

## **Communities of International Relations in Emerging World: Neither Resistant to the Positivism nor Beyond Debates**

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### **Abstract**

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When one focus in the last 10 years, some scholars strengthen the question of whether we were beginning a period that could be called “beyond debates” in theory of international relations. Some researches concluded that, specially on the epistemological aspect, the world is divided between the positivist theory that is practiced in the United States, and the disbelief that prevails in many parts of the world about the merits of positivism. When one reviewed some of the data derived from TRIP 2011 we can clearly observe that the conclusion above must be reviewed. When we look at the applicability that epistemological perspectives have in communities of international relations in some countries of intermediate power, such as Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey, we realize that there is not in such countries a clear epistemological hegemony neither a strong reaction to the positivism nor a enthusiasm visible with the post-positivism. In fact, this paper points out the thesis on the existence in communities of international relations of countries of intermediate power of an epistemological and methodological pluralism manifested in the form of a theoretical hybridity.

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**Keyword:** BTASME; Positivism; International Communities; Plurality; Core

### **Introduction**

The discipline of International Relations is a field of knowledge commonly associated to the great debates. At least the main production centers of knowledge- the United States and Europe- for nearly a century, has fed countless pages of journals and books with their so-called "great debates". Since the so-called third debate is losing its attraction capacity in communities of international relations around the world, it seems opportune to ask how this tendency can affect the theoretical production in regions of the theoretical periphery?

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It is not possible to answer to this general question because we lack empirical data to gauge whether they have had any impact. Shortly bibliographic material was produced in the periphery that indicate more clearly how the three major debates affected the methodological and epistemological production in regions like Africa, Asia and Latin America. However, when one focus in the last 10 years, when the question of whether we were beginning a period that could be called “beyond debates”, some works (Smith, 2000, 81) concluded that, specially on the epistemological aspect, the world was divided between the positivist theory that is practiced in the United States, and the disbelief that prevails in many parts of the world about the merits of positivism along with a resistance to considering consistent the idea that there is a universal standard to judge the quality of scientific work. Evidently in those "many other parts of the world" Smith should also be including peripheral regions of theoretical production, as Latin America, Asia and Africa.

However, is it the same conclusion that rises when we focus the theoretical concerns in the periphery of the international system? When one reviewed some of the data derived from TRIP 2011 we can clearly observe that the conclusion above must be reviewed and questioned. For example, according to TRIP 2011<sup>3</sup> 47% of the academics from the 20 countries part of the sample identified themselves as positivists, against 28% as non-positivists and 26% as post-positivists.

On the other hand, when we look at the applicability that these three epistemological perspectives have in some countries of intermediate power, such as Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey, we realize that there is not in such countries a clear epistemological hegemony neither the non-positivism nor the post-positivism as could suggest the referred conclusion of Smith.

To address the problem above, as far as possible, this paper propose the following research design: characterization of the communities of international relations of some developing countries of medium power (Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey. In relation these communities, and following the TRIP 2011, will be treated, the epistemological, ontological and methodological aspects. The data will be treated through qualitative analyze.

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<sup>3</sup>Teaching, Research, and International Policy (TRIP) is one project from the College of William & Mary, Williamsburg (USA. This project measure trends in IR research and teaching with results from an extensive survey of IR professors who teach and/or do research at colleges and universities in 20 different countries. This paper uses the data of 2011 TRIP.

Finally, for operational purposes of the description of the information and data we convention to call the four countries studied of BTASME group (Brazil, Turkey, South Africa and Mexico)

The paper is divided in four sections: in the first, is made a review of the state of the art of the theoretical production in the peripheral South; in the second is featured the profile of the communities of the BTASME group; in the third, is analyzed the epistemological and ontological issues from the four countries, and the four section we analyze the methodological aspects. Of course we will retake the findings in the final remarks.

### **International Relations in the South: A Short Review**

There are few academic papers on the subject of how periphery countries deal with epistemological and ontological issues in International Relations Theory. This can be explained by the fact that most of the works in the field continue to belong to a North American Social science, normally associated with the belief that international behaviours of states or groups follow standards of acceptance/rejection of the knowledge produced in the United States, as underlines Smith in according to the world is divided between the positivist theory that is practiced in the United States... and those, in various parts of the world, who are sceptical about the merits of positivism ...” (Smith, 2002: 81).

Some authors highlight the increase of international theory research and production beyond the US’ borders, though they do not specify the nature of these researches. As pointed out by Aydinli & Mathews “the major common underlying factor behind these optimistic assertions has been the understanding that international studies outside the United States are flourishing (Aydinli & Mathews, 2000: 291)”. Nevertheless, it is still not clear what is the nature and contents of the studies conducted in the periphery.

As a result of a wide effort to understand how international relations theory have been undertaken around the world, Olef Waever and Arlene Tickner, – who both work in Universities located in the periphery – released a book entitled *International Relation: Scholarship around the World*.

In the book the authors detect the lack of deeper research with a global perspective in International Relations Theory: “a limited number of studies have emerged on the contrast between the field of international relations in the United States and Western Europe, but within a global perspective this is ridiculously narrow view” (Weaver & Tickner, 2009: 1). Waever and Tickner also suggest that several key concepts belonging to the traditional theories – such as State, power, self-help and anarchy – do not fit third world realities, an hypothesis that should be assessed with further research in non-traditional States theory production. (*ibid.*).

Some researchers from peripheral countries have been trying to suit core theories to the reality of their countries. By thinking of new categories, without renouncing the general premises of core theories, Carlos Escudé (2009: 56) assessed the thesis that the international system is not anarchic in peripheral countries: it is, on the other hand, a hierarchical system. To better understand the meaning of the substitution of “anarchy” to “hierarchy”, Escudé proposed a “peripheral theory”, which he believes to be “... the formulation of concepts, explanatory hypotheses, and normative judgments specifically applicable to peripheral states that is, states relatively devoid of power resources”. Mohammed Ayoob is another scholar who made an important contribution to the list of concepts that summarize the “melting pot” of the Western perspective of the realities in periphery, by proposing the concept of “subaltern realism”. According to Ayoob (1998: 44-45) “the experience of the subalterns in the international system is largely ignored by the elitist historiography of the system popularized by neorealists and neoliberal”

In accordance with the previous argument, Stephanie Newman – a professor at Columbia University, who has organized one of the few books focusing the production of International Relations theory in the Third World – affirms that: “Realism, neorealism and neoliberalism are under attack from many quarters or many grounds, but the apparent fissure between theory and empirical reality in the Third World remains virtually unexamined. Even the so-called critical theorists, whose assaults on IR theory have been the most vigorous, have all but ignored that issues” (Newman, 1998: 2). Similar arguments are raised by David Puchala, who had pointed out “The experience of the Third World can be forced into the conceptual categories of conventional Western theorizing about International Relations.

But the explanations that result are at least wanting in richness if not also in interpretive validity (...) A realistic analysis, for example, would reveal that in the world of states most of those in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are deficient in power and most predominantly Third World societies are therefore inconsequential in world politics” (Puchala, 1998: 149).

Regarding the theoretical production in the non-Western world, another topic that remains unclear is the epistemological nature of what is being produced in these countries. A large number of works scrutinizing the epistemological production in international studies (the same stacking arguments about the North American influence in discipline of international relations) is based on the assumption that either other countries share the same ontological and epistemological views of the US, or they place themselves against the North American theories, by rejecting their views. In fact, this assumption may be covering a truth or could express lack of knowledge about how the theory actually works in the rest of the world, especially outside the West. Firstly, the research conducted by Tickner in early 2000’s have shown that International Relations courses taught in Latin America are mainly based on positivist frameworks. The majority of them include classic texts (state-centric and non state-centric) in their programs (Tickner, 2002: 92). When analysing the case of Latin America, Monica Herz adds: “the programs of courses on international relations theory are particularly similar to those found in North American or English-speaking universities. The inclusion of texts by authors from Latin American or from other regions is extremely rare”. (Herz, 2010: 1-2).

Notwithstanding, the question that stills unanswered (and probably the one which has been ignored) is: to which extent the positivism – and even the non-positivism – that underlies research in developing countries and in the Third World follows the pure model of the approaches coming from the United States and Europe? It is reasonable to assume that western theoretical contributions, when incorporated into research communities in other parts of the world, mingle with concepts and practices produced regionally. The impact theories such as Realism and Theory of Complex Interdependence had on researchers and decision-makers in Latin America seems to be undeniable.

Latin American researchers (at least those belonging to the generations of the 70's, 80's and 90's) can not ignore the relevance of the "Dependency Theory", originally formulated by Cardoso and Falleto, presented in "Dependência e Desenvolvimento na América Latina" (Dependency and development in Latin America). It is reasonable to suppose that the concepts of the Theory of Dependence could have been entangled with realist and liberal ideas coming from the West, generating what Arlene Tickner (2002, 2009) called a "Latin Americanization of imported theories through of a 'Latin America Hybrid model' (a fusion of concepts from dependency, realism and interdependence" (Tickner, 2009: 33-34; 2002). This conclusion is quite similar to the one proposed by Maxi Schoeman, who investigated South Africa's community of international relations. When asked to answer a survey applied by Schoeman, one Professor of International Political Economy (IPE) said: "In IPE, in my opinion, we part ways with dominant Northern discourses. Dependency theory forms an important part of the curriculum to explore the politics of unequal development (...)I would argue that the way we teach (and were taught) IPE is with an intense sense of colonial and neo-colonial injustice" (Schoeman, 2009: 62).

At this point one more question should be addressed: to which extend the theoretical debate – especially the so-called "third debate", between positivists and post-positivist – appears in the third world and in the developing countries? As Herz argues: "The reflection on the history and nature of the discipline, which was so important for the development of the post-positivist debate in international relations circles, did not take root in the region [Latin America]. Partly because most scholars working in the field presently graduated in social sciences, political science, history or law, partly because the separation between international issues and domestic issues was never attainable in Latin America" (Herz, 2010). What Herz states does not diverge from what a South African professor answered to survey applied by Schoeman, underlying that the priority of research on the internal or regional agendas relegated works in theory of international relations to a second plane: "We are always busy with security issues, but mostly doing case studies and applications, not serious theory" (quoted by: Schoeman, 2009: 62). For this reason, it is important to regard the conclusion reached by Thomas Biersteker: "the existence of an emerging global discipline of international relations is contested, given the significance of the differences that remain among its many national and regional variations (Biersteker, 1999: 3)". Whatever explains the lack of theoretical reflection in Latin America and South Africa, the fact should not be taken as a rule for the periphery.

In Turkey, for example, researches indicate that there is a large proportion of scholars teaching and reflecting theory: "It is difficult to find an IR scholar in Turkey today who will not, in some way, attempt to explain how his or her work incorporate a theoretical perspective into their analyses. The prioritizing of "theory" has become so widely accepted that scholars of all background try to claim their position as "theorists". (Aydinli & Mathews, 2009: 211).

It is also frequently assumed that communities outside Europe and the US share the same level of training in international relations theory. For instance, it should be taken into account the fact that the acquisition of theory in the developing countries may be filtered due to the inequality between local academic groups and also by the commitment to the theory of these groups. Aydinli & Mathews(2009) have called attention to the fact that in Turkey's there is the division between one core group and one "non-elite" group and that this division "operated like a domestic core and periphery". Tickner has also drawn attention to the same issue in Latin America: "The field may be described as a multi-tier structure in which distinct national and regional nodes coexist and sometimes overlap. To begin with there is a small group of seated scholars primarily in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Colombia at the top not universities that are highly integrated with the discipline's core, albeit in a subordinate role..."(Tickner: 2009: 45-46).

### **The Profile of the Communities under Study**

In numerical terms the four communities are not equivalent. The community of Turkey is the most numerous. According to calculations from the 2011 TRIP, Turkey accounts 6.8% of the total of 20 communities studied, Brazil 3.9%, Mexico by 3.6% and 0.6% for South Africa. In terms of age, the average for the four countries is 44.2 years, which is not so far from the average of the 20 communities, which is 46 years. Individually Mexico is the country with the oldest community (49 years on average) and Turkey the youngest (average 41 years). In terms of gender, 62.2% of researchers are male and 37.8% female. Both averages are lower and higher, respectively, than the overall mean. Brazil, in the other hand, is the country with fewer females in their community followed only by Mexico.

The four countries have an average of PH.D (doctors) of 77.7% among scholars working in their communities to international relations.

This average is less than the overall average that is 85%. But it should be emphasized that Turkey has an average of 93% of doctors, index close to countries like USA and UK. The lowest average as doctors working in the community of international relations is that of Brazil with 62%.

The communities of international relations in Brazil, Mexico and South Africa tend to be more balanced in terms of national and foreign composition. In all three cases, respectively, 69%, 66% and 50% of teachers and researchers who are part of the community of international relations are originally from the country in which the survey TRIP 2011 was applied, while also in these three cases above, respectively, 30%, 29% and 32% are people originating from other countries. The average of "foreigners" for these three countries (which is 30.3%) is higher than the overall average of the 20 communities that is 23%. What is not bad if you compare the average incorporation of foreign researchers in the U.S. which is 20% (USA has a reputation of recruiting external human resources). Between the four countries of the BTASMEcommunity the one which has a more endogenous is Turkey where 90% of their community areturkish and only 9% are foreigners. Only South Africa, to a greater extent, and Mexico, to a lesser extent, incorporate researchers from countries like USA, Canada and UK.

In all four countries it can be observed to be following the international trend to use as the main bibliographic reference for graduate teaching material mostly authors from the United States. On average of 47% the four countries use of American authors. In the other hand, Brazil, South Africa and Turkey use 25%, 17% and 17% of authors from the same country. Finally, Brazil is also taking 19% of authors from Latin American countries.

In terms of the balance between teaching and research (and other activities) all four communities follow the international trend as one can see in the Table 1 below: devote himself to teaching in the first place (43.3% of its activities in media) and then to the survey (36% of its activities in media). Both averages are nearly identical averages for all communities studied). Only in the case of Mexico that activity in research tends to be slightly higher than teaching.

**Table 1 – Teaching and Research Profiles (%)**

	<b>Research</b>	<b>Teaching</b>	<b>Consulting</b>	<b>Community Service</b>
<b>Brazil</b>	34	47	11	8
<b>Mexico</b>	40	37	15	14
<b>South Africa</b>	26	45	9	7
<b>Turkey</b>	39	44	0	10

Source: TRIP 2011

In four BTASME countries the two main fields of study are "International Relations" and "Political Science." Otherwise, only in Mexico and Turkey "Area Studies" is a significant field of study. In terms of main research field, Brazil tends to focus on "International Security" (22%); Mexico focuses on "International Relations of a Specific Region" (21%), South Africa remains divided between "International Security" and "International Political Economy", both with 16%, and, finally, in Turkey the field "Foreign Policy" is the dominant with 13%. In accordance to Schoeman for the case of South Africa,

However, the focus in security was not new -it had been the main objective and obsession of the white regime during apartheid. What had changed was the (political) environment in the country and internationally, and change also meant that South Africa were relinked as it were with the rest of the continent (Schoeman, 2009: 65).

In the Latin American case Tickner found out that the publications on security from the scholars are scarce when summarized some of the region's main journals.

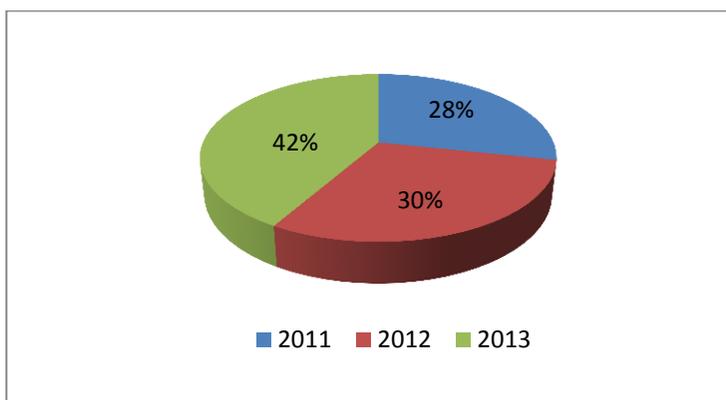
Three countries have an ethno-regionalist perspective as the main object of research: for Brazil and Mexico the main study region is Latin America (although the foreign policy of the country is an important research area in the case of Brazil, and North American region in the case of Mexico). For South Africa, a high proportion in the main study area is the Sub-Saharan Africa. Turkey, in the other hand, is the only country where the region coincides with the own country (the main area of research is the foreign policy of the country itself). To a lower extent, still for the community of Turkey analysis, "Western Europe" remains an interesting area of research as well.

Ironically the choice of the region itself as the main object of study can only increase the feeling that southern researchers are only good to talk about the national countries or their regions:

Their scholarly efforts, when recognized by the core, seem to hold importance only as far as they represent a national view (e.g., Turkish perspective on the Iraq situation or ...and when you get invited to conferences, it's not for the contributions that you might make on theory or conceptual thinking, but more to sort of case studies or area studies... (Aydinli Mathews, 2009: 221).

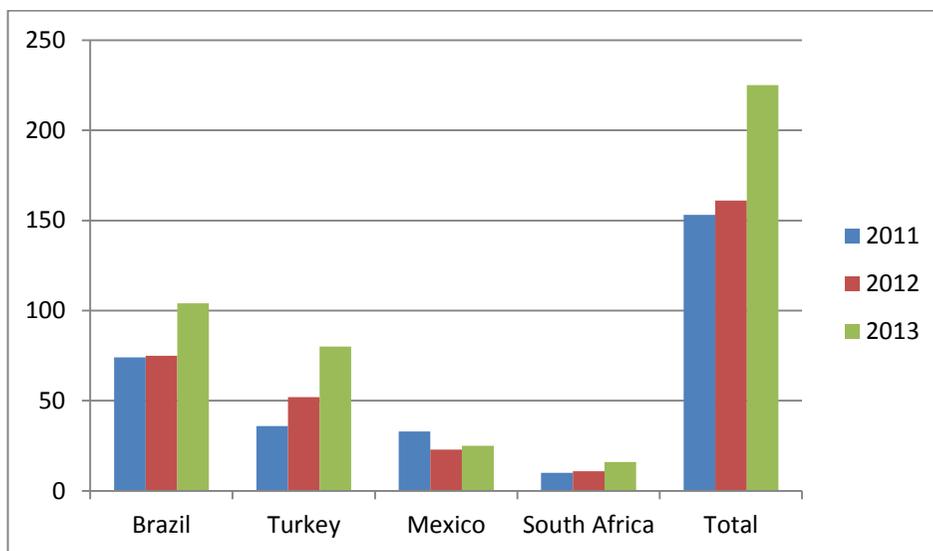
These countries have gradually improved their participation at International Studies Association Annual Meeting, considered the most vast and important event of international relations community. As one can see at the Graphic-1 below:

**Graphic1- ISA Annual Conventions: Total of BTASME Group Participants**



Graphic adapted by the authors using ISA General Programm, from 2011, 2012 and 2013

Between BTASME countries one can observe slight differences, as shown in Graphic 2 below, specially the biggest amount of brazilian participants in comparison with Mexico and South Africa. Additionally, it is possible to note a decrease in the number of mexican participants in both 2012 and 2013 Annual Conferences.

**Graphic 2- BTASME Community at ISA Annual Conventions**

Graphic adapted by the authours using ISA General Programm, from 2011, 2012 and 2013

Finally, this data clearly show that BTASME international relations community has become an active participant of current international relations debates and has gradually increase its community not only on numerical terms but also, and this is what this article intends to discuss, in epistemological and methodological terms, as an intelectual reflection of the structural change of power of these four countries, which can be observed by the last 10 years.

### **Mapping on The Epistemological And Ontological Matters**

In a paper published in 2011 the directors of the TRIP project by studying the U.S. community of international relations reached the following statement:

There is a considerable theoretical diversity within the American IR community and diversity which has grown over time. Interestingly, realism does not have the hold on the field often do it is thought to have and, perhaps more strikingly, our data suggest it never did (Maliniak, 2011: 439).

This conclusion is found important because it overturns the traditional view according to which the contemporary theoretical production has the hegemony of the realism. So, is it correct to address that the “no mainstream” world's academy would have a different way to think about international relations?

The first important aspect revealed by the data is that by most BTASME countries, positivism does not exercise control over the work of researchers. Only in the case of Turkey the majority of the community identifies itself as positivist, yet even in this country it is not irrelevant the fact that 30% of respondents prove non-positivist and post-positivist, respectively. But the most important fact to be noted is that the proportions in which they divide the three epistemological categories (positivism, non positivism and post positivism) among the BTASME countries in the study show that: firstly, general epistemological choices are diverse and it may not be said that a category is epistemologically deleted. Certainly there are cases where the choices are more divided (for example, in the case of South Africa where 39% are positivist besides 43% which prove post-positivist). In Brazil, in the other hand, the choice for the non-positivist category tends to be the majority. Nevertheless, the most important aspect to be highlighted is that there is a plurality of epistemological choices in all of them, taking into account that there is a reasonable minimum of researchers who relate their scientific work to one of these three categories;

Secondly, it is difficult to find consistency in the Smith's argument: "about the disbelief that prevails in many parts of the world about the merits of positivism". Among other reasons because positivism, although it is not a majority choice, it is well accepted in a considerable part of BTASME communities, including between peripheral countries of theoretical production. On the other hand, it is true that the sum of the choices for non-positivism and post-positivism, according to data from the 2011 TRIP, accounts for slightly more than two thirds. However, non-adherence to positivism and post-positivism does not necessarily indicate an attitude of open questioning of positivism (and its main exponents realism and liberalism) but could also indicate that the search for alternative epistemological positivism is not yet able to be provided.

Third, and finally, considering the data presented in Table 2 it is also not possible to observe a non-positivist hegemony in countries outside of the mainstream of the theoretical production of international relations (USA and some European countries, especially the United Kingdom).

One can assume that there is a good use of non-positivist perspectives (such as constructivism, critical theory and feminism) but it is itself far from supposing that the outlying communities focus their epistemological choices in that category.

A most striking conclusion is the great acceptance that post-positivist epistemological perspective has among the four countries, ie, an average of 34% (which is higher than the 26% post-positivist average from the 20 communities). Only in the case of Turkey, positivism (40%) presents a superior index, while post-positivism represents 30%, and only in the case of Brazil the non-positivism paradigm is superior to post-positivism (44% versus 29%, respectively). What could explain this tendency? In order to comprehend it, it becomes important to recover the background of epistemological discussion in the recent decades.

Gone are the days in which mainstream works (see Keohane 1989) have called attention to "the lack of a clear research program in reflective agenda". According to Keohane reflexivists approaches lacked a "research program ... [so] they would remain on the margins of the field, largely invisible to the preponderance of empirical researchers, most of whom explicitly or implicitly accept one or another version of rationalistic premises".

Under frank denial of Keohane's arguments, today is largely known all the "boom" of constructivism during the 90s. Consequently, the focus of the epistemological and ontological debate has changed, and target of "denial" epistemological also has changed its focus. It was accepted that the constructivism, particularly its "scientific version" affirmed by Wendt (summarized in the book "Social Theory of International Politics", 1999) had achieved legitimacy. Accordingly, Peter Katzenstein, Robert Keohane & Krasner (1998) heralded the emergence of a new debate, this time between rationalism and constructivism. In his words, constructivism "offers a general theoretical orientation and specific research programs that can rival or complement rationalism" (Katzenstein, Keohane & Krasner, 1998: 675).

On the other hand, identified the new axis of debate (rationalist versus constructivist), the post-positivist became the place of "excluded" or "exiles" which was assigned to "reflexivists" in late 80s:

What separates critical constructivism and post modernism is the acknowledgment by critical constructivists of the possibility of a social science and a willingness to engage openly in scholarly debate with rationalism '(ibid., 677). Also some authors, in the other hand, now called the non positivist paradigm shared that same vision: "I agree with their prediction that the main debate in the discipline for the next decade will indeed be between rationalism and constructivism. (Smith, 2000: 380).

However, if we look at the data in the group of countries that we have called BTASME it is possible to assert that this polarization between rationalism and constructivism has not achieved during these almost two decades of 2000`s the developing countries. The good acceptance hold by post-positivism (the "new exiled") paradigm on the periphery disallows those hypotheses of a nearly new debate (rationalism versus constructivism) announced in such strong terms by the mentioned above authors and the media a decade abd a half ago. For example, the case of SouthAfrica shows that is true thatthe community of that country tends to use Northern IR theories, but on the other hand also uses "postmodernism, critical theory, constructivism and German hermeneutic as the reflectivist impulses among at least some local IR scholars" (Schoeman, 2009: 62). And the case of Turkey, appear "a domination in recent years of applications of critical theories and approaches" (Aydinli and Mathews, 2009: 216).

In compensation post positivism coexists with positivism and non positivism. There are several reasons why BTASME communities type tend to have a much greater diversity of epistemological perspectives and tend to accept as largely post-positivism paradigms. They move away from the theoretical biases of so-called mainstream debates more frequently in the United States and Europe. Between those reasons we can enumerate: i) high acceptance of sociological traditions, ii) less intense involvement in academic intra-paradigmatic rationalist debate (i.e neo-realists and neoinstitutionalists) and iii) finally these debates tend to arrive lately almost everywhere in the periphery. "Notwithstanding the majority weighth of U.S. approaches recent debates between neorealism and neoliberalism, and rationalism and reflexivism, are given passing attention in the syllabi examined". (Tickner, 2009: 42).

**Table 2- BTASME Countries on Epistemological Terms (%)**

	<b>Positivist</b>	<b>Non-positivist</b>	<b>Post-positivist</b>
<b>Brazil</b>	28	44	29
<b>Mexico</b>	33	33	34
<b>South Africa</b>	39	17	43
<b>Turkey</b>	40	30	30

Source: TRIP 2011

On the other hand, the data also seem to give rise to a questioning of the "growing enthusiasm in IR for synthesis or "eclectictheorizing" (Maliniak, et al., 2011 p. 448). The international relations communities of BTASME countries ignore this debate (in the sense of finding it irrelevant) or take into account that they prefer to affirm the identity of theory choice (paradigm An illustrative quote is helpful in that regard: Stephen Walt's recent commentary on the persistent dominance of Anglo-Saxon scholarship in IR.

I'm still struck,' [he states] 'by the relative dearth of "big thinking" on global affairs from people outside the trans-Atlantic axis, including continental Europe. And by "big thinking" I mean ideas and arguments that immediately trigger debates that cross national boundaries, and become key elements in a global conversation (Walt 2011).

Another good example of little interest in the major debates, and its epistemological and methodological implications is a recent book on the study of international relations in Mexico, where detailed articles on teaching, history, curriculum and mission are written on 16 universities institutions around the country. However, there is not in that book a single study that addresses the theoretical approaches and perspectives in Mexico (to see: Ochoa *et al*, 2013).

Little enthusiasm for the theoretical synthesis can also be translated from another possible reading. The fact of speaking about international relations communities who share paradigmatic approaches, and even common assumptions such as "the state is the main actor in the international system" not easily erase the differences between those paradigms faced in the third debate or turns easier the task of "exile" non-paradigmatic.

In principle, if we look at the data from TRIP 2011 on the type of approach that guides research in BTASME countries (on average, 18% affirm using in their researches realistic approaches; 15% liberal approaches, 24% constructivist, 5.8% marxist approaches, and finally, 13.8% non paradigmatic approaches) it is possible to assert that communities of this group of countries are mostly positivists more and not non positivist nor post-positivist either, as one can see at Table 2. However if it is true that the proportion of realists and liberals is significant in BTASME countries as one can see at Table 3, especially in Turkey whose community manifests itself as the second most realistic among the 20 countries surveyed) is no less significant that the preferred approach of most communities in the BTASME countries is constructivism and that some proportion not too distant of the liberals proportions affirm to prefer the paradigmatic approaches to their research.

**Table 3- Research and Theoretical Approaches among BTASME Countries (%)**

	<b>Constructivism</b>	<b>English School</b>	<b>Feminism</b>	<b>Liberalism</b>	<b>Marxism</b>	<b>Realism</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Non-Paradigmatic</b>
<b>All</b>	22	4	2	15	4	16	15	22
<b>Brazil</b>	20	9	1	13	8	14	16	19
<b>Turkey</b>	24	4	1	15	7	26	11	11
<b>Mexico</b>	19	2	0	11	8	19	25	17
<b>South Africa</b>	33	4	4	21	0	13	17	8

Source: TRIP 2011

In fact, the data indicates that among the BTASME countries is more for a balance of plural approaches to research. By this sense, it does not reflect that these countries experiment a polarization of approaches (assuming more positivist or post-positivist approaches) nor experiment the post paradigmatic era or overcoming the era of debates.

However, the widespread perception for decades that there is a dominant paradigm (or even that the third debate opposes rationalistic to not rationalists) has not ceased to have consequences both in practice and in the field of perceptions about “who is who” and “what place does one occupy in the study of international relations”.

On the practical side, the long standing ideas of positivism of spread in the community of international relations according is the dominant epistemological perspective which has had the direct consequence that the international relations theory courses at the undergraduate level are organized taking into account the dominant idea, because evidently the organization of courses should reflect not only dominant content as accepted, but also because no teacher would deprive your student from a fundamental epistemological content in the formation of a student.

The 2011 TRIP survey shows that introductory courses in international relations theory are organized taking into account the general perception about the epistemological domain. In general, IR theory education is focused on strong traditional paradigms, in descending order: realism liberalism, constructivism and marxism. The BTASME countries, as one can see in Table 4 below, follow the same general trajectory of "All" teaching mostly realism, liberalism, constructivism and marxism as well as dedicating a percentage, not so high but most importantly, the Non-paradigmatic approaches. Note that in the group BTASME the perception that really paradigmatic approaches are the most important in the student's education is quite strong: on average of 28.75% the four countries teaches realism; 22.75% teaches liberalism; 15,5% teaches constructivism, and finally, marxism is the least taught with only 7.5%. In compensation, a non paradigmatic perspective, the English School, is relatively well taught to students, with 13, 75% on average.

**Table 4- Theoretical Choices in Introductory International Relations Undergraduate Courses (%)**

	Realism	Constructivism	Liberalism	Marxism	Feminism	English School	Non-paradigmatic	Other
<b>All</b>	13	24	21	11	7	8	18	15
<b>Brazil</b>	13	26	23	14	5	18	16	20
<b>Turkey</b>	17	33	24	17	8	16	19	20
<b>South Africa</b>	13	25	22	15	6	6	16	12
<b>Mexico</b>	19	31	22	17	11	15	14	14

Source: TRIP 2011.

On the other hand there is a perception about BTASME countries related to the consequences derived from the socialized vision on the positivist domain.

One can assert that there is a hierarchy of paradigms that is reflected by literature production, with which the major community of international relations works.

This perception is reinforced when looking into the question of what is the amount on the literature of what would be devoted to paradigmatic and not paradigmatic community relations as one can see at Table 5 BTASAME group considers that it is devoted to realism on average 39% (against 33% of the 20 communities overall average), 32.3% believe that it is devoting more attention to the liberal literature (28% for the average general ), 24.8% think it is the constructivist literature(20% for the overall average); 32.3% believe that it is devoting more attention to the liberal literature (28% for the average overall), 24.8% think it is the constructivist literature (against 20% for the average overall).

Also 15, 5% and 15.3% believe that the English School and Marxism, respectively, are the most devoted literature for the international relations community. The number of those who think that the international community international relations literature devotes space to non-paradigmatic is 17, 8% (versus 17% overall average).

**Table 5- Devoted Literature in Paradigmatical Terms (%)**

	<b>Construc tivism</b>	<b>Real ism</b>	<b>Libera lism</b>	<b>Marx ism</b>	<b>Femin ism</b>	<b>EnglishS chool</b>	<b>Non- Paradigmati cal</b>	<b>Ot her</b>
<b>All</b>	20	33	28	9	7	9	17	13
<b>Brazil</b>	24	36	31	14	7	17	16	25
<b>Turkey</b>	22	43	28	13	7	12	14	16
<b>Mexico</b>	30	38	35	16	12	19	23	19
<b>South Africa</b>	23	39	35	18	10	15	18	5

Source: TRIP 2011

The reasons for this perception in BTASME countries which supports the idea that there is a group of dominant paradigms in the last 50 years, mainly positivist in nature, may also be related to the fact that the positivist literature is the most influential and disclosed in an international level.

It is not uncommon to find in the literature devoted to the thematic of epistemological reflections phrases like, "Rationalism dominates the mainstream literature of the discipline, especially in the United States" (Smith 2000: 380). As a practical consequence hardly a program for graduate students in a course of international relations in developing countries will not include works such as *Politics among Nations* (Hans Morgenthau), *Theory of International Politics* (Waltz Kennnetz), *Power and Interdependence* (Robert Keonah and Josep Nye), *After Hegemony* (Robert Keohane), *Social Theory of International Politics* (Alexander Wendt) and *The Tragedy of Great Powers* (John Mearsheimer).

That consequence in the teaching of courses of IR is valid for Latin American (included Brasil and Mexico and it may be valid for South Africa and Turkey). Tickner found that 53.3% of the reading IR theory courses in Latin America are organized on the base of realism (classical and neorealism) and liberalism (classical, interdependence and neoliberalism). Other paradigms as Marxism and neo- Marxism are less used to teach IR theory (Tickner, 2009: 42). The research of Tickner not cough the importance that the English School is beginning to has in Latin American. In the caseof Turkey something similar happens:

The translation –level theorizing would include works that provide overviews of particular core theoretical paradigms or perspectives, translating into Turkish to make them accessible to the average Turkish IR student... It also happens to include the major textbooks of IR ...which present in Turkish major ideas from the Western disciplinary community (Aydinli Mathews, 2009: 215).

Besides, one can note that there is a group of influential authors, most of the liberal camp, realistic and to a lesser extent constructivist reinforces the idea among researchers and teachers in developing countries about what and how is the dominant epistemological perspective and what are the paradigms that should be taught the most. As may appear by the TRIP survey of 2011 BTASME countries in the list of the first 10 scholars who are indicated as the ones that have influenced the field of international relations: they are all liberal, realistic and to a lesser extent constructivist.

This idea of the positivist prevalence is reinforced by cyclical production in the literature (Hoffman, 1977; Alker and Biersteker's 1984; Holsti, Waever, 1998, Smith, 2000; Kismet, Ersil & Julie Mathews, 2000; Kristensen, 2012) that since the work of Stanley Hoffman has been tasked to disseminate and validate with evidence, the idea that international relations is an American science, and therefore there is a predominance of epistemology, ontology and methodology produced in the United States, with its strongly positivist and rationalist nature.

But also parochialism linguistic communities of international relations in the United States and Europe have helped affirm in communities of developing countries the idea of selective relevance of paradigms, works and authors, and on the other hand, the irrelevance and invisibility of production elsewhere in the world: How Biersteke Thomas says:

Linguistic parochialism has created equally vexing problems for the creation of a global discipline. Much of the literature on most theoretically sophisticated situations of Latin American dependency was simply out of reach for most Americans unable to read Spanish. Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto's pioneering work "Dependency and development in Latin America", originally written between 1965 and 1967 did not exist for most North Americans until the english language edition was published in 1979. (Biersteke , 1999: 6)

Besides much of the contemporary German literature on international relations is ignored by the vast majority of American scholars who are unable to read German. Similarly, contemporary perspectives from China and Japan are rarely discussed outside the realm of "area" studies (Biersteke, 1999, p 6). However, this also can be very parochial in developing communities: has the Latin American dependency theory become known in South Africa and Turkey before its translation into English?

Perhaps nowadays it is not as accurate to say that most of the international relations discipline is divided epistemologically, ontologically and methodologically but rather geographically, with much of the academic community marginalized, heard only when the 'topic of the day' in the United States is specifically about a country or a region, ie, South American academics, and so on in other regions tend to be heard when the matter is being dealt with South America (Kristensen, 2012).

However, it is important to note that parochialism may also be pushed to the South do not communicate between them. The report TRIP for Latin America (this report is authored by: Tickner, Cepeda & Bernal, 2012) can be read, for example, that among the most influential authors who teach and research in the Latin American do not research or teach in Brazil. In this region Brazil is the largest community among those from international relations (to be more precise among the most influential authors from that report there is a Brazilian, who only teaches and researches in Argentina). Actually this fact brought by the report TRIP Latin America does not seem to reveal that there is not influential Brazilian authors rather their colleagues of Hispanic origin are unaware or do not read his works.

A second way to measure the tendency to the plurality of perspectives in BTASME countries is when we consider the ontological aspect. Following the positivist tradition which guides the conduct of international actors is the material aspect related to the distribution of power. Choices, strategies and preferences are defined from the structure. Looking at the results the impact of ideational factors have a very important role in the work of researchers and teachers from BTASME countries.

This finding relativize the idea according to which the ontology is reflected on the international relations community to assume that the material structure of power as determinants of conducts of states. Highlight two aspects are needed: first, although it is not possible to determine to what extent and intensity ideational factors develop a role is the fact that the data show that the premise that there is a predominance of a materialist ontology need at least be reviewed and contrasted with data and research consistent. In fact it has made assumptions based on perceptions of real premises with little empirical rigor. However, the second aspect and as shown by the relevant data is related to the type of positivism that is practiced in developing countries.

In realism, from Hans Morgenthau until John Mearsheimer, ideational aspects as explanatory variables of the external action of a state has been regarded as Ideological "fallacies". Also liberal institutionalism has incorporated quite timidly ideational and cultural aspects (an exception is the work of Goldstein and Keohane "Ideas and Foreign Policy", 1993).

A crossed look at the high levels of researchers and teachers who say take into account the ideational factors suggests that in BTSAME countries (see Table 6) a considerable portion of those who call themselves positivists adhere to ideational variables. So in practice these countries present kind of positivism that could be called hybrid positivism, ie positivism in the pure theoretical forms inherited from positivism realistic and liberal institutionalist is mixed in developing countries with the cultural or even ideological nationalist factors (which obviously reflects local realities).

**Table 6- Emphasis on Ideational Factors on International Relations Research(%)**

	<b>Presence of Ideational Factors</b>	<b>Absence of Ideational Factors</b>
<b>All</b>	84	16
<b>Brazil</b>	77	23
<b>Turkey</b>	95	5
<b>Mexico</b>	88	12
<b>South Africa</b>	88	12

Source: TRIP 2011

Therefore, there is not a pure positivism (or “puritan”) but a kind of theoretical syncretism, in which the core is hegemonic theoretical amalgam according to local characteristics. A pure version of the mainstream theory condemns national communities of international relations outside the United States and some European countries to an autist theory, in which the specific ideational aspects would be sacrificed by the theoretical demands. How has highlighted Donald Puchala,

Contemporary Western thinking about international relations has had little to offer to explain, or to evaluate the significance of, the embittered tone, the complex motivations, the mythological underpinnings, or the historical dynamics of North-South relations. The main reason for this is that for a very long time..Western theorists have not been sufficiently concerned with the impact of the culture and ideas upon among states and people " (Puchala, 1998: 150). That type of theoretical miscegenation that challenges the possibility that “pure theory” be reproduce beyond the IR core is fairly consistent with what Tickner (2009) 2002), Escudé(1998) and Ayooob (1998), respectively, has called “Latin American hibridism, " peripheral theory"and"subaltern realism".

As one Turkish scholar point out to Aydinli and Matthews: You won't see an Alexander Wendt in Turkey because Wend was writing from Wisconsin'. In others words, even if actual theory construction does take place in Turkey , it will no likely be the same as that carried out by core IR scholars (Aydinli &, Matthews, 2009: 214).

### The Methodological Matter

BTSAME countries tend to be diversified in regard to methodological choices, as one can see at Table 7, but first follow the international tendency that emphasizes qualitative analysis, followed by the quantitative analysis and the policy analysis. The methodological aspect is which most identifies the group of countries under study with the rest of the 20 countries surveyed. The average BTSAME countries in what concerns the use of methodologies are: quantitative analyzes 11.25%, qualitative analysis 48.75%; and policy analysis 31%. Other methods such as pure theory with 3.5% and ethical-legal with 2.5% tend to be fairly minority as to its use. The overall average for all countries in the same categories of methods are respectively 15%, 58%, 17%, 3% and 4%. Two aspects can then be highlighted: first, that there seems to be an international standard (or mainstream) regarding the use of qualitative and quantitative methods, ie, high use of qualitative and relative little use of quantitative. Second, this pattern manifests the low use of methods such as pure theory and ethical-legal, and above all a general pattern, or resistance to the use of formal and experimental analysis.

**Table 7-Methodological Choices at BTSAME Countries (%)**

	Quantitative Analysis	Qualitative Analysis	Policy Analysis	Pure Theory	Legal or Ethical Analysis
<b>All</b>	15	58	17	3	4
<b>Brazil</b>	8	44	36	4	3
<b>Turkey</b>	9	43	40	3	4
<b>Mexico</b>	16	44	32	3	3
<b>South Africa</b>	12	64	16	4	0

Source: TRIP 2011

An important observation to make at this point is that if these trends correctly indicate preferences then the impact on the publications, especially publications considered the top, can be identified. Editions of a good part of journals come loaded with quantitative analysis articles or formal analyzes while articles with qualitative analyzes are less numerous. Remember that the *International Political Sociology* (IPS), one of the journals published by the International Studies Association (ISA) was born just as a demand for a part of the community of international relations who complained about the excessive quantitivism or formalized analysis of the journals published by ISA .

Thus, if international relations community members are signaling in large number their use of qualitative analysis, and the use of policy analysis, we should be aware of three consequences: first, there would be a clear under-representation in top journals of methodological preferences of the majority of international relations community. This is an effect that had been raised in the cited work of Maliniak et al (2011) and the analysis of data for BTASME communities can confirm it. Second, the fact that publishers prefer quantitative analysis and formalized articles already make it difficult to publish a part of the community relations in one of the United States and Europe called top Journals (which are published mainly in the United States and some in Europe two) would be less accessible for researchers from developing countries as mentioned above are less trained to face analyzes that use complex econometric and statistical calculations.

Third, and finally, international relations community members strengthen the highlighted other specialists' ideas according to which the international academic world remains insular (Kismet & Mathews, 2000). Ultimately, American academic publishing concentrate in American journals, European scholars in European journals, etcetera. In the pages of these journals there is a strong dominance of American academics, or at least of academics working at American universities, confirming the results of a survey of Breuning et al. (2005). This also applies to some of the called 'sub - disciplines' of International Relations, such as foreign policy analysis (*Foreign Policy Analysis*). For example, in the journal of the same name, between 2005 and 2010, 80% of authors were working in American universities, with other authors based on institutions from the 'global north'. In other words, no article was written by authors from universities in the 'south', either in Brazil nor any other country. (Breuning, 2010).

Of course it is not always possible to explain the absence of the authors of the developing world in the top journal through editorial parochialism. As teachers supported a report from the Institute Relations at the University of São Paulo (Brazil) citing information of international journals editors: (Lehman & Lucena, 2013, p. 5).

Brazilian and South American academic need to take risks. An editor of a major American academic journal (and she is not American) said that even if she wanted to, she could not accept, nor reject Brazilian submissions because she did not receive articles from Brazilian scholars, a fact separately confirmed by a member of the announcement body of a French academic journal, as well as the editor of another journal

Still on the methodological aspect one recurrent perception in what concerns theoretical studies is the dominance of the international framework of rational choice in the analyzes. One of the consequences was that the assumption of rationality of the actors was displacing the third debate, from the dichotomy of positivist versus positivists, to the category rationalists versus not rationalists actually called from the second debate, which focused on the methodological aspects. Thus, the idea that scientific communities assumed rationality of the actors was largely disseminated.

Data from the 2011 TRIP go counter to this common sense, as one can see at Table 8. In all communities of international relations, only 7% use a rational choice framework. In BTASME countries the average is 12.5%, which is slightly higher than the overall average. Like the rest of the countries surveyed a large part of the communities of international relations of BTASME countries do not deny rationalism (second column of the chart). The data show that most of the communities of BATASME identifies themselves with a broadly rationalism presumption. Even the average of these countries which consider themselves as rationalists but deny use a strict rational choice framework is above the overall average (53% and 46% in BATASME in 20 countries).

**Table 8: The use of Rational Choice Framework (%)**

	<b>Strict Rational Choice framework.</b>	<b>Broadly rationalist presumption, but not strict</b>	<b>Do not presume the rationality of actors</b>
<b>All</b>	7	46	47
<b>Brazil</b>	16	44	41
<b>Turkey</b>	13	56	31
<b>Mexico</b>	9	60	31
<b>South Africa</b>	12	52	36

Source: TRIP 2011

In fact, at these communities of the developing world, the questioning is not to assume that actors are rational but resistance to use a kind of methodological framework so specialized that assumes in its most extreme forms to formalize further analysis in mathematical models. Such resistance occurs against the epistemological assumption (positivist) or as a reaction to high technical expertise - sometimes the statistic that assumes rational choice's. It is important to remember that outside the United States, the programs of Political Science and International Relations does not require the undergraduate or postgraduate strong training on mathematical or statistical

Furthermore the data also reveals a questioning of the nature and logic of the internal rationality of actors, when it is taken off from an ideational or cultural perspective. Looking at the data above there is a considerable number in the BTASME community who do not assume rationality of actors (an average of almost 35%). Why a part of the community of international relations do not assume the rationality of the actors? The answer should be sought further methodological considerations. The answer must be structured in both nature and the lack of logical consistency of rational choice when its logic is taken from the historical - cultural context.

As Stephanie Newman notes:

Rational choice theory has proved also problematic to an analytic tool in the Western setting (and to some social scientists in the Western setting too). It assumes that any chosen behavior can be understood as optimizing material self-interest.

In class, many of my students and I wondered how can we make the assumption? Could that all decisions and human acts are a means to self-interested, material end in all cultures. How does one know this empirically? ... Intuitively we felt the strength of a body of theory that ignores cultural variety is suspect (Neuman, 1998): 5)

Taking this statement into consideration, how to understand, for example, that a country like Brazil, which since 20 years aspired to be recognized as a major international power has signed in the late 90s of last century the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), to which his diplomacy has insistently denounced as an unfair international regime. Under the rational choice of a realistic (offensive) perspective this decision could not be explained logically and consistently.

### **Final Remarks**

Initially we conclude that for various reasons this paper operationalized what we have called BTASME countries –they all practice relative epistemological, ontological and methodological diversity. Such diversity is nothing to support the diffused idea that communities of international relations are divided in a field polarized debate between rationalist/positivist (geographically located in the USA) and a field not rationalist/positivist (the rest of the world). Also for those same reasons many can argue that diversity in these countries (typical examples of community relations in developing countries of the South) does not support the idea of a "beyond debate" but that these communities continue to take advantage of different perspectives without explicit concern about what is the current debate (in mainstream communities). Thus our findings indicate:

Under epistemological aspect, general epistemological choices are diverse and can not be said that any epistemological category is or was excluded from the preferences of researchers. Certainly there are cases in which the choices are more polarized. However, it is important to highlight that in all four countries there is a plurality of epistemological choices. In other words, there is not an identification or membership to a single epistemological perspective. However, the epistemological aspect there is a strong caveat to do: data on the epistemological diversity does not correspond with teaching practices and perceptions on trends of research.

There is, indeed, epistemological diversity however, what is taught to graduate students, and what is perceived as more influential (both authors and works) and what is conceived as the dominant literature remains mainly positivistic (or minimally in the positivist BTASME countries).

In the methodological aspect of the communities BTSME follow the international standard that mostly prefer the use of qualitative methods. Among the epistemological, ontological and methodological, the latter is what most identifies that group of countries with the rest of the communities of international relations. Of course, these findings also confirm that the other had already been explained in the international literature: the impact on publications that have the fact that IR communities (which argue their main use on qualitative methods and said they enjoy other tools such as policy analysis in greater extent than quantitative methods) are strongly under-represented in these publications, which prefer articles with qualitative methods and formalized.

Under the ontological aspect the impact of ideational factors have a very important role in the work of researchers and teachers in all of the group of BTASME countries. The direct consequence of this statement is that relativize the idea according to which the ontology's main international determining the material structure of power. The findings also suggest that in BTSAME countries type up a good portion of those researchers identified with positivism also adhere to ideational factors. We argue that the community of international relations of those four countries practice is a kind of positivism that could be called hybrid positivism or interbred (positivism in which the pure forms of positivism inherited realistic and liberal institutionalist is mixed in developing countries with element cultural, ideological or even local nationalist).

Finally, one should remember that these countries are rising countries (or rising powers) that go through a stage, especially in the case of Brazil and Turkey, an intense international activism. It is possible that the demand for 'pluralistic communities' is linked with the international rise of these countries, and that this is reflected in a major concern among researchers in these countries to develop policy paper or policy analysis. Although it is not absolutely clear, it seems to be relevant that there is an improvement in the international political position of these countries and the fact that the very emergence of developing countries that started to affect decisions and actions especially in multilateral organizations .

At the beginning of the first decade of the 2000 a work of Robert Keohane affirmed Latin American countries were takers rather than makers of global rules (Keohane 2001). This statement in that context was correct and accurate. The same statement would be valid for Brazil and Mexico and would be perfectly valid for South Africa and Turkey. However, there is a current perception that countries such as Brazil and Turkey, and to a lesser extent Mexico and South Africa, are moving from a situation of rule's takers to the rule makers. Indeed, it might have an impact on relations between communities of international relations from center and periphery system.

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