nuclear-deal–86241597/113413.html, 12 July 2013.

[24]Alexei Barrionuevo, "Brazil Leader Defends Iranian's Visit," *New York Times*, 24 November 2009, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/24/world/americas/24brazil.html, 12 July 2013.

and urged the UN Security Council to draft a resolution for new sanctions against Iran.[25]

Because Brazil challenged the most important U.S. initiative surrounding what was then perhaps the most important national security concern of the United States, the 2010 Iran affair set back U.S.–Brazil relations considerably. While the White House did not take any punitive actions against Brazil, the episode raised doubts in the United States, especially among conservatives, that Brazil could be a reliable partner. The view that Brazil was taking advantage of United States weakness in 2009, the high point of the recession, to adopt contrarian views not just on Iran but on a number of fronts, became inescapable in Washington.[26] Thus, U.S.–Brazil relations hit a major setback in 2010, and yet, even at this low point, no other area of bilateral cooperation was terminated.[27]

Resetting

An effort to address this setback in U.S.–Brazil relations was launched in 2011, the so-called resetting, with Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff (2011–present) showing more commitment to engaging with the United States than Lula, at least until the 2013 NSA scandal made the news. One of the first indicators of Rousseff's new direction for Brazilian foreign policy was her choice of minister of foreign affairs: Antonio Patriota, a former Brazilian ambassador to the United States (2007–2009), who had a more favorable attitude toward the United States than his predecessor, Amorim. In contrast to Lula, Rousseff had also shown a desire to distance Brazil from Iran. She had been more vocal in condemning the Iranian regime's record on human rights, and she supported a March 2011 UN resolution to establish a special rapporteur to investigate human rights abuses in Iran.[28] Ahmadinejad's top media adviser, Ali Akbar Javanfekr, was quoted in a Brazilian newspaper as saying that "[s]he [Rousseff] destroyed years of good relations" between Iran and Brazil, and when

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[25]Alexei Barrionuevo and Sebnem Arsu, "Brazil and Turkey near Nuclear Deal with Iran," *New York Times*, 16 May 2010, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/17/world/middleeast/17iran.html, 12 July 2013.

[26]For an argument on how perceptions of crisis in the United States incentivized BRICS countries to formalize their association, see Oliver Stuenkel, "Emerging Powers and Status: The Case of the First Brics Summit," *Asian Perspective* 38 (January 2014): 89–109.

[27]Peter Hakim, "Brasil y EE UU están de acuerdo en el desacuerdo," *Política Exterior* 152 (January/April 2013): 5, accessed at http://www.thedialogue.org/PublicationFiles/Hakim_PoliticaExterior_Brazil-US.pdf, 12 July 2013.

[28]"Brazil's UN Vote on Iran Marks First Great Difference between Dilma and Lula da Silva," MercoPress, 26 March 2011, accessed at http://en.mercopress.com/2011/03/26/brazil-s-un-vote-on-iran-marks-first-great-difference-between-dilma-and-lula-da-silva, 12 July 2013.

Ahmadinejad visited Latin America in January 2013, he did not meet with Rousseff.[29]

In 2012, Brazil acted as a crucial broker of a deal between Bolivia and the United States. Brazil engineered the participation of Bolivia, which, since the election of President Evo Morales in 2006, has pursued the most stridently anti-American policy in the region (second to that of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela), especially regarding drug trafficking. This trilateral cooperation agreement is designed to control the Bolivian production of coca leaves (the main ingredient in cocaine) through a system of satellite surveillance of Bolivian coca crops. The agreement represented two important advances in the rapprochement process of the United States and Brazil. First, it showed Brazil's capacity to act as a moderator between the United States and more radical countries such as Bolivia. Second, it represented the United States' willingness to confer on Brazil some responsibility for regional affairs in the area of drugs, an issue of vital security importance for the United States. Minister Patriota affirmed in an interview with a Bolivian newspaper that there has been a decrease in the United States' role in the fight against drugs in the region, with increased activity from Brazil.

In 2012, during Rousseff's visit to the United States, the two countries announced six agreements of cooperation (on trilateral affairs, space, health, social inclusion, education, and racial equality). The trilateral cooperation agreement is noteworthy in that it pledges cooperation in several South American and Lusophone African countries, areas considered by Brazil to be its natural sphere of influence.[30] The social inclusion agreement is noteworthy in that it includes a pledge to cooperate on a domestically controversial subject—advancing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues—in international forums: the UN Human Rights Council and the Organization of American States.[31]

Evidence of Rising Cooperation in Numbers

The rise in cooperation between the United States and Brazil can also be shown by looking at the overall outcomes of key bilateral disputes. The

[29]Eduardo J. Gómez, "Why Iran–Brazil Friendship Has Gone Cold," CNN, 5 April 2012, accessed at http://www.cnn.com/2012/04/05/opinion/gomez-iran-brazil-chill/index.html, 12 July 2013.

[30]U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, "The United States and Brazil: Trilateral Cooperation," 9 April 2012, accessed at http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/2012/187613.htm, 1 February 2014.

[31]U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, "The United States and Brazil: Cooperation for Social Inclusion," 9 April 2012, accessed at http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/2012/187611.htm, 1 February 2014.

appendix presents the most important disputes dominating the U.S.–Brazil agenda between the late 1980s and 2013 and shows the result of each dispute.[32] Based on Robert O. Keohane's criterion that a reliable indicator of cooperation (compared with "harmony") is "active attempts to adjust policies to meet the demands of others,"[33] the appendix also shows which party, if any, yielded to settle the dispute. The data were extracted from authoritative accounts of negotiations in the literature of U.S.–Brazil relations. The range of topics is vast: patents, trade, finance, intellectual property, disarmament, human rights, troops in the Middle East, nonproliferation, border security, terrorism, drug interdiction, diplomacy, the environment, pharmaceuticals, currency wars, and defense.

Before drawing conclusions from these data, it is important to note some of their limitations. Negotiations preceding the late 1980s are not included because of data unavailability, which means that the appendix might underrepresent evidence of cooperation in the 1980s. In addition, some long-standing disputes such as relations with Cuba and Venezuela, the lack of free trade and tax agreements with the United States, and Brazil's general policy toward the Middle East are not mentioned, in part because they are too general or too constant.[34] By the same token, some settlements might still remain undisclosed. Furthermore, the appendix assigns equal weight to each dispute, when, in reality, officials in each country might assign importance unevenly across issues. The 2010 dispute over Iran, for example, was more significant to the United States than many others, whereas the dispute over the Snowden affair was more significant for Brazil than many others, and yet the appendix counts them as just one case equal to all others.

Despite these caveats, the appendix confirms the story of rising cooperation. Starting in 2007, the year of the agreement on energy that I have argued marked an important turning point in the relationship, both "dispute settlement" and "concession" have become more dominant trends in U.S.–Brazil relations. Disputes are not declining, but settlements are increasing. Fifteen of the 20 disputes or issues that dominated the bilateral agenda during this period were settled, for a settlement ratio of 75 percent,

[32]Additional supporting information may be found in the Appendix accompanying the online version of this article and available at www.psqonline.org and the *Political Science Quarterly* page of the Wiley Online Library.

[33]Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 12.

[34]Simon Romero and Jackie Calmes, "Brazil and U.S. Accentuate the Positive," *New York Times*, 9 April 2012, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/10/world/americas/in-dilma-rousseff-visit-brazil-and-us-accentuate-positive.html?_r=2&, 23 November 2013.

TABLE 1
U.S.–Brazil: Key Disputes and Their Outcomes, 1980–2013

Period	Number of Key Dispute Issues	Issues Settled	Settlement Ratio (%)	U.S. Concessions	Brazil Concessions
1980–2006	23	12	52.2	3	9
2007–2013	20	15	75.0	13	10

Source: Author's elaboration based on data in the appendix (the Appendix accompanying the online version of this article is available at www.psqonline.org and the *Political Science Quarterly* page of the Wiley Online Library).
Notes: The year 2007 is selected as a possible turning point in reference to the energy agreements between the United States and Brazil that year.

an increase from the 52.2 percent settlement ratio in the preceding period (see Table 1). In addition, in the 2007–2013 period, the United States made concessions in 13 settled issues (and Brazil made concessions in 10). This is in stark contrast to the preceding period, in which the United States made concessions in only three issues (while Brazil made concessions in nine). In short, settlement ratio was arguably adequate prior to 2007 and improved afterward; U.S. concessions to Brazil went from infrequent to frequent.

Historical Comparisons

One drawback of relying exclusively on the appendix and Table 1 to study rising cooperation is that because they exclude data before the 1990s, the recent trend of cooperation could be overstated. However, an overview of the pre-1990 period also confirms that cooperation might have been far less frequent during that period.

While the United States and Brazil cooperated during World War II and the early part of the Cold War, deep divisions in foreign policy emerged starting in the 1960s. With its so-called *política externa independente* (independent foreign policy), Brazil began to defy the United States on multiple issues. Although Brazil broke relations with communist Cuba and supported the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in the mid-1960s, the military junta began in the late 1960s to improve relations with most communist countries, including the Soviet Union. Despite appeals from the United States, Brazil consistently refused to provide troops for Vietnam. During the 1970s, communist Cuba and authoritarian Brazil deepened contacts, especially concerning relations with Africa,[35] where both

[35]Benicio Schmidt, "Relations between Brazil and Cuba," 2008, accessed at http://www.cubaencuentro.com/revista/revista-encuentro/archivo/48-49-primavera-verano-de-2008/relaciones-entre-brasil-y-cuba-97197, 23 November 2013.

countries found themselves supporting newly independent, anti-imperialist regimes. Furthermore, Brazil defied the United States by pursuing full national nuclear power capabilities in the 1970s, despite serious misgivings from the United States. When President Jimmy Carter pushed for a human rights agenda in Latin America, Brazil held fast to its autocratic ways. While Brazil informally sided with the United States and the United Kingdom during the Falkland Islands (or Malvinas) War of 1982, it mostly ignored calls to fight pro-Cuba forces in Central America in the 1980s.

During the Cold War period, therefore, there was collaboration but no rising partnership. The United States gave Brazil abundant aid, but it never treated Brazil as a partner deserving major concessions. Instead, Brazil was seen as a "dependent," nonenemy state, to borrow Cottam's language.[36] The United States stood ready to supply Brazil with plenty of help to fight its inner demons: underdevelopment (hence the huge expansion of foreign aid to Brazil in the 1960s), potential unrest (hence the expansion of military aid), and financial crises (hence the expansion of economic bailouts in the 1980s and 1990s). The United States saw Brazil as too consumed by domestic issues, and therefore no leader in either country would discuss special partnerships, except in efforts to battle these internal problems. Brazil, in turn, accentuated its independent foreign policy, perhaps as a way to camouflage its dependence on the United States, and the United States tolerated Brazil's foreign policy independence, in part because Brazil lacked international clout.

DEFYING EXPECTATIONS

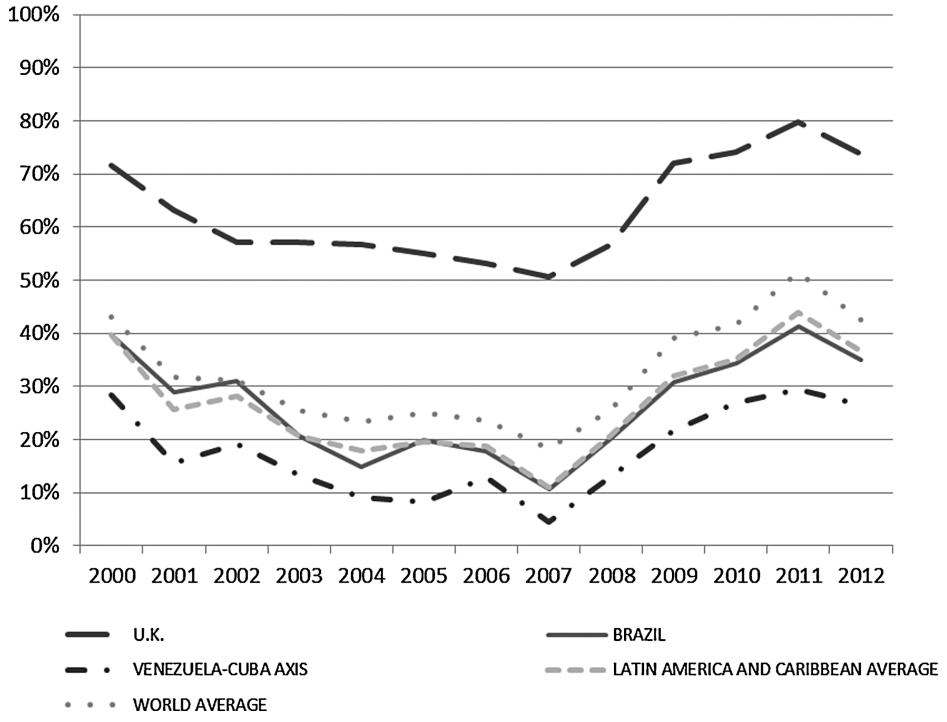
The U.S.–Brazil rapprochement since the mid-2000s—however tentative and incomplete—is surprising because it breaks not just with history but also with some theoretical expectations. First, it defies strands of neorealism that contend that a disruption in the structure of power in the international system yields friction. As Gilpin explains, when a rising power threatens the position of the hegemonic power, a clash is more likely.[37] Furthermore, realists and neo-Marxists suggest that there is a hierarchy in the international system, with dominant powers at the top setting rules of conduct for others to follow[38] and establishing "hegemony" rather than just acting in self-preservation.[39] These accounts predict the

[36]Martha L. Cottam, *Images and Intervention: U.S. Policies in Latin America* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994).
[37]Robert Gilpin, "The Theory of Hegemonic War," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (Spring 1988): 591–613.
[38]Organski, *World Politics*.
[39]Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

"rise of the rest," where powers unsatisfied with the status quo will engender conflict with established superpowers. This framework would thus predict expanding rather than shrinking conflict between the United States and Brazil.

Second, this cooperation was not the result of a convergence of interests between the United States and Brazil on global affairs. One way to see this is by examining "voting coincidence" between Brazil and the United States at the UN. The United States has logged the percentage of "same votes" at the UN, defined as the number of votes for which the United States voted yes and a country voted yes, plus the number of votes for which United States voted no and a country voted no. Figure 1 shows the voting coincidence for Brazil. For the sake of comparison, the figure also includes the average for all world countries, the average for all Latin American countries, the score for the United Kingdom (to show the behavior of a very close

FIGURE 1
Voting Coincidence with the United States in the UN General Assembly, by Year



Source: Department of State, "Voting Practices in the United Nations," 2000–2012, accessed at http://www.state.gov/p/io/rls/rpt/, 21 November 2013.
Notes: "Voting coincidence" is the percentage of "same" votes between the United States and a given country. "Same" votes refer to instances in which the United States and a given country voted yes or no on the same issue. "Venezuela–Cuba axis" refers to the average voting coincidence between those two countries.

ally), and the average for Cuba and Venezuela (to show the behavior of strong anti-American states from Latin America).

Figure 1 reveals that there was not much coincidence of interest between Brazil and the United States in the 2000s. While Brazil's voting coincidence is greater than the combined average of Castro's Cuba and Chávez's Venezuela, it is still not that close to the United States. Brazil essentially followed the Latin American trend, which is below the world average and far below that of the United Kingdom, the gold standard. In addition, Brazil, like most other countries, was on a path of declining voting coincidence when the United States started to make overtures (2005–2007). In many ways, Brazil's voting pattern reflects its commitment to values that are more akin to "national liberation struggles" typical of the Global South, such as "sovereignty, self-determination, nonintervention, autonomous economic development," perhaps more so than to values embraced by liberal Western democracies such as the United States.[40] It cannot be said, therefore, that the decision by the United States and Brazil to intensify cooperation in the mid-2000s was a response to rising coincidence on the types of issues covered by the UN. The United States was not rewarding an ally for loyal behavior; at the UN, at least, Brazil showed little evidence of unequivocal loyalty.

Third, the rapprochement is surprising because it cannot be completely attributed to closer economic cooperation. It is difficult to argue, as neoliberal institutionalists would, that what is driving this rapprochement is a growing interdependence between the United States and Brazil. Keohane affirms that "the more tightly intertwined and interdependent the valued interactions among states, the greater the incentives for long-term cooperation in order to avoid disrupting these ties."[41] While there is certainly interdependence between the two, it is not as profound or as rapidly expanding as it would need to be to qualify as an important driver of rapprochement.

This lack of sufficient economic interdependence becomes clear through a comparison of the evolution of U.S.–Brazil trade prior to the late 2000s with that of U.S.–Mexico trade prior to the approval of NAFTA in 1994 or

[40]For an argument on how rising powers are more accepting than defiant of liberal international norms, see G. John Ikenberry, "The Future of the Liberal World Order," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2011, accessed March 29, 2015. http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67730/g-john-ikenberry/the-future-of-the-liberal-world-order. For a counterargument, see Jorge G. Castañeda, "Not Ready for Prime Time: Why Including Emerging Powers at the Helm Would Hurt Global Governance," *Foreign Affairs* 89 (September/October 2010): 109–123.

[41]Robert O. Keohane, "International Liberalism Reconsidered," in John Dunn, ed., *The Economic Limits to Modern Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 165–194.

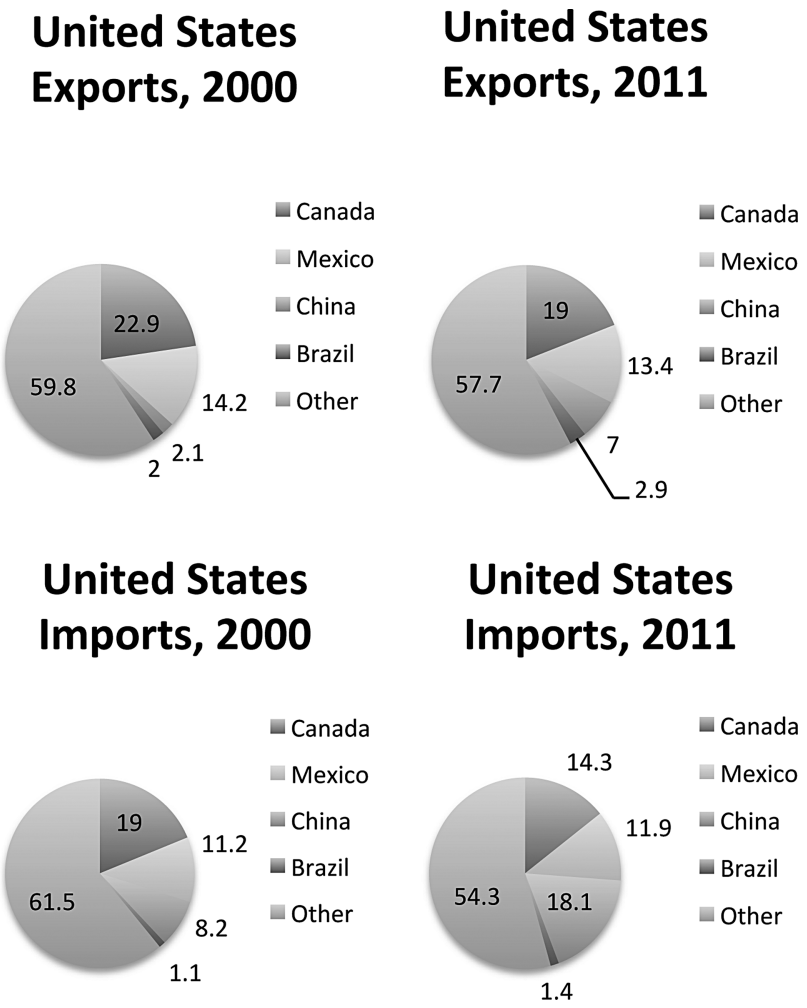
even with that of U.S.–China trade during the 2000s. In the last two cases, trade expanded continuously in relative terms (not just absolute terms). Mexico in the late 1980s decided, as a matter of national priority, to deepen its trade relationship with the United States to become one of the United States' top trading partners, suggesting that there was an economic logic to NAFTA—trade agreements were propelled by the sheer volume of trade and the desire to preserve it. Likewise, U.S. demand for Chinese imports has expanded to the point that China today is the third or fourth main trading partner of the United States.

In contrast, Brazil's trade with the United States has not reached the same proportions. In fact, the share of U.S. exports to and imports from Brazil stayed fairly small and stable in the 2000s (see Figure 2). From the perspective of Brazil, the share of exports to the United States declined from 24 percent of total in 2000 to 14 percent in 2008. Similarly, imports from the United States declined from 23 percent of total Brazilian imports in 2000 to only 15 percent in 2008. To this day, the United States and Brazil have failed to sign any economic cooperation or trade agreements.[42] This low level of dependence on trade with the United States represents a strong contrast with the past. In the early twentieth century and throughout World War II, Brazil was 60 percent to 70 percent dependent on coffee exports (mostly to the United States).[43] Thus, the Brazilian economy has not become significantly more intertwined with that of the United States compared to the recent and long-term past. This defies neoliberal institutionalism, which would expect economic interdependence to be a driving force for rapprochement.

Finally, rising cooperation between the United States and Brazil seems to defy James Morrow's famous "security/autonomy trade-off" argument.[44] Although referring to military alliances rather than mere situations of cooperation, Morrow argues that when a minor power seeks an alliance with a major power (what he calls an "asymmetrical alliance"), the minor actor typically gains security at the cost of autonomy, meaning the power to pursue "desired changes in the status quo."[45] However, this is not what has happened as a result of the U.S.–Brazil rapprochement. Rather than reducing Brazil's margin of maneuvering, the rapprochement seems

[42]Peter Hakim, "A U.S.–Brazil Respect Deficit," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 April 2012, accessed at http://www.thedialogue.org/page.cfm?pageID=32&pubID=2926, 12 July 2013.
[43]Luiz Alberto Moniz Bandeira, "Brazil as a Regional Power and Its Relation with the United States," *Latin American Perspectives* 33 (May 2006): 12–27.
[44]James D. Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry: An Alternative to the Capability Aggregation Model of Alliances," *American Journal of Political Science* 35 (November 1991): 904–933.
[45]Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry," 908–909.

FIGURE 2
U.S. Exports and Imports, Selected Countries, 2000–2011



Source: TradeStats Express, International Trade Administration, accessed at http://tse.export.gov, 26 November 2013.

to be increasing it, especially within South America. Signs that the United States is tolerating, even relying on, Brazilian leadership in South American affairs are becoming common. This is evident when comparing U.S. responses to three different political crises in South America since 2002.

In the 2000s, both Venezuela and Bolivia saw massive street protests against left-leaning, anti-American presidents: Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and Evo Morales in Bolivia. The opposition in each country attempted to force recall referenda for each respective president. The threat of violence was high, especially in Bolivia, and so was the threat of government

repression. Despite these similarities, the United States responded differently to the two crises. In the Venezuelan crisis, the United States tried to take the lead in the diplomatic effort to force mediations. It also argued vigorously on behalf of involving the Organization of American States (OAS) as the key mediating party.[46] In the Bolivian crisis, in contrast, the United States urged Brazil to handle the mediations. Brazil not only took the lead (together with Chile) but also used the Bolivian crisis as the first official act of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), a recently created international organization of South American nations (with no U.S. presence).[47]

In Paraguay in 2012, another left-leaning president, Fernando Lugo, got into trouble when he was too quickly impeached by Congress. The United States and Brazil took different positions, with Brazil arguing that the impeachment constituted a coup and the United States siding with the OAS secretary general, arguing that "it was not a coup" but a termination of a term that occurred too rapidly. Despite this difference in views (and the United States' displeasure with the way that Brazil handled a similar crisis in Honduras in 2009), the United States took the backseat and essentially allowed Brazil, together with Venezuela (representing UNASUR), to conduct the international response. Official delegates from Brazil and Venezuela traveled to Asunción, accompanied by delegates from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay. No delegate from the United States was included. In the end, the more pro-Venezuela countries broke diplomatic relations with Paraguay. Brazil merely recalled its ambassador and agreed to the removal of Paraguay from Mercosur as punishment. The United States disagreed with these responses, but did not intervene.

In short, in the span of a decade—in the same region, dealing with similar governments and crises—the United States went from trying to exercise the lead role to relying on—and, in the case of Paraguay, accepting—Brazil's leadership, even when there was significant disagreement with the Brazilian approach. This reliance/tolerance is not visible on every issue, but it is not nonexistent either.

A THEORY OF PARTNERSHIP

A theory of partnership (applicable to U.S.–Brazil relations) must be able to account for the two processes just described: rising cooperation despite

[46]Jennifer McCoy and Francisco Diez, *International Mediation in Venezuela* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2011).
[47]Miguel Ángel Martínez Meucci, "Conflictividad y Gestión Multilateral de Crisis en América Latina: Casos Venezuela (2002) y Honduras (2009)," *Revista Paz y Conflicto* 6 (2013): 53–77.

power transition and scant convergence on foreign policy goals, and occasional setbacks. One way to begin to formulate such a theory is to invoke Charles Kupchan's famous argument on "how enemies become friends."[48] Kupchan's key point is that rivalry turns to cooperation if there is a change in the quality of diplomacy in the form of "institutionalized restraint" along with "compatible social order" and "cultural commonality." In this section, I show how these factors are a useful starting point but, ultimately, insufficient to explain the recent evolution of U.S.–Brazil relations.

Institutional Restraint

There is no question that the U.S.–Brazil rapprochement meets Kupchan's notion of institutional restraint. In both cases, this restraint stemmed from changes inside the state.

In the United States, the key domestic change occurred at the level of the bureaucracy: the displacement of "neoconservatives" from the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) in the U.S. State Department during the second George W. Bush administration. During the first Bush administration, the WHA was staffed with individuals who had a more distrusting attitude toward nations with independent foreign policies or leftist domestic politics (for example, Roger Noriega). These diplomats did not enthusiastically promote partnership with Brazil. In 2005, the ideological orientation of the WHA changed with the appointment of a new diplomat: Thomas Shannon.

With a doctorate in politics from Oxford University and diplomatic experience in Brazil, Guatemala, Venezuela, and the OAS, Shannon brought to the job a "fusion of commercial liberalism and prudent realism" along with greater tolerance toward risk.[49] Shannon was quick to recognize the importance of partnering with Brazil and to demonstrate "to the world" that the United States and Brazil "are prepared to work together."[50] In his words,

> This is a country that has emerged globally and that over the next 10 years will move from the tenth-largest economy in the world to the fifth-largest

[48]Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

[49]Javier Corrales and Carlos Romero, *U.S.–Venezuela Relations since the 2000s: Coping with Midlevel Security Threats* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

[50]Eric Green, "U.S.–Brazil Biofuels Pact Has Broad Significance," IIP Digital, 22 March 2007, accessed at http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2007/03/20070322115608l1xeneerg0.9870111.html#ixzz2ji6nnWMN, 21 November 2013.

> in the world. And that has significant implications for the United States, which is looking for strong and reliable partners to work with, both in South America and beyond.[51]

This approach broke rank with neoconservatives. With their characteristic aversion to risk, neoconservatives would have felt uncomfortable yielding too much to a country whose foreign policy was still too independent, too protectionist, and too friendly to anti-American regimes. Shannon's approach was to downplay these risks. Because the United States in the mid-2000s was focusing on other security threats (the surge in Iraq, nuclear proliferation in Iran and North Korea, and, closer to home, Venezuela's radicalization), Shannon's pro-Brazil foreign policy remained under the radar of more risk-averse actors in the Bush administration and in Congress.

For Brazil, perhaps the most significant domestic force contributing to institutional restraint was the partial displacement of another domestic constituency: not so much neocons but their nemesis—the radicals from the ruling party, the Workers' Party. Jeffrey W. Cason and Timothy J. Power call this process the "pluralization" of actors.[52] Pluralization means that the traditional constituency dominating foreign policy begins to share space with new constituencies. Historically, foreign policy in Brazil was dominated by one branch of government—the Ministry of Foreign Relations, often referred to as Itamaraty, in reference to the name of the ministry's building (Itamaraty Palace). Itamaraty, in turn, has been dominated by nationalists and radicals, especially in terms of relations with the Global South. Starting under Cardoso and continuing under Lula, the radical groups lost some influence. Furthermore, trade relations were taken away from traditional diplomats in Itamaraty and transferred to new consultative councils dominated by export-oriented private businesses. In the 2000s, with Brazil's rise as an export giant, these businesses acquired greater prominence in Brazil's economy and as more important actors in foreign policymaking.

In many ways, what happened to Brazil in the mid-2000s paralleled changes in the United States during the same time. Foreign policy was removed from the extreme factions of the ruling party. In Brazil,

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[51]Pierre Dumot, "Ambassador Thomas Shannon '80: Serving His Nation and the World," *William & Mary Alumni Magazine,* 2010, accessed at http://www.wmalumni.com/?fall10_21, 21 November 2013.

[52]Jeffrey W. Cason and Timothy J. Power, "Presidentialization, Pluralization, and the Rollback of Itamaraty: Explaining Change in Brazilian Foreign Policy Making in the Cardoso–Lula Era," *International Political Science Review* 30 (March 2009): 117–140.

the change went farther, with more room given to businesses that were more competitive and export oriented. This change at the bureaucratic level in both countries was a reason for the rise of institutional restraint.

Likewise, the cases also conform to Kupchan's two other factors, "compatible social order" and "cultural commonality." One could say, for instance, that the United States and Brazil share significant cultural elements: both are predominantly Christian countries with increasingly prominent evangelical groups; both have histories of African slavery and mistreatment of natives; both have received large influxes of migrants, from Europe until the mid-twentieth century and now from Latin America; and both have highly entrepreneurial business sectors. There are clearly major differences between the two nations, but one could easily argue that the cultural commonalities of the United States and Brazil exceed those that exist between the United States and most countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

The problem with Kupchan's argument when applied to U.S.–Brazil relations is that it overpredicts cooperation. While there is no question that cooperation has expanded, it has not moved as fast or as far as one would expect from Kupchan's analysis, with numerous bumps along the way. Thus, we should look not just at quality of diplomacy and cultural commonalities but also at some underlying geopolitical factors that might be shaping this rapprochement.

The Demand for Partnership: Comparisons with the Anglo-American Rapprochement

Drawing comparisons from one of the most commonly studied cases of turnaround in global politics (also invoked by Kupchan)—the Anglo-American rapprochement of the late nineteenth century—I offer a series of geopolitical conditions that shape the factors that lead to greater international partnership. While the analogy is imperfect (the level of animosity between the United States and Brazil was never as high as that between England and the United States from independence until about 1895), the analogy helps identify the geopolitical factors that lead to greater demand for partnerships.

During most of the nineteenth century, England was an important rival of the United States. That changed roughly during the period from 1895 to 1910, when England yielded to the primary demands of the United States regarding the northern Western Hemisphere (border disputes in Alaska and British Columbia, U.S. control over the construction of the Panama

TABLE 2
The U.K.-U.S. (Early Twentieth Century) and U.S.–Brazil (Early Twenty-First Century) Rapprochements

	Existing great power: (England ca. 1900, United States ca. 2010)	*Emerging power*: (United States ca. 1900, Brazil ca. 2010)
Similarities	- Need for a partner - Decreasing interest in South America - Distant wars - Near-the-border wars - Regime convergence	- Expanding interest in South America - Presidents willing to challenge anti-imperialist sentiments at home
Differences	- United States in 2010s still has some interest in the region (drugs, emergence of friendly regimes)—not eager to disengage fully	- State power: United States in 1900 was a strong state domestically and a hard-to-rival world power - Collective Good Provision: United States in 1900 was willing and able to take on the costs of public good provision

Source: Author's elaboration.

Canal, support for Cuba's independence during the Spanish-American War, and debt negotiations and border disputes in Venezuela).[53] The result was a spectacular turnaround, with England becoming a key ally of the United States, not just in Western Hemisphere affairs but globally.

The Anglo-American rapprochement of 1895–1910 shares several similarities with the U.S.–Brazil rapprochement (see Table 2). Both hegemonic powers—England at the end of the nineteenth century and the United States at the beginning of the twenty-first century—saw their interests in the region decrease, in part because other areas of the globe were becoming more important, or at least more deserving of national security attention.

In the late nineteenth century, England found itself facing a number of issues that drew its attention away from the Americas. England had problems both close to home and far from home. Close to home, England faced the threat of an increasingly armed Germany. Further afield, England faced the threat of the Boer Wars in South Africa (1880–1881, 1899–1902). The Second Boer War initially went poorly for the British, prompting it to send an additional 180,000 troops in 1900, which at the time was the largest deployment of troops Britain ever sent overseas.[54]

[53]Bradford Perkins, *The Great Rapprochement: England and the United States* (New York: Atheneum, 1968); Kathleen Burk, *Old World, New World: The Story of Britain and America* (London: Little, Brown, 2007); and Stephen R. Rock, *Why Peace Breaks Out: Great Power Rapprochement in Historical Perspective* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

[54]"The Second Boer War," accessed at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Boer_War, 28 November 2013.

Likewise, one could argue that in the 2000s, the United States faced a similarly urgent set of issues near its border and far afield. Along its southern border, the United States faced the threat of exploding drug-related violence. Abroad, it faced escalating threats from the Middle East (Iraq, Iran, al Qaeda, oil price hikes, piracy, the Arab Spring), South Asia (relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan), and Asia (the rise of China, nuclear proliferation in North Korea). With the post–September 11 war on terror and especially the 2007 surge in the Iraq War, the United States, like Britain during the Boer Wars, deployed its largest force ever overseas.

As a result of these complications near its borders and afar, both England in the early nineteenth century and the United States in the early twenty-first century found themselves in need of partners to take on greater responsibilities abroad. Just as England found itself looking for trustworthy allies with some degree of ideological convergence (liberal values), the United States in the mid-2000s was interested in a partner to share the burdens of collective good provision in the region. In the case of the United States and Brazil, the convergence focused on shared goals of protecting the region from coups and instability, keeping markets open for multinationals, expanding energy resources, and, increasingly, containing the drug trade from the Andes. This convergence was far from absolute,[55] but for non-neocons in the United States and nonradicals in Brazil, it was sufficient to justify deeper rapprochement in U.S.–Brazil relations.

Likewise, the rising power in the twentieth-century case (Brazil) shares several similarities with the rising power in the late nineteenth-century case (the United States). Both countries longed to exert a greater international role within their respective neighborhoods and beyond, and both countries were interested in minimizing the influence of the larger hegemonic power and thus creating more opportunity for independent foreign policy. In addition, as discussed in the previous section, the executive branch had lessened the role of potential veto actors: Anglophobes in the case of the United States at the turn of the century and anti-imperialist party members in the case of Brazil since the 2000s.

Capacity and Trust

Comparing American-Brazilian rapprochement to the Anglo-American rapprochement helps identify not just similarities but also important

[55]Hakim, "U.S.–Brazil Relations."

differences. These differences, in turn, help explain why the U.S.–Brazil rapprochement has been fraught with so many setbacks. The differences have to do with state capacity and levels of trust.

First, as the rising power in the nineteenth century, the United States had already achieved a fairly "capable state" and the strongest economy in the world, which allowed the country to absorb the costs of providing public goods in the region.[56] The United States had no counterpart rivaling its state capacity, certainly not in the Americas, which allowed the country to operate relatively unencumbered in the region. In contrast, Brazil today has not proven its weight; its economy is still weak—it is large but not necessarily more dynamic than those of Chile and Mexico in the Americas or other emerging powers elsewhere (China, Russia). [57] The power of the United States was so unrivaled in the Americas at the end of nineteenth century that no alliance within the Americas would have been capable of challenging the United States. In contrast, Brazil today does not share the same status. An alliance of several countries in South America, if it were to form, could easily rival the economic and military power of Brazil.

Second, Brazil has been unable to invest significant tangible and intangible resources in foreign policy. Its foreign aid is miniscule, far lower than that of Venezuela. Brazil has even been criticized for relying on a "charm offensive" in the region; the country all too often assumes that its leadership is welcomed in South America, even though anti-Brazilian sentiment is rising.[58] Part of Brazil's problem is that despite its economic growth since 2005, its economy remains frail. Much of its growth stemmed from reliance on commodity exports, and this has generated some deindustrialization, further loss of competitiveness, and postponement of second-generation reforms such as quality improvements in education outcomes.[59] Brazil's troubles getting ready for the World Cup reflect deeper economic problems: low economic competitiveness, poor infrastructure, rigid labor markets, and pervasive wastefulness and

[56]Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[57]See Michael Shifter and Cameron Combs, "Shifting Fortunes: Brazil and Mexico in a Transformed Region," *Current History* 112 (February 2013): 49–55.

[58]Oliver Stuenkel, "Brasil necesita lanzar una ofensiva de 'encanto' dentro de la región" [Brazil Needs to Launch a Charm Offensive in the Region], Post-Western World, 10 July 2011, accessed at http://www.postwesternworld.com/2011/07/10/brasil-necesita-lanzar-una-ofensiva-de-%E2%80%9Cencanto%E2%80%9D-dentro-de-la-region/, 1 February 2014.

[59]Peter Kingstone, "The Brazilian Miracle and Its Limits" (paper presented at the Conference on BRICs, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX, 29 March 2012).

corruption.[60] The massive protests that erupted throughout the country in June 2013 show middle-class discontent with corruption and governance failures.

Finally, the United States is not yet entirely convinced that Brazil's foreign policy interests are fully aligned with its own.[61] Spats over Iran, Honduras, Colombia, Paraguay, and the Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América (ALBA; Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America), although declining in intensity, make many conservative sectors in the United States question the reliability of Brazil as a strategic partner in the Americas. Furthermore, in the Americas, there is no major potential threat to balance against, diminishing the value of Brazil as a geopolitical partner. In Asia, for example, the United States recognizes the need to balance China, making India (or other Asian countries) more appealing for a deep partnership. And on the issue on which the United States does see a security threat in the region—the expansion of drug trade—Brazil has yet to demonstrate its capability for success.

These differences between the Anglo-American and U.S.–Brazil cases, and the difference between today's balancing needs in Asia versus America, explain why the United States is unable to have the same level of trust with Brazil as England ended up having with the United States. They also explain the uneven nature of the U.S.–Brazil rapprochement in comparison.

Unrealistic Tests and Expectations: Paradoxes of Partnership Construction

This mistrust by the larger power and the consequent inclination to test potential partners could very well be intrinsic to the process of partnership building, regardless of the historical context. While expected, this mistrust can prove to be toxic. In the case of U.S.–Brazil relations, it helps explain the two most serious crises since the start of the current rapprochement.

The first was the crisis stemming from the 2013 revelations that NSA was spying on Rousseff, her advisers, and the national oil company, Petrobras. Domestically, public opinion in Brazil unified against the

[60]Jaime Daremblum, "World Cup No Cure for Brazil's Woes," Real Clear World, 1 November 2011, accessed at http://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2011/11/01/brazils_world_cup_woes_99741.html, 22 November 2013; see also Louise Lucas and Samantha Pearson, "Brazil: Consumer Rhythm," *Financial Times*, 7 January 2013, accessed at http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/d5375732-58be-11e2-bd9e-00144feab49a.html#axzz2HZLRSZFe, 7 January 2013.

[61]See Hakim; Nikolas Kozloff, "Is Obama Wary of Brazil and Dilma Rousseff?," Al Jazeera, 5 May 2012, accessed at http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/04/201242813485033375 7.html, 12 July 2013; and Lowenthal, "Brazil and U.S. Are Becoming Increasingly Important to Each Other."

United States across all party lines. Internationally, Rousseff canceled a state visit to the United States (this would have been the first state visit since April 1995), lambasted the U.S. government at the UN, and called for an international campaign to curtail espionage. While the crisis did not escalate out of control (Brazil "delayed" rather than canceled the visit, refrained from expelling ambassadors or calling for punitive actions, and refused to grant Snowden asylum), it was a critical setback in the trend toward rising cooperation. Of course, the United States was found to have been spying on a number of countries, not just Brazil, so mistrust of would-be partners is not the only explanation for this episode of conflict in U.S.–Brazil relations. However, as one U.S. diplomat (quoted anonymously) explained, the case of espionage on Brazil was different: "From Washington's perspective, Brazil is not exactly a friendly government . . . Silva's, Rousseff's, and the Workers' Party's friends are enemies of the United States."[62] This diplomat might be using the term "enemy" loosely, but he captures the idea of lingering mistrust that, I argue, is inherent within the greater party in the politics of partnership construction.

An even better example of the toxic effect of persistent mistrust was the 2010 dispute over Iran. While the United States refrained from taking retaliatory action against Brazil, it stayed fairly irritated at Brazil. The issue was not that the United States would feel betrayed when Brazil began working with Turkey on an independent nuclear deal with Iran. The key issue was that, as another diplomat stated (also anonymously), "Turkey was quickly forgiven, but Brazil was in the administration's doghouse for a couple of years."[63]

Another related issue, also a sore point for the United States, is Brazil's refusal to sign the additional protocols for the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. These protocols call for more inspections. Brazil claims that the protocols are unnecessary and discretionary. For the United States, Brazil's refusal to accept the new protocols is suspicious.[64]

Herein lies the central paradox of the "mistrust and test" problem in the politics of partnership construction. The greater power feels it must obtain assurances on the reliability of a potential partner; these tests yield unrealistic expectations and, naturally, resentment in the would-be partner. This paradox bolsters the point made by Hofmann that on the politics of

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[62]Anonymous quote in Carlos Alberto Montaner, "Por qué Estados Unidos espía a Brasil?" [Why Does the United States Spy on Brazil?], *El Nuevo Herald* (Miami, FL), 22 September 2013, accessed at http://www.elnuevoherald.com/2013/09/22/1571913/carlos-alberto-montaner-por-que.html, 23 November 2013.
[63]Jaime Daremblum, "Make Brazil a Higher Priority," *Weekly Standard*, 5 November 2013, accessed at http://www.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication_details&id=9758, 23 November 2013.
[64]Hakim, "U.S.–Brazil Relations."

trust building, one cannot assume that testing and information gathering will automatically lead to greater rapprochement.[65]

Likewise, in the politics of partnership construction, if the risk stemming from the larger power is to impose unreasonable tests on the would-be partner, the risk stemming from the smaller party is to expect more attention and recognition than it can realistically get. In 2011, during President Obama's visit to Brazil, Rousseff expressed frustration that the United States was not paying enough attention to Brazil or taking the country as seriously as India.[66] The view that the United States does not pay sufficient attention to Brazil has been expressed by virtually all Brazilian presidents since the 1990s.

Like the issue of mistrust by the larger partner, the expectation by the smaller party that it deserves more attention is also bound to yield disappointment. While the United States could certainly do more to recognize Brazil's importance, there are inherent limits to what a large power can do. In the case of Brazil, there are two main reasons for this limit.[67]

The first reason has to do with geopolitics and has already been explained: Brazil is not located between two major trouble spots (in India's case, China and Pakistan). The second and more theoretically relevant reason is that in the politics of partnership construction, the very same forces that drive the larger power to reach out to smaller power—namely, a full plate and security threats elsewhere—are the same reasons that attention to the second party is limited. This was tacitly recognized by Foreign Minister Patriota. When asked whether he was disturbed that the United States paid scant attention to the region and that President Obama had never mentioned the region during the presidential debates, Patriota stated forgivingly, "South America is becoming increasingly a region that offers solutions rather than problems . . . That's why we interpret [the lack of mention] as positive."[68] When referring to South America, Patriota probably meant Brazil more than the entire continent, but the

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[65]Aaron Hoffman, *Building Trust: Overcoming Suspicion in International Conflict* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 38-41, 141.

[66]Nikolas Gvosdev, "The Realist Prism: U.S. Paying the Price for Taking Brazil for Granted," *World Politics Review*, 20 September 2013, accessed at http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/13229/the-realist-prism-u-s-paying-the-price-for-taking-brazil-for-granted, 23 November 2013.

[67]Peter Hakim, "Obama Vai Elogiar Brasil, mas só Ficará nas Palavras, diz Profesor," [Obama Will Praise Brazil, but It Will be Just Words, Says Professor] interview with Maurício Moraes, R7, 19 March 2011, accessed at http://noticias.r7.com/internacional/noticias/obama-vai-elogiar-brasil-mas-so-ficara-nas-palavras-diz-professor-20110319.html, 23 November 2013.

[68]"América Latina Oferece Soluções, Não Problemas, Afirma Patriota," [Latin America Is Providing Solutions, Not Problems, Says Patriota], Agence France–Presse, 24 October 2012, accessed at http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hmTdJ08h82-HuVOt7uZy1cW81vKQ?docId=CNG.400e5d4eb4641413d915b82b57edbbe1.541&hl=pt_PT, 23 November 2013.

overall point is that his reflection suggests that he understood the second central paradox of partnership construction from the point of view of the weaker power: declining interest and security concerns by the greater power may encourage rapprochement but can also lead to detachment and disinterest. This paradox is not always easily understood by the minor partner and often leads to disappointment with the large actor.

In short, the tendency toward unrealistic tests by the big partner and unrealistic expectations by the minor partner lead to similar negative outcomes: mutual feelings of disappointment. This negative outcome explains why partnership construction can be a rocky affair despite the best intentions of leaders and the exigencies of geopolitics.

Neighborhood Effects: Cooperation and Differentiation

What have been the regional effects of the rise of Brazil and its tentative rapprochement with the United States? Once again, the effects have not been exactly what realists would have predicted. The rise of Brazil has neither unified the region behind Brazil's leadership (bandwagoning) nor caused antagonistic competition against Brazil (balancing). Daniel Flemes and Leslie Wehner explain the logic of the region's response.[69] They show that no South American nation wants to seek distance from Brazil, as they all derive benefits from links with a rising power, creating an environment that Randall L. Schweller would call "underbalancing."[70] And yet South American nations remain keen on preventing Brazil from becoming a dictating hegemon, thus opting for "omni-enmeshment," an effort to build strong bilateral relations with *all* other countries in the region, not just Brazil.[71]

Yet there is more than omni-enmeshment taking place in South America. The countries in the region are also responding to the rise of Brazil by pursuing differentiation: they cooperate with Brazil while simultaneously emphasizing different foreign policy priorities and even different forms of soft power.

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[69]Daniel Flemes and Leslie Wehner, "Drivers of Strategic Contestation in South America" (working paper, German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), Hamburg, Germany, October 2012), accessed at http://www.giga-hamburg.de/dl/, 12 July 2013; see also Luis Leandro Schenoni, "The Brazilian Rise and the Elusive South American Balance" (working paper, GIGA, Hamburg, Germany, March 2015) accessed at http://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/publication/the-brazilian-rise-and-the-elusive-south-american-balance, 29 March 2015.

[70]Randall L. Schweller, "Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing," *International Security* 29 (Fall 2004): 159–201.

[71]Lincoln Bizzozero, "Las Manifestaciones de Ollanta Humala y la Política Internacional del Perú," [Ollanta Humala's Manifests and Peru's International Relations], *Vadenuevo,* 6 July 2011, accessed at http://www.vadenuevo.com.uy/index.php/the-news/2438-34vadenuevo05, 12 July 2013.

The first group to seek differentiation has been the ALBA countries. ALBA is the loose association of nations led by Venezuela and Cuba that encompasses the small and poor countries of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua, as well as several small Caribbean islands. ALBA nations have cordial relations with Brazil, but they have also sought to differentiate themselves by being more hostile toward the United States (anti-imperialism) and toward any collective multilateral effort to bolster the quality of democracy (by the OAS or any other international organization in which the United States participates).

At the opposite end of the spectrum are Chile, Colombia, Peru, and, in North America, Mexico. In the 2000s, these nations began to seek differentiation from Brazil by reinforcing, rather than lessening, their strong ties with the United States, including free trade agreements. More recently, these countries have joined (or are considering joining) the United States in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a free trade agreement among 11 countries launched in 2010.[72] This is the only free trade agreement in which the number of participating nations has increased while negotiations are under way.[73] It excludes Brazil. The Trans-Pacific Partnership is seen in the United States and Asia as a response to the rise of China and a better way to compete with China,[74] but it is seen in Santiago as a message to the international community that Chile's economy is far more sophisticated, and thus Asia-worthy, than that of Brazil.

Sandwiched between Chile and Brazil is Argentina, which has historically resented and feared the rise of either of its neighbors. Argentina, like all South American nations, recognizes that open competition with Brazil would be suicide, so it cooperates with Brazil. However, like the rest of South America, Argentina has sought to differentiate itself. The most evident manifestation has been Argentina's move toward ALBA. Of all the South American nations, Argentina has had the closest relations with the ALBA countries. By 2007, Venezuela was Argentina's most important international partner; a report showed that Argentina entered into 294 bilateral agreements, including 39 with Venezuela, 37 with Chile, 30 with Bolivia, 21 with Brazil, 12 with China, 10 with Germany, and 9 with the

[72]On Chile's use of free trade and free trade agreements to advance its national interest, see Flemes and Wehner, "Drivers of Strategic Contestation in South America." On Colombia, see Eduardo Pastrana Buelvas, "Evolución y Perspectivas de las Relaciones Entre Colombia y Brasil" (Working Paper 14, Plataforma Democrática, July 2011), accessed at http://www.fes-seguridadregional.org/index.php?option=com_booklibrary&task=view&id=4264&catid=249&Itemid=319, 12 July 2013.

[73]Jeffrey J. Schott, Barbara Kotschwar, and Julia Muir, *Understanding the Trans-Pacific Partnership* (Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2013).

[74]Ibid.

United States.[75] In terms of soft power, Argentina has sought differentiation from others, especially Brazil, by focusing on human rights issues[76] and, more recently, by championing lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights. More generally, Argentina is caught in what Laura Gómez-Mera describes as the fundamental paradox of Mercosur in the 2000s:[77] the need to fortify Mercosur as a defensive strategy against the United States and globalization as well as unease at being in the shadow of the more powerful Brazil. This is one of the main reasons that Argentina has not endorsed Brazil's request for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

CONCLUSION

The rise of Brazil and its complicated rapprochement with the United States are two of the most significant geopolitical shifts in the Americas since the end of the Cold War. This rapprochement has been less the result of economic interdependence or convergence of preferences than of a posthegemonic world in which the existing power finds itself in need of partners for lesser-priority regions.

This article proposed a theory of partnership based on the demand side. As with England and the United States after 1895, the rapprochement between the United States and Brazil since 2005 stems from the need for a regional partner in the context of declining interest in the regional environment surrounding the would-be partner, the proliferation of threats to the larger power both near (the Mexican border) and farther afield (the Middle East, South Asia, North Korea), increasing interest in the minor partner of expanding its influence in its neighborhood, and some degree of societal and institutional convergence between partners (institutional restraint, the prevalence of market-oriented, socially conscious democracies in a world in which this type of regime is scarce).

However, partnership depends not just on external demand conditions and social compatibility but also on state capabilities, trust, and commitments. Present-day Brazil does not possess the same capabilities to become a reliable supplier of public goods and thus act as a regional partner the way the United States did in the late nineteenth century when England

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[75]"Kirchner Signed 39 Percent of Argentina Deals in 100 years," *El Universal*, 22 March 2007, accessed at http://www.eluniversal.com/2007/03/22/en_pol_art_kirchner-signed-39-p_22A847381, 26 November 2013.

[76]Kathryn Sikkink, "From Pariah State to Global Protagonist: Argentina and the Struggle for International Human Rights," *Latin American Politics and Society* 50 (Spring 2008): 1–29.

[77]Laura Gómez–Mera, *Power and Regionalism in Latin America: The Politics of Mercosur* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013); see also Kozloff, "Is Obama Wary of Brazil and Dilma Rousseff?"

cemented its rapprochement with the United States. By the same token, the present-day United States is not as eager to abandon the region as England was in the early twentieth century or to fully trust any regional partner with equivocal loyalties. Brazil, as the junior partner, has developed expectations of its global importance that are hard to justify given its inability thus far to absorb the costs of providing collective goods. If the United States has been slow to recognize the importance of more trust, Brazil, in turn, has been slow to recognize the central paradox of partnership seeking: the very same force that is pushing the United States to grant greater latitude to Brazil—reduced security concerns in the region—is the same force that precludes the United States from treating Brazil as an equal partner.

Despite these setbacks, the U.S.–Brazil relationship appears to be moving toward more rather than less cooperation. In January 2015, less than a year and a half since the Snowden affairs, Vice President Biden held high-level talks with president Rouseff, and in March, President Obama officially re-invited Rousseff for a state visit in 2016, calling both countries "hemispheric and global *partners* [emphasis added]."[78] This rapprochement has implications for both Brazil and South America. For Brazil, collaborating more with the United States is likely to increase trust over time within the United States, especially among conservative sectors, and this will grant Brazil greater autonomy within South America. At some point, however, Brazil will need to decisively abandon its now-historical tradition of "showing off its opposition" to the United States.[79]

For South America, the rise of Brazil has produced neither intense intraregional rivalry nor the unity that diplomats claim exists. Instead, there has been a process of differentiation of foreign policies, with the ALBA bloc challenging the United States and a larger bloc embracing the United States.

One unexpected conclusion is that the decline of interest in the South America has actually *increased* the demand for partnerships in the region—yet another paradox in the politics of international partnership in the Americas. Currently, Brazil is more interested in partnering with the United States than it has been in decades (as long as the partnership does not concern free trade), in part because the United States is less unilateral. Outside ALBA, countries feel left out by rising Brazil, turned off by Venezuela's radicalism, and disappointed by China's lack of interest in

[78]https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/03/13/readout-vice-president-bidens-call-president-dilma-rousseff-brazil
[79]Hakim, "A U.S.–Brazil Respect Deficit."

helping the region with governance issues—and this has driven them toward closer partnership with the United States.

For the first time, therefore, new partnerships are being forged between the United States and Latin America that are based less on U.S. imposition and more on demand from willing countries. The rise of Brazil, together with the process of differentiation, has undoubtedly created conflictive relationships (mostly between ALBA and the United States), but it has also created more opportunities for sustained cooperation with Brazil and the vast majority of countries in South America.*

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