

UNIVERSIDADE DE SÃO PAULO  
INSTITUTO DE RELAÇÕES INTERNACIONAIS

JURRE EDSGER VAN DIJK

Reproducing and reflecting Latin America and South America: Wendtian  
and Deweyan analyses of Bolivia, Brazil and Chile in the agent-structure  
dynamic of the region

São Paulo  
2019



Jurre Edsger van Dijk

**Reproducing and reflecting Latin America and South America: Wendtian and Deweyan analyses of Bolivia, Brazil and Chile in the agent-structure dynamic of the region**

Dissertação apresentada ao Instituto de  
Relações Internacionais da Universidade de  
São Paulo para obtenção do título de Mestre  
em Ciências.

Área de concentração: Análise de Política  
Externa e Integração Regional.

Orientador: Prof. Dr. Amâncio Jorge Silva  
Nunes de Oliveira.

**Versão corrigida**

A versão original se encontra disponível na Biblioteca do Instituto de Relações Internacionais

São Paulo  
2019

Autorizo a reprodução e divulgação total ou parcial deste trabalho, por qualquer meio convencional ou eletrônico, para fins de estudos e pesquisa, desde que citada a fonte.

Catálogo na publicação  
Serviço de Biblioteca e Documentação  
Instituto de Relações Internacionais da Universidade de São Paulo

Dijk, Jurre Edsger van

Reproducing and reflecting Latin America and South America: Wendtian and Deweyan analyses of Bolivia, Brazil and Chile in the agent-structure dynamic of the region / J. E. van Dijk ; orientador: Amâncio Jorge Silva Nunes de Oliveira. -- São Paulo, 2019.

43 p.

Dissertação (Mestrado) – Instituto de Relações Internacionais. Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2019.

1. Regionalismo 2. Integração regional 3. América Latina 4. América do Sul  
5. Identidade I. Oliveira, Amâncio Jorge Silva Nunes de, orient. II. Título.

CDD – 320.1098

DIJK, J. E. van. **Reproducing and reflecting Latin America and South America: Wendtian and Deweyan analyses of Bolivia, Brazil and Chile in the agent-structure dynamic of the region.** 2019. 43 p. Dissertação (Mestrado em Relações Internacionais) – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2019.

Aprovado em: 18 de novembro de 2019.

Banca Examinadora

Prof. Dr. Amâncio Jorge Silva Nunes de Oliveira

Instituição: Instituto de Relações Internacionais (IRI-USP)

Julgamento: \_\_\_\_\_

Prof. Dr. Brigitte Weiffen

Instituição: Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas (FFLCH-USP)

Julgamento: \_\_\_\_\_

Prof. Dr. Karina Lilia Pasquariello Mariano

Instituição: Universidade Estadual Paulista “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” (UNESP)

Julgamento: \_\_\_\_\_



*O presente trabalho foi realizado com apoio da Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de  
Nível Superior – Brasil (CAPES) – Código de Financiamento 001*

*This study was financed in part by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível  
Superior – Brasil (CAPES) – Finance Code 001*



## AGRADECIMENTOS

Esta dissertação é fruto da oportunidade que eu tive de entrar como estudante estrangeiro, no ano de 2017, no programa de pós-graduação do Instituto de Relações Internacionais da Universidade de São Paulo. Ao longo de trinta meses, foram várias as pessoas que de forma direta ou indireta contribuíram para o bom êxito da minha estadia em São Paulo e no Brasil, e para as condições que permitiram que eu realizasse a presente pesquisa. Minha gratidão por esta possibilidade bem aproveitada é eterna. Cabe, aqui, mencionar algumas pessoas especificamente.

Em primeiro lugar, agradeço ao meu orientador, professor Dr. Amâncio Jorge Silva Nunes de Oliveira, por sua disponibilidade para discutir os caminhos da presente dissertação sempre que solicitada, e por ter confiança de que eu conseguiria combinar um estágio de dedicação integral com os últimos meses de pesquisa.

Agradeço também aos meus pais, Miranda Laernoes e Edsger Willem van Dijk, por sempre acreditarem em mim e em meus planos, mesmo que inusitados, que levaram a separar-nos por grandes distâncias geográficas. Tenho certeza que o tempo mostrará que valeu a pena.

Além do meu orientador, obtive outras valiosas orientações, primeiramente, dos membros da minha banca de qualificação, em junho de 2018. Obrigado, professora Dra. Brigitte Weiffen e professor Dr. João Paulo Candia Veiga. Acrescento aqui também reconhecimento pelos conselhos do professor Dr. Detlef Nolte do Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien, dados durante workshop organizado na Universidade de São Paulo em março de 2019, ao qual me convidara a professora Britta. *Danke*.

Ainda no âmbito acadêmico, não posso deixar de mencionar o professor Dr. Feliciano de Sá Guimarães, tendo me dado orientações na matéria de Metodologia Qualitativa em Relações Internacionais, e a professora Dra. Daniela Carla Decaro Schettini, minha supervisora de estágio de monitoria da matéria de graduação Métodos Estatísticos II. Obrigado por sua paciência e por seus ensinamentos.

Realizando este estágio, cumpri com uma das condições para ser bolsista pela Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES), encontrando-me nesta condição

durante quatorze meses. Agradeço à CAPES, que fora mencionada anteriormente, pelo apoio que garantiu a continuidade da minha pesquisa e permanência no país.

Passando a realizar outro estágio em 2019, agora em representação diplomática em Brasília, deixei de contar com este apoio e ao invés contei com o vínculo empregatício com o Ministério de Relações Exteriores do Reino dos Países Baixos, meu país de naturalidade, até pouco antes do depósito do presente trabalho. Agradeço em especial ao excelentíssimo senhor Cornelis van Rij, ao excelentíssimo senhor Roderick Wols, à Ineke van de Pol, ao Bart van Bergen e à Marcela Formiga, pelo bom acolhimento na capital do país, pela compreensão por minha necessidade de tempo de pesquisa mesmo em momentos de expediente, e principalmente, pela grande aprendizagem profissional.

Morar em mais outra cidade do país me permitiu conhecer muitas pessoas estimadas, cujos quatro entrevistados para minha pesquisa eu gostaria de agradecer particularmente.

E quando voltei para São Paulo, a primeira pessoa a ver-me foi minha querida namorada, Elicassia Costa Santana. Obrigado por seu amor, que sempre me forneceu uma base para o meu progresso.

Uma base também forte na sua essência foi o café da cozinha do Instituto de Relações Internacionais. Obrigado, dona Cristina.

Deste Instituto, faltam ainda das menções meus queridos colegas da pós-graduação e da Associação Acadêmica Atlética Guimarães Rosa, em especial, os da modalidade de handebol. Obrigado pela amizade, confraternização e descontração, importantes variáveis também para o sucesso acadêmico.

## RESUMO

DIJK, J. E. van. **Reproduzindo e refletindo a América Latina e a América do Sul**: análises wendtianas e deweyanas de Bolívia, Brasil e Chile na dinâmica agente-estrutura da região. 2019. 43 p. Dissertação (Mestrado em Relações Internacionais) – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2019.

Essa dissertação busca revelar como a identidade do Estado leva à reprodução de um comportamento peculiar compondo um ambiente de organizações regionais que se apresentam como latinoamericanas ou sul-americanas. As relações no âmbito regionalista nesta parte do mundo são peculiares, pois o sucesso destas organizações em produzir resultados de longo prazo em termos materiais é altamente duvidoso. Isso requer um entendimento mais atencioso para o caráter social das organizações regionais e para os Estados interagindo com e dentro delas: apresentam características de grupos sociais. A pergunta principal feita aqui é, portanto: como a identidade de Estado afeta decisões de criar, aderir a, permanecer dentro ou fora e desviar socialmente de organizações regionais na América Latina e América do Sul? Para entender melhor no que consistem identidade, identidade de Estado e os papéis interativos que têm, essa dissertação adota as premissas ontológicas do social-construtivismo convencional para conceitualizá-los. Para então chegar a um quadro de medição, recorre-se à escola do pragmatismo e emprega-se a análise abdutiva deweyana. Para estudar as normas, os motivos e os interesses de três ministérios de relações exteriores latinoamericanos e sul-americanos e sua interação com seu ambiente regional, usa-se discursos obtidos por meio de entrevistas semi-estruturadas com quatro diplomatas em Brasília. Conclui-se que tais discursos não fornecem uma lente sobre a reprodução mútua de agentes e estrutura. Apresentam, ao contrário, o ambiente regional como reflexão de motivações e interesses enraizados fundamentalmente nos ambientes geográficos dos Estados individuais, cada um dos quais os entrevistados definiram de forma diferente. As decisões que dizem respeito ao ambiente regional nesta parte do mundo são, portanto, muitas vezes sujeitas à vontade política de atores governamentais nacionais, ou à falta dela. Regionalmente, os interesses de tais atores convergem quanto à defesa mútua da soberania nacional. Evidências provisórias para um interesse comumente identificado que vai além disso encontram-se entre Estados que definem suas políticas externas como pragmáticas (Brasil, Chile). Contudo, tal pragmatismo contradiz estruturas

institucionais para tal interesse comum, o qual no fim das contas, então, também continua a ser o que as políticas nacionais fazem dele.

Palavras-chave: Regionalismo. Integração regional. América Latina. América do Sul. Identidade.

## ABSTRACT

DIJK, J. E. van. **Reproducing and reflecting Latin America and South America**: Wendtian and Deweyan analyses of Bolivia, Brazil and Chile in the agent-structure dynamic of the region. 2019. 43 p. Dissertação (Mestrado em Relações Internacionais) – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2019.

This dissertation attempts to reveal how state identity leads to the peculiar reproduction of an environment of regional organizations that present themselves as Latin American and South American. The regionalist intercourse in this part of the world is peculiar, because the success of these organizations at producing long-term outputs in material terms is highly dubious. That calls for a more pronouncedly human understanding of regional organizations and the states interacting with and within them: they present characteristics of social groups. The main question asked here, therefore, is: how does state identity affect decisions to create, adhere to, stay in or out of and socially deviate from regional organizations in South America and Latin America? To understand better what identity, state identity and their interactive roles may consist in, this dissertation adopts the ontological premises of conventional social constructivism to conceptualize them. To then come to a way of measurement, it resorts to the school of pragmatism and employs Deweyan abduction. To study the norms, motives and interests of three Latin American and South American foreign offices and their interaction with their regional environment, discursive data obtained by way of semi-structured interviews with four Brasilia-based diplomats are used. It is concluded that such discourse does not yield a lens onto the mutual reproduction of agents and structure. It rather only presents the regional environment as a reflection of motivations and interests rooted ultimately in the geographic environments of the individual states, which interviewees defined differently for each one. Decisions with respect to the regionalist environment in this part of the world are therefore most often subject to national government actors' political will, or lack of it. Regionally, such actors' interests mostly converge when it comes to the mutual defense of national sovereignty. Tentative evidence for a more continuous commonly identified interest beyond that is found for states that define their foreign policies as pragmatic (Brazil, Chile). Such pragmatism being at odds with common institutional structures for a common interest, however, that interest is also still ultimately what national politics makes of it.

Keywords: Regionalism. Regional integration. Latin America. South America. Identity.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, INITIALS, AND SYMBOLS

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>ALADI</b>    | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for the Latin American Integration Association (English: LAIA)                                  |
| <b>ALALC</b>    | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for the Latin American Free Trade Association (English: LAFTA), the predecessor of ALADI        |
| <b>ALBA</b>     | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America                                      |
| <b>ALCA</b>     | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for Free Trade Area of the Americas (English: FTAA)   |
| <b>APEC</b>     | English acronym for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation  |
| <b>CAN</b>      | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for the Andean Community  |
| <b>CEED</b>     | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for the Centre for Strategic Defense Studies of the Union of South American Nations             |
| <b>CELAC</b>    | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States  |
| <b>CEPAL</b>    | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (English: ECLAC) |
| <b>ESUDE</b>    | Portuguese and Spanish acronym for the South American Defense School of the Union of South American Nations                    |
| <b>EU</b>       | English acronym for European Union (Portuguese, Spanish: UE)   |
| <b>GRULAC</b>   | English acronym for the United Nation's geopolitical Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries.                          |
| <b>ISI</b>      | Import Substitution Industrialization  |
| <b>MERCOSUL</b> | Portuguese acronym for the Southern Common Market (Spanish: MERCOSUR)  |
| <b>Prosul</b>   | Portuguese acronym for the Forum for the Progress and Development of South America (Spanish: Prosur)                           |

**UNASUL**

Portuguese acronym for the Union of South American Nations (Spanish: UNASUR)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |     |   |    |
|---|-----|---|----|
| 1 |     | INTRODUCTION.....   | 17 |
|   | 1.1 | States, state identities and regional organizations.....                                      | 17 |
|   | 1.2 | Ontology, epistemology and methodology.....   | 18 |
|   | 1.3 | Some assumptions.....   | 19 |
| 2 |     | LITERATURE REVIEW.....  | 21 |
|   | 2.1 | A history of regionalism in Latin America and South America.....                              | 21 |
|   |     | 2.1.1 Conceptual definitions.....   | 21 |
|   |     | 2.2.2 From ideas to institutionalization.....   | 21 |
|   | 2.2 | The psychology behind Latin American and South American regionalism.....                      | 26 |
|   |     | 2.2.1 Groups and social psychology.....   | 26 |
|   |     | 2.2.2 Social deviation.....   | 29 |
| 3 |     | ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, METHODOLOGY.....  | 33 |
|   | 3.1 | Ontology.....   | 33 |
|   |     | 3.1.1 Identity in regional dynamics.....  | 33 |
|   |     | 3.1.2 Social constructivist premises: International Relations are human relations...<br>..... | 34 |
|   |     | 3.1.3 Positivist focus on structure, social-constructivist inclusion of process.....          | 36 |
|   |     | 3.1.4 Social process: the quality of identification.....                                      | 38 |
|   |     | 3.1.5 Sovereignty's role in the transformation of international anarchy.....                  | 40 |
|   |     | 3.1.6 Collective identity and political regionalization.....                                  | 42 |
|   |     | 3.1.7 Wendtian conceptualizations and directions for their operationalization..               | 43 |
|   | 3.2 | Epistemology.....   | 45 |
|   |     | 3.2.1 A short history of pragmatism.....  | 45 |
|   |     | 3.2.2 Pragmatist propositions.....  | 47 |
|   | 3.3 | Methodology.....  | 49 |
|   |     | 3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews and Deweyan abduction.....                                   | 49 |
|   |     | 3.3.2 Some assumptions.....   | 50 |
| 4 |     | RESULTS.....  | 53 |
|   | 4.1 | Bolivia, Brazil and Chile within their region.....  | 53 |
|   | 4.2 | Ideology and pragmatism.....  | 56 |
|   | 4.3 | Latin American or South American integration.....   | 62 |
| 5 |     | CONCLUSION.....   | 65 |
| 6 |     | REFERENCES.....   | 69 |
| 7 |     | APPENDIX A – Interviews with four diplomats.....  | 73 |



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 States, state identities and regional organizations

This scholarly endeavour starts with a deductive claim. States are human organizations with a self-identity. If regional organizations are associations of states, then it follows that such organizations are themselves social in their nature. What distinguishes one sort of human organization from another is a matter of the meanings we have ourselves given to them.

It is in terms of meanings, understandings and expectations that we do not only understand the objects concerning our interaction, but indeed, ourselves: they constitute our identities (WENDT, 1992). If states are human organizations, then there are elements outside of it in function of which states understand themselves and their role in regional and world society. Identities, including those of states, can gradually change because through interaction the meanings, understandings and expectations of objects are reproduced or altered. State identity can grow to be inclusive: other states and their interests are then understood as in extension of self. Inclusive self-understandings are not very typical of states within an anarchical system of states, though. Many social processes such as in-group and out-group dynamics make that many states, already social groups in themselves, at best do not see the interest of the other as in the interest of the self. At worst, they distrust the interest of other and perceive it as adverse to their self-interest. The main state interest is physical security, and if one state is physically less secure than another, it may perceive risks to its own existence (Id., 1994).

In Latin America and in South America, states have been able to cooperate as overt distrust has been long away now from their relations. If states do not typically identify a structural common interest beyond coexistence, though, it is striking that there have been so many initiatives towards regional integration in the region (Latin America) and on the continent (South America). To look further into the role of state identity therein, the question posed in this dissertation is how it affects decisions to create, adhere to, stay in or out of and socially deviate from regional organizations in the region and on the continent. A social deviation is a deviation of an individual from a group, which happens when a state suspends its own membership of a regional organization or leaves it,

assuming that regional organizations are social groups. That assumption is only a small extrapolation if one takes a state to be a social group.

## **1.2 Ontology, epistemology and methodology**

Making the aforesaid assumptions about state identity – mainly, that it is mutually constitutive with the meanings of the objects concerning the interaction with other states – requires one to define it in a workable way: how can a state identity be known to be a state identity, in order that be known what to look for in a research design? The school's standard-bearer himself, Alexander Wendt, is mainly known for taking issue with the ontology of systemic rationalism and admits that it is a challenge “to construct measures of state identity and interest capable of sustaining inferences about change” (WENDT, 1994, p. 391). The research design thus requires resort to a different school that shares the most important assumptions of social-constructivist ontology and beyond that offers epistemological and methodological consolidation: (American) pragmatism is such a school.

Pragmatism proposes that if agents and structure socially constitute each other, knowledge is generated through social interaction. In addition, knowledge is knowledge if agents consider the consequences of the social interaction tied to it successful. Methodologically, then, it proposes that agents' motives and success evaluations be studied without a separation of an empirical and a normative realm of analysis, claiming that studying actors' norms in their normative context is as important as studying social interaction's role in reproducing, altering and reflecting intersubjective structure. It proposes in a more general sense, also, a critical engagement with realm separations that are ultimately social constructions (COCHRAN, 2012).

Adopting these philosophical claims, the research set out to do interviews, held in Brasilia in July 2019, with diplomatic spokespersons of three state actors that have been major agents within the social structure of Latin American and South American regionalism. More specifically, the interviews were done with the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a first and a second secretary of the Chilean embassy in Brasilia and a first secretary of the Bolivian embassy in Brasilia. On condition of anonymity (but with agreement to cite them by their public function), they responded to questions about the social interaction constituting their regional environment. One question concerned the definition of the

region their countries sit in and normative connotations. Four questions concerned the regional organizations within their regions and the norms and interests promoted by them. Seven questions concerned, more specifically, states' decisions to create, adhere to, stay in or out of or socially deviate from regional organizations. Their answers rendered discursive data on their countries' norms and interests, and how they relate to the sphere of common regional norms and interests; to a lesser extent, on how these have been historically conceived; and most importantly, on how these have motivated the production and reproduction of the regionalist environment as we have witnessed it between the 1991 founding of the Southern Common Market, or MERCOSUL, and the year 2019. The interrelations between the data were inferred through Deweyan abduction, a method proposed by the pragmatic methodology proper, and conclusions were also compared to Wendtian conceptions of possible anarchies at the (sub)-system level.

### **1.3 Some assumptions**

Brazil, Bolivia and Chile are countries that at the regional level, according to the literature, each represent a different regional interest group concerning the region and the continent: one of a rather committed regionalism of joint global embedment, one of resistance towards political or economic hegemony and one of a flexible regional intercourse (VILLA; BRAGATTI, 2015; NOLTE; COMINI, 2016). Brazil's political and economic weight in the region and on the continent can in addition be considered to lend it a role of leader in the processes concerning regional integration. Chile can in its own manner be considered a leader: it typically chooses to fare its own autonomous course and assume noticeably fewer regionalist commitments than other countries in the region and on the continent. Venezuela has arguably been the most prominent defender of the anti-systemic Latin American way of regional intercourse. It turned out not possible to interview a spokesperson of that country's bureaucratic apparatus. Bolivia continues to be the country second-most committed to this third way of regional intercourse judging by its continued membership of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, or ALBA, in 2019. Ecuador, the other continental country previously considered to make part of that group, left ALBA in 2018 and since then has seemed to be shifting to Chile's flexible group, considering its 2019 accession talks with the Pacific Alliance. The reliability of the research method is assumed to be guaranteed by asking the same questions in the same language (Portuguese) to all respondents,

while in terms of validity, the assumption has been made that the answers of the respondents have been representative of their respective state apparatuses, in turn representative of the respective integration groups. Here, the assumption that the (leading) roles of a flexible group country, a global-embedment group country and an anti-system group country are sufficiently representative of the regional processes that have resulted in the Latin American and South American regionalist landscapes is made.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 A history of regionalism in Latin America and South America**

#### **2.1.1 Conceptual definitions**

The Latin American and South American regions largely coincide: a South American country is almost by definition a Latin American country, too, and many Latin American countries are South American. The region and the continent, one with regional connotations, have a lot of interaction and dynamics of regionalism to some extent coincide. This dissertation understands Latin America to encompass all the lands in the Western Hemisphere where due to French, Portuguese and Spanish colonization in the past, a Latin language is spoken, excluding Canada. South America, on the other hand, is the landmass starting east of Panama and south of the Southern Rim of the Caribbean, including the non-Latin Guianas, and ending where the Argentinian-Chilean border ends to form the division between the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean south of Tierra del Fuego. It understands regional organizations that identify with and through these regions to encompass sovereign states with a major part of their territory in either or both of them (Cf. MALAMUD, 2013, p. 1-12).<sup>1</sup> They may also encompass, for a minor part, sovereign states that are Caribbean, non-Latin American and non-South American or, such as in the case of ALBA, came to encompass such states only after it was originally created by Latin American and South American states. The most important delineations clarified, the next section outlines the history of regionalism in as far as found in preceding literature and relevant to the dissertation's scholarly endeavour: revealing how states' identities relate to association and adherence to, and deviation from Latin American and South American regional organizations.

#### **2.1.2 From ideas to institutionalization**

Ideas of a politically united (Latin) America are as old as the very states now constituting

---

<sup>1</sup> This dissertation understands regionalism and all things regionalist through the more political connotations found there: (voluntary) acts of cooperation, integration and the intended and unintended consequences of such.

the political geography of North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. In spite of figures such as Simón Bolívar, the best known among Latin American political elites to endeavour the political union of Latin America, the nineteenth century did not see any regional initiatives. Rather, vast states broke up into smaller ones, wars altered some borders but not their importance in political thought,<sup>2</sup> and the United States, as it itself consolidated as a federation, increasingly came to assert itself and meddle in the region's internal affairs, spawning division. The United States would always retain an interventionist image in the region, yet a sort of defensive regionalism meant to guard South American and Latin American countries from its clout would only arise very recently, in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It was only half a century before that that Latin American and South American political elites started to discuss the institutionalization of their regions. In the wake of World War II, the United Nations were created, and in 1948, a special branch of it concerned with the development of Latin America and the Caribbean: the Economic Commission for Latin America, or CEPAL. Its second executive secretary, Raúl Prebisch (1950-1963), wrote about the need for Latin America to develop a Latin American industry competitive with industries in global centres. If Latin America produced the industrial products it at that time needed to import, it would not need to fear for long-term diminished returns on exports relative to expenditure on imports, for industrial products' value would, over time, tend to increase more than that of agricultural goods and commodities. In other words, Latin America needed to industrialize in a concerted effort and diversify exports that at that time consisted almost fully in primary goods. Prebisch's vision was one of tariffs on imports from industrialized nations by Latin American and Caribbean countries which amongst themselves would have a free trade regime. As industrial imports would experience difficulty entering the Latin American market and domestic businesses would respond to demand for industrial products by investing in domestic industrial infrastructure, Prebisch called this strategy Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) (MOLANO-CRUZ, 2017).

The earliest Latin American regionalism consisted in attempts to implement Prebisch's

---

<sup>2</sup> This can be summed up by the principle of *uti possidetis* which governed the Iberian colonial empires and continued to be followed by the decolonized states. 'As you possess' meant a strong emphasis on their borders especially as resulted from wars fought by Spain and Portugal, which were to be respected. It increasingly took on the meaning of respect of state sovereignty. Taken to mean such emphasis on sovereignty and autonomy, it is at odds with any forms of regionalism beyond institutionalized multilateralism, as it does not allow any prevalence of possible common rules and practices over domestic ones.

ideas, however, governments turned out to be much better at protecting their industries than at opening up their markets to their neighbourhood. United States-sponsored authoritarian regimes between the 1950s and early 1980s throughout the hemisphere were even more reluctant to engage in a regionalist discourse and did little to advance it. At best, they were protectionist; at worst, they were bellicose, as demonstrate El Salvador and Honduras in the late 1960s and a conflict in the late 1970s that almost escalated into warfare between Argentina and Chile. Re-democratized Argentina and Brazil were the first, in the 1980s, to exchange state visits, leaving behind a past of rivalry, and advance their trade relations through a series of treaties. The most significant treaty was only signed together with Uruguay and Paraguay in the latter's capital, Asunción, in 1991, and created MERCOSUL. It was not an actual common market and would not develop into one in the years after. Yet, after the 1994 Treaty of Ouro Preto the organization, consisting in a commission, a council and a secretariat (all intergovernmental), came to have some short-lived success at establishing common external tariffs and taking away internal tariff as well as non-tariff barriers. Such barriers were never fully taken away and efforts suffered various setbacks from the late 1990s on, yet the extent of economic integration was, and continues to be historically unique in the region and on the continent.

The Andean Community, or CAN, MERCOSUL's neighbour regional organization, was created as the Andean Pact in 1969 in Cartagena, Colombia. Only original member states Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru have stayed in the agreement, after Chile left under then President Pinochet. Venezuela first joined in 1973, then left in 2006 to join MERCOSUL. Even though the organization is older than MERCOSUL, it has not outperformed it: it did establish a free trade zone and a common external tariff, but only, like MERCOSUL, in the 1990s.

The 1990s saw the rise of more similar regional organizations each with a different geographic focus (Central American Integration System, North American Free Trade Agreement, Association of Caribbean States) but all oriented towards abandoning economic barriers and finding common trade positions primarily. This homogeneity in economic and regionalist thought gave rise to debate about one hemispheric free trade zone, the Free Trade Area of the Americas. It would never materialize, as economic crises in Latin America lead newly elected governments, starting with Chávez's 1998 election to the Venezuelan presidency, to redefine their priorities in the regional sphere.

With the 1998-2008 wave of centre-left to radical leftwing presidents elected to office in

South American countries, countries' foreign policies generally became more critical of relations with the United States, perceived to increase its clout in a region increasingly dependent on it economically. Only Colombia, for economic and security reasons, and Chile, whose political elites think much like American policymakers about national economic embedment in globalized markets, continued to invest in strong relations with the United States. The countries with clear foreign policy shifts fall into two groups. The original MERCOSUL member states (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) aimed for their embedment in a MERCOSUL autonomous from the United States but with a positive agenda towards it (VILLA; BRAGATTI, 2015) – quite in the fashion Prebisch had originally foreseen.

Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela constitute the other group within South America, while within broader Latin America and the Caribbean, Cuba, Nicaragua and most of the Lesser Antilles island states fall into their group, too. These countries all work together in a regional organization that started off in 2004 as a trade agreement between Cuba and Venezuela, but that moved its focus considerably beyond trade solely: ALBA. ALBA member states choose social policies over free trade as a basis for their development, rejecting proposals such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas, or ALCA. From the outset, ALBA has presented itself as an alternative to ALCA (Ibid.), so much that the A for 'Alianza' originally stood for 'Alternativa'. What sets ALBA apart from MERCOSUL, whose member states also fiercely opposed ALCA from 2003 on (NOLTE; COMINI, 2016), is its hostility towards free trade in a general sense, and towards the United States in a more specific one. ALBA embodies the geopolitical interests of Venezuela, which seeks to regionalize them through a multilateral framework with states interested in its main offered benefit: access to cheap hydrocarbons (SANTANDER 2014). Much of ALBA's activity and financing revolves around this resource and the revenues it provides Venezuela with. Through Petroandino and Petrocaribe, Venezuelan initiatives later incorporated in ALBA's structure, national oil companies from ALBA member states but also from many more states throughout the Caribbean were connected (Ibid.).

If it seems that oil had Venezuela punch above its weight on the regional stage, confirmation may be found in the simultaneous institutionalization of South America as a region that was led by Latin America's and South America's more, by sheer size and economic capacity, natural leader, which is Brazil. Under its Lula governments, Brazil pursued a regional strategy of "*South-Americanization*" (NOLTE; COMINI, op. cit., p. 553). In 2008, even after some hesitation from

Argentina, not exactly enthused about the weight Brazil would have in an organization without Mexico (NOLTE; COMINI, 2016), Brazil managed to get all South American governments' signatures under the founding document of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUL).

Venezuela's radical, Latin American and Brazil's MERCOSUL-inspired South American strategies made for regional rivalry between Venezuela's ALBA and Brazil's UNASUL, yet not outright antagonism. After all, Venezuela became a MERCOSUL member state in 2012 and enjoyed Brazil's support in the process. In addition, even though Brazil was UNASUL's natural leader (until its auto-suspension in April 2018), all South American countries including Venezuela are founding members. Venezuela's conception of integration is mainly political, anti-capitalist and anti-hegemonic (VILLA; BRAGATTI, 2015), yet it has participated in two South American organizations that were conceived pragmatic and economic, reflecting Brazil's regionalist course. Room to rival Brazil in the regional space Venezuela thus finds in ALBA, which apart from Venezuela's petrodollar financing, exists by virtue of Cuba's scientific expertise (Ibid.). It also, however, has assumed an active role in UNASUL from the negotiating phase.

In 2006, Venezuela was the author of what would become UNASUL's South American Defense Council, first proposed to Brazil and Argentina as a South Atlantic NATO of sorts. Brazil sought such an institution to be less deep and more intergovernmental than Venezuela's alternative NATO and received the proposal with little enthusiasm. Brazil might have feared that one deep defense institution instead of various more pragmatic ones would diminish its clout, believing that pulling some levers both in MERCOSUL and in UNASUL while keeping ALBA in check would rather maximize it. Hence, the South American Defense Council as approved by all signatories to the UNASUL Treaty in 2008 became more of a forum that provided for multilateral coordination (Ibid.).

Venezuela still desired a military alliance as well and launched one that same year with the Andean ALBA member states, Cuba, and the non-ALBA Dominican Republic. On that alliance's agenda was, in addition, what would become ALBA's security and defense institution: the School of Defense and Sovereignty (hereinafter referred to as ALBA Defense School) eventually founded in 2011 in Santa Cruz, Bolivia (Ibid.).

While ALBA had its Defense School in Santa Cruz, UNASUL's Defense Council was expanded with a Centre for Strategic Defense Studies (CEED) in Buenos Aires and a South American Defense School (Esude) in Quito (Ibid.). The CEED and the ALBA Defense School,

both there to defend autonomy in the region, were founded in the same week in 2011 (VILLA; BRAGATTI, 2015), which only underlines the folly of institutional overlap (Ibid.). There seems, however, to be a slight difference in their objective: ALBA and its Defense School define their main goal as fighting American imperialism, while UNASUL and CEED define theirs as protecting autonomy in the face of the United States, but without defining the latter overtly as a threat or security issue (Ibid.). ALBA's fear is an American invasion; UNASUL's, multi-dimensional, non-territorial threats (Ibid.). In the face of such fundamental discord about what constitutes a threat to South America, UNASUL and ALBA can hardly cooperate on defense (Ibid.). In defending different conceptualizations of security, however, they unintentionally expand the menu for South American countries who wish to make part of an *à la carte* regional security environment (Ibid.). That does not take away the problems of institutional overlap, mainly, the high amount of resources spent within South America on the differing yet similar sets of mechanisms and practices that make up ALBA and UNASUL (Ibid.; WEIFFEN; WEHNER; NOLTE, 2013).

## **2.2 The psychology behind Latin American and South American regionalism**

### **2.2.1 Groups and social psychology**

If states are human organizations, and regional organizations are, too, the repeated reproduction of similar organizations may be best explained as social group dynamics. A recent and indeed innovative theoretical approach is pioneered by Dubé and Thiers (2017). They consider Latin American and South American countries as a group and explain regional dynamics quite in a manner social psychologists would. If it can be plausibly assumed that social psychology theories have such external validity that they can be extended to the area of International Relations, this approach does indeed help understand why South American and Latin American countries have so often entered ineffective regional organizations, their presidents collectively presenting a narrative of constant progress, and so little exited them (Ibid.).

In social psychology, for a group and group behaviour to exist, individuals must be externally recognized as part of the group and identify themselves as group members. This identification requires an individual's awareness of their group membership, value connotations

that come with this awareness and an emotional commitment resulting from this awareness and of the value connotations. Among South American and Latin American political elites, this sort of identification, or sense of community, results from cultural and historical likenesses, as such, exists, and underlies all regional politics. In other words, there is a group and there is a group dynamic, as also turns out from the constitutive treaties and official declarations of UNASUL and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, or CELAC (DUBÉ; THIERS, 2017).

Individuals, and if one may so induce, South American and Latin American political elites form groups to reduce uncertainty in their social exchange – group commitment makes actors more predictable – and to produce benefits they could not on their own. Countries rarely leave regional organizations because even in the light of dissatisfaction, the social exchange within the group has taken on value for them. Group cohesion, for example, reduces stress. The (feared) costs of leaving a regional organization are negative reactions, ostracism and a deteriorated social exchange (Ibid.). Even when half of UNASUL's member states walked away from it in April 2018, they did so suspending their membership,<sup>3</sup> not leaving the organization.

The fear for negativism and stress as a result of group leave is well captured by the concept of groupthink, or the peer pressure felt by members of a group in which unanimity is of high importance. It increases the cost of deviation within the group by much: nobody likes to be the black sheep. This could be a dynamic going on in South American and Latin American regional organizations, whose decisions generally require unanimity (Ibid.).

The continued adherence to and creation of regional regimes does not seem, in the first instance, to follow logically from the non-achievement of regional objectives. Yet, in social psychology, a misfit between an environmental and a behavioural cognition (cognitive dissonance) is known to motivate actors to change either or both of them, in attempts to reduce the misfit. The choice for continued construction of new regional organizations over actual reforms in existing ones can, through the lens of social psychology, be seen as attempts to adjust the regional environment to a behaviour that communicates South American and Latin American unity. The cost of changing the behavioural cognition, which would quite likely implicate withdrawal from organizations that constitute an environment of non-achievement, would be too high. This would

---

<sup>3</sup> The six countries suspending their membership did so in a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia, Huanacuni, just two days after that country assumed the pro-tempore presidency of the Union. Argentina, which had formerly held that presidency, was among these countries. The letter was delivered at the Bolivian Embassy in Quito, Ecuador, where the Union's headquarters are located.

be explained by the value of the group to the group member, and groupthink (DUBÉ; THIERS, 2017.).

Besides a motivation to change cognitions, cognitive dissonance also causes a selective search for additional cognitive elements to diminish it. For regional integration in South America and in Latin America, it may mean that actors are motivated to avoid, ignore and misinterpret figures on non-achievement while being more public and straightforward with information that conforms to their pro-integration behaviour. Group decisions can be convincingly justified afterwards through such selectiveness – even if at the moment of the decision there were obviously better alternatives, and, relatedly, even to previously dissident members. This means that in a group context, a cognitive-dissonance-biased decision tends to increase a group's shared preference through a cognitive-dissonance-biased justification. This implicates a positive feedback loop between a group's shared preferences and their taken decisions (Ibid.).

In other words, previous behaviours are reinforced: for example, progressive collective discourse, continued summitry and the signing of documents of new organizations. Accordingly, the regional environment and cognitions of it change – yet, as long as the renewed environment does not represent actual progress in the same manner as does discourse about it, cognitive dissonance persists. Effectively, this perpetuates the desire to change environmental cognitions to make them fit behavioural cognitions and makes such things as organizational overabundance a systemic feature of the region. Moreover, as long as the costs of continuing a behaviour are perceived as exceeded by those of changing it, they do not play a deterrent but rather a stimulating role: they widen the discrepancy between environmental and behavioural cognitions, making policy-makers all the more eager to continue their behaviour, i.e. change their environment. In other words, they deceive themselves into believing expenditures were worth it (Ibid.).

In short, South American and Latin American political elites maintain a desire to reduce the misfit between a behavioural and an environmental cognition in the face of a high cost of changing the behavioural cognition. Instead of changing their behaviour, they continue it and lock in a course of mediocre regional politics; they see the regional environment change in response, but they never see the misfit with their behaviour reduced. As regional integration policies only advance formally and discursively, they can be said to be inertial. Thus, cognitive dissonance leads to inertia in South American and Latin American regional politics (Ibid.).

The duration of this inertia depends on the cost of changing the behavioural cognition

instead of the environmental one. If it is higher than the cost of continuing to try to change the environmental cognition, cognitive dissonance and inertia are likely to persist. The exception to the rule, which would see changes in the regional environment that lead to more efficient and effective regional politics and their match with leaders' discourse of progress, has simply not been observed yet. The reverse situation, in which the cost of changing the environmental cognition comes to exceed that of changing the behavioural one, became more than just hypothetical in 2018. As mentioned before, in April 2018, half of UNASUL's members suspended their membership. They did so for an indefinite period of time, declaring not to attend UNASUL meetings for a year, out of frustration with Venezuela's and Bolivia's blocking the nomination of Argentine José Octavio Bordón as secretary-general of the organization. By lack of a unanimous decision on the nomination, the position of secretary-general had been vacant since early 2017.

The act of suspension is a severe deviation from the South American social group, comparable to the phenomenon of group leave in social psychology. To have the social psychology lens fully account for the 1991-2019 regional dynamics of South America and Latin America, this group deviation cannot be ignored.

### 2.2.2 Social deviation

Socio-psychological analysis of deviation from group norms requires, first, that not the act of suspension, but a preceding group norm change is identified as the initial deviation. If a deviation within a group is not so severe as to cause non-deviant members to stop identifying with the group, they will rather seek communication with the deviants, or exclude them from the group, than walk away themselves. Communication and exclusion are moves associated with preventing a group's norms from changing. Leaving a group, or *escape*, occurs when a deviation is indeed perceived by the non-deviants as having changed the group's norms (DITRICH; SCHOLL; SASSENBURG, 2017).

The April 2018 South American group leave, directly triggered by in-group deadlock, is likely to have been triggered indirectly by an ideological shift: the leavers had shifted from left-wing to right-wing government over the years 2015-2016, while the remainers generally remained under left-wing government. This means that both the escape phenomenon *and* the preceding deviation (ideological shift) were embodied by the leavers, which is not what social psychology

predicts. If, however, the explanatory power of this lens – especially given its uncommon application on regional politics – lies rather with the very occurrence of a deviation and a (sub-group) norm change as predictors of escape than with what side of the group divide that will result this occurrence will have taken place on, it still offers an enlightening perspective.

Behaviour deviant from what is considered normal within a group typically has up to three direct consequences. First of all, it may fundamentally change a group's norms, especially if there are many deviants or a group leader deviates (DITRICH; SCHOLL; SASSENBURG, 2017). In South America, this was the case when half of the Union's member states underwent a right-wing political shift. Secondly, non-deviant members see a threat to the group's identity in this attempt towards group norm change, a perception called "*identity subversion*" (Ibid., p. 2, italics theirs). Thirdly, if group norm change takes place, non-deviants come to identify less with the group, as the new group norm no longer fits their self-concepts (Ibid.). One of the arguments of this dissertation is that social psychology helps explain the April 2018 South American group leave, on a condition of flexibility of the *locus* of lessened post-deviation self-identification with the group: it was the deviant right-wing governments that felt out of place in left-leaning UNASUL, not the non-deviants.

A guided recall study and a social experiment suggest group norm transformation, identity subversion and a lessened identification are related as follows in predicting escape. First, a group norm deviation occurs. Whether the deviation changes the group norm depends on the severity of the deviation, and when it does, it predicts identity subversion at the ninety-nine percent significance level in the guided recall study. In the social experiment, it predicts both identity subversion and a lessened post-deviation self-identification with the group, tested here as well, at the 99.9% significance level. In the guided recall study, identity subversion predicts group leave at the ninety-five percent significance level, and in the social experiment, the severity of the group deviation is demonstrated to predict group leave via identity subversion and post-manipulation identification with the group at the 99.9% significance level: identity subversion and post-manipulation identification mediate between the deviation and group leave (Ibid.).

The same guided recall study and social experiment corroborate another hypothesis, namely, that a group norm deviation leaving the group norm intact leads not to group leave, but to communication with and exclusion of the deviants by the non-deviants. Communication, only tested in the social experiment, is predicted by deviation severity, identity subversion, and deviation

severity via identity subversion at the 99.9% significance level. Exclusion from the group is not statistically significantly predicted by either deviation severity or identity subversion in the guided recall study, but in the social experiment it is at the 99.9% significance level, as it is by deviation severity via identity subversion. Post-manipulation self-identification with the group, only tested as predictor in the social experiment, does not play any (statistically significant) role in the deviation-exclusion and deviation-communication relationships: yet since the group norms remain intact in these relations, this was not to be expected anyway (DITRICH; SCHOLL; SASSENBURG, 2017).

Communication and exclusion as possible reactions to an in-group deviation are important when we consider the April 2018 South American group leave as constituting the initial deviation, now shifting our attention away from the preceding ideological shift in its role of deviation. Social psychology thus teaches that non-deviant Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela probably continued to self-identify with UNASUL throughout 2018, yet at the same time perceived a threat to its identity (identity subversion). This perceived threat as a consequence of the group leave made it likely that the non-deviants would try communicating with the deviants in order to save UNASUL (whether exclusion would be a likely outcome is somewhat ambiguous, as the guided recall study tested it as statistically insignificant). There is in fact an observation that fits that prediction: the Foreign Minister of Bolivia (which held UNASUL's *pro tempore* presidency from April 2018), Huanacuni, days after the deviation, announced he would call for an extraordinary meeting, with affirmed support from Ecuador and Uruguay (TELESUR, 2018).

Nolte and Comini (2016) part from a similar ontology as Dubé and Thiers (2017) and in extension, Ditrich, Scholl and Sassenburg (2017), lending centrality to a South American and Latin American identity in regional politics. Yet, there are differences. The social psychologists consider group identity and identification with it as what motivates individuals, and Dubé and Thiers (2017) see regional organizations as means for countries to institutionalize such an identity. Nolte and Comini (2016), on the other hand, argue that UNASUL (and perhaps other organizations in extension) is an expression of its constituent member states' regional interests – how they identify their own position with respect to their region. In their vision, a country (e.g. Brazil) identifies its position (e.g. leader) and its region (e.g. South America), and then creates or joins a regional organization (e.g. UNASUL) to institutionalize its self-identity. Yet they also converge with the social psychologists where they point out countries' motivations for creating or joining regional

organizations: either they perceive a real interest to be attended to, or “they want to avoid any expected negative externalities of not being a member” (NOLTE; COMINI, 2016, p. 548). Of course, such negative externalities may include such things as the black sheep effect pointed out by the social psychologists.

In other words, one lens considers the driver of regionalism within structure (the group identity) while another considers it to lie with agents. Both are essentially social-constructivist readings of why regionalism in the region and on the continent is what it is. They are complementary and help a great deal in accounting for the 1991-2019 regional dynamics, especially those behind UNASUL. As outlined in the next chapter, this dissertation will therefore adopt the core social constructivist premises. Much beyond underlying explication both from an agent as well as from a structure perspective, they enlighten the dynamics *between* agents and structure, too.

### **3      **Ontology, epistemology, methodology****

#### **3.1    **Ontology****

##### **3.1.1   Identity in regional dynamics**

Especially since the 1990s, ever more regional organizations have been created within the Latin American and South American regional space. Regional organizations are not clear-cut phenomena and their quality is judged by criteria that depend on how they are conceptualized. Some scholars criticize regional organizations in this part of the world for discrepancies between what they set out to do formally and material outputs (DUBÉ; THIERS, 2017; GARDINI, 2015; MALAMUD, 2013; MALAMUD; GARDINI, 2012; SANAHUJA, 2012; SERBIN, 2013); others judge organizations by their reproduced existence as indicative of a willingness to uphold or foster a regional identity (ARENAS-GARCÍA, 2012; BRICEÑO-RUIZ, 2013; RIGGIROZZI, 2010; TUSSIE, 2009). Latin American and South American regional organizations are usually judged poorly by the first group, especially among those who draw comparisons with European regional organizations and their outputs. They are judged in a more positive light by those more concerned with questions of identity.

The latter group have picked up notions that would have been left ignored by scholars concerned with material outputs solely. Through content analysis, Jenne and Schenoni (2015) offer an insight into the importance given by Latin American leaders to presenting their countries as part of certain regional organizations at the United Nations General Assembly. Using interpretations borrowed from social psychology, Dubé and Thiers (2017) offer a plausible explanation as to why a seemingly unproductive regional integration dynamic keeps being reproduced in the same regional space. It seems that this group of scholars is on to something and that the role of identity in the Latin American and South American regional dynamics is worth studying: it is directive in this dissertation.

The problem with identity is that it, neither, is a clear-cut concept. Traditionally, it was not considered a relevant variable to the field of International Relations, until neo-liberals operationalized it as an independent, categorical variable. The social complexity of identity, setting

the parameters of social interaction while able to undergo change to the extent to which actors change social cognitions, is better recognized by the social constructivist school. Wendt (1992, 1994) especially has ably brought a lens of social psychology to the field, arguing that anarchy at the international level does not of itself have causal powers, but expectations of it and meanings socially attributed to it do: “*anarchy is what states make of it*” (Id., 1992, p. 395, italics his).

This chapter first summarizes the Wendtian view on identity in International Relations for this dissertation, in a likewise fashion, to adopt the social constructivist premises required to understand the identity variable on a conceptual level. In doing so, some of it may seem somewhat distant from tradition International Relations as much of it is grounded in social psychology. In so far as it is, it ought to be read on the premise that states and state actors are groups of humans which interact, which renders them objects analyzable through the lens of social psychology. That premise is, in fact, the first of social constructivism presented here. Second, this chapter points at the problem of transcending the conceptual and operationalize identity, only to then offer a summary of pragmatism in International Relations. In doing so, it demonstrates how its epistemology is useful both in finding a pathway towards that operationalization and in connecting theory to practice. Lastly, this chapter borrows pragmatist methodology from that school’s epistemology and clarifies how a pragmatic method can be employed to make inferences about state identity in Latin America and South America and its role in the shaping of the regionalist environment.

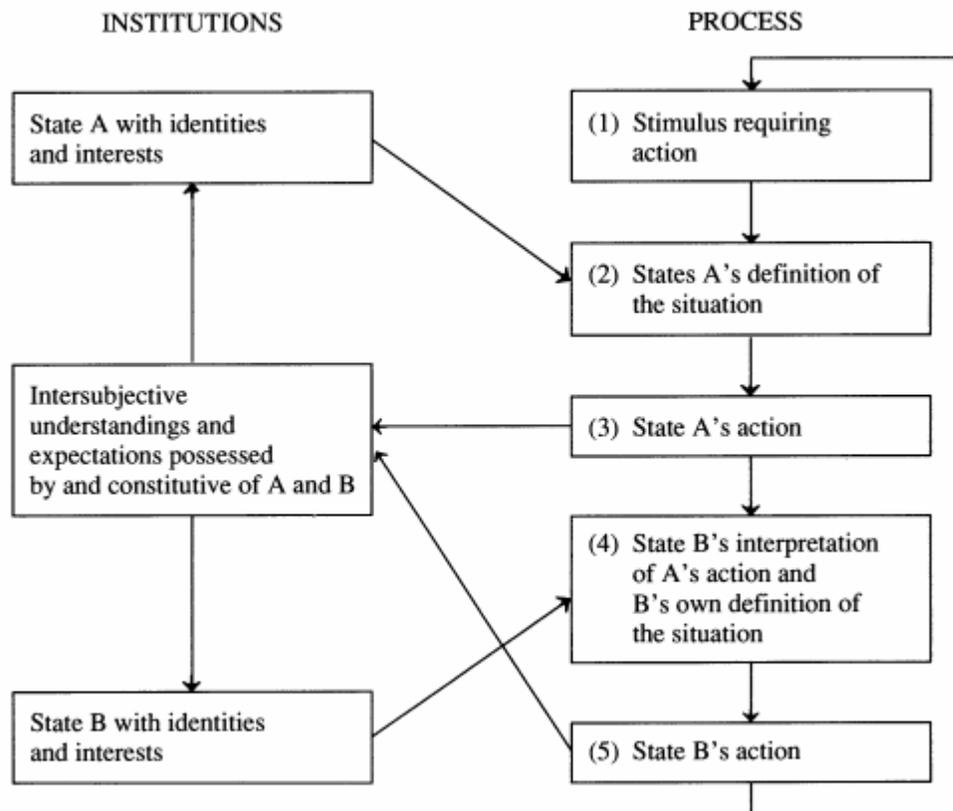
### 3.1.2 Social constructivist premises: International Relations are human relations

If states and state actors are themselves psychological objects, they, like humans, act towards other objects on the basis of the meanings those have to them. Such objects comprise the material structure central also to the rationalist ontology: for example, the distribution of capabilities at the systemic level and trade flows. Rationalists assume the social meanings of material structure either explicatively irrelevant or plainly fixed: for neo-realists, states pursue no gains other than relative gains and for neo-liberals, they inhabit a given context of cooperation in which shifts in the distribution of capabilities are brought about in such a way that all cooperators benefit. Social constructivists consider both absolute and relative calculus valid depending on intersubjective understandings and expectations of all that goes into it (Ibid.).

Intersubjective understandings are a concept that introduces objects to International

Relations that do not make part of the rationalist ontology: the psychological self and other. I.e., self and other interact and in doing so give meanings to objects concerning that interaction that are equally understood by both. As self and other are themselves objects given meaning to in this interaction, they construct identity during their interaction: “relatively stable and role-specific understandings about self” (WENDT, 1992, p. 397). Identity is thus endogenous, not exogenous to interaction. This is the second of the main premises of social constructivism presented here that distinguish it from rationalism. The distinction, indeed, is with neo-liberal scholars who do assume identity to be relevant, but as a categorical variable exogenous to interaction. Social constructivism assumes the possibility for identities gradually to change through process. For example, a participant to interaction makes sustained efforts, consciously or not, to change the intersubjective knowledge that governs a cognitive schema and that makes actors predictable (Ibid.).

Figure 1 – The co-determination of institutions and process



Source: Wendt (1992, p. 406)

This, however, is not easily done, as institutions, the rules of the game such an actor seeks to change, “confront individuals as more or less coercive social facts” (WENDT, 1992, p. 399). Even if not formal or articulated they are social rules produced by the meanings and expectations attached to social practice, and binding it. If formalized, they beget new administrations, or the official commitment of existing ones, meant to encourage or ensure compliance by all actors. Institutions do not necessarily improve actors’ interaction, they rather stabilize it, meaning they may help actors to retain stably conflictual relations as well as ensure the continuity of their harmonious cooperation (Ibid.).

Overcoming institutions, how does an identity, which, being true to social constructivism, we assume endogenous to interaction, function as a variable in International Relations? First of all, considering identity as a variable in interaction is considering the actually variable component of identity, which is social identity. Social identities have structural properties, some of which are individual, others, social. The individual structural properties situate an actor in its role in a given context: for example, the interaction with a neighbouring state. Social structural properties inform an actor what the understandings and expectations shared with the other in an interaction are. Social identities are key to the third constructivist premise presented here, which is that of mutual constitution of agent and structure: it is social identities that make states’ behaviour endogenous to the context in which it occurs at the same time at which they shape the conditions of that context (Id., 1994).

### 3.1.3 Positivist focus on structure, social-constructivist inclusion of process

Social identity, however, is only what determines how an actor puts its motivation into action. What motivates actors to act in the first place is corporate identity, hardly variable over time. Corporate identity pertains to the individual qualities that constitute actor individuality. These qualities are, on the one hand, physical ones, such as the body or an organization’s resources; on the other, they are such things as an individual’s consciousness and organizations’ shared institutions and beliefs, which bind such physical qualities into an actor. Once these qualities come together to form an actor, such as a state actor, and a corporate identity, this actor will pursue four types of interests. The first is physical security. Projected onto International Relations, it translates to physical differentiation through national borders and is the interest considered supreme by

realists. Then, there is ontological security, which is realized when there is a continuity of being: this makes actors and their relations predictable. It is best realized by stable social identities. Furthermore, an actor seeks recognition as an actor by others on a level beyond physical force – in the example of states, through UN membership, for instance. Lastly, there is the interest of advancing utility, the aspiration for a better life. For states, it may be called development, which is an interest articulated at the level of domestic society (WENDT, 1994).

Assuming social contexts fixed or irrelevant is easily done because of institutions' rigidity and states' ontological security interest that, among others,<sup>1</sup> underlies it. In realist ontology, this rigidity of social structure becomes (or so a social constructivist will have it) exaggerated: human nature is malign, or units are self-help-ish. So it happens realists miss from view states' efforts to attend to corporate identity interests other than physical security. Social identities occur in one kind only, that of the self-help. So, in addition, they observe little of explicative relevance beyond continuous distrust and the recurring of conflict at the international level. So, finally, they fail to recognize that self-help is a changeable identity decided by state actors to be fittest to attend to a corporate security interest that is so commonly held that ruling out more collective sorts of social identity should raise suspicion. After all, if all are preoccupied with their physical security, should that not unite them in their worry? Rather than rule out social identities other than self-help egos it is valuable to question why self-help anarchy seems prevalent over anarchies socially designed in more harmonious ways and how the process of social interaction can be improved (Ibid.).

Assuming social structure fixed also leads many opponents of realists to adopt a liberal ontology: human nature is benign, or state and other actors build institutions on a linear path towards world peace. So liberal scholars observe little of explicative relevance beyond the institutionalization of international society, which, if anything before realizing shared absolute benefits (such as development), works to increase predictability in states' relations and offer platforms for seeking political recognition – all corporate interests save physical differentiation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Wendt (1992) describes ways in which the international system resists easy change. Any system tends to sustain itself and thus provide incentives for certain kinds of behaviour and deterrents for others. In self-help anarchies, if one deviates from the state security logic they risk being stabbed in the back. In collective security arrangements, not living up to commitments may result in exclusion and leave one dangerously exposed. The best chances of survival are in playing by the rules. Relatedly and following from such systemic incentives and deterrents, certain behaviour is expected from states on the basis of their role identities assumed and commitments made. If they do not make efforts toward the stability and continuity thereof, especially of the more salient ones, they will incur costs for being unpredictable, a deterrent in itself. Such costs may include the loss of domestic and foreign support, cognitive dissonance and being framed as threat.

Even the institution of sovereignty tends to be analyzed as terms set by states to guarantee harmonious interaction rather than their physical security, although intergovernmental currents may contend sovereignty does both. Yet (harmonious) international institutions, too, have a social history, and even if relatively stable are always in process and require sustained practice, lest states recur to more bellicose means to their ends. Positivist explanations part from structural properties, whereas sometimes process does a better job at explaining International Relations than structure (WENDT, 1994).

One way in which ignoring process in virtue of structure leads to conclusions different from those a social constructivist would draw is through game theory, a method that unites neo-realists and neoliberals. This approach of mathematical modelling of rational outcomes following from the interests of participants to some defined interactive situation assumes the latter at best to be independent of past or future interaction, and at worst to be a one-off, which is hardly realistic in International Relations. Repeated interaction, even in zero-sum games which predict self-help, takes away incentives for egoistic behaviour as it would sour the infinite course of interaction, on which future gains depend. Self-help may continue for a long time but the logic behind it changes from the second interaction onward from a rational one ever more to a socially cognitive one. In other words, expectations about one another's future behaviour are created from the first interaction onward (Id., 1992). In the long run, expectations become a mutually perceived predictability of interaction, characterized by intersubjective meanings, reciprocal typifications and "relatively stable concepts of self and other regarding the issue at stake in the interaction" (Ibid., p. 405). Intersubjective knowledge thus begins as tentative knowledge and is developed in the process, becoming "the relatively enduring social structures in terms of which we define our identities and interests" (Ibid., p. 406).

#### 3.1.4 Social process: the quality of identification

Recognizing this enables one to see how states, as social actors, can identify with one another's interests negatively, neutrally or positively: in the latter case, the other's interest is seen to be in extension of the self-interest. Actors then act in each other's interest, even if (initially) on pragmatic grounds, which is why positive identification is also described as high-quality intersubjective knowledge in this dissertation. As states are themselves social groups, in-group and

out-group dynamics make positive identification of interests, or the perception of foreign interests in extension of the self-interest, less common between states than between just any group of humans. In any case, and as mentioned earlier, improving the quality of intersubjective knowledge is a slow process because of such things as institutional rigidity and the ontological security interest. Negative identification would appear from relative gain strategies, while neutral identification, from absolute gain strategies (WENDT, 1994).

The evolution of a socially negative anarchy into a positive one is not a linear process, but it *is* conceivable as a process. All states, as social actors, have an interest in their own physical security, by nature of being social actors; anarchical systems inform states that that physical security cannot be taken for granted. This causes a primary concern with preservation of security of the self, but does not mean an adoption by default of self-help attitudes: social attitudes depend on the system's social history as it presents itself in the now – the role of structure – and its constituents' interest in reproducing or innovating the state it has wound up to be in – the role of agents (Id., 1992).

But even recognizing this agent-structure dynamic, it is most helpful, when thinking of improving social structure, to recognize here the role of the agent, too, as the agent of change. All relations start, after all, without any interaction history: this is to be shaped by agents before they are shaped by it. Considering the system level, even though this applies very much, too, to the level of the Latin American region, social structure rests very much on one institution: state sovereignty.

This institution did not just pop up in seventeenth-century Europe but was so consciously accorded by concerned European powers as to have shaped international relations to this day. At times of growing dissatisfaction with the implementation of the institution, the institution did not reform itself, but political actors did. This happened when democratizing societies transformed state sovereignty into people's sovereignty, and when former colonial powers opened the institution to former colonies. Even in the light of numerous violations and differences in interpretation of the institution ever since it has been around, state actors still make reference to it in their doings, proving it a strong institution. It has only been able to grow strong through reproduction, which instilled it in international relations' social structure, seeing sovereign states become sovereignty states,<sup>2</sup> operating under a system logic not of self-help, but of collective

---

<sup>2</sup> The distinction I seek to make here is not between two different kinds of states but rather, between the active and passive properties of their relation to the institution: sovereignty as understood as upheld, acted out by agents on the one hand, and on the other, as governing systemic principle. Sovereignty states it not something coined by Wendt,

recognition of each other's exclusive political authority within territorial limits (WENDT, 1992).

### 3.1.5 Sovereignty's role in the transformation of international anarchy

It is worth looking into sovereignty and the systemic role it plays a little more, as Wendt has quite some things to say about it. That role, namely, is an ambiguous one when it comes to the transformation of the social structure of international relations. This section first describes how articulating 'territorial property' as a state's right can pave the way for an ever-more harmonious international anarchy. Then, it describes how it can do the exact opposite by leaving state actors feel less, not more secure.

For being a shared norm (when it is), sovereignty helps increase predictability in the system, which is important for harmonious international relations. It is reasonably predictably reproduced by the community of states because of the negative externalities of deviation, and knowing that that goes for everyone they feel less threatened. In addition, once sovereignty is the operating logic, states equate their national security to territorial property rights. Arguably this makes the system more peaceful, because it precludes negative-identity zero-sum security definitions: no state is, after all, concerned with matters beyond their borders as far as relates to their security. The downside of this is that, depending on how the borders of their 'territorial property' are drawn, internal stability may be sacrificed. Lastly, once states normatively adopt sovereignty, they have a genuine normative interest in respecting others' territoriality. In other words, state actors (or the domestic societies they represent) deem it unethical not to do so (Ibid.).

Especially resulting from the first two considerations here, what typifies a society of sovereign states, or sovereignty states, is a commonly held indifference towards one another's security interests. This indifference will work as a variable that conditions the effect of intensifying relations on the possibility of positive identification. That is, if state actors feel they have nothing to fear from one another, they are more likely to improve and further institutionalize their relations in situations where they need to negotiate their interests. Hence, they are likely to cooperate; and if they identify with each other's interests in a certain policy area sufficiently, they may even replace Westphalian sovereignty with administrative integration (Ibid.).

---

although the idea to apply social constructionist principles of reproduction of agents and structure on International Relations is of course all his (*opera citata*).

It must also be considered, however, that at the same time at which all state actors see their foremost corporate interest, physical security, protected by a right, they also see it conflated with a social identity, understanding self and other to assume the role the institution prescribes. Any deviation from that script is thus easily seen not only as a threat to sovereign identity but also to higher-stake corporate identity. That easily leads to the impression that together with territorial property rights, actors' very core is up for negotiation. As such, a sovereignty system may more easily promote distrust (WENDT, 1994).

In addition, sovereignty formally removes hierarchy from the system, because it bestows the right to physical security to all states equally. In an anarchy, that means actors are left individually to guarantee it. Such a perfect system of sovereigns rid of hierarchy is governed by a logic that punishes the altruism of a benevolent suzerain that comes to the defense of a state under threat. Even if costs do not exceed gains, a possible suzerain would fear they would: that by deviating from what the social script prescribes, he would provoke other states to do so, too, while lowering the costs for his own sovereignty to be infringed. Such a system thus leaves self-help as the only guaranteed tool for state actors to enforce their sovereignty and possibly, as the system logic (Ibid.; Id., 1992).<sup>3</sup>

It seems that as far as sovereignty is concerned, whatever obtains (realist self-help, liberal cooperation or from the latter, incipient collective identities) greatly depends on how strong state actors feel the institution to be the system norm. The norm must be sufficiently strong, in other words, there is a threshold of predictability the system must have for states to behave cooperatively and build harmonious relations. Below that threshold, states will be too wary to relinquish self-help; above it, mutual gains are perceived sufficiently to be within reach and judged worth the risks of free-riding and risks that come with exposing political and economic vulnerabilities. Moreover, state actors with strong and respected sovereign identities will perceive full freedom of decision to develop collective attachments or not: in other words, they are psychologically enabled to do so. The challenge would be to operationalize this 'trust' variable and quantify the role, undoubtedly mutually constitutive with the system's social structure, in the development of the latter. Indeed, this would in general be the challenge with identities (WENDT, 1994).

---

<sup>3</sup> The paradox here, is that systemic agreement on the institution of sovereignty can be a first step towards more harmonious systems that allow for the peaceful negotiation of that institution, in the form of regional organizations. Arguably, the modern-day model of regional integration, the European Union, exists in member states that have 'pooled' their sovereignty.

### 3.1.6 Collective identity and political regionalization

In spite of all the limitations to outspokenly positive identification between states, such as the corporal need for physical differentiation and in-group and out-group dynamics, nothing in Wendt's argument is strictly prohibitive to the formation of collective identity. That would entail a consideration of the interest of other to be in extension of the interest of self to an advanced extent so as for the self-other distinction to lose relevance. Possibly, the interests commonly defined beget a common administration of statist nature, but at the supra-national level (Ibid.; COX, 1987, p. 253-265, apud WENDT, 1994, p. 392).<sup>4</sup>

As outlined, positive identities can come about through intensifying relations on the condition that respect for norms be inherent to the intersubjective knowledge characterizing the relationship. Intensifying relations is a wording that bears connotations of materiality – trade flows, the rise of a common enemy – but can also apply to the behavioural and rhetorical properties of interaction. As for behavioural interaction, when states engage in a strategy of reciprocity, they learn to cooperate and negotiate, whether consciously or not, the interests and identities with which they entered the social structure. They do this by updating their intersubjective knowledge: they come to know more accurately, by practical experience, how the other sees them. If that is a positive image, their interests will become more mutually inclusive and their social identities more extensive. As they self-identify through their cooperative behaviour they learn to identify with each other. As for rhetorical interaction, this is similar but takes place along the dimension of language (WENDT, 1994). Discursive practice is capable of changing states' conceptions of their interests by expressing or manipulating ideas “about who ‘the self’ of self-interested collective action is” (Ibid., p. 391).

As at the domestic level, state authority at the supra-national level depends on legitimacy and coercion, and can be observed to be had by certain regional organizations. There, it coexists with state authority at the member state level. More powerful, however, it may be beneficial to centralize authority supra-nationally for common interests to be better attended to. That may also generate perceptions of national sovereignty threats, though. Regional organizations such as MERCOSUL, UNASUL and ALBA may or may not classify as intermediate forms between supra-

---

<sup>4</sup> COX, R. **Production, power and world order**. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.

national administrations and multilateral forums for the coordination of national policies – successful or not – in the South American region. What this says about state identity in the region and on the continent is partly explored in this dissertation. For neither being supra-national nor merely multilateral, political regionalism may best be conceptualized as a continuous variable. This allows criticism on lack of institutional capacity without rejecting organizations as anarchies within an anarchy (WENDT, 1994.).

### 3.1.7 Wendtian conceptualizations and directions for their operationalization

Conceptualizations bring one only halfway when the endeavour is to analyze what happens in the Latin American and South American regionalist environment, though. Making a first step towards operationalizing state identity, what should one pay attention to according to Wendt? A first thing may be that state identities are themselves collective: “[t]he state itself is testimony to the role of collective identity in human affairs” (Ibid., p. 386). “Although collective identification operates at the level of social identity,” Wendt’s endnote to this statement reads,

by enhancing the capacity for collective action it can help create corporate identity, which in one sense is simply a (temporarily) ‘solved’ collective action problem. The distinction between the corporate and social identity of groups is therefore itself a construction, signifying the higher self-organization of the former rather than timeless and essential (WENDT, 1994, p. 394).

For the operationalization of state identity and its role at the system level, Wendt seems to suggest two dimensions: the depth, or thickness, of intersubjective structures, and cooperativeness. Most adequately, these two sub-concepts themselves are interpreted as continuous variables: structures’ depth can assume any value from zero upward, and cooperativeness may intuitively take any positive or negative value. Furthermore, Wendt implies that changes in one usually do not occur in isolation of the other when he writes that intensifying relations under conditions of respect of norms may lead to positive identities (Ibid.; Id., 1992).

In Wend’s discussion of what causes collective identity, which is interesting for laying bare state identity’s systemic endogeneity, structural contexts and systemic processes are separate realms. As systemic processes reproduce and reshape the parameters of structural contexts, they are discussed, here, together.

Structure, either material or intersubjective, can deepen (or thicken, if you will)

relationships, cooperative or not (Wendt, 1994). “Intersubjective structures,” however, “give meaning to material ones, and it is in terms of meanings that actors act” (Ibid., p. 389). In other words, material structure, through absolute and relative variations, will mutate vulnerabilities, but whether such variations produce or remove threat perceptions or foster (post-) hegemonic relationships depends on the social schema through which they beget meaning (Ibid.).

Wendt suggests three categories of intersubjective structure: the Hobbesian, the Lockean and the Kantian (Ibid.). These categories could be a start to inferring an axis of ordinal values of that other property of state identity, which is cooperativeness, or harmony of the social schema. For purposes of analysis of South American regionalism over a relatively short period of time, these categories seem to be very large to capture small changes: they do not capture what takes place between a state of war of all against all and a state of generally recognized sovereignty, or between that state and one of a general identification with a higher good common to the whole of international (or regional) society.

The historically low incidence of interstate war in South America and Latin America already give a good indication that, at least since some time after the region’s and the continent’s last major war,<sup>5</sup> a Hobbesian anarchy has been foreign to them. This indication is helped when reminding oneself, in this context, of the historical role of the *uti possidetis* principle in these regions, where it would predetermine the better part of each country’s regional extent from since right after countries’ independence (with major examples of scarce violations of that principle mentioned in footnote 5 on this page). A Lockean anarchy of generally respected sovereignty looks to be a acceptable classification of intersubjective structure in the region and on the continent, but recent efforts towards more (Kantian) union within or throughout South America and Latin America cannot be ignored, in the form of so many regional organizations that at least present themselves as more than just multilateral fora. Locke and Kant could have interesting debates about South and Latin America had they been alive today and interested enough in the subject matter, but the ways in which their ideas have been borrowed for broad International Relations system classifications by scholars such as Wendt are of little help in describing changes that can account for a year or thirty of regionalist dynamics. What they do do is suggest an axis between a Lockean

---

<sup>5</sup> The War of the Pacific and the Chaco War make good candidates. Both occurred before the Second World War, a time at which, one may argue, intersubjective structure in most parts of the world was never far removed from overtly Hobbesian.

and a Kantian idealization where one may class empirical observations, carrying messages that go beyond a reaffirmation of a strictly Lockean order and point towards Kantian transformation, leaving the actual social structures somewhere in between. Just where that somewhere would be is an epistemological and a methodological question.

## 3.2 Epistemology

### 3.2.1 A short history of pragmatism

Pragmatism is an approach to the social sciences developed predominantly in the United States, but one, as Cochran (2012) notes, traditionally given little attention to in the field of International Relations. She distinguishes frequent mentions to pragmatism as a prudent attitude that avoids applying moral principle from the intellectual current. Pragmatism in the first sense and in the second are indeed quite divergent. Adapting policy to circumstances whereby especially power alignments are taken into account is an attitude more inspired by the school of realism than by pragmatism.<sup>6</sup> The intellectual philosophy agrees with realism only in avoiding the application of moral absolutes. Most importantly, pragmatism defends giving attention “to the particular context of a problematic situation” (Ibid., p. 2).

Some early names within the Pragmatic current are William James and John Dewey, both of whom wrote extensively about US foreign policy, coercion in the international system and the relation between war and democracy, but who have both been referenced little by other IR scholars. An important reference to Dewey was made by Brian Schmidt who, in 1998, wrote that Dewey in his early works challenged the late-nineteenth-century orthodoxy of the theory of the state (Ibid.).

The theory of the state was defended by W.W. Willoughby, who borrowed the idea that in a state of nature, man reigns supreme, from John Austin in arguing that states among each other are analogous to persons in a state of nature, namely, “legally supreme” (Willoughby as quoted in SCHMIDT, 1998, p. 88, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 5).<sup>7</sup> Willoughby and other state theorists in

---

<sup>6</sup> If power alignments become the sole concern informing foreign policy, one may even consider that a prudent attitude has made way for realpolitik. In extension of part of the argument made in this chapter section, the two can become synonymous depending on what is defined as useful knowledge.

<sup>7</sup> SCHMIDT, B.C. **The Political Discourse of Anarchy**: a disciplinary history of International Relations. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998.

the early twentieth century defended that the core principle of the state was sovereignty, and sovereignty was its “legitimizing will” (Willoughby as quoted in SCHMIDT, 1998, p. 88, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 6).<sup>8</sup>

Dewey, in an essay written in 1894, challenged the state theorist idea of sovereignty, because it failed to recognize that states are themselves constituted by the social forces that underlie them, and thus that state sovereignty lies not with governments but ultimately with the domestic system units of which governments and their legitimacy are a result. That argument, according to Schmidt (1998, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 6),<sup>9</sup> influenced posterior pluralist thinkers, who especially from the 1920s on rejected the state and state sovereignty as absolute and unitary. A later contribution of Dewey’s to that position was that the state, however important, is basically a coordinator of the activities of the “real social units” (DEWEY, 1920, p. 196, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 6),<sup>10</sup> which are voluntary groupings that “do not coincide with political boundaries” (DEWEY, 1920, p. 196, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 6),<sup>11</sup> but that are transnational. National sovereignty is compromised by the transnational character of voluntary association: the two are at odds and present barriers to one another. Cochran concludes that through shaping pluralist thought, Dewey helped to form the ideas liberal internationalists held about international interdependence and the possibilities to manage it if the limits imposed by state sovereignty were lifted. In other words, Dewey’s pragmatist thought fed the ideas that liberal internationalists contributed to the First Great Debate in International Relations (COCHRAN, 2012).

In that Great Debate, liberal internationalism, the dominant ontology in the earliest International Relations research programmes, was challenged by realists. The latter group stressed the unchangeable nature of systemic anarchy, while the liberal internationalists stressed the possibility to overcome it through international cooperation. System-level anarchy has thus been the dominant element under discussion in International Relations ever since the early development of the field. Schmidt even contends that Willoughby’s analogy of states with men in the state of nature is a pre-International Relations recognition of anarchy at the state system level and an early

---

<sup>8</sup> SCHMIDT, B.C. **The Political Discourse of Anarchy**: a disciplinary history of International Relations. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> DEWEY, J. **The Collected Works of John Dewey, 1882-1953**. Electronic edition. Charlottesville, VA: InteLex Corporation, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

invitation for the debates about what that meant for state relations that would thus largely come to define the discipline (SCHMIDT, 1998, p. 41, 88-89, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 5).<sup>12</sup>

It seems that when systemic anarchy was theorized for the first time by the two sides in the First Great Debate, there was simply no epistemological room left for a pragmatist school within the discipline's boundaries (COCHRAN, 2012.). For a good part, Dewey's and pluralist concerns were those of liberal internationalists, whose preoccupation lay with "the growth of international forces that were reaching beyond the control of sovereign states" (Ibid., p. 7), and whose proposed solution was a new interstate organization for managing it – the League of Nations. That organization, however, turned out hardly to be a solution to problems posed by systemic anarchy when WWII broke out, leading to the end of the First Great Debate in International Relations with something of a consensus that the idealists got anarchy wrong. If Dewey had had any hopes of establishing a pragmatist school of thought within International Relations, inspiring the ideas of the losing side of the First Great Debate, even though early realist scholars had also engaged with his philosophy, did probably not help the ambition (Ibid.).

### 3.2.2 Pragmatist propositions

At the time of the Second Great Debate, International Relations scholars in the United States, remarkably, the birth ground of pragmatism, predominantly embodied the behavioural turn of the discipline, responding to a policymaker demand for predictability and explication of international politics. That meant that again, pragmatist thought was sidelined within the discipline. It was only from the late 1980s-1990s Positivist-Post-Positivist Debate on that the widening of the epistemological scope of the discipline let room for pragmatism to gain prestige, albeit in a now crowded marketplace of ideas (Ibid.).

They have done so, like other post-positivists, by offering a critique of empiricist ontology and through ontological expansion, or claiming that International Relations is more than what positivists and other post-positivists have claimed it to be. Modern pragmatists such as Friedrich, Kratochwil and Pierce, recognize knowledge generation as a social, discursive activity, while aiming "to produce useful knowledge" (COCHRAN, 2012, p. 10). They choose to develop an

---

<sup>12</sup> SCHMIDT, B.C. **The Political Discourse of Anarchy**: a disciplinary history of International Relations. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998.

abductive methodology,<sup>13</sup> and advocate against paradigm-bound scholarship and in favour of “analytic eclecticism” (COCHRAN, 2012, p. 10). Importantly, pragmatism feeds analytic eclecticism by evaluating the success of a knowledge claim by its practical consequences. Pragmatists do, however, have a constant understanding of the reproduction and transformation of agents, structure and identity, who for them beget meaning in function of their interaction with one another (Ibid.). Not surprisingly, they draw here on Mead’s concept of symbolic interactionism (SIL, 2009, p. 651, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 10),<sup>14</sup> in so doing converging with social constructivists (WENDT, 1999, p. 143, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 11).<sup>15</sup>

Thanks to this partly ontological overlap, the rise of social constructivism in International Relations also benefitted pragmatism’s appeal. Most social constructivists, despite taking norms and identities as their object, continue to make purely empirical analyses and avoid normative lines of inquiry. Cochran contends that the social constructivists inherited the separation of an empirical and a normative realm from the positivists they challenged. According to her, they need pragmatism for the sort of analysis that questions the social values attached to social interaction otherwise left to be analyzed (2012).

The importance of such analysis may be in avoiding making assumptions about the moral simplicity of foreign policy and the existence of solutions to them. In addition, research rid of normative considerations may not be welcomed by policymakers, or imply that they can control or manipulate the whole diplomatic field. As much as these may seem to be pragmatist concerns, this was originally an English School argument against American behaviouralism (BULL, 1966, p. 376, apud COCHRAN, 2012, p. 12).<sup>16</sup> The English School’s own moral bias towards order where ethical choices for justice could also be made did not lead to the rejection of normative analysis altogether (at least not in the UK). What it did do was spark debate on how normative IR theory could be developed without making ethical judgments: normative analysis as the study of “norms in the context of their normativity; that is, [of] the processes of valuation that go on in the practices of

---

<sup>13</sup> I take this to mean that rather than combine present knowledge claims to make new inferences (whether true, probable or possible), the pragmatists’ approach is one of trial and error. Logically, if consequence b of action a can be evaluated as successful, then a is known to work (although other explanations for the success of b may logically still be possible). As Cochran points out, Dewey wrote that seeking to find a knowledge claim’s success in its consequences “helps scholars and citizens integrate ‘knowing’ and ‘doing’” (2012, 10).

<sup>14</sup> SIL, R. Simplifying pragmatism: from social theory to problem-driven eclecticism. **International Studies Review**, v. 11, p. 648-652, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> WENDT, A. **Social theory of international politics**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

<sup>16</sup> BULL, H. International theory: the case for a classical approach. **World Politics**, v. 18, n. 3, p. 361-377, 1966.

international society” (COCHRAN, 2012, p. 13), as opposed to analysis informed by what it is supposed to take as its object. Pragmatist methodology offers an abductive, or Deweyan method of inquiry to reveal how valuation is done that could be of interest to the English School and to social constructivists alike (Ibid.).

### **3.3 Methodology**

#### **3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews and Deweyan abduction**

The particular motivations involved in the shaping of a regionalist environment require a wide access to cases for investigating norms, interests and identities at play when cases did what they did. As suggested in the former section, Deweyan abduction, which naturally follows from a pragmatist epistemology, is a method that reveals the construction of norms at the particular level and its interrelation to states’ creating, adhering to, staying in or out of, and socially deviating from regional organizations in the regional atmosphere. According to the method’s philosophy, the success of the resulting regional landscape validates the knowledge implied in the decisions as having been useful. As such qualifiers as success and usefulness of decisions are subjective to the actors who made the decisions, semi-structured interviews were done with civil servants representative of the social groups that are the institutes behind those decisions: a Brazilian diplomat, two Chilean diplomats and one Bolivian diplomat (all in July 2019 in Brasilia).

As mentioned in Chapter I, these three countries fall into three different integration groups: one with more flexible, less committed definitions of what regionalism ought to entail, one with a more dense integration vision as a means of global economic embedment and one with a more defensive vision critical of hegemony at the system level and the economic system at large (VILLA; BRAGATTI, 2015; NOLTE; COMINI, 2016). In addition, this dissertation considers Brazil and Chile, within their respective groups, to be model countries in projecting their ideas and interests onto the regionalist environment and in reflecting that environment themselves: Brazil is with a distance the political and economic giant on the continent and Chile is and has always been historically non-committed to regional organizations, even if compared with Colombia and Peru (which have never left the Andean Community, for instance). With respect to the third group, Venezuela may be considered to have been, mainly from the Chávez presidency on, the most

influential regionally: however, it turned out not to be possible to interview a spokesperson of the Venezuelan embassy in Brasilia. Bolivia is the obvious second-best case: it is the only other country as of 2019 that is Latin American, South American and has ALBA membership. In addition, Guimarães and Maitino (2019) use the example of Bolivia to demonstrate that small powers can actually have considerable power when they employ altercasting strategies to unbalance leaders' decision-making processes.

### 3.3.2 Some assumptions

A number of key assumptions about the validity of the method and the case selection must be clarified. Firstly, that Brazil, Chile and Bolivia can be assumed to be model countries within their regional integration groups, for being very active over the time scope under analysis and therefore most reflective of regional dynamics. Secondly, it is assumed that the answers of the diplomats reflect the roles of their institutes within their regional environments. This is deemed a relatively safe assumption, as respondents themselves have a diplomatic concern for representing a foreign office, something their profession by definition implies they do. Of course, this is also a weakness: diplomats may be loath to make normative statements that may ultimately reflect badly on themselves, their institution or other countries, even though those norms are particularly of this dissertation's interest. To take away this weakness to some extent, I agreed conditions with the interviewees to have them feel most at ease during the interview, enabling them to speak with as few limits as possible. The first was that they would appear by their function in this dissertation but not by their name;<sup>17</sup> the second, that the interview would not be recorded. In Chapter 4 and in the Appendix, therefore, I cite from a self-made Portuguese-to-English translation of my notes taken during the interviews and not from the interviewees' direct speech.

The interviews were done in Portuguese considering reliability, which in this case was mainly a concern for creating settings as similar as possible for every interviewee to respond under similar conditions. Portuguese was a language common to both the interviewer and the interviewees, although only a native language of the Brazilian interviewee. In function of a concern

---

<sup>17</sup> They are the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; a First and a Second Secretary of the Chilean embassy in Brasilia; and a First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy in Brasilia.

for reliability, too, the interviewees were asked the same questions, although they were also asked to expound some points made if so desired by the interviewer. One question concerned the definition of the region the interviewees' countries sit in and normative connotations. Four questions concerned the regional organizations within their regions and the norms and interests promoted by them. Seven questions concerned, more specifically, states' decisions to create, adhere to, stay in or out of or socially deviate from regional organizations (APPENDIX A).

The notes of the interviews were reconstructed as sentences carrying the messages the responses conveyed as accurately as possible, and translated into English. These discursive data represent normative and empirical information considered representative of the roles and expectations of the Bolivian, Brazilian and Chilean states in the regional sphere. By lack of scope of the questions asked and availability of time to respond, the answers present norms and normative assumptions, but hardly, how these have developed within the interviewees' respective institutions. That is indeed a research alley suggested in this dissertation's conclusion. The interrelations of motivations, norms and interests with the regional realm as presented by the discursive data were analyzed employing Deweyan abduction: deconstructing normative assumptions and motivations behind decisions so as to draw conclusions from the role of states' expectations and interests in changes and continuity in their regional environment, between the founding of MERCOSUL and the year of concluding the research, 2019. Conclusions were also analyzed in the light of what it meant for Lockean or Kantian conceptions of anarchy at the level of the Latin American and South American region.



## 4 Results

### 4.1 Bolivia, Brazil and Chile within their region

The Bolivian, Brazilian and Chilean relations to the region and to the continent are quite different. Diplomats of all three countries made references to the role of geography in defining national and commercial interests. The geographical components of those definitions, however, diverge: for Brazil, geographic proximity is related to a more practical and economic interest, even though that does not in itself make one region more interesting than another. The Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs cited Cuba as an example here, which independently of the political course of a government holds an elevated importance in Brazilian foreign policy for its geographical proximity. “Geography imposes us patterns of trade, migratory fluxes and other things that we always have to deal with in a certain way. South America provides most of the geography that imposes the conditions for Brazilian interests” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Unpacking what such a Brazilian interest can be, the interviewee revealed a Brazilian interest in free trade with the Latin American region. According to him,

Brazil has free trade with almost all countries in the region. Guyana and Suriname, which are focused towards the Caribbean, are an exception. The free trade arrangements have been concluded within the framework for negotiations provided by ALADI.<sup>1</sup> MERCOSUL is a political arrangement, but its economic branch was molded through pragmatic ALADI guidelines for trade facilitation. Depending on whether any agreement in Latin America affects intraregional trade, it must make part of ALADI. Tariffs must be subject to what ALADI prescribes with respect to them. ALADI provided the framework not only for how MERCOSUL was set up, but also for its subsequent free trade agreements with Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and others (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

From the interviewee’s elaboration of the ALADI’s free trade agreements as a Brazilian interest and the fact of continued Brazilian participation in such arrangements, it can be inferred that Brazil considers free trade with the Latin American region to be something that has *worked* because of expectations of it having come true. Without explicit mentions suggesting otherwise, the inference can only be made with respect to Brazil: it was expected free trade with Latin America

---

<sup>1</sup> Latin American Integration Association.

would benefit Brazil. Whether the expectation of Latin American free trade being beneficial also applied to the region as one whole, or to the fostering of (Kantian) regional unity, is beyond the logical boundaries of that inference.

The Chilean embassy's First Secretary mentioned that Chile is oriented towards Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific region in general, while the differing macro-economic realities of the countries across South America meant that Chile saw difficulties in commercial integration when the topic was first raised. MERCOSUL, an Argentinian-Brazilian initiative with an ambitious, South-American wide vision, did offer a possibility for political participation through associate membership, an opportunity that Chile seized (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Asked to define norms inherent to the region Chile sits in, the interviewee revealed a Chilean concern for a stable, rules-based environment for Chilean commerce:

Chile's commercial diplomacy is prevalent over its political diplomacy. Commercially, it is very active. Chile seeks to create an environment of stable rules. More than sixty percent of its national product depends on international trade. Chile defends clear and stable rules. Chile advocates for conflict resolution committees, and origin certificates (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Asked about the Bolivian relation to that country's region however defined, the Bolivian embassy's first secretary was quick to cite the *uti possidetis juris* principle by which Latin American countries' borders were defined shortly after their independence, revealing a concern with the Latin American historical foundations of state sovereignty. That helped him make a bridge to Bolivia's losses of territory to neighbouring states, of which the one to Chile in the late nineteenth century was the most serious for leaving Bolivia landlocked. Bolivia, by its current-day geography, is naturally inclined towards the Andean region. "Bolivia's philosophy," he added,

is guided by the principles of equality, sovereignty and non-intervention in one another's affairs in the regional organizations it is a member state of (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

The Bolivian embassy's First Secretary, having now touched upon norms in foreign policy, went on to talk about Bolivia's new thought, pursued since Evo Morales assumed the presidential office in 2006:

The main pattern of Bolivia's new thought are the Mother Earth principles. Capitalism considers that the Earth serves human needs. Nature is a means. In new thought, man is nature's child. Nature is not a person that one puts at their disposal. Environment is an important concept (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

The interviewee revealed a concern, here, with something of a corruptness in the capitalist economic system as exists in countries in the region and beyond, and the importance of the environment, concerns not mentioned by the other interviewees. He framed the concerns as central in Bolivian "new thought" (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine), not as interrelated with regional norms although defended by Bolivia as such.

Interestingly, none of the interviewees made mention of existing regional interests or norms, whether that would be South American or Latin American common interests or norms. They did make mention of a number of norms and interests defended by their countries as worth fostering as regional norms and interests. They failed, however, to reveal the interrelation between their particular norms and interests and the regional level, or to defend why what is good or important for their own countries is, or should also be, a regional norm or interest. In addition, the interviewees cited different norms and interests: Latin American free trade, stable rules for trade and sovereignty, non-intervention, a rethinking of capitalism and protection of the environment. Brazil's and Chile's responses, however, can be considered different wordings for a thing equivalent: predictable and unimpeded trade flows across the region.

That is not, however, necessarily to say that Brazil and Chile consider each other's commercial interests to be in extension of their own, a Wendtian condition for a Kantian intersubjective structure to develop, because free trade within the region is something markedly different from a common approach to commercial interests, which affects extra-regional relations. It is to say that there is a convergence in their visions with respect to what is good for their respective countries, a convergence that disappears from view when juxtaposed to the rather critical *Umgang* with capitalism Bolivia defends. In talking about Bolivia's territorial losses within a context of *uti possidetis juris* as what the interviewee implicitly reveals should have been a pillar of a Lockean society of Latin American states at times at which it was often more Hobbesian, he connects Bolivia's defense of sovereignty, non-intervention and equitable economic conditions to Bolivia's particular historical experience rather than to a regional realm of wider identification. The defense of such principles is therefore the defense of a firmly Lockean regional order of states

with one main common interest: the guarantee of each other's sovereignty.

In short, interviewees of the three ministries of foreign affairs qualified what they most identified as their region each in a different way, being the countries closest by for Brazil, the Pacific region for Chile and the Andean region for Bolivia, while failing to characterize regional norms or interests. Instead, they identified the national norms and interests that their countries defend in the regional forums, implying a passivity on the latter's part and a one-directional, bottom-up acting of sovereign states with exogenously given norms and interests. What that results in is a regional landscape of ambitious organizations with limited scope or duration. That leaves much to be answered, still, about why, then, states have decided to found, stay in and socially deviate from regional organizations.

## **4.2 Ideology and pragmatism**

Asked about whether these organizations have contributed to the fostering of common regional norms, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs's Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations emphasized that his ministry conducts state politics and not government politics, and that state politics is pragmatic (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine). As becomes clear from this dissertation's Chapter 2 that may mean two things. It is either a favouring of a prudent over a norm-driven foreign policy or integrating knowing and doing by adopting successful policy as knowledge and abandoning unsuccessful policy. Assuming all ministries of foreign affairs pursue the policies that they deem have proven their success as opposed to policies they deem to be unsuccessful, the latter definition is unhelpful.

The former definition, however, presents a problem of its own. It seems to make the sort of normative assumption the pragmatist methodology adopted here seeks to detect and deconstruct. Namely, that prudence can be juxtaposed to norms and is itself value free, apolitical or neutral. The avoidance of applying moral absolutes is at best a strategy to achieve results whose success is judged by a relatively small group of policymakers but that affect society at large; at worst, if the avoidance of moral absolutes (however defined) is consistent, the principle defined as prudence assumes itself the dimensions of a moral absolute, paradoxically attaining the exact opposite of what the ministry sets out to do. In other words, ethics cannot be made to go away and it is necessary for this analysis to avoid simplifying it. Some normative direction will in fact be given by

government actors, making a conceptual separation of state politics and government politics, a social construct, misleading when one seeks to make a valuation analysis as attempted here. Unfortunately, to make this analysis complete it would be necessary to study how (and why) the social construction of a state politics as separate from a government politics has been done within the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a line of inquiry I did not take up in the interview (and one that would be rather extensive in its own respect).

That does not mean that there is nothing more to be said about what the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs values in its policy vis-à-vis the continent and the region. As touched upon in his answer to the question about what defines Brazil's region, the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations revealed an interest in Latin American free trade, an interest shared with, for example, Chile, and perhaps less so with a Bolivia that is critical of the foundations of the economic system. At one point in the interview, he also said the ALADI arrangements are more technical, but also that that does not make the non-ALADI arrangements such as UNASUL and the Forum for Progress and Development of South America (Prosul) non-pragmatic: "They are more political than the ALADI arrangements, but all arrangements have at least some degree of pragmatism, too" (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

There is another observation to be made. Asked about the relation between regional organizations and regional norms, the interviewee answered that Brazil's foreign policy is pragmatic. Besides the normative assumption about Brazil's foreign policy, this suggests something of a disconnect between the national and the regional normative realm, or an unwillingness to commit to regional norms or their construction when those are incompatible with Brazil's pragmatism. That is a subtle defense not only of pragmatism but of state sovereignty, an institution that protects a country's will ultimately to commit to its own, domestically defined course. The interviewee went on to describe the discrepancy between countries' national courses within UNASUL, which lead a group of six countries, including Brazil, to suspend their membership in April 2018. Brazil's auto-suspension from UNASUL, according to him, must be seen as Brazil's judgment that some member states were going a way that was less pragmatic than that of countries such as Peru, Argentina and itself (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine). In so doing, the interviewee discerns a group of norm-driven countries and a group of countries that have a relatively more elevated concern for regional intercourse as a means to negotiate the national interest, and perhaps, *if* common interests beyond the mutual defense of

sovereignty are discerned, as an end in itself.

The Bolivian embassy's First Secretary in a similar way distinguished Prosul, the organization proposed by Chile to substitute UNASUL, and MERCOSUL from UNASUL: the latter had a more political nature. For Bolivia, however, that less pragmatic, more consistently normative regional intercourse was more positively identified with. The interviewee mentioned the integration of peoples and the fight against discrimination as some of UNASUL's hallmarks. UNASUL, according to him, was a very important setting for Bolivia. He qualified MERCOSUL as consisting of more right-wing countries (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine), using a qualification different from the one used by the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in his distinction that included MERCOSUL countries.

The latter, however, talking about regional organizations' fostering of regional interests, did identify current Prosul member state governments as more right-wing, while the states represented by them as more pragmatic. "In Prosul, pragmatic countries join other pragmatically oriented countries to move forward together" (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine), according to him:

In UNASUL, there was convergence because of the political colour of South American governments at that time. In Prosul there is also a more long-term common vision. Pragmatism means to advance a vision with partner countries that are aligned or not ideologically. If they are not, they must be pragmatic for it to work. It so happens that in Prosul, governments now tend to be right wing. Pragmatism is what enables a bloc of countries to have ideological plurality. UNASUL, in the end, could not work not necessarily because of its dependence on political ideology, but because of particular national interests resulting from differing levels of development. The latter play a role not only in UNASUL but also in MERCOSUL. Paraguay's industry, for example, is nascent and will have more difficulty reacting to the effects of free trade with, for example, the EU<sup>2</sup> than will Brazil. Bolivia is more worried about its own gas sales than about common interests (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy himself, as part of his answer to whether regional organizations have fostered regional interests, answered that different blocs have fostered different interests, and that Bolivia's economic resources especially motivate its regional interests. "We live of our resources. Investments, however, must come from persons subordinate to the government. One cannot order the government" (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine) according to the Brazilian interviewee, "to go forward together one needs to

---

<sup>2</sup> European Union.

balance differences” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

At the same time, according to him, pragmatism is not a necessary condition for regional interests to be defended – but then what is necessary is alignment of political ideology:

The Rousseff government had good relations with Venezuela and a convergence of interests. There were problems in the relations with Argentina. Venezuela was not a pragmatic partner, certainly not more pragmatic than Argentina. The Argentinian national interest inhibited compliance with MERCOSUL norms. Rousseff displayed understanding for Argentina’s protecting its economy, because she was of the same ideology as Kirchner. Having opposed ideologies will lead to a tendency of conflict (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy finds ideological coincidence of governments also an important driver of regional interests and made clear UNASUL’s substitution with Prosul was not in Bolivia’s interest. “Right-wing thought may be beneficial to other countries, but not to ours. We have a social thought” (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

The Chilean embassy’s First Secretary also stressed the dependence of UNASUL on its member states’ governments, mentioning, too, Venezuela’s role in bringing it down:

South American governments are now more right-wing, whereas before they had been more left wing. Ideology is a philosophical, theoretical concept. There was UNASUL, in which Venezuela participated. Now, UNASUL is dead. A political integration mechanism depends on governments at a given time. There was a certain common vision that ceased to be when other governments assumed, and when Venezuela started to spoil it. Venezuela has become a theme for all South American countries (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

That, the Brazilian interviewee recognized in answering whether the 2018 auto-suspensions from UNASUL had diminished the importance of that or of that of the other organizations, but also that UNASUL’s obsolescence had made dealing with the issue more difficult. “They did not diminish the importance of regional governance, but they did make it more difficult. Brazil wants to continue to be in ALADI. Dealing with Venezuela in common forums is now difficult” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine). Yet while regional forums can see their importance diminished in the light of a lack of pragmatism, ideological alignment and even the breakdown of domestic democratic order if one concerns the Venezuelan question, a common interest in coexisting will, according to the Brazilian interviewee, never fade:

Border questions will always be important [as a common interest] to be resolved whatever the governments on each side of it. Neighbouring countries will always in some way be a priority in [each other’s] foreign policy interests. They have a mutual interest in coexisting. The region is a circumstance that imposes itself

(INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

The distinctions between pragmatic and political courses and between state and government politics not being hard ones, and the apparent preferences for independently set courses to commonly defined courses when the latter would hinder the former, reinforce the inference made earlier that ultimately, the only durable common regional interest is the guarantee of states' sovereignty. The Brazilian interviewee in effect concludes this himself, too, when he says that neighbouring countries will always have an interest in coexisting. Beyond that interest typical of a Lockean society of states, the interviews did not yield evidence for a durably sustained construction of a common interest with mention either to supreme authority of common institutions or a desire for a common recognition of such, independent of a state's course under a given government, in any of the regional organizations asked about.

Stopping the analysis there would leave it short of evaluating the importance of the distinction made between a pragmatic and a political group of countries. The Brazilian interviewee seemed to make a link there with differing levels of development different countries are at, leading less industrialized countries such as Paraguay and Bolivia to be less willing to make concessions on a nationally set political course and for that, less pragmatic. Once again, nothing therein is to convince that prudence is a constant within the ministries of foreign affairs identified by whomever as pragmatic, and that it is not reproduced or cannot be subverted by whatever political dynamics take hold of a country, however much industrialized. The distinction does help to understand how perhaps by virtue of a prudence stably sustained by foreign offices across not only a group of typically industrialized South American countries but importantly, their election cycles of over the past ten to thirty years, has helped those countries to institutionalize such things as the common external tariff in the MERCOSUL and the Pacific Alliance's free trade arrangements, absent compulsory supranational structures. In that light, as long as the interest in cross-region free trade in MERCOSUL countries, the interest in both intra- and ultra-regional free trade in Pacific Alliance countries, and prudent attitudes in all of these countries' foreign offices continue to be reproduced, evidence for common regional interests in the economic sphere can with due reservations be argued for.

The reason for invoking here these two regional organizations is because the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after

distinguishing a pragmatic and a political group of countries, particularly identified, apart from Brazil, Chile as a pragmatic country. “Chile is the most pragmatic country in the region and will talk with anybody” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine). Asked about the effects of the founding of other regional organizations on the importance of MERCOSUL, he also mentioned the Pacific Alliance as a bloc that seemingly presented a model competing to that of MERCOSUL but that later came to be seen as complementary and as a partner. All of the observations made here by him very much mirror those of the Chilean interviewees.

As mentioned, the Chilean embassy’s First Secretary pointed at the different macro-economic realities of the different countries as standing in the way for regional integration:

Chile had been developing a more liberal economy. Brazil and Argentina had large industrial sectors, and industrial interests were reflected in their commercial politics. Chile saw difficulties in becoming a member of Argentina’s and Brazil’s common market: first, its economy was much smaller than that of its partners; second, the common tariff was much higher than Chile’s individual tariff. Chile preferred to have, say, Japanese televisions enter its market easily than Brazilian ones. The other South American countries did not like Chile’s posture of free trade, of APEC<sup>3</sup> membership and of bilateral free trade agreements (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Asked about preferences for regional organizations, he answered in a manner that bore witness to the pragmatic label given to Chile by the Brazilian interviewee: “Chile participates in many mechanisms. It will now organize COP21. Chile has a state foreign policy and respects that, and this renders its characteristics permanent” (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine). About effects on MERCOSUL by the appearance of other regional organizations, his answer especially mirrored that of the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of Brazil’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

“In 2012, Chile founded the Pacific Alliance together with Peru, Colombia and Mexico. It had a promising economic agenda. There is now a Pacific Alliance summit taking place in Lima. It was not founded as a competitor of the Southern Common Market. Some, back then, saw it that way” (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

The Chilean embassy’s Second Secretary pointed at the organization’s success at not becoming politicized, and its convergence, not competition with MERCOSUL:

The Pacific Alliance has survived various [national] governments now. [Leftist Michelle] Bachelet even

---

<sup>3</sup> Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

reinforced Chilean participation. Mexico is still participating, too [under leftist Andrés Manuel López Obrador]. Ecuador wants to participate. Chile has many connections with Asian countries and Russia. The Pacific Alliance is a case of success. Its citizens can travel freely. Now, the convergence between the Pacific Alliance and MERCOSUL needs to take place. Chile will assume the pro-tempore presidency of the Pacific Alliance for one year. An action plan for such convergence was developed in [at the] Puerto Vallarta [Joint Summit with MERCOSUL in August 2018]. The MERCOSUL countries participate [in this plan towards one free trade zone], and so does CEPAL<sup>4</sup> (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

The perceptions of a regional interest shared between Chile, Brazil, and presumably, the other countries whose pragmatism and overall positive valuation of Latin American free trade have lead their different governments to choose to associate – and stay associated! – with either MERCOSUL or the Pacific Alliance, so tentatively evidence reforms of a Lockean intersubjective structure towards one with Kantian common interests, albeit only in the economic and commercial area. As the Second Secretary of the Chilean embassy summed up, “[s]uccesses are bigger in the commercial than in the political area. There, the common interests are to be found and can be given an institutional structure” (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

If that proves true, the tentative success of finding common interests can only very cautiously, if at all, be extrapolated to more political Prosul, which by coincidence or not comprises all MERCOSUL and Pacific Alliance member states plus Ecuador, a country in accession talks with the latter organization. The Second Secretary of the Chilean embassy remarked that UNASUL had worked out in its ambition, with many thematic councils of which the Security Council worked best: “[t]he current Brazilian government recognizes the work done by the Security Council. One of the questions attended to at the meeting in Chile was: which are the elements to be reinvigorated [that had been present in Unasul]? At the same time, Prosul is a more flexible mechanism” (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

### **4.3 Latin American or South American integration**

The interviewees used different qualifications to distinguish two groups of countries roughly along the same lines, one group of which they called more political. The interviewees made more distinctions. Asked about the regional organizations and whether they represented Latin American or South American integration, the second secretary of the Chilean embassy talked about

---

<sup>4</sup> UN Economic Commission for Latin America.

Brazil and Mexico: “[i]n UNASUL, the first truly South American organization, Brazil purposefully left Mexico out” (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine). His observation mirrors one made by Nolte and Comini, who ascribe the exclusion of Mexico to a Brazilian strategy of “*South-Americanization*” (2016, p. 553, italics theirs). While most of the other regional organizations are older than UNASUL and thus more pronouncedly Latin American, the interviewee emphasized that the earliest ideas for regional integration were hemispheric:

Pan-American conferences were organized at the beginning of the twentieth century and at this time, Argentina, Brazil and Chile were seen as a bloc of strongest countries in their region. The more recent regional organizations part from a context in which the idea of Pan-American union entered into conflict with the role played in practice by the United States during the Cold War (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy recognized the role of the United States in the necessity of a Latin American integration:

Integration became necessary when the United States adopted the Monroe Doctrine, whose message was: America for the Americans. Countries would become isolated. There needed to be formed a bloc against the United States, one with its own language identity, culture and history of colonization (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Bolivia therefore has a more outspoken interest in “Latin blocs” (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

In so far as could be inferred from these answers, both the Latin American and the South American models of regional integration are regarded as a consequence of the failure of a wider endeavour to include the United States and Canada. That gave rise, firstly, to Latin American models, such as ALADI, the Southern Common Market and ALBA. UNASUL and CELAC represent a second, less necessarily Latin American model, within which the first organization was identified not only as more political, but also, by the Chilean Second Secretary, as more (politically) selective in its geographical scope. CELAC is almost a return to a hemispheric model yet omitting from it the United States and Canada. According to the second secretary of the Chilean embassy, again, the Venezuelan question has been destructive to the forum. Talking about that leads him to touch upon one other forum hitherto not mentioned and whose member states largely coincide with those of Prosul:

CELAC is one other mechanism, encompassing the UN grouping of GRULAC countries (Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries). It is a forum for political discussion also to speak to Caribbean countries. Brazil and Mexico [unlike in UNASUL] are both part of it. Again [like in UNASUL], the Venezuelan question has broken the group. The Bolivian pro-tempore presidency wants to organize a summit also with European countries, but Venezuela has destroyed that possibility. There is also the Lima Group [whose main concern is the restoration of democracy in that country]. Mexico does not [effectively] participate in it anymore INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

The different models do not have a differing importance to the countries in as far as could be inferred. The Bolivian respondent acknowledged a preference for Latin American integration but had also called UNASUL a “very important setting” (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Lastly, all interviewees regarded positively the conclusion of a free trade agreement between MERCOSUL and the EU in July 2019. “MERCOSUL,” according to the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian foreign ministry, “is now seen as a serious bloc. The agreement has credited it as a bloc that is willing to trade with the world” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine). For the Second Secretary of the Chilean embassy, “[i]t will do well to the institutional maturation of MERCOSUL, as the EU requires that” (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation mine). That conclusion is in line with the tentative conclusion made earlier here, that conditionally upon foreign offices’ reproduced pragmatic state politics and the positive valuation of Latin American free trade, the regional interest can be perceived, reproduced and attended to. “The conclusion of the EU-MERCOSUL agreement,” according to the First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy,

may be advantageous for Bolivia, too. Brazil exports a lot to Europe and now has free access to its market. Bolivia will also have the possibility to export more (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

The extent to which Bolivia will depends on when it becomes a full member state of MERCOSUL. Talking about the different blocs with their different interests, he remarked that Bolivia is in the process of becoming a full member state of MERCOSUL, but the Accession Protocol awaits Brazilian parliamentary ratification. As with other subjects, the Bolivian interviewee highlighted the Bolivian interest to export here, without a clear mention of, or relation to a wider regional interest.

## 5 CONCLUSION

This dissertation started with the ontological claim that regional organizations are social in their nature. It is a claim that in its essence does obviously not present something new but that is indeed a very typical one of the social constructivists in the Positivist-Post-Positivist Debate in International Relations. That first claim led the research project presented in this dissertation to fascinating elaborations by IR scholars, psychologists and political philosophers about group dynamics, the roles of state agents and regional structure vis-à-vis one another and the interrelations between norms, motivations and actions with respect to the construction of states' regional environments. With respect to the countries that between 1991 and 2019 engaged in both regional integration processes within Latin America as well as with the continent that is South America, the literature identifies three groups of countries pursuing their own conceptions of what regional integration ought to be (VILLA; BRAGATTI, 2015; NOLTE; COMINI, 2016). The identities of all of these groups begot an institutional structure through regional organizations. Once states become a member of such organizations, as with individuals in social groups, high social costs may be attached to leaving them, or to deviations more generally (DUBÉ; THIERS 2017), while such acts may also alter the group identities (DITRICH; SCHOLL; SASSENBURG 2017).

In asking how state identity affects decisions to found, adhere to, stay in or out of or to socially deviate from the social groups that are Latin American and South American regional organizations, this scholarly endeavour involved interviews with diplomats of three South American countries: one of the flexible group (Chile), one of the global embedment group (Brazil) and one of the anti-systemic group (Bolivia). The diplomats responded similarly with respect to regional identity: they did not make reference to it in situating their countries in regions or regional organizations. They made reference to the regional realm only as one where the national interest can be pursued at a higher level or proposed to others in the group as in the common interest, making it subject to a genre of intergovernmental negotiation. In so doing, respondents revealed only one aspect of the agent-structure dynamic: namely, the reproduction of regional structure by state agents, and not vice versa. In that sense, the method failed to reveal any effects of structure – for example, pressures not to be a social deviant and the value attached to group membership – on the norms and motivations of the agents.

The main reason for this failure may be that the discourse yielded by the method of doing interviews with diplomatic spokespersons is official. Official discourse may present selection bias and by default leave out interpretations of regional identities and their roles in producing agents, instead emphasizing the role of the agent in producing the region. That calls for a search for other methods to obtain other sorts of discourse (for example, that of former diplomats) and compare both how the state produces the region and its norms and how these predispose the state. Future research may also explore the history and the historical construction of norms in foreign offices. That is a line of inquiry not adopted here, but a very important one for understanding why different states have different interests and pursue different politics. The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy gave a hint when he talked about his country's historical land losses to its neighbours in answering to the question about Bolivia's region that state sovereignty is an important value. There is a lot more to be understood, not least about foreign offices' identification of their politics as statist or pragmatic as opposed to political, and about the social construction that underlies this binary distinction. In addition, such research might just reveal some of the effect of structure on agents if it has much of a role in institutions' normative development.

Besides citing different norms states found important for the region they sit in, interviewees gave different definitions of the latter. Geography rather than ideational factors appeared to be the leading factor therein: responses indicated that the countries in immediate neighbourhoods presented higher-degree interests, or more highly economic interests if (Latin American) free trade was identified as a national interest (Brazil). An exception may be discerned in Chile's response which did not necessarily reflect a concern for geographic proximity: its commercial ties with Asia and Russia are very important, too, and it therefore pursues free trade with the world at large. Importantly, it is this liberal economic outlook that defines Chile on the world stage: "Chile's commercial diplomacy is prevalent over its political diplomacy" (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Interestingly, states' different geographies seem to relate to particular historical and economic national experiences, yet they all mainly defend the respect for status-quo rules at the regional level. In direct and in indirect ways, whether it be Chile's concern with commercial rules or Bolivia's with the respect of sovereignty, the different foci on rules to be defended within the region all boil down to the defense of independently defined national courses. Even though the analysis did not clearly discern a defense of some set of rules in the region in the Brazilian

responses, the interviewee did contend that ultimately, the states in the region will always have a common interest in their coexistence (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine), a defense of state sovereignty in the region in itself.

A distinction between two sets of countries on the continent and in the region rather than three is not made in the literature but did appear in the interviews, especially in the Bolivian and the Brazilian answers. Both identified a political set of regional organizations most defended by one particular set of countries whose breakdown may change depending on the national government in charge; and another group of countries that Bolivia considers right-wing and Brazil, pragmatic. Even though especially Brazil and Chile defended that their foreign policies are pragmatic or permanent in their characteristics (Appendix A), a distinction between a pragmatic state politics and a government politics cannot be assumed hard. UNASUL, judged by the interviewees as political, is identified in the literature very much as a Brazilian organization (NOLTE; COMINI, 2016). In addition, there are normative assumptions inherent in a pragmatic foreign policy itself, and it is not at all clear yet whether newly created Prosul is an organization of pragmatic states or of right-wing governments.

If one considers the distinction of the two groups of states more important than the social constructions based upon which it is itself constructed, however, it becomes easy to see how Brazil and MERCOSUL on one hand and Chile and the Pacific Alliance on the other find natural partners in each other for promoting convergence in the area they are both most interested in: trade. The fact that MERCOSUL and the Pacific Alliance have now outlived national governments of various ideologies, tentatively evidences that these countries do identify a common interest, even if that common interest firmly continues to be subject to how a state identifies with it. It is these organizations, therefore, that present indications of Kantian transformation of Latin American and South American state societies, while regional organizations here in general work rather to cement a Lockean intersubjective structure motivated by the national interest however defined.



## 6 REFERENCES<sup>5</sup>

- ARENAS-GARCÍA, Nahuel. 21st century regionalism in South America: UNASUR and the search for development alternatives. **eSharp**, n. 18, p. 64-85, 2012.
- BRICEÑO-RUIZ, José. Ejes y modelos en la etapa actual de la integración económica regional en América Latina. **Estudios Internacionales** n. 175, p. 9-39, 2013.
- BULL, H. International theory: the case for a classical approach. **World Politics**, v. 18, n. 3, p. 361-377, 1966.
- COCHRAN, Molly. Pragmatism and International Relations: a story of closure and opening. **European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy** v. iv, n. 1, p. 1-22, 2012.
- COX, R. **Production, power and world order**. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.
- DEWEY, J. **The collected works of John Dewey, 1882-1953**. Electronic edition. Charlottesville, VA: InteLex Corporation, 2003.
- DITRICH, Lara; SCHOLL, Annika; SASSENBERG, Kai. Time to go! Leaving the group in response to norm-deviations. **Journal of Experimental Social Psychology** n. 73, p. 259-267, 2017. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.07.005>.
- DUBÉ, Sébastien; THIERS Consuelo. Social group dynamics and patterns of Latin American integration processes. **Revista de Estudios Sociales**, n. 60, p. 25-35, 2017. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.7440/res60.2017.02>.

---

<sup>5</sup> In accordance with the Brazilian Association of Technical Standards (ABNT NBR 6023).

GARDINI, Gian Luca. Towards modular regionalism: the proliferation of Latin American cooperation. **Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional**, v. 58, n. 1, p. 210-229, 2015. doi: [http:// dx.doi.org /10.1590/0034-7329201500111](http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0034-7329201500111).

GUIMARÃES, Feliciano de Sá; MAITINO, Martin Egon. Socializing Brazil into regional leadership: the 2006 Bolivian gas crisis and the role of small powers in promoting master roles transitions. **Foreign Policy Analysis**, v. 15, n. 1, p. 1-20, 2019. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/orx010>.

JENNE, Nicole; SCHENONI, Luis. **Latin American declaratory regionalism: An Analysis of Presidential Discourse (1994-2014)**. Working paper, EUI, RSCAS, n. 53, p. 1-17, 2015.

MALAMUD, Andrés. **Overlapping Regionalism, No Integration: conceptual issues and the Latin American experiences**. Working paper, EUI, RSCAS, n. 20, p. 1-12, 2013.

MALAMUD, Andrés; GARDINI, Gian Luca. Has regionalism peaked? The Latin American quagmire and its lessons. **The International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs**, v. 47, n. 1, p. 116-133, 2012. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2012.655013>.

MOLANO-CRUZ, Giovanni. La construcción de un mundo de regiones. **Revista de Estudios Sociales**, n. 61, p. 14-32, 2017. doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.7440/res61.2017.02>.

NOLTE, Detlef; COMINI, Nicolás Matías. Unasur: regional pluralism as a strategic outcome. **Contexto Internacional**, v. 38, n. 2, p. 545-565, 2016. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0102-8529.2016380200002>.

RIGGIROZZI, Pia. **Region, regionness and regionalism in Latin America: towards a**

- New synthesis.** Working Paper, Latin American Trade Network, Inter-American Development Bank, n. 130, p. 1-17, 2010. Available at: <[www20.iadb.org/intal/catalogo/PE/2012/10382.pdf](http://www20.iadb.org/intal/catalogo/PE/2012/10382.pdf)>. Accessed 28 March 2018.
- SANAHUJA, José Antonio. **Post-liberal regionalism in South America: the case of UNASUR.** Working paper, EUI, RSCAS, n. 5, p. 1-31, 2012.
- SANTANDER, Sebastian. The impact of the Iberian states on European Union – Latin American interregionalism. In: BAERT, Francis; SCARAMAGLI, Tizia; SÖDERBAUM, Frederik (Ed.). **Intersecting interregionalism: regions, global governance and the EU.** Dordrecht: Springer, 2014. ch. 7, p. 107-128.
- SCHMIDT, B.C. **The political discourse of anarchy: a disciplinary history of International Relations.** Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998
- SERBIN, Andrés. Atuando sozinho? Governo, sociedade civil e regionalismo na América do Sul. **Lua Nova**, n. 90, p. 297-327, 2013. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S010264452013000300011>.
- SIL, R. Simplifying pragmatism: from social theory to problem-driven eclecticism. **International Studies Review**, v. 11, p. 648-652, 2009.
- TELESUR. Bolivia calls extraordinary meeting to discuss UNASUR impasse as Ecuador, Uruguay pledge support. **Online news article**, 21 April 2018. Available at <<https://www.telesurenglish.net/news/Bolivia-Calls-Extraordinary-Meeting-to-Discuss-UNASUR-Impasse-as-Ecuador-Uruguay-Pledge-Support-20180421-0011.html>>. Accessed 18 May 2018.
- TUSSIE, Diana. Latin America: contrasting motivations for regional projects. **Review of International Studies**, v. 35, p. 169–188, 2009. Special number. doi: 10.1017/S026021050900847X.

VILLA, Rafael Duarte; BRAGATTI, Milton Carlos. Complexificação das instituições de defesa na América do Sul. **Carta Internacional**, v. 10, n. 3, p. 4-22, 2015. Special number. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.21530/ci.v10n3.2015.245>.

WENDT, Alexander. Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics. **International Organization**, v. 46, n. 2, p. 391-425, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_. Collective identity formation and the international state. **The American Political Science Review**, v. 88, n. 2, p. 384-396, 1994.

\_\_\_\_\_. **Social theory of international politics**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

WEIFFEN, Brigitte; WEHNER, Leslie; NOLTE, Detlef. Overlapping regional security institutions in South America: the case of OAS and UNASUR. **International Area Studies Review**, v. 16, n. 4, p. 370–389, 2013. doi: 10.1177/2233865913503466.

## **7 APPENDIX A – Interviews with four diplomats**

### **7.1 The interviews**

In the month of July 2019, I held four interviews: one with the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (interviewee 1, 16 July), two with Chilean diplomats based in Brasilia (interviewee 2, a First Secretary, interviewee 3, a Second Secretary, both on 18 July) and one First Secretary of the embassy of Bolivia in Brasilia (interviewee 4, 25 July). All were asked the same questions, although they were reformulated to suit the country they were asked to answer the questions about. In addition, the interviews with interviewee 2 and 3, both representing the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were conducted in such a way that they complemented each other as much as possible: individually, they were not available to sit out one whole interview. One question concerned the definition of the region their countries sit in and normative connotations. Four questions concerned the regional organizations within their regions and the norms and interests promoted by them. Seven questions concerned, more specifically, states' decisions to create, adhere to, stay in or out of or socially deviate from regional organizations.

**7.2 Does your country, which is among others Latin American and South American, identify one or more regions as its own, with its own regional norms that your country shares? Which are these regions and regional norms?**

#### **7.2.1 Interviewee 1**

The Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spoke about Latin America and South America, without exploring regional identity in a sense of mutually shared expectations and institutions:

Latin America is a cultural and social construct that countries from Brazil to Mexico make part of. South America, on the other hand, is a geographical concept and physically, Brazil's immediate region. That makes South America not more interesting to Brazil than Latin America, but Brazil does take a more practical and economic interest in its immediate region than it does with countries with which it neither has borders nor as

much interaction (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

This posture of pragmatism, according to the interviewee, is a continuous one of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which pursues state politics rather than government politics:

Of course, a more left wing or a more right wing government will set their own course. Independently of that course, Cuba will always hold importance in the Brazilian foreign policy interest, however defined, again because of regional proximity, in the same manner that North Korea cannot be absent from the Japanese foreign policy interest. Geography imposes us patterns of trade, migratory fluxes and other things that we always have to deal with in a certain way. South America provides most of the geography that imposes the conditions for Brazilian interests (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

With respect to a commonly identified interest in free trade,

Brazil has free trade with almost all countries in the region. Guyana and Suriname, which are focused towards the Caribbean, are an exception. The free trade arrangements have been concluded within the framework for negotiation provided by ALADI. MERCOSUL is a political arrangement, but its economic branch was molded through pragmatic ALADI guidelines for trade facilitation. Depending on whether any agreement in Latin America affects intraregional trade, it must make part of ALADI. Tariffs must be subject to what ALADI prescribes with respect to them. ALADI provided the framework not only for how MERCOSUL was set up, but also for its subsequent free trade agreements with Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and others (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

### 7.2.2 Interviewee 2

The First Secretary of the Chilean embassy had been explaining a lot about the Chilean interest hitherto and visibly needed to take some time to think about an answer with respect to the normative dimension of region-hood. Like interviewee 1, did not opt to explore regional identity in a sense of mutually shared expectations, but did reveal a concern for a stable environment of interaction:

Chile's commercial diplomacy is prevalent over its political diplomacy. Commercially, it is very active. Chile seeks to create an environment of stable rules. More than sixty percent of its national product depends on international trade. Chile defends clear and stable rules. Chile advocates for conflict resolution committees, and origin certificates (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

### 7.2.3 Interviewee 4

Asked about what Bolivia considers to be its own region, the First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy started to talk about Bolivia's independence and historical events after that:

Independence was gained in 1825 with borders defined based on the principle of *uti possidetis juris*: the Spanish delineations made to organize a part of the former Viceroyalty of the River Plate as a land called Charcas became Bolivia's national borders. Since then, Bolivia has lost a lot of its territory to neighbouring states. The land loss to Chile was the most serious. It left Bolivia without a maritime coast. Bolivia, by its current-day geography, is naturally inclined towards the Andean region (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

He then told about regional interests and how a number of regional organizations relate to them. He then came back to the topic of regional norms:

In all of these organizations, Bolivia's philosophy is guided by the principles of equality, sovereignty and non-intervention in one another's affairs. The main pattern of Bolivia's new thought [that it pursues since Evo Morales' assumption of the Presidential office in 2006] are the Mother Earth principles. Capitalism considers that the Earth serves human needs. Nature is a means. In new thought, man is nature's child. Nature is not a person that one puts at their disposal. Environment is an important concept (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

### **7.3 These organizations, in your view, contributed to the fostering of common regional norms?**

#### 7.3.1 Situating the interviewee in the research's scope of time and organizations

Before asking questions about regional organizations, some historical context of (recent) Latin American and South American regional integration was given, mentioning the signing of the founding treaties of MERCOSUL in the 1990s; the signing of ALBA-TCP between Venezuela and Cuba in 2004; Venezuela's exit from the Andean Community in 2006 and its process towards membership of MERCOSUL; the founding of UNASUL in 2008; the founding of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in 2011; the founding of the Pacific Alliance in 2012; that year's accession of Venezuela to MERCOSUL and its suspension from it four years later; the auto-suspensions from UNASUL in 2018; Ecuador's exit from ALBA that year; and finally, the creation of Prosul and the signing of a free trade agreement between UNASUL and the EU, both in 2019.

#### 7.3.2 Interviewee 1

According to the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that ministry conducts state politics and not government politics, and state politics is pragmatic:

Brazil's auto-suspension from UNASUL must be seen as Brazil's judgment that some member states were going a way that was less pragmatic than that of countries such as Peru, Argentina and itself. An example thereof is a public construction work in Paraguay which that country had MERCOSUL funding for. Paraguay, however, for electoral reasons, sabotaged its completion. When free transit of people in the region is discussed, a poor country may posit that they will need budget for more policemen. The richer countries may be willing to help out financially, but pose conditions for economic reform that then are rejected by the poorer countries (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

### 7.3.3 Interviewee 4

The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy made out a fostering of different sets of values in MERCOSUL and new Prosul on the one hand and in UNASUL on the other:

MERCOSUL consists of more right-wing countries. Chile proposed substituting UNASUL [with Prosul]. It is now almost defunct. UNASUL was a very important scenario for our country. It had a more political nature. Some of its trademarks included the integration of peoples and the fight against discrimination (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

## **7.4 These organizations, in your view, have a Latin American or South American character?**

### 7.4.1 Interviewee 1

“UNASUL and Prosul do not qualify as such [organizations whose structures were agreed upon in accordance with the mold of the Latin American Integration Association]” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine),

as they are not economic or commercial arrangements.<sup>1</sup> ALADI arrangements are more technical, but

---

<sup>1</sup> This part of the semi-structured interview with interviewee 1 went somewhat off-structure. He started to elaborate on the role of the Latin American Integration Association as seen in the answer to the first question in this appendix, and I had decided to ask whether all agreements concerning the region follow that association's mold. Curious to

that does not make the non-ALADI arrangements non-pragmatic. They are more political than the ALADI arrangements, but all arrangements have at least some degree of pragmatism, too (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

#### 7.4.2 Interviewee 3

As interviewee 2 at this point of the day had introduced me to interviewee 3, it was to the latter that I asked to expound the Latin-American or South-American nature of the regional organizations. He explained that the earliest ideas in this respect were hemispheric and rather of a Pan-American nature:

Pan-American conferences were organized at the beginning of the twentieth century and at this time, Argentina, Brazil and Chile were seen as a bloc of strongest countries in their region. The more recent regional organizations part from a context in which the idea of Pan-American union entered into conflict with the role played in practice by the United States during the Cold War (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

About Latin America, South America and their regional organizations,

Latin America is what is south of the Rio Grande, including, for example, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, but excluding Belize, Suriname and Guyana. For South America, the delineation is more southerly and starts at Colombia. Suriname and Guyana make part of it. For these regions, there have been different integration processes. In the 1990s, the Rio Group promoted democracy in the region. The most important economies in the region are Brazil and Mexico. UNASUL was the first truly South American organization and did not exclude Guyana and Suriname (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

He observes here that Brazil was purposefully leaving Mexico out.

#### 7.4.3 Interviewee 4

For the First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy, regional integration is a Latin American necessity:

Latin America must stand strong against foreign interventionism. Integration became necessary when the United States adopted the Monroe Doctrine, whose message was: America for the Americans. Countries would become isolated. There needed to be formed a bloc against the United States, one with its own identity, culture and history of colonization. Bolivia therefore has a more outspoken interest in Latin blocs (INTERVIEWEE 4,

---

know what further distinguishes the Latin American and South American, or ALADI and non-ALADI arrangements, I then asked whether the former can be classed as more pragmatic than the latter.

2019, verbal information, translation mine).

## **7.5 These organizations, in your view, contributed to the fostering of common regional interests?**

### 7.5.1 Interviewee 1

The Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that particular interests resulting from distinct levels of development that groups of countries in South America are at are in the way for common interests to advance:

Paraguay's industry, for example, is nascent and will have more difficulty reacting to the effects of free trade with, for example, the EU than will Brazil. Bolivia is more worried about its own gas sales than about common interests. Oftentimes, to walk forward together one needs to balance differences. Differing perceptions of UNASUL meant its member states could not walk forward together. The bi-oceanic corridor is an example thereof. In Prosul, pragmatic countries join other pragmatically oriented countries to move forward together. In UNASUL, there was convergence because of the political colour of South American governments at that time. In Prosul there is also a more long-term common vision. Pragmatism means to advance a vision with partner countries that are aligned or not ideologically. If they are not, they must be pragmatic for it to work. It so happens that in Prosul, governments now tend to be right wing. Pragmatism is what enables a bloc of countries to have ideological plurality (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

“Chile is the most pragmatic country in the region and will talk with anybody. Brazil's relationship with it is much better nowadays” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine). As the question concerned the fostering of regional interest and he emphasized pragmatism a lot in his answer, I asked more specifically whether, according to him, common interests always require pragmatism:

Pragmatism is not a necessary condition for common interests to form. The Rousseff government had good relations with Venezuela and there was a convergence of interests. There were problems in the relations with Argentina. Venezuela was not a pragmatic partner, certainly not more pragmatic than Argentina. The Argentinian national interest inhibited compliance with MERCOSUL norms. Rousseff displayed understanding for Argentina's protecting its economy, because she was of the same ideology as Cristina Kirchner. Having opposed ideologies will lead to a tendency of conflict INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

And the lack of ideological alignment can lead to the breakdown of common regional interests?

Geography will not allow that common interests cease to be. Border questions will always be important whatever the governments on each side of it. Neighbouring countries will always in some way be a priority in foreign policy interests. They have a mutual interest in coexisting. The region is a circumstance that imposes itself (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

### 7.5.2 Interviewee 2

At the start of my interview with the First Secretary of the Chilean embassy, I shortly described my research to him. This led him to start explaining why Chile has commercial interests that are very different from those of other Latin American countries, effectively providing something of an answer to the question about regional organizations and the fostering of common interests:

Argentina and Brazil, in the 1980s and 1990s, had big economies and populations and an ambitious vision for what would become MERCOSUL. The idea was for it to encompass all countries of South America. That idea came to confront the macroeconomic realities of the individual countries. Chile had been developing a more liberal economy. Brazil and Argentina had large industrial sectors, and industrial interests were reflected in their commercial politics. Chile saw difficulties in becoming a member of Argentina's and Brazil's common market: first, its economy was much smaller than that of its partners; second, the common tariff was much higher than Chile's individual tariff. Chile preferred to have, say, Japanese televisions enter its market easily than Brazilian ones. The other South American countries did not like Chile's posture of free trade, of APEC membership and of bilateral free trade agreements. Chile is oriented towards Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific region in general. It came to participate in MERCOSUL as an associate state, involved in its political activities but not economically, despite trading considerably with its MERCOSUL partners. Chile has many imported products that are inexpensive. In Brazil and Argentina, this is not the case, because of industrial interests. One will find a computer to be very inexpensive on the Chilean market, compared to one in Brazil (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

At a later point during the interview, he talked about governments' political ideology as a condition for common conceptualizations of a common interest:

South American governments are now more right-wing, whereas before they had been more left wing. Ideology is a philosophical, theoretical concept. There was UNASUL, in which Venezuela participated. Now, UNASUL is dead. A political integration mechanism depends on governments at a given time. There was a certain common vision that ceased to be when other governments assumed, and when Venezuela started to spoil it. Venezuela has become a theme for all South American countries. Chile received 300.000 refugees. Chile is attractive. It has a very prosperous economy. Unemployment is at seven percent. Moreover, the refugees already speak the language. Bolsonaro, Macri, Piñera and the Lima Group are now trying to reconcile agendas. The Venezuelan question is important, too, when it comes to regional integration. What Norway is trying to do[, organizing talks between the Venezuelan government and the opposition,] is interesting. A pacific and political solution is needed. The Venezuelan migrant issue vastly affects countries in the region. Chile has only seventeen million inhabitants (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

### 7.5.3 Interviewee 3

The Second Secretary of the Chilean embassy talked about the common interest in UNASUL. His words also point into the direction of the role of governments' political ideology:

Different organizations have different mechanisms, but the ones with effective influence have a general secretariat, a charter and a deliberative council. UNASUL had these three elements and came closest to a regional organism. Chile ratified the UNASUL Treaty in 2011. Evaluations of the organization's success are political. Left-wing currents made out a process of regional integration. Right-wing currents made out a left-wing project. Many governments were left-wing. Now, many are right-wing. Venezuela and Bolivia used to put brakes on the process or block it. When the Venezuelan issue arose, it was not possible to discuss it within UNASUL. The organization then became highly criticized. Colombia, under ex-President Iván Duque, was the first member state to leave it. Over the next month, the other countries announced their exit. There are now five active member states (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Asked more specifically about the common interest in MERCOSUL, the Second Secretary largely echoed the words of his colleague earlier:

The return of democracy and an economic boom formed the context of the creation of MERCOSUL, which was [Brazil] together with Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. Chile is an associated member state. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Chile had begun a process of opening up and liberalization. Chile unilaterally took the decision to eliminate import taxes. A common tariff would have to be very low to be worth it for Chile to become a full member of MERCOSUL. It is a customs union, but not really. Chile had the political will to participate, but already had [commercial policy] commitments (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

Towards the end of the interview with interviewee 3, he sums up: “[s]uccesses are bigger in the commercial than in the political area. There, the common interests are to be found and can be given an institutional structure” (INTERVIEWEE 3, verbal information, translation mine).

### 7.5.4 Interviewee 4

According to the First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy, many different blocs foster their own interests:

MERCOSUL benefits Argentina and Brazil mainly, who trade a lot with one another. For Paraguay and Uruguay, there are benefits, too. Bolivia is in the process of becoming a full member state of MERCOSUL, but the Accession Protocol awaits Brazilian parliamentary ratification. Nowadays, there

are many bigger and smaller blocs that look for solutions to a scope of problems they defined as their own. Their member states [of the several different blocs] have characteristics in common. Bolivia's economic resources motivate its regional interests. We live of our resources. Investments, however, must come from persons subordinate to the government. One cannot order the government. Bolivia has diverse interests. There is not a lot of fight between the regional organizations it makes part of. Bolivia has economic, but also ideological interests. The Chilean bloc has a distinct thought. They think that UNASUL embodied left-wing interests. The Pacific countries have interests to form a different bloc, with a considerable commercial focus [which is likely the Pacific Alliance]. That bloc tends considerably to [the formerly discussed idea of] the American Free Trade Association. Meanwhile, Prosul is substituting UNASUL (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

As for common regional interests, interviewee 4 told that ideological alignment of national governments helps a lot: “[r]ight-wing thought may be beneficial to other countries, but not to ours. We have a social thought” (2019, verbal information, translation mine). According to him, “geography is also important, though. Countries that lie closer together interact more. [Regional integration] needs to be between us [countries nearby]” (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

## **7.6 Does there exist an order or preference of these regional organizations for your country? Does the organizations' importance depend on specific policy areas?**

### 7.6.1 Interviewee 1

The Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not comfortable about talking about preferences for organizations.

### 7.6.2 Interviewee 2

The First Secretary of the Chilean embassy told that Chile participates in many mechanisms:

It will now organize COP21. Chile has a state foreign policy and respects that, and this renders its characteristics permanent. The Piñera government pays more attention to Venezuela than former governments had done. Economically, it cooperates mainly with Peru, Colombia and Central American countries (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

### 7.6.3 Interviewee 4

The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy, after telling that Bolivia's current-day geography leaves it naturally inclined towards the Andes, went on to make a mention of CAN and its commercial relevance, as well as of ALADI:

Bolivia is a founding state of CAN, which entered into force [as the Andean Pact] more than thirty years ago. It has been progressing gradually and has been good for Bolivia's soy exports. ALADI, which began as ALALC<sup>2</sup> and has administrative offices in Montevideo, is also one of the older agreements Bolivia has been a part of for a longer time (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

**7.7 At the moments regional organizations post-MERCOSUL, with or without your country's membership, were established, did that change something in the importance of MERCOSUL?**

#### 7.7.1 Interviewee 1

According to the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, when the Pacific Alliance was founded, there was an atmosphere of dispute of what bloc would be the better one. "That is not the case any longer. They are complementary and have constructed a relation" (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

#### 7.7.2 Interviewee 2

Interviewee 2 gives an answer similar to interviewee 1:

In 2012, Chile founded the Alliance of the Pacific together with Peru, Colombia and Mexico. It had a promising economic agenda. There is now a Pacific Alliance summit taking place in Lima. It was not founded as a competitor of the Southern Common Market. Some, back then, saw it that way (INTERVIEWEE 2, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

#### 7.7.3 Interviewee 3

---

<sup>2</sup> Latin American Free Trade Association.

The Second Secretary of the Chilean embassy also pointed at the success of the Pacific Alliance and its complementarity to the Southern Common Market:

The first Piñera government convened a meeting of countries in the west corner of the continent. With these countries, the Pacific Alliance was created. The Pacific Alliance has survived various [national] governments now. [Leftist Michelle] Bachelet even reinforced Chilean participation. Mexico is still participating, too [under leftist Andrés Manuel López Obrador]. Ecuador wants to participate. Chile has many connections with Asian countries and Russia. The Pacific Alliance is a case of success. Its citizens can travel freely. Now, the convergence between the Pacific Alliance and MERCOSUL needs to take place. Chile will assume the pro-tempore presidency of the Pacific Alliance for one year. An action plan for such convergence was developed in [at the] Puerto Vallarta [Joint Summit with MERCOSUL in August 2018]. The MERCOSUL countries participate [in this plan towards one free trade zone], and so does CEPAL (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

**7.8 Did the founding of the organizations post-Union of South American Nations, either in the importance of that or in that of regional organizations previously created?**

7.8.1 Interviewee 3

CELAC is one other mechanism, encompassing the UN grouping of GRULAC<sup>3</sup> countries. It is a forum for political discussion also to speak to Caribbean countries. Brazil and Mexico [unlike in UNASUL] are both part of it. Again [like in UNASUL], the Venezuelan question has broken the group. The Bolivian pro-tempore presidency wants to organize a summit also with European countries, but Venezuela has destroyed that possibility. There is also the Lima Group [whose main concern is the restoration of democracy in that country]. Mexico does not participate in it anymore (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

**7.9 Did the indefinite suspension of Venezuela in 2016 change anything in the importance of MERCOSUL or in that of any of the other organizations? Is that suspension comparable with that of Paraguay four years earlier?**

7.9.1 Interviewee 1

“The suspension of Venezuela did nothing to diminish Mercosul’s importance” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine), according to the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

---

<sup>3</sup> Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Venezuela is not an original member. Quite the contrary: without Venezuela, which did not want to conform to MERCOSUL's norms but rather write them, MERCOSUL started to move forward. The difference between the two MERCOSUL suspensions was in that Venezuela's did not only come forth from a lack of democratic commitment but also from a lack of commitment to MERCOSUL commercial norms, allied with political justifications. Venezuela was going to assume the pro tempore presidency and it would possibly be very destructive to the bloc (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

#### 7.9.2 Interviewee 4

The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy thinks the 2012 and 2016 MERCOSUL suspensions on the basis of the Ushuaia Protocol can be compared, but expresses concern with the possibility of how it may be used in the future against Bolivia:

[The MERCOSUL suspensions of Paraguay and Venezuela] are comparable situations. Democracy and respect for the rule of law were not upheld. [These] are an important motive for joining a bloc. Fernando Lugo [in Paraguay] was swapped very swiftly. On the political side, Venezuela was not kept unsuspended in the bloc and Bolivia also runs a risk of being expelled [if it becomes a full MERCOSUL member]. The Bolivian problem is not economic or commercial (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

### **7.10 Did the auto-suspensions from the Union of South American Nations in 2018 change anything in the importance of that or in that of the other regional organizations?**

#### 7.10.1 Interviewee 1

“UNASUL's auto-suspensions did not diminish the importance of regional governance” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine), according to the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “It did make it more difficult. Brazil wants to continue to be in ALADI. Dealing with Venezuela in common forums is now difficult” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

#### 7.10.2 Interviewee 4

The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy answered that the other regional organizations

do not see their relevance increased by the 2018 auto-suspensions in the Union of South American Nations. “Chávez and Lula spearheaded the idea [of UNASUL] and the others came in one after the other MERCOSUL is more balanced” (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

### **7.11 Has the Bolivarian Alliance been weakened by Ecuador’s exit from it in 2018?**

#### 7.11.1 Interviewee 4

The First Secretary of the Bolivian embassy confirmed that Ecuador’s exit from the Bolivarian Alliance left it weakened: “[e]very country brings in their own weight and when one leaves the bloc, the latter weakens” (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

### **7.12 In the same fashion of changes in and their effects on the landscape of regional integration, how would you interpret the establishing of Prosul?**

#### 7.12.1 Interviewee 1

As part of his answer to the question about regional organizations and their fostering of common regional interests, the Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had said that in Prosul, pragmatic countries join other pragmatically oriented countries to move forward together.

#### 7.12.2 Interviewee 3

A project of Chilean President Piñera has begun, to maintain integration with a different emphasis: Prosul. It was launched in Chile with all the countries that have left UNASUL, and Bolivia also sent a representative [while it did not join the bloc]. Prosul does not have a Charter, nor a General Secretariat, nor a Council (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

Interviewee 3 emphasized that what worked out in UNASUL was the ambition:

There was a Security Council, a Health Council, among others. The Security Council worked best. The current Brazilian government recognizes the work done by the Security Council. One of the questions attended to at the meeting in Chile was: which are the elements to be reinvigorated [that had been present in Unasul]? At the same time, Prosul is a more flexible mechanism (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation and brackets mine).

**7.13 In the same fashion of changes in and their effects on the landscape of regional integration, how would you interpret the conclusion of the EU-Southern Common Market free trade agreement?**

7.13.1 Interviewee 1

The Deputy Chief of Regional Commercial Negotiations of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs answered that thanks to the EU-Mercosul agreement, Mercosul is now seen as a serious bloc. “The agreement has credited it as a bloc that is willing to trade with the world” (INTERVIEWEE 1, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

7.13.2 Interviewee 3

Interviewee 3 also thought that the EU-Mercosul agreement is very positive for MERCOSUL: “It will do well to the institutional maturation of Mercosul, as the EU requires that” (INTERVIEWEE 3, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).

7.13.3 Interviewee 4

Interviewee 4 answered that the conclusion of the EU-Mercosul agreement may be advantageous for Bolivia, too: “Brazil exports a lot to Europe and now has free access to its market. Bolivia will also have the possibility of exporting more” (INTERVIEWEE 4, 2019, verbal information, translation mine).