

UNIVERSIDADE DE SÃO PAULO
INSTITUTO DE RELAÇÕES INTERNACIONAIS

JOSÉ BRUNO FENERICK JÚNIOR

**The Polarization of the South American Integration: The
Unasur Case**

São Paulo
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Unasur Case**

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Orientador: Prof. Dr. Pedro Feliú
Ribeiro

Coorientador: Prof. Dr. João Carlos
Amoroso Botelho

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to answer the question: Why Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay left the Unasur, while Bolivia, Guyana, Surinam and Venezuela remained on the bloc? The hypothesis of this research is that ideology of domestic players, marked here by right-wing and left-wing spectrums, and its influence in the foreign policy decision-making explains the dismantlement of the Unasur. In order to answer the question presented, the research aims to map three domestic players involved in the foreign policy decision-making: the Executive, the Legislative and the Public Opinion (2008-2021). The methodology employed in this paper is based on specific literature about foreign policy decision-making and data collection of documents, diplomatic cables, legislative votes and surveys of public opinion available in the “Las Americas y el Mundo”. Through Stata and R program, statistics models are also employed in order to identify the relation between ideology and the behavior of legislators and the public opinion towards Unasur. As results, it is possible to visualize an ideological polarization over the bloc in the Executive, the Legislative, and the Public Opinion, which gives empirical strength to corroborate to the idea that shifts in the ideology of the players in the domestic level were relevant to the dismantlement of the Unasur.

Keywords: Unasur, Regional Integration, South America, Foreign Policy and Ideology.

RESUMO

Essa pesquisa busca responder à pergunta: por que Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colômbia, Equador, Paraguai e Uruguai saíram da Unasul, enquanto Bolívia, Guiana, Suriname e Venezuela permaneceram? A hipótese do trabalho é que a ideologia dos atores internos, marcados por direita e esquerda, e sua influência no processo decisório de política externa explicam o desmantelamento da Unasul. A fim de responder à pergunta apresentada a pesquisa teve como objetivo principal mapear três importantes atores internos envolvidos no processo decisório de política externa: o Executivo, o Legislativo e a Opinião Pública (2008-2021). A metodologia empregada parte da revisão de literatura sobre o processo decisório de política externa e se concretiza na coleta de dados, realizada por meio de documentos, telegramas diplomáticos, votos do Legislativo e surveys de opinião pública disponível no “Las Américas y el Mundo”. Através dos programas R e Stata, modelos estatísticos foram aplicados para identificar a relação entre a ideologia e o comportamento dos legisladores, assim como entre a ideologia e a opinião pública. Como resultados, é possível constatar uma tendência de polarização ideológica sobre o bloco, tanto no Executivo e no Legislativo quanto na Opinião Pública, o que dá força empírica e corrobora com a ideia de que mudanças na ideologia de atores no nível doméstico foram determinantes para o desmantelamento da Unasul.

Palavras-chave: Unasul, Integração Regional, América do Sul, Política Externa e Ideologia.

RESUMEN

Esta investigación busca responder a la pregunta: por qué Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay y Uruguay salieron de la Unasur, ¿mientras Bolivia, Guyana, Surinam e Venezuela permanecieron? La hipótesis del trabajo es que la ideología de los actores internos, marcados por derecha e izquierda, y su influencia en el proceso decisorio de política externa explican el desmantelamiento de la Unasur. Con objetivo de responder a la pregunta presenta la investigación tuvo como objetivo principal mapear tres importantes actores internos envueltos en el proceso decisorio de política externa: el Ejecutivo, el Legislativo y la Opinión Pública (2008-2021). La metodología empleada parte de una revisión de la literatura sobre el proceso decisorio de política externa y se concretiza con la colecta de datos, realizada por medio de documentos, telegramas diplomáticos, votos del Legislativo. Través de los programas R e Stata, modelos estadísticos fueron empleados para identificar la relación entre ideología e el comportamiento de los legisladores, así como entre ideología y opinión pública. Como resultados, es posible constatar una tendencia de polarización ideológica sobre el bloco, tanto en el Ejecutivo y en el Legislativo cuanto en la Opinión Pública, que da fuerza empírica e corrobora con la idea que mudanzas en la ideología de los actores en el nivel domestico fueron determinantes para el desmantelamiento de la Unasur.

Palabras-llaves: Unasur, Integración Regional, América del Sur, Política Externa y Ideología.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIC - Agenda of Consensus Implementation

ALBA - Bolivarian Alliance for the People of Our America

ALCA - Free Trade of The Americas

CAN – Andean Community

CASA - South American Community of Nations

CELAC - Community of Latin American and Caribbean States

COSIPLAN - South American Council of the Infrastructure and Planning

EID – Axes of Integration and Development

EU – European Union

FHC – Fernando Henrique Cardoso

FPA – Foreign Policy Analysis

IIRSA - Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America

IR – International Relations

MAS – Movement for Socialism

MERCOSUR – Southern Common Market

OAS - Organization of American States

OCDE - Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

PELA – Latin American Elites Project of the University of Salamanca

PROSUR – Forum for the Progress and Development of South America

PSDB – Party of the Brazilian Social Democracy

PSL – Social Liberal Party

PSUV – United Socialist Party of Venezuela

TIAR - Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance

UCR – Radical Civic Union

UNASUR – Union of South American Nations

WTO – World Trade Organization

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last decades the Brazilian foreign policy began focusing more on South America and with its leadership the integration process was led, especially since the strengthening of the relations between Brazil and Argentina. The strengthening occurred during the military regimes with the settling down of the Itaipu problem, when Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina signed the Treaty of Itaipu-Corpus in 1979, resolving the dispute over the use of the waters of the Parana River to build Itaipu hydroelectric (LUIZ CERVO & BUENO, p.484, 2012). From that time to nowadays, the regional integration has evolved widely and proliferated, not only in the case of South America with the Union of South American Nations (Unasur) that rose in 2008¹, but in the world.

As a concept, the regional integration could be defined as a process that national states voluntarily mingle, merge, and mix with other states to lose the factual attributes of sovereignty while acquiring new techniques to solve conflicts between themselves (HAAS, 1971). It could be understood also seen as the intent of rebuilding eroded national boards to a higher level, also as a maneuver of the States that cannot guarantee by themselves their goals and interests, and then seek to do it with others (MALAMUD, 2012). According to the same author, the contemporary State is subject to two types of tensions, fragmentation or integration. In that way, the regional integration is a path taken by some states to face the changes that came from the growing integration among the world markets. Important to mention that the regional integration is also called regionalism, being both processes led by the States. Differently from that, Malamud (2012) describes the regionalization, or the increase of the intra-regional inter-dependence, as an informal process that expand the exchange flows among a group of countries territorially adjacent. This paper will be concentrated in the first process, despite considering some variables that measure the second one.

Considering that, the object of this study is the regional integration process of Unasur and its dismantlement. The bloc rose in 2008 as a political space for coordination of the twelve countries of the region, space that included different sub-regional schemes and with several issues not debated regionally before as security, energy, health, infrastructure and others. The Unasur surged under the post-liberal

¹ Considering the year that the Treaty of Brasilia was signed.

regionalism, concept that has as essential feature a broad criticism to the liberal paradigm that influenced the regional integration process in the 90's as well the economic agenda of the countries in Latin America (CEPAL, 2007). The liberal paradigm, conceptualized as "open regionalism" or "new regionalism", was the unilateral opening of markets to the rest of the world in the region and included several initiatives of trade negotiations. Under the open regionalism, the regional integration had as goal the elimination of tariffs of goods, as well as services and investments (CEPAL, 2007). The resurgence of the economic nationalism and the politicization of the economical agendas are direct consequences of the pos-liberal regionalism in South America. However, this process of dislocating the agenda from traditional trade issues to new collective concerns as mentioned before created a moment that has been called regionalism "à la carte", which new organizations have risen to deal with topics related to political and strategic objectives of regional leaders instead of deepening/adapting the ones focused on trade (QUILICONI; ESPINOZA, 2016).

Nevertheless, the regional integration has been an important tool to the foreign policy of the states in all Latin America in order to better insert in the international scenario. Also, the autonomy of the region dealing with the most different issues in the regional and international system is important to be highlighted. However, from the gridlock over the election of the secretary-general of the Unasur in 2017, the changes in the scenario with the election of different presidents and the worsening of the Venezuelan permanent crisis accelerated the decline of the Unasur, contradicting the positive prospects.

Despite its short "life", one of the main reasons and justifications that led to this study is the major importance of the role played by Unasur in the region in its active years. In the pink tide, moment with left-wing and nationalist presidents elected in the region (PANIZZA, 2005), the Unasur was the most significant outcome for the integration process, a multilateral space of coordination and political cooperation. According to Nery (2016), one of the most significant characteristics of the bloc was the plurality of its members. The author points out that the South American organization was a mechanism of building consensus, grouping visions about regional integration. Inside of it, the Bolivarian Alliance for Our People of the America (ALBA), the Southern

Common Market (Mercosur), and the Alliance of the Pacific coexisted for example, being an impressive accomplishment for the region.

From another point of view, Barnabé (2011) calls attention to the importance of Unasur in solving issues among these countries without any external interference. In that case, the author argues that the Organization of American States (OAS) - which includes Central America, Mexico and United States – takes measures that do not follow the South American interests because of its large scope. Therefore, an effective integration as proposed by Unasur would generate more autonomy for the region, especially in relation to the United States. Besides, the organization was relevant for the continuous strengthening of the countries and to a safer and more competitive international insertion of them (BARNABÉ, 2011).

Along the discussion about the decline of the regional integration in South America, this work also inserts into a macro discussion as discussed on “What kills international organizations?” “When and why international organizations terminate” by Eilstrup-Sangiovanni (2019). In the article, the author addresses that little effort has been put in the studies of IO termination, which she calls of ‘IO death’. In the article, the author defends that exogenous shocks are a leading cause of the end of international organizations, but also that organizations with higher survival rates have large memberships and technical mandates. In other words, newly created, with small memberships, and/or lack of centralized structures are the organizations most likely to succumb. However, Eilstrup-Sangiovanni (2019) settles that exogenous shocks themselves are important but they not enough to explain variation in IGO terminations.

Over exogenous shocks, considering an eclectic analytical perspective in the Unasur case, Mijares & Note (2021) analyze systemic elements that could have influenced the process, but also the authors state that the rising of Unasur was not made it due to significant power shifts in the international system. They argue that there was a specific combination of a permissive international security environment and an economic boom cycle that increased the scope for action of governments in the region. In this point, this work agrees that there was not a power shift in the period, and that the economical environmental and the Venezuelan crises are issues that influenced the process. However, this work follows Eilstrup-Sangiovanni (2019) that exogenous shocks are not enough to explain IO “deaths” in the Unasur case, and despite being

clearly very relevant, specially to accelerate the process, domestic factors are the focus of this research to explain the Unasur's dismantlement. Taking this into account, this research is inserted to better understand how one of the most important regional projects of integration in South America was dismantled. Why again, in Latin America, an important regional integration bloc as Unasur, despite still technically existing, has been left dead?

To understand the falling apart of the bloc, this work is based on the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), a consolidated subfield in the International Relations (IR). The specificity of the FPA is its focus on international actions of unities. Thus, it is involved in the studies of specific governments, considering its determinants, goals, decision making, and actions taken (SALOMÓN & PINHEIRO; 2013). In that way, the FPA pays great attention to the variety of players and units of the decision-making process, inside and outside the boards of the State that influence and implement the foreign policy. So here it is considered that all decision makers in the foreign policymaking disagree about what it would be the national interest or that the international system demands (PUTNAM, 2010). In other words, this paper is not based on the idea that the State is a unitary player, free of internal influences.

In that stance, Moravicks through the 'intergovernmental institutionalist' (1991) calls attention toward domestic politics in the regional integration process as in the case of the European Act. According to the author, intergovernmentalism is explained on that each government sees the integration process on its own policy preferences, even if the social interests are transnational, the principal form of their political expression remains national. Thus, the author explains the regional international as an intergovernmental regime, which the decisions and preferences of the State are influenced by organized pressures of the internal coalitions formed by the elites.

As elites, or the theory of Elites, we understand as a theory that defends that in every society there is a minority that holds the power in contrast of a majority that is deprived of it (BOBBIO, 1992). As power, the most important ones would be the economic power, the ideological power and the political power (BOBBIO, 1992). Going further in the domestic politics, Putnam states that the Executives have an essential roll mediating domestic and international pressures principally because they are

directly exposed to both levels, and not because they are unified in all questions or are insulated in relation to the domestic policy (PUTNAM, 2010).

In the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests pressuring the government to adopt favorable politics to its interests as at the same time the politicians pursue the power creating coalitions with those groups. In the international level, the national governments pursue maximize their own abilities to satisfy the internal pressure while minimize the consequences of the international level. None of the levels can be ignored by the decision makers (PUTNAM, 2010).

Regarding this domestic conflict, Milner (1997) points out that the legislative can initiate and set the agenda, amend any proposed policy, ratify or veto it, in other words, the author points out how the legislative influence the policy-making process. Not only this, but political leaders also deal agreements with legislators, elites and constituents, being the preferences of the domestic policies set by the preferences of the players and its interests (MILNER, 1977). Actors' preferences are primordial, and from these they derive their policy preferences. The structure of these preferences exerts a major impact on domestic political game, which shapes policy choices (MILNER, 1977).

Also, elite politicians are not aliens completely divorced from the publics they represent; socialized within the same national contexts, they share ideologies and international attitudes as their constituents. Besides, ideology has an indirect impact on foreign policy via public opinion as revealed as changes in American public opinion preceded also changes in the U.S Foreign Policy (YAM & GRIES, 2020). In the case of public opinion and foreign policy in Latin America, several papers have showed the importance of that relation as well (SELIGSON, 2000; FARIA, 2008; ALVAREZ, 2008; LOPES & FARIA, 2014).

Therefore, this paper's objective is to map three important players in the Foreign Policy decision-making: the Executive, the Legislative and the Public Opinion in order to find empirical regularity by the point of view of the ideology and its support or not to the Unasur. The hypothesis of this research is that ideology of these players, marked here by right-wing and left-wing spectrums, and its relation to foreign policy decision-making, explains why the South American states have left Unasur, what could be seen as the political polarization of the process. In sum, the investigation will be driven to

question if left-wing players mentioned support the Unasur while right-wing ones were against it.

Important to mention that the objective is not to map all the domestic players involved in the foreign policymaking of the region. However, from those three important players, demonstrate how the category of ideology could have influenced the Unasur's decline. Besides what it has been showed about the importance of the domestic players studied here, ideology is a category hard to study, specially empirically, however, the chosen of the Presidents, the Legislative and the Public Opinion are also justified because of the availability of data and instruments that can show the relation between ideology and the Unasur through these players.

As ideology, we briefly understand as a number of images of the past, present, and future; a set of lenses through which information concerning the physical and social environmental is received (Holsti, 1962). It guides the individual to his environment, defining it for him and identifying for him its salient characteristics. Besides, it has the function of the establishment of goals and the ordering of preferences (Holsti, 1962). Furthermore, it is important to mention that this work is based in the analytic historical tradition (FERRER; VELASCO, 2013) of the understanding of left-wing and right-wing concepts, also called ideological dimension. The analytic historical tradition is conceptualized by Ferrer and Velasco (2013) as the method of analysis of manifests of the political parties, analysis of surveys of public opinions, or the evaluation of the experts about political parties. Highly recognized, the concepts of left-wing and right-wing are well used all over the world by researchers and are commonly used by people. Despite that, there are some problems related to discrepancy among classifications of political parties' ideologies in Latin America, specially comparing surveys of voters with surveys made by experts about political parties. However, Ferrer and Velasco (2013) defend the importance of the use of the concepts in the region, explaining why there would be differences among classifications.

The authors point out that the two different methods mentioned of classifying the ideological spectrum in Latin American (experts classification compared to surveys with voters of political parties) cannot be imperfect indicators of the same reality. The authors state the importance of the concepts to the Latin American reality, pointing out

that there is no right or wrong side. According to them, the experts' classifications are basically correct in a way that reflect the history and the specific circumstances of its place and time while the classification based on survey of voters are right because they measure the collective knowledge process about the left of right scale in each country. In other words, both are correct, they just measure different things (FERRER; VELASCO, 2013).

Another important paper to demonstrate the relevance of right-wing and left-wing spectrums in Latin America is the one written by Alcántara and Rivas (2007). The authors point out the elements that polarize or differentiate the most the Latin American parties being the state intervention factor (liberalism versus conservatism), Democracy (Democratic tendency of the legislators), position towards the United States, and the role played by Armed Forces. In other words, the authors defend that is perfectly logical to keep using concepts as right and left in Latin America.

As the methodology employed, this paper is based on specific literature about foreign policy decision-making, data collection of documents, diplomatic cables, legislative votes, and surveys carried out in Latin America of Public Opinion. Through Stata and R program statistics models are also employed in order to identify the relation between ideology and the behavior of the players towards Unasur.

As results, the ideology of domestic players marked by right-spectrum and left-spectrum in the Executive, mostly the Presidents of the countries, the Legislative, and the Public Opinion presented itself a relevant factor that demonstrate how these actors behaved towards the Unasur. In other words, the regional integration under the Unasur project is polarized, and the finding show that this used to happen during the rising of the bloc. Later, the polarization that has always existed was accelerated with the Venezuelan crisis and the drastic changes occurred in the Brazilian Foreign Policy. Despite the domestic factors were the focus of this research, it is important to highlight that the international scenario was important to understand the scenario, specially to accelerate the decline of Unasur. Finally, the results show how the players inside the foreign policy-decision had always been polarized ideologically through left-wing and right-wing the regional process. While left-wing players support Unasur, right-wing players were against it.

Besides the introduction, this work is divided in three chapters. The first chapter is about the background of Unasur, its evolution and its decline, an overview of the literature about its falling apart, and the foreign policy of the period considering the presidents' ideologies. In the second one, the relations between the legislative and foreign policy are discussed with results presented for the Unasur case. The last chapter is about foreign policy and the public opinion. At last, the conclusions.

1. BACKGROUND OF UNASUR: HISTORY, REGIONALISM MODELS, THE EXECUTIVES, AND FOREIGN POLICY OF THE PERIOD.

1.1 Rising of the Union of South American Nations

In order to understand the scenario that the Unasur arose is important to mention that over the last two decades of the twentieth century in Latin America was marked by military regimes and later a period of neoliberal administrations that consequently influenced the Latin American regionalism. However, left-wing and nationalist presidents were elected in the region from 1998 on, the year Hugo Chávez was elected in Venezuela. This period was called "Pink Tide" (PANIZZA, 2005) besides Hugo Chávez, Ricardo Lagos in Chile (2000), Lula da Silva in Brazil (2003), Néstor Kirchner in Argentina (2003), Tabaré Vázquez in Uruguay (2005), Evo Morales in Bolivia (2006), and Rafael Correa in Ecuador (2007), among others were elected in the region. The pink tide generated effects in the international arena, the leaders mentioned adopted more autonomous foreign policies and launched a different type of regionalism, a heterogeneous project with political characters. It surged under the post-liberal regionalism, concept that has as essential feature a broad criticism to the liberal paradigm that influenced the regional integration process in the 90's as well the economic agenda of the countries in Latin America (CEPAL, 2007). The liberal paradigm, called at this moment as "open regionalism" or "new regionalism" was the unilateral opening of markets to the rest of the world in the region and included several initiatives of trade negotiations. Under the open regionalism, the regional integration had as goal the elimination of tariffs of goods, as well as services and investments (CEPAL, 2007). The resurgence of the economic nationalism and the politicization of

the economical agendas are direct consequences of the pos-liberal regionalism in South America.

Through an alternative classification, Souza (2012) points out this moment as well as a fourth wave of the regionalism, which began with the end of the negotiations about the Free Trade of the Americas (ALCA, in Portuguese), due to the elections of Hugo Chavez (1999), Lula (2003), and Néstor Kirchner (2003), and the launching of organisms as Unasur, The Bolivarian Alliance for the People of Our America (ALBA), and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Souza (2012) argues that the main reason to that would be the wider scope of the processes, including for the first time the 33 countries of Latin America and Caribbean without the presence of the United States as in the CELAC. Another reason would be the strategic and alternative content of the regional integration schemes, changing from a 'competitive' process to a 'cooperation' one, according to the author, since issues as infrastructure, education, health, and others are discussed instead of economical or commercial issues only. On the other hand, even if more countries are involved in the negotiations, Souza (2012) had already indicated that there were several projects of sub-regional integration in the region.

In this context, on the 23rd of May 2008, the Brasília Treaty was signed. This constitutive treaty would create Unasur, a historical regional integration bloc, because for the first time, all the twelve countries of the sub-continent would take part of it: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Venezuela, Surinam, and Uruguay. However, the process that created the organization not started but was accelerated in 2000 when the Brazilian president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, called a summit for all South American countries, the first of many in the coming years as it is possible to see it from the table 1 below. From that first presidential meeting, the Heads of States signed the "*Comunicado de Brasília*", in Portuguese, strengthening a process that would culminate years later with the Unasur, starting with the launch of the Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA) at that time.

Chart 1 – Presidential Meetings in South America and the Ideology of Their Hosts (2000-2014)

Year	Name	Place	President	Party	Ideology
2000	1st Meeting	Brasilia- Brazil	Fernando Henrique	PSDB	Right-Wing
2002	2nd Meeting	Guayaquil – Ecuador	Gustavo Noboa	Independen t	Right-Wing
2004	3rd Meeting	Cusco /Ayacuho - Peru	Alejandro Toledo	Peru Possible	Righ-Wing
2005	1st Meeting of CASA	Brasilia- Brazil	Lula da Silva	Worker's Party	Left-Wing
2006	2nd Meeting of CASA	Santiago - Chile	Michelle Bachelet	Socialist Party of Chile	Left-Wing
2007	1st Summit of Energy	Margarita – Venezuela	Hugo Chavez	PSUV	Left-Wing
2008	Unasur Treaty	Brasilia- Brazil	Lula da Silva	Worker's Party	Left-Wing
2008	1st Summit of Unasur	Santiago - Chile	Michelle Bachelet	Socialist Party of Chile	Left-Wing
2009	2nd Summit of Unasur	Quito - Ecuador	Rafael Correa	Pais Alliance	Left-Wing
2009	3rd Summit of Unasur	Barichole – Argentina	Cristina Kirchner	PJ	Left-Wing
2010	4th Summit of Unasur	Georgetown- Guyana	Bharrat Jagdeo	PPP	Left-Wing
2011	5th Summit of Unasur	Asuncion – Paraguay	Fernando Lugo	Guasú Front	Left-Wing
2012	6th Summit of Unasur	Lima - Peru	Ollanta Humala	PNP	Left-Wing
2013	7th Summit of Unasur	Paramaribo – Surinam	Dési Bouterse	NDP	Left-Wing
2014	8th Summit of Unasur	Guayaquil – Ecuador	Rafael Correa	Pais Alliance	Left-Wing

Source: Elaborated by the Author based on the information of the presidential meetings in Meunier and Medeiros (2013).

From the table 1, it is possible to see that there were three summits of presidents of South America before the launch of the South American Community of Nations (CASA) in 2004 that soon would be replaced by the name of Unasur. Another interesting point is that only in the beginning of the process the Presidential Meetings occurred in countries with right-wing presidents elected as in 2000 (Brazil), 2002 (Ecuador) and Peru (2004). After these three meetings, in the context of the pink tide, there were only presidential meetings in countries with left-wing presidents elected.

The apparent consensus and the ideological approximation would accelerate the process, despite the differences inside the bloc.

The first presidential summit was in Brasília, (2000), the second took place in Guayaquil, Ecuador in 2002, and the third in Cusco, Peru in 2004. These three summits are paradigmatic for the process because there is an ongoing process of change in the region related to the pink tide and its influence in the regional integration. From the *Comunicado de Brasília* of the I Summit, the participants mention the role played by the unique and historical summit that represents a support of an area of democracy, peace, supportive cooperation, integration, and shared economic and social development (Comunicado de Brasilia, 2000). The presidents identified important issues to the South American cooperation: democracy, infrastructure of integration, illegal drugs and related crimes, information, knowledge, and technology. The document also mentions the creation of a free trade area in the Americas, based on the consolidation of sub-regional processes. The declaration of the presidents also expresses the valuable trade opening process of the 90's and condemns the persistent trade barriers of developed countries against the South American products.

At that moment, the Heads of States of Mercosur and CAN had decided to launch negotiations to establish, before January of 2002, a free trade area between Mercosur and CAN. Furthermore, the document also points out that the region will follow the principles of the open regionalism. The presidents of the South American countries reaffirmed their support to the economic integration process led by ALCA. Finally, the document brings the most important contribution to the South American Process, the Action Plan for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure in South America in areas such as energy, transports, and communications, which it would generate the IIRSA (Comunicado de Brasília, 2000).

From the meetings of 2000 and 2002, besides mentioning that they occurred in countries elected by right-wing presidents, it is also relevant to mention that the period is clearly marked by the open regionalism with strong prevalence of opening markets and trade as it shows the documents of the period. Also is interesting that while Unasur will be recognized by its autonomy goal, the first documents of the South American Meetings indicated the support to ALCA and to the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR).

About IIRSA, mentioned in the document, it is an important initiative to be highlighted because it aims to boost the integration and modernization of the physical infrastructure under a regional concept of the South American space (Comunicado de Brasília, 2000). From the launching of the UNASUR, several sectorial councils with a ministerial level were established inside the bloc, one of them, the South American Council of the Infrastructure and Planning (COSIPLAN) was created on January 28th of 2009. In 2011, IIRSA was incorporated in the COSIPLAN as a Technical Forum to support the connectivity regional infrastructure planning (IIRSA, 2021). IIRSA was an institutional mechanism of coordination of intergovernmental actions in the region aiming to build a common agenda to boost infrastructure projects of integration of transports, energy and communications.

Taking IIRSA into account, for the first time, South America has acted as a singular and integrated unit having meaningful results as a Consensus Portfolio of more than 500 infrastructure projects organized in 9 Axes of Integration and Development (EID). Besides, from 2005 to 2010, it was built the Agenda of Consensus Implementation (AIC) that consists in 31 high level impacts of physical integration in the region, besides several types of new tools and methodologies of planning for the region. The rising of Cosiplan meant a political strengthening of the South American Infrastructure Integration since Unasur gave an institutional support to IIRSA's work (IIRSA, 2021).

In the II Summit of the South American Presidents, the document of the summit adopts the Declaration about the South American Peace Zone. It is also interesting that the document, still under the context of the recent events of the world trade center in the United States, condemned the terrorist attacks and presented support through the TIAR. In the document, an International Humanitarian Fund is mentioned as a proposal made by the Venezuelan government. At the same time, the Heads of the State point out that the relation between infrastructure and development must be done according to a strategic vision about South America under the open regionalism. Another accomplishment mentioned is the creation of the "Mechanism of Dialogue and Political Consultation" in the I Meeting of Foreign Ministries of the Mercosur with Chile, CAN, Guyana, and Surinam in 2001. Besides, most of the document reveals the importance of IIRSA and its advances in the process (Guayaquil, 2002).

In the III South American Presidential Summit, Cusco in 2004, relevant shifts are seen, for example CASA is launched as explained before. The document brings some changes, as the idea that not only economic growth would promote higher standards of life quality in the region. The declaration of Cusco also calls attention to an understanding of strategies, that with responsible environmental awareness and acknowledge of the asymmetries in the development of the countries, will assure a fairer and more equal distribution of revenues, access to education, social inclusion, and promotion of sustainable development. The document also declares that the South American Integration is and must be an integration of the peoples. At the end, the document points out that the integrated South American space will promote the political consultation and coordination that will reaffirms the region as a differentiated and dynamic space. In sum, political features are now seen in the process, seeking to include the peoples in the process, furthermore, expanding the integration agenda with ideas as environmental awareness, the importance of education, social inclusion, and finally acknowledging the asymmetries among the States of the region.

According to Botelho (2008), despite the problems between Brazil and Argentina, the political context was positive to the bilateral relations from 2002 on. The author argues that Unasur would rise with the name of CASA, as an initiative of Brazil, under Lula's government. Therefore, this explains the shifts from the first summit in 2000 to the presidential summit in Cusco. About these changes, Veiga and Ríos (2007) explain that the economic liberal policies in the 90's through the open regionalism were in a reverse process, since the countries of the region, and worldwide, were now resistant to deepen the economic liberalization because of the negatives impacts of globalization. The economic nationalism started to gain space and the countries in development relived the worries for creating capacity to endogenous growth. In this scenario, the authors defend that heterodox political projects rose as example of policies to reduce poverty and the inequality. It is at this point when the regional projects started to be questioned by its exclusively commercial profile since they were created in the 90's. Therefore, the liberal convergence disappears to give place to a diversity of strategies of international insertion (VEIGA; RÍOS, 2007). In sum, new goals, priorities and issues are established in what is called post-liberal regionalism (VEIGA; RÍOS, 2007; SANAHUJA, 2009) in South America in a clear inflexion of the integration agenda whereas other social players start to take part in the process

integration of the region too. Other authors conceptualized this moment of the regionalism as post-hegemonic (BRICEÑO-RUIZ; HOFFMANN, 2015).

Bearing in mind this context, Unasur was institutionalized as an intergovernmental organization in 2008, with the Treaty of Brasília, in force from 2011 on with international personality. In its second article, the Unasur treaty establishes that the new organization aims to build, from a participative and consensus way, a space for integration and union in different sectors as culture, social, economic, and politic among the peoples, prioritizing the political dialogue, social politics, education, energy, infrastructure, financing, and environment. Besides, the treaty designates the organization to eliminate the socioeconomic inequality, achieve social inclusion and the citizen participation, to strength the democracy and reduce the asymmetries at the mark of the independence of the States and the strengthening of the sovereignty (Tratado da Unasul, 2008).

About the consensus, that would mean here the need of unanimity of all member in the bloc, giving basically a veto vote for each of the member, differently from what it happens in organizations as OAS. Considering that, one of the main contributions of Unasur is the establishment, for the first time, of a South American space for political coordination, as it sets the Article 14 of the treaty. The article sets out that the State members will reinforce the consensus building practice in central issues of the international agenda, promoting the identity of the region as a dynamic factor of the international relations (Tratado da Unasul, 2008).

Chart 2 - Presidents that Signed the Unasur Treaty and Their Ideologies on 23rd of May 2008.

Country	President	Political Party	Ideology
Argentina	Cristina Kirchner	Front for Victory	Left-Wing
Bolivia	Evo Morales	Movement to Socialism	Left-Wing
Brazil	Lula da Silva	Workers' Party	Left-Wing
Chile	Michelle Bachelet	Socialist Party of Chile	Left-Wing
Colombia	Álvaro Uribe	Colombia First	Right-Wing
Ecuador	Rafael Correa	Pais Alliance	Left-Wing
Guyana	Bharrat Jagdeo	People's Progressive Party	Left-Wing
Paraguay	Nicanor Duarte	Colorado Party	Right-Wing
Peru	Alan García	Peruvian Aprista Party	Right-Wing
Surinam	Ronal Venetiaan	National Party of Surinam	Left-Wing
Uruguay	Rodolfo Nin Novoa ²	Broad Front	Left-Wing
Venezuela	Hugo Chávez	United Socialist Party of Venezuela	Left-Wing

Source: Elaborated by the author from the Unasur Treaty.

From table 2, it is possible to see that only three presidents are from right-wing parties. Therefore, the process that culminated in Unasur was clearly influenced by the left-wing and nationalist presidents elected in the pink tide period, however, even with three right-wing presidents, Unasur succeeded in including all positions of the region in its bloc. This apparent consensus reached to create Unasur coexisted with different models of regionalism according to Sorj and Fausto (2011, apud PEDROSO, 2014) that divided South America in three great positions: 1) The most liberal or pro-United States, 2) The national-statist or bolivarian, 3) The moderate. In the first group, there are countries with free trade treaties with the United States as Colombia, Chile, and Peru. This first group would create, in 2012, the Pacific Alliance, that besides the countries mentioned, Mexico would take part of it later.

The second group of integration would be driven by Hugo Chávez, elected in 1998 in Venezuela. According to Pedroso (2014), from the high prices of oil in the 2000's, in the context of the "boom of the commodities", Chávez had been able to finance national and international social projects based on the "socialism of the 21st century", and the bolivarianism, which ALBA is the most representative symbol. The

² At the moment of the signing the Brasilia Treaty, Uruguay sent its Chancellor.

author points out the Brazil was also marked by its leadership and assertiveness in the international arena, leading initiatives of regional integration, one of the most important the Unasur, that institutionalized the articulation of the twelve countries autonomously from the United States. About this second group, consisting also of Bolivia and Ecuador, Pedroso (2014) points out that these countries are similar because they fomented deep institutional reforms, they are dependent of natural resources and aimed to invest part of these venues in the population, allowing a wider intervention of the government in the economy. At last, in relation to the foreign policy, these countries stood for the national sovereignty, the Latin American solidarity, and they had an anti-American and anti-imperialist discourse.

Following these ideas, Kfuri and Flores (2009) explain that the regional integration process based on socialist ideas and building a multipolar and anti-imperialist world are key elements of the Foreign Policy of Hugo Chávez. The authors also point out that in the political plan, the Venezuelan foreign policy was characterized by the tension with the leadership of Chávez internationally and the polarization caused by the speech of confrontation. Cicero (2016) also points out that Hugo Chávez's foreign policy central point was fighting and denouncing the unfair worldwide distribution of power aiming to strength the multipolar character in the international relations.

Specifically, about the regional integration, Hugo Chávez's foreign policy was based on the goal of strengthening ALBA as a model project of regional integration, to take part of Mercosur and Unasur in order to review them; developing energetic alliances; create new institutions of financial integration; promote the participative democracy and the protagonist of non-privileged groups as a model; and political formation about the bolivarian revolution to allies worldwide (KFURI; FLORES, 2009).

For example, in 2008, months before the definitive launching of Unasur, the Brazilian Ambassador in Caracas, Sérgio França Danese, in the credential meeting with the current Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Policy, Nicolás Maduro, reports in a diplomatic cable how Maduro underlined the great moment lived by the relations between Brazil and Venezuela too. Besides, this document shows the importance of the relations between the countries to the context, including building a factory of drugs in Venezuela:

Na área de saúde, referi a possibilidade de o Brasil vir a apoiar, com consultoria da FIOCRUZ, a construção de uma fábrica de medicamentos, idéia surgida na reunião que mantive com o Ministro Temporão. Aduzi, outrossim, outra idéia oriunda deste mesmo encontro e de reunião com representantes da FIOCRUZ, acerca da conveniência da realização de campanhas conjuntas de vacinação contra a febre amarela na fronteira com o norte do Brasil (DANESE, 2008).

However, from that meeting, in 2008, another interesting point must be mentioned, Sérgio França Danese indicated that the Brazilian view about the interest of Ecuador to review the text of the treaty of Unasur. In response, Nicolas Maduro pointed out that, besides Ecuador, Argentina and Bolivia would like to propose changes, and that is why he would host a meeting, in Caracas, to the High Representatives of these countries, and only Brazil was missing to confirm its presence to rediscuss the text (Ministry of Foreign Relations, 2008) showing that despite the apparent consensus in the region, and the great relations between Brazil and Venezuela, there were different groups and visions inside of Unasur.

As the diplomatic cable showed, there is a third group consisted of the moderate countries as Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Brazil. These countries did not build an international agenda based on opposition to the United States, as the bolivarian group, neither they had their economy completely liberalized or with special military cooperation with the US. Sorj and Fausto (2011, apud PEDROSO, 2014) point out that the intermediate position is institutionalized in the Mercosur, and, on the other hand, the Unasur, as a political project. At the end, Pedroso (2014) defends that the Brazilian regional project was successful reuniting in Unasur the three groups.

In order to understand how Brazil was successful grouping all countries inside Unasur is relevant to understand some points of Brazil's foreign policy of the period. Vigevani and Cepaluni (2007) argue that there were no meaningful ruptures with historical categories of the Brazilian Foreign Policy in Lula's Foreign Policy, stating that some guidelines and efforts had started in the last administration. To the authors, the change was with some important emphasis given to actions taken in the periods before of Lula's government. In other words, the authors defend that the ultimate goal of the Brazilian Foreign Policy was kept: developing economically the country while seeking to maintain some political autonomy.

According to the former Minister of Foreign Relations of Lula, Celso Amorim (2010), the integration process in South America was a top priority to Lula's foreign policy. The Minister argues that closer economic and political relations to the countries of the region would support growth and stability, besides, this strategy would increase Brazil's clout in international negotiations (AMORIM, 2010). Giving an example of the importance of the region to the government, Amorim (2010) comments that in just eight months of office, Lula had received all Heads of States of South America.

Still about Lula's government, Vigevani and Cepaluni (2007) define the foreign policy of the period as seeking "autonomy through diversification" and point out some changes that occurred with the Brazilian Foreign Policy from FHC to Lula. The authors argue that Brazil aimed 1) to find an international balance, seeking to mitigate the unilateralism; 2) to strength multilateral and bilateral relations to have more power in international negotiations; 3) to strength the diplomatic relations in all possible ways as economic, finance, cultural and others; 4) To avoid agreements that could harm the long-term development. According to them, these guidelines took emphasis in: 1) deepening the South American Integration Process with CASA; 2) intensifying the relations with emerging powers as India, China, Russia, and South Africa; 3) taking important actions in Doha Negotiations and the World Trade Organization (WTO); 4) Keeping good relations with developed nations as the United States; 5) Strengthening relations with Africa; 6) Campaign to reform the Security Council in order to Brazil be a permanent member; 7) Defense of social goals that would allow a better balance among States and populations (VIGEVANI; CEPALUNI, 2007).

Still about the intermediate group inside Unasur, Brazil and Argentina were part of it, but disagreeing with the view that Argentina had always supported Unasur, or disagreeing with the view of subordination to Brazilian interests or with the approach that there was a resistance to the regional project, Nolte and Comini (2016) argue that the institutional flexibility of Unasur and the lack of supranational institutions were a result of the Argentinean desire to assure that the organization would not restrain its foreign policy options. Despite governmental changes from 1993 to 2008, the South American project was neither the priority nor the first choice of the Argentinean government. Unasur would be an additional platform to influence the regional agenda, being the Mercosur still its priority in the region.

The authors argue that several Argentinean administrations were reluctant to support a “South Americanization” of the regional integration until 2008. They consider its institutional profile and agenda the result of a collective decision. The same authors criticize the regular comparison made between new regional organizations and the European Union or analyzing these institutions by the perspective of its coherence and efficiency since the institutional design of a particular regional organization reflects the interests and the strategies of its member-states.

Malamud and Gardini (2012) state that segmented and overlapping regional projects are not successful, they show the exhaustion of their potentials. On the other hand, based on the European experience, Hofmann and Mérand (2012) support that differentiated multilateral cooperation and “institutional elasticity” can foster peaceful and interstate relations. According to them, no country is forced to participate in all the institutions, investing more time in the areas that are close to its interests. Nolte and Comini (2016) point out that regionalism is a tool of foreign policy used to achieve international visibility, regional stability and regime legitimacy, criticizing that the only ‘flaw’ of these self-declared goals is that they do not follow the European Union model.

Besides, Nolte and Comini (2016) say that secondary powers as Argentina, Venezuela and Colombia are not keen to relinquish sovereignty rights. Another fact to mention is the Euro crisis harmed the EU view as the global reference for integration projects. The authors defend that Latin American States join different organizations because these are focused on varying topics and because they create more arenas for their strategic projects to be realized.

In the context of the South American Summit of Brasilia in 2000, the Argentinean president, De la Rúa, was openly reticent about excluding countries as Mexico and United States. The Brazilian initiative was seen by the Argentinean government as a strategy to strengthen Brazil’s position in the region. So, it preferred a variable geometry of regional integration with IIRSA and a sub-continental free trade area complementary to ALCA that would to be finished by 2002. That position was in line with its foreign policy priorities: Mercosur and the ALCA, and rejecting any initiative with strong institutional and political commitments (NOLTE; COMINI, 2016).

Furthermore, the global financial crisis and the complicated relation with other governments and international financial institutions defined Argentina's political priority as 'do not implode', as consequence, restricting Argentina's foreign policy options. These conflicts put pressure on the Argentina's uni-axial agenda. Even in 2008, with Cristina Fernández's signature on the UNASUR's Constitutive Treaty, the relations between Brazil and Argentina were of conflicts and tensions as well (Nolte and Comini, 2016). From 2003 to 2008, Argentina chose a 'multi-axial' approach. In the presidential campaign, Néstor Kirchner pursued to differentiate himself from Carlos Menem, and raised the argument that Mercosur would be a priority in his government. Taking that into account, Cristina Kirchner also made the bloc more multi-axial, supporting a wide range of projects.

Between 2003 and 2008, Argentina promoted the expansion of Mercosur through the inclusion of other states with associated member status. Argentina's support of the "south Americanization" was related to the country's honeymoon periods with Brazil. South Americanization was generally interpreted by the Argentinean authorities as a shoe made for Brazilian feet. On diplomatic cables between the Brazilian Embassy and Itamaraty, dated of April 17th of 2008, Mauro Vieira, the Brazilian Ambassador in Buenos Aires, reports that the president Christina Kirchner had not confirmed her presence on the launch of UNASUR summit which it would happen in Brasília on May 23rd (VIEIRA, 2007). According to the ambassador, the issue was under discussion at the Casa Rosada for ten days. During the negotiations of the Brasília Treaty, on 16th of April of 2008, on the diplomatic cables, it is also mentioned that the 4th meeting about the Finance Integration of the Unasur, which Argentina is the coordinator, has not kept its agenda as other Work Groups of the bloc. Even before that, on July 23rd of 2007, the Ambassador Mauro Vieira mentioned other efforts so one of the meetings of the Finance Work Group could happen again:

Recordo, a propósito, que a necessidade de convocação da referida reunião foi objeto de repetidas gestões por parte do Brasil junto às autoridades argentinas, no entendimento de que os propósitos e a agenda do GT sobre Integração Financeira da UNASUR não se confundem com o exercício negociador do Banco do Sul (VIEIRA, 2007).

Considering these models of integration and groups, during the Work Group of Finance, in 2007, a fragile issue that divided opinions in the Unasur scope is presented, Mauro Viera in the diplomatic cable states:

Vale registrar que a delegação da Venezuela – que de resto manteve perfil bastante discreto ao longo de toda a reunião – referiu-se à importância que teria o Banco do Sul como instituição catalisadora do mercado financeiro regional. A menção, como era de se esperar, não foi bem acolhida pelas delegações do Chile e da Colômbia, que fizeram questão de esclarecer que a temática do Banco do Sul era tratada em foro específico (VIEIRA, 2007).

At the second meeting of the Group of Finance in the scope of Unasur, Mauro Vieira points out that:

Bolívia e o Equador marcaram presença formal no encontro por meio de representantes de suas embaixadas em Buenos Aires que acompanharam parcialmente o desenrolar dos trabalhos. A exemplo do que ocorreu na primeira reunião do GT, a Venezuela não se fez representar (VIEIRA, 2007).

The diplomatic cable shows clearly the different positions of the countries inside the Unasur, since the bolivarian group was not enthusiastic of economic and financial issues in the Unasur since these themes remind the past model of South American regionalism based on the open regionalism. Considering these divisions, later, the end of the period of the 'pink tide' would generate even more political divisions.

1.2 The Decline of Unasur

In order to understand the dismantling of Unasur is important to comprehend some changes in the Foreign Policy of Brazil. Miriam Saraiva (2017) explains that Michel Temer's foreign policy was limited by the political and economic crisis since its beginning while between 2003 and 2010 Lula's foreign policy was supported by external and internal factors. In that Lula's period, the foreign policy pursued international coalitions in order to review institutions in the international system and, under the Brazilian leadership, to pursue to strengthen the regional governance in South America (SARAIVA, 2017). However, from 2011 on, the international scenario changed drastically to exporters of commodities as Brazil. The scenario combined with

political inability and lack of interest of the new president, Dilma Rousseff, for the foreign policy, the decline of the Brazilian foreign policy started (SARAIVA, 2017).

According to Miriam Saraiva (2017), Dilma Rousseff continued Lula's foreign policy but that was mostly only presented in the political speeches, not in practice. At this time, Brazil began to lose external power and started to behave more pragmatically. The president eliminated the political element of the foreign policy in the region and, in the international scenario Brazil had intermitted moves. Dilma Rousseff's second term as president was very unreliable since she lost legislative support in a context of economic crisis, corruption accusations between infrastructures companies and political leaders that paved that way to the impeachment. Saraiva (2017) argues that Dilma's foreign policy including its behavior in South America was dragged into the national debate. In this context, Mauricio Macri was elected in Argentina, and Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, in Peru. Besides that, Miriam states that the Pacific Alliance became more important, and the Venezuela crisis worsened. Following the path that had already begun the post-liberal regionalism was being spoiled more actively in South America.

When Michel Temer took office, after Dilma being impeached, Itamaraty was used to ends of national politics, since the Ministry of Foreign Relations was given to the Party of the Brazilian Social Democracy (*PSDB*) as part of the new coalition built in order to Michel Temer rule. José Serra, first chancellor of Temer's government, criticized the past foreign policies of being ideological and 'petista' suggesting changes. In relation of South America, the Minister of Foreign Affairs also criticized the secretary of Unasur because he condemned Dilma's impeachment. Brazilian behavior was changed clearly according to Miriam Saraiva (2017): Venezuela was removed from Mercosur and the adhesion of Bolivia was put on wait, the commercial relation with the Pacific Alliance was encouraged and the Free Trade Agreement with the EU advanced, but economic and political crisis again held back the Brazilian foreign policy in Temer's government.

José Serra was replaced by Aloysio Nunes. One of his challenges was the Venezuelan crisis. The critical Brazilian position met opposition with the Uruguayan government of Tabaré Vázquez and also opposition in the OAS. But at the time a Venezuelan Constituent Assembly was settled, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

proposed the suspension of Venezuela's participation in Mercosur and Uruguay accepted. As a way of surpassing the economic crisis, the idea to adhere the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was taken into account (SARAIVA, 2017).

However, in Buenos Aires, in a diplomatic cable from the Ambassador Sérgio França Danese and an institution related to the Argentinean political party Radical Civic Union (*UCR*) to Itamaraty in 15th of August of 2018, the Brazilian government still shows clearly support for the organization:

[...] frisei o apoio brasileiro à candidatura argentina à Secretaria-Geral do órgão como um possível passo inicial para gradual superação do impasse atual no organismo. Assinalei, a título pessoal, que medidas extremas, como o abandono do organismo, poderiam ser tão improdutivas para o interesse regional quanto a postura obstrucionista venezuelana e sublinhei não haver intenção brasileira de tomar decisão análoga à do governo colombiano. De qualquer forma, dispus-me a conversar com representantes da Fundação e do radicalismo sempre que tiverem interesse em trocar ideias sobre as relações Brasil-Argentina, o Mercosul interno e externo e a integração regional sul-americana (DANESE, 2018).

In short, there was a deadlock to choose a new Secretary-General for Unasur in 2017. After one year and a half of the dispute about who would be the new Secretary-General, in April of 2018, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, and Peru suspended their participations in the bloc for an indefinite time. This group demanded the approval of the Argentinean Ambassador José Octavio Bordón as the new Secretary-General, but the Venezuelan Government, with the support of Bolivia, Surinam and Ecuador, did not accept it. As the decisions in the organization are approved only by consensus, the bloc was practically inactive (PARAGUASSY, 2019). At the same time, the states-members could not get a consensus to suspend Venezuela from the organization as it happened in the Mercosur.

Chart 3 – Presidents that withdrew from Unasur and their Ideologies in order of dates

Withdrawal's Order		President	Period	Party	Ideology	Aligned³
27th of August 2018	COL	Iván Duque	Aug 2018 – Now	Democratic Center	Right-Wing	Yes
14th of March 2019	BRA	Jair Bolsonaro	Jan 2019 – Now	PSL	Right-Wing	No
14th March 2019	ECU	Lenín Moreno	May 2017 - May 2021	PAIS Alliance	Left-Wing ⁴	No
25th of May 2019 ⁵	PER	Martín Vizcarra	Mar 2018 - Nov 2020	PPK	Right-Wing	No
11th of April 2019	PAR	Mario Abdo	Aug 2018 – Now	Colorado Party	Right-Wing	Yes
12th of April 2019	ARG	Mauricio Macri	Dez 2015 - Dez 2019	Republican Propose	Right-Wing	No
14th of June 2019	CHI	Sebastián Piñera	Mar 2018 – Mar 2022	National Renewal	Right-Wing	No
10th of March 2020	URU	Alberto Lacalle	Mar 2020 – Now	National Pary	Right-Wing	No
It remains on Unasur	BOL	Luis Arce	Nov 2020 – Now	MAS	Left-Wing	Yes
It remains on Unasur	GUY	Irfaan Ali	Agos 2020 – Now	People's Progressive Party	Left-Wing	Yes
It remains on Unasur	SUR	Chan Santokhi	Jul 2020 – Now	Progressive Reform Party	Left-Wing	Yes
It remains on Unasur	VEN	Nicolás Maduro	Mar 2013 – Now	PSUV	Left-Wing	Yes

³ Aligned means that the President is aligned to the President that signed the Unasur treat

⁴ Despite being elected from a Left-Wing political party, Lenín Moreno is discussed to be also considered a Right-Wing president, see Lenín Moreno section.

⁵ Peru has not finished the withdrawal's process since the congress did not vote the president's decision. That is why the dark green color.

Source: Elaborated by the author from information collected on the presidential communications.

In this scenario, from the table 3, it is possible to see that the first country to leave the bloc was Colombia. Colombia left the bloc even with the president being aligned with the president that signed the treaty of Unasur, as it shows in the column “Align”. The Colombian President, Iván Duque, sent a letter on the 27th of August of 2018 to Unasur. According to him, the regional bloc was an ally of the Venezuelan government and it served to Maduro’s purposes. Besides, Iván Duque criticized the bloc because it would have “fractured the inter-American system” (COLÔMBIA..., 2018). On the 14th of March, Brazil withdrew from the Unasur Treaty (BRASIL, 2019). Chile notified Unasur on the 14th of June of 2019. Paraguay did the same on the 11th of April of 2019. Argentina followed the same path on the 12th of April of 2019. Ecuador required to the National Assembly to approve its withdrawal on 14th of March of 2019. Peru also presented a law project to withdraw from the Treaty on the 25th of May of 2019 and Uruguay would only leave Unasur on 10th of March of 2020 after Alberto Lacalle was elected. Despite the Peruvian Legislative has not voted for its withdrawal yet, there are only official four remaining members: Bolivia, Surinam, Guyana, Venezuela, and Peru in the ongoing process. Therefore, all the four remaining members that have not moved forward to leave Unasur are left-wing presidents and they are aligned to the presidents that signed the Unasur treaty. Comparing to table 2 with table 3, there is a clear change in the region because of the prevalence of right-wing presidents elected that withdrew from the Treaty of Brasília. From the table 3, the only left-wing president that withdrew from Unasur was Lenín Moreno, from Ecuador.

Outlier: Lenin Moreno (2017-2021)

Lenin Moreno (2017-2021), *Movimiento Alianza País (Mpais)*, was elected President in Ecuador as successor of Rafael Correa (2007-2017), *MPaís*, well-known political leader of the pink tide. Lenin Moreno, despite being an outlier in the charter 3, as the only considered left-wing president to leave the Unasur bloc, had drastic changes in his policies after being elected.

When Lenín Moreno took his presidency, Moreno and Correa had a rupture that divided the *Movimiento Alianza* (WOLFF, 2018). After that, Moreno, that had been elected because of the popularity of Rafael Correa, had lost support of 38% of the legislative of his party. In 2018, 28 legislators left Mpais and founded the movimiento Revolución Ciudadana. On the other hand, Guilherme Lasso, Creando Oportunidades (CREP), the right-wing presidential candidate in 2017 took advantage of this opportunity and offered support to Moreno's government if Moreno would implement pro-market policies (NAVIA; REGUERO, 2021).

In sum, even if Lenin Moreno was elected by a left-wing political party and supported by a pink tide leader as Rafael Correa, domestic factors as the rupture with Correa and his suddenly approach with right-wing parties as CREO in the legislative demonstrate that if there was not a total "right-wing shift" in this policies, included the foreign policy, (TAMAYO, 2019; PINCHINCHA, 2020; PRIMICIAS, 2021), at least it is more than clear and understandable the reasons that could have taken Lenin Moreno to leave Unasur, specially that even its building was located in Ecuador, showing how committed Rafael Correa was to its regional project.

Now, considering the importance of the presidents, the next section will analyze Bolsonaro's Foreign Policy, since Brazil would be the paymaster in the process of the regional integration in South America (BURGES, 2005) and changes to Brazil's foreign policy were also important to accelerate Unasur's decline.

1.3 Bolsonaro's Foreign Policy

From Temer's Foreign Policy ideas, Vidigal (2019) defends that there are some continuities in Jair Bolsonaro's foreign policy: the liberal economic policy, the opening to foreign investments, prioritizing bilateral relations instead of multilateral, neglecting the South American integration and condemnation of the Venezuelan government, besides abdicating categories as autonomy and development defended by Itamaraty historically. However, Jair Bolsonaro's election brought relevant changes. Saraiva and Silva (2019) present several players that influence the government, dividing them into two groups, the ideological and the pragmatic players. According to the authors, the ideological group found themselves limited by the external context and by the

pragmatic group consisted of the militaries. However, the authors defend that the regionalism was led by the ideological group, since the post-liberal vision was in crisis.

Celso Lafer (2020), former Brazilian Foreign Minister, also states that the foreign policy of Bolsonaro does not consider the principles written in the Constitution of 1988, as the goal of the integration with the countries of Latin America, for example. The former minister (2020) points out that the current government's diplomacy is the opposite of the cooperation concept, stating that is a "diplomacy of combat", that does not pursue the national interests. In sum, Bolsonaro's foreign policy has some continuity with Temer's, as the central idea of strengthening relations with Washington, especially before Biden's election, support to ideas as liberal economic policy, opening to foreign investments, bilateral priority instead of multilateral, neglecting South American integration and the leaving the idea of development historically defended by Itamaraty.

Bearing in mind the context and Bolsonaro's foreign policy, especially neglecting the South American integration, on the 14th of March, Brazil withdrew from the Unasur Treaty. Meanwhile, on 22nd of March of 2019, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana⁶, Paraguay, and Peru signed a document that indicated their willingness of creating the "The Forum for The Progress and Development of South America" (PROSUR) to replace Unasur. At that time, Jair Bolsonaro commented that the PROSUR had risen because Unasur was moved by ideologies, while Piñera, the president that called for the summit, stated that Prosur will be the space to face problems and take on opportunities (Planalto, 2019).

The Declaration of Santiago established that the Forum would be implemented gradually and with a flexible, light, and cheap structure with clear operations rules and an agile mechanism of decision taking. The document that launches Prosur begins stating the important of renovating and strengthening the integration process in South America in a flexible institutional way (Declaração de Santiago, 2019). The document also recognizes the contributions of past South American integration process, clearing in reference to Unasur, as most of the sectors and goals of the Unasur treaty are also

⁶ Despite signing the document, Guyana was the only country to not be present with its president to the meeting but its Minister.

mentioned in the document differentiating the current process being more efficient, pragmatic, and with a simple structure.

1.4 Literature about the Decline of Unasur

This section aims to present what the literature has written about the decline of Unasur. For example, Medeiros, Teixeira Júnior & Reis (2015) claim that the weak engagement with the deepening of the institutions and the lack of relinquishing responsibilities to Unasur can be explained by the strategy of aiming more liberty in the international arena and reduction of external restraints. Besides, the authors argue that there was a process of detachment of the foreign policy related to South American since Dilma Rousseff's government. Riggiozzi and Grugel (2015) claim that Unasur needed to build its legitimacy and show its worth. According to the authors, Unasur developed a hybrid form of legitimacy, based on a normative provision of regional public goods such as democracy, human rights and eradication of poverty what would prove that the project would have not failed, although not predicting its decline.

Alvarez (2021) argues that the current status of Unasur is a result of the decline of Brazil's power which explains the changes in regional governance, what the author called 'hegemonic stability theory' to South America. In other words, once the leadership that proposed the regional project weakens the proposal loses dynamism too, using ALBA, through Venezuela, and Unasur, through Brazil as examples. On the other hand, Briceño-Ruiz (2018) defends that after a period of pos-liberal/hegemonic initiatives, there is resurgence of the open regionalism and as consequence implications to the regional integration process. Political changes in the region weakened the coalitions that promoted the regional strategy that rejected neoliberalism, and according to the author, that is a sign of a new cycle of regionalism.

According to Jaeger (2019), the current collapse of Unasur rises as a symbol of a broader process, resulted from a conservative offensive in the region. The author argues that there was not a consolidated South American integration process. Jaeger (2019) enumerates other factor as the problems with the Brazilian leadership in the process due to the internal political crisis and the opposition represented by parts of the national and regional bourgeoisie; the lack of a strong social upholder that could

support the project; the movement of political cycles and the effects of a regional economic crisis, and Ivan Duque's role, in 2018, aiming to isolate Venezuela.

On the other hand, Santos (2016) disagrees with this traditional vision about the post-liberal regionalism with the Foreign Policies of Lula and Dilma. According to him, the same projects of the open regionalism continued, being the inflection in the foreign policy only a rhetorical maneuver. To the author, the regional disputes settlements would not be an advance towards a multipolar world, once the United States had never seen this way. In this view, the Brazilian leadership could be seen as a tool to the international order under the United States interests.

From the speeches of Heads of States in South America about the reasons to leave Unasur, Guerra and Frisso (2020) argue that despite recognizing the ideological elements of Unasur, as consequence of the influence of the context that it rose, the organization had several pragmatic proposes. On the other hand, the argument of the authors is that the critics of Unasur, symbolized by launching PROSUR, for example, are more ideological than pragmatic as it is given in the speeches. The authors defend that the dismantling of Unasur is a process carried by an ideology, a liberal-conservative one, that is disconnected from pragmatic results and that do not consider the regional and the international scenario. To justify this idea the authors base themselves in Gian Luca Gardini (2011) that points out that in the foreign policy, "ideology" and "pragmatism" are two complementary elements.

Comparing the times of the high number of South American Summits to nowadays "low profile regionalism", Nolte (2021) discuss the current crisis of the Latin American regionalism and possible ways to solve it. The author points out that the lack of interaction between the presidents led to the paralysis and then disintegration as result of the political polarization. The author also argues that the central feature of Latin American regionalism is both intergovernmental and interpresidential, therefore in times of polarization and lack of political consensus the processes are led to a deadlock. Besides, as the Latin American countries are characterized by weak commercial relations, one of the arguments to strengthen the regional integration process is to focus on working on the interdependences, especially the economic linkages, Nolte (2021) gives the example of the harmonization of rules and regulations between regional grouping and countries. Besides, in the words of the author "the

political-ideological polarization has not only hindered the development of joint regional projects but has also jeopardized the survival of existing regional organizations” (NOLTE, 2021., 185).

Over this statement, this research follows a path similar to this idea, however, it will be demonstrated that the polarization of the Unasur existed before the current crisis. About dealing with the current crisis, the Nolte (2021) defends that the option to solve a conflict within a regional integration would be making the “vote” option more attractive. Furthermore, Nolte (2021) also highlights that when the crisis started in Unasur the bloc was still a young organization that did not have time to build “loyalty” of its members. The author also criticizes that Unasur did not have an economic mandate as Mercosur, what made the “leaving option” easy without costs, differently than what happens to Mercosur. About the supranational institutions, Nolte (2021) puts that the path is unlikely for Latin American, but the author states that because of the conflicts between presidents, the organizations should be shielded from these conflicts, what is hard without a strong supranational mechanism.

PARTIAL CONCLUSIONS

At this chapter, already, from the chart about the meeting of Unasur, it is possible to see most of the meetings were in countries with left-wings presidents, specially from 2005 on. Moving to the chart about the signature of the Treaty of Unasur, we can visualize how most of presidents were also from left-wing parties. Nevertheless, right-wing parties also signed the treaty of Unasur in 2008, meaning it included both spectrums in the process, even though there was a clear majority of left-wing presidents. Pedroso (2014) gives a good differentiation of the groups and communications among ambassies confirm how, despite apparent consensus, different groups and visions there were in the Unasur.

To understand how the scenario came to this point, institutional flexibility and lack of supranational institutions were explained a result of Argentinean’s desire to assure there were no restraints to its foreign policy (NOLTE; COMINI 2016), as well as

to Venezuela and Colombia that had the same concerns. Besides, this chapter showed how drastic changes occurred in the Brazilian Foreign Policy from Lula, Dilma Rousseff, Michel Temer, and then Bolsonaro, influencing changes to the region accelerating Unasur's decline.

With no doubts the literature about the decline of Unasur supports important features that helps to better understand the scenario that occurred with Unasur: weak engagement and lack of relinquishing responsibilities (TEIXEIRA JUIOR; REIS, 2015), or the decline of Brazil's foreign policy (ALVAREZ, 2021). Nevertheless, it is possible to visualize from charter about the withdrawals, how polarized the Unasur decline was, since all right-wing presidents left the bloc, to the exception of Lenín Moreno, that was clarified through the domestic politics in Ecuador, what it has even called "a shift to the right" or even a "co-government with the right" in Ecuador (TAMAYO, 2019; PINCHINCHA, 2020; PRIMICIAS, 2021).

Therefore, this chapter showed the importance of the executive's ideology and how the ideology of them are a strong empirical data that separates those countries participating in Unasur from the ones that left it. Nolte (2021) mentions how the political polarization led to the paralysis and then disintegration, argument showed in this chapter, and that will follow the next ones. In order to fulfill this take, the next section will present the discussions about the relation between the Legislative and the Foreign Policy decision-making. Finally, the results will demonstrate how the polarization existed as well in the legislative.

2. LEGISLATIVE AND FOREIGN POLICY

2.1 Literature Review

Without doubts the legislative is a primordial player in the foreign policy, considering that in the presidential systems the president needs the approval of the legislative in order to move forward with the international agenda. Despite the studies about the relations between legislative and the foreign policy is strongly influenced by the American academics, Latin American studies have been also very important to the foreign policy field. Onuki, Ribeiro and Oliveira (2009) call the attention to the importance of Legislative and its relation to the foreign policy decision-making,

especially due to the disregarding of the Legislative in the studies of the area. The authors confront the idea that legislators tend to abdicate their preferences in determining foreign policy. In a study with Chile and Argentina, it is possible to identify the political-party ideology as a relevant explanatory factor of the legislators' votes (Onuki, Ribeiro and Oliveira, 2009) differently from what it is generally believed. In other words, the legislative is not a passive player that would support the president's international agenda regardless the ideology.

Following the same path, Ribeiro and Onuki (2014) also demonstrate the similarity of the unity of political parties in Latin American over national or international votes in the legislative chambers. In sum, the authors state that there are no differences between the matters, national or international, voted in the legislative, being the international agenda as important to the political parties as the national agenda. The authors remind the importance of the studying the legislative's role in the foreign policy decision-making to understand if the unity or lack of it in the political parties is a determinant factor to veto the foreign policy of the president.

On the academic debate about the relations between the legislative and the foreign policy, Ribeiro and Oliveira (2018) describe that there are two major groups. The first group defends the idea of two presidents or the "two presidents' thesis". That theory means that there is a president with great fierce to rule and approve international issues on the legislative, while on domestic issues there is a president restrained. On the other hand, the second group of academics denies this idea, in other words, there would be not differences between the successes of the president to approve international or national matters in the legislative (RIBEIRO; OLIVEIRA, 2018).

About this debate, Ribeiro and Oliveira (2018) confirm the "two presidential theory" specifically to the case of Paraguay with President Lugo. The authors demonstrate that in comparison to domestic politics, the foreign policy agenda, even when polarized, has higher probability of being approved. Their paper proves the differences between domestic and international agendas on the legislative, in other words, international issues should be easier to be approved than domestic ones in Paraguay. The same path is followed by Ribeiro and Urdinez (2017) studying the Argentinean case from 2001 to 2014. The paper of the authors also supports the "two

presidents' thesis" demonstrating that in the Argentinean case the President has more legislative support in the international agenda compared to the national one.

On the other hand, analyzing the behavior of the legislative over foreign policy themes in five Latin American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, and Paraguay, Ribeiro (2019) points out at the end that there is a similarity about the approval between the domestic and the international issues in the legislative. Also, the author calls attention to the importance of including the legislative in the studies of foreign policymaking since there is a polarization over international issues. From this study, it is also possible to determine some structural factors that polarize the legislators vote as political party, coalition and ideological spectrum (RIBEIRO, 2019).

About the elections, in Brazil, for example, the role played by the political parties and their position over international issues did not receive proper attention by researchers of foreign policy analysis for some time. In order to contribute to that, Mendes and Graça (2020) pointed out that the foreign policy is presented in the electoral presidential debate in Brazil, demonstrating the differences among political parties over the international agenda. In sum, Mendes and Graça (2020) show a clear ideological differentiation in the electoral debate, demonstrating the importance of considering not only the position of political parties, but their participation in the Brazilian elections.

Again, about the debate between the legislative and the foreign policy, with the cases of Peru, Colombia, and Chile and their roll-call votes over Free Trade Agreements with the United States, Ribeiro (2012) notices important factors in each context that explains the behavior of the legislators. The author shows that unemployment tax, ideology and belonging or not to a governmental coalition are central variables to understand the vote of the legislative in these cases.

At last, a recent study in the Brazilian congress over the Unasur, confirming how the political ideology influenced on the view of the speeches in the Brazilian congress. The authors found that the left-wing parties mentioned the Unasur 66,9% of the time. On the other hand, only the right-wing parties spoke negatively about the bloc, while the left-wing parties never criticized Unasur. In other words, the paper contributes to

the discussion on how the ideology is a relevant factor to explain the dismantlement of the bloc.

Bearing in mind the role played by the legislative and the importance of factors as ideology and governmental coalition, for example, the next sections will focus on the case of Unasur with its votes in the legislatures of South America.

2.2 Methodology and Database

The database of this research was built through joining the roll-call votes of the legislative chambers of the South American countries about the approval and the withdrawal of the Unasur treaty. Due to the period of approval of the Unasur treaty, from 2008 to 2011, more than ten years ago, the roll-call votes were available only in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay, seven of the twelve countries. On the other hand, about the withdrawal of the Treaty, there are available roll-call votes of Chile and Ecuador, since only these countries plus Peru, constitutionally, vote the withdrawal of treaties on the legislative house, however, Peru has not voted its withdrawal from the Treaty of Unasur yet. From this database, a statistical inference will be employed through three logistic models in order to test the following statistical hypothesis:

H1: Both periods of voting, to approve the Treaty of Unasur and to withdraw from it, were influenced by ideology demonstrating that the political polarization of Unasur exists. More specifically, it is going to be tested if left-wing legislators tend to vote in favor of Unasur while right-wing legislator tend to vote against.

In total, there are 1140 roll-call votes from the period of 2008, when the legislatures chambers started to vote the approval of the Unasur treaty, to 2019, period that Ecuador voted the withdrawal. In the following section, the variables of the statistic models are presented.

2.2.1 Dependent Variable and Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

1. Vote Favorable: The dependent variable is the vote of the legislator towards the Unasur. The favorable vote is represented with the number “1” and the vote against is represented by the number “0”. In the case of the votes about the withdrawal of the Unasur treaty, the legislators who voted to approve the withdrawal received the “0” as a vote against the Unasur and the legislators who did not support the withdrawal of the treaty received “1” as a vote in favor of the bloc.

Independent Variable

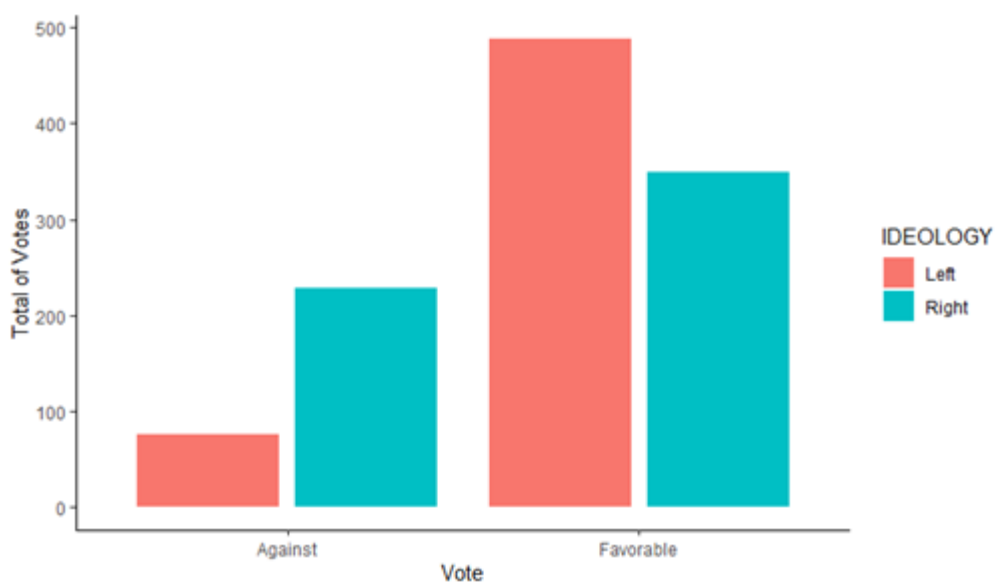
2. Ideology: The ideology of the legislator is divided in left-wing or right-wing parties according to the PELA (*Observatório de Élités Parlamentarias en America Latina*, in Spanish) database and other sources as manifests and political-parties websites. The PELA has a database that applies surveys with legislators in Latin America to measure the ideology of their political parties. The database uses a scale from 0 to 10, which 0 would be the extreme-left and 10 the extreme-right. However, as not all political parties in the database are also found in the PELA database, the variable was dichotomized (0 to left-parties and 1 to right-parties). Parties in a scale from 0 to 4,99 received the 0 and the ideology of parties with scale from 5 to 10 was replaced by 1 that means it is a right-wing party. From the database of PELA, unfortunately it is not available the ideology of all political parties collected in the nominal votes of the Unasur. Therefore, the political parties not available in the ideology of the PELA was completed according to the websites of the political parties as they see themselves 0 – left-wing parties and 1 – right-wing parties.
3. Position: This variable shows if the legislator is part of the presidential coalition that signed the Unasur treaty with the number “1” or if it is part of the opposition to it through the number “0”.
4. Senator: This variable shows if the legislator is a senator or not. “0” if it is not a senator and “1” if it is a senator.

5. Bicameral: It explains the presence of a high chamber or not, since some countries have a unique chamber. The number “1” represents that there is a high chamber and the number “0” is the there is a unique chamber.
6. South American Exportations Percentage: Each legislator represents a district. This variable shows the percentage of the South Americans exportations of this district, in the most approximate year of the vote, in relation to its worldwide total.

2.4 Results

First, from the database of all available rollcall votes (including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay on the approval and withdrawal of the Unasur Treaty), the results will be presented by a bar graphic, showing the distribution of the votes (figure 1), chi-square testes (table 4), demonstrating the relations between two categorical variables, and three logistic models of regression (table 5 and 6), besides a graphic of the marginal effects of the exports of South American in relation to the votes (figure 2). All the logistic regression models have as the dependent variable the vote of the legislators.

Figure 1 – Distribution of Legislative Votes in Relation to Ideology



Source: Elaborated by the author from the Database

To begin with the distribution of votes and the relation to ideology, it is very clear to see that there is a majority of votes from left-wing political parties favorable to the Unasur project. However, there is also a relevant support of right-wing parties. On the other hand, the votes against the bloc have most right-wing parties, although, the votes against the project in total is smaller than the total in favor of Unasur.

Table 1 – Distribution of Votes in relation to Ideology

	IDEOLOGY	
	Left-Wing (0)	Right-Wing (1)
FAVORABLE VOTE		
No (0)	75	228
Yes (1)	488	349

Source: Elaborated by the author.

In order to see the exact distribution of the votes, the table 4 above also presents the distribution of the votes. The favorable vote (“No” if it is against Unasur and “Yes” if it is in favor of Unasur) and Ideology (Left-Wing and Right-Wing). After dividing them, chi-squares testes are applied to the database to test if two categorical variables “vote” and “ideology” are significant statically, or, in other words, if the variables explain each other.

Table 2 – Chi-square Tests - Ideology vs. Vote

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2- sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	100.1842	1	,000		
Likelihood Ratio	103.9489	1	,000		
Fisher's Exact Test		1		0	0
N of Valid Cases	1140				

Source: Elaborated by the author.

From the chi-square tests it is possible to confirm that there is a significant relation between the ideology of legislators (Left-Wing and Right-Wing) and their votes in relation to Unasur in the aggregated database since from the value of the tests and the degrees of freedom (df) the p-value of the tests are $<.00001$ meaning they are statistically significant. In other words, ideology is a factor that influences the legislators in case of Unasur, differently what defends the “two presidents thesis”, already confirming part of H1 that states the ideology influence the legislators.

Table 3 – Model 1 of Logistic Regression (Aggregated Database)

	(1) Favorable Vote
Favorable Vote	
Exports to South America	0.0207*** (0.00480)
IDEOLOGY	
Right	-1.767*** (0.186)
POSITION	
Government	-0.613*** (0.174)
SENATE	-0.122 (0.195)
BICAMERAL	0.626** (0.208)
_cons	1.470*** (0.196)
<i>N</i>	1140

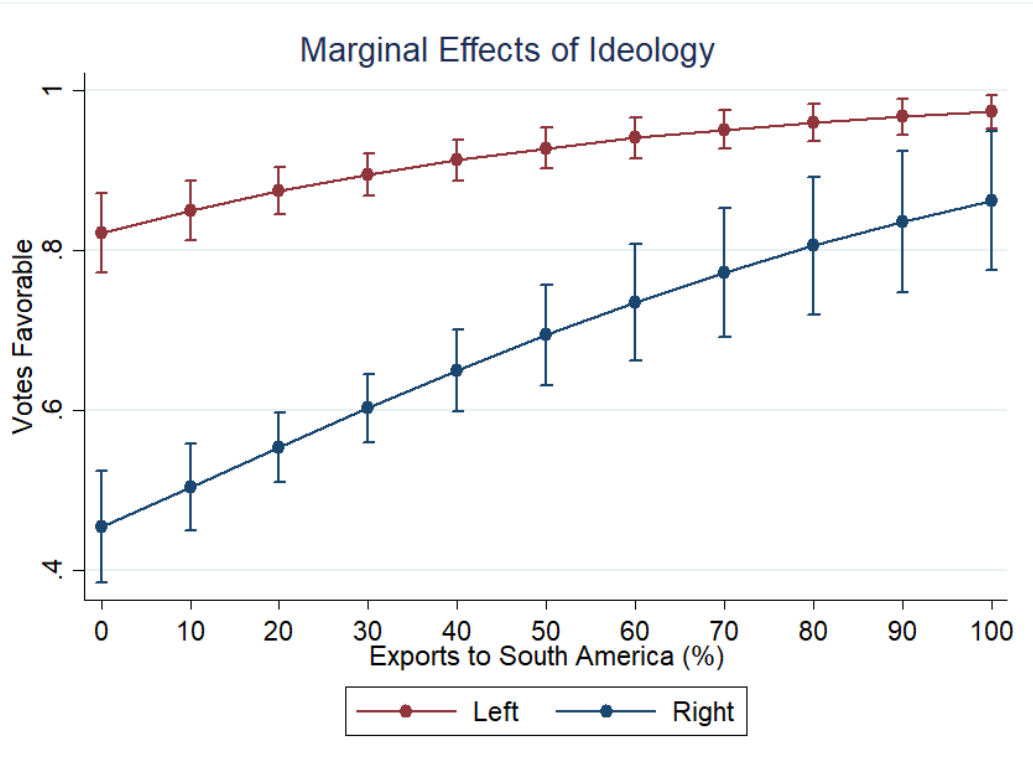
Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The first model of the logistic regression has as dependent variable the vote of the legislators and it includes all the votes in an aggregated database. As independent variables are “Exports to South America”, “Ideology”, “Position” and “Senate”, and “Bicameral”. All the variables in this model, except “Senate”, are presented as significant statistically. The exports to South America or, in other words, the importance of exports to the countries of South America from the region which the deputy represents is a significant variable in the model. As the exports have a positive coefficient of 0.0207, more exports or stronger the trade relations between the territories more in favor are the legislators in relation to Unasur. Other significant variable is “ideology”.

From the “ideology” variable is possible to affirm that right-wing parties have a negative coefficient of 1.767, indicating an inverted relation. In other words, the legislators from the right-wing spectrum are more against the Unasur, confirming the hypothesis about the relation between ideology and the behavior of legislators towards the Unasur, especially in the case of the relation between the right-wing and the Unasur. Finally, the Senate factor is not significant to the model, therefore, it does not matter if it is a senator or a deputy, however, as the “Bicameral” is a significant variable, it that means when there are two chambers the votes are more favorable to Unasur.

Figure 2 – Marginal Effects of Ideology



Source: Elaborated by the author .

In the figure of the Marginal Effects of Ideology on the votes favorable to Unasur from model 1, it is possible to visualize the effects of the trade relations of territories that the legislators are from and their votes. Both sides of the spectrums are influenced by this variable. However, the right-wing parties are way more sensitive to the trade relations of their territories. From 0% of exports to Unasur, the left-wing parties vote much more in favor to Unasur, but as the percentage of exports to Unasur increases more right-wing legislator vote in favor of the South American regional project.

Table 7 – Model 2 and 3 of Logistic Regression (Separated Database)

	(2) VOTE APPROVAL	(3) VOTE WITHDRAWAL
VOTE		
Exports to South America	-0.00227 (0.00524)	0.0433* (0.0207)
Right	-1.657*** (0.273)	-2.737*** (0.382)
Government	-0.434 (0.236)	-1.635*** (0.362)
_cons	3.140*** (0.371)	0.553 (0.349)
<i>N</i>	857	283

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Elaborated by the author.

In the second and third logistic regression model, the data is separated according to the matter voted. The second model is about the votes for the approval of the Unasur treaty and the third is for the withdrawal from Unasur treaty. On the second model, it is possible to see that the only significant variable is “ideology”, which shows that right-wing legislators voted less to approve the Unasur treaty from 2008 on. In the third model, with only the votes to withdraw from the treaty, the model presents other results. First, the result as expected is that the right-wing legislator voted more in favor of the withdrawing of the Unasur treaty, but now more evident with a coefficient of negative 2.237. Besides, the political parties that before were part of the coalition that approved the Unasur treaty now is against Unasur as the coefficient indicates.

Finally, the exports to Unasur also seem to be significant, stronger the trade relations with the South American States, more favorable are the votes for Unasur. It is important to mention that the third model is only made based on the votes of Chile

and Ecuador, since few countries in South American vote to withdraw from international treaties. Considering that, further studies will be done to understand the context of votes in these countries, as example to understand why the variable “Government” for example has a negative coefficient, a counter-intuitive result. It would be expected that parties of the presidents that supported the Unasur before would now be against the withdrawal. One of the hypotheses for the negative coefficient for “Government”, as an example, is that some political parties that before supported the Unasur, as the “Alianza País” in Ecuador, now are divided. In the Ecuadorian’s case the reason is because the president in that time, Lenin Moreno (Alianza País), cut off relations to the former president Rafael Correa (now Movimiento Revolucion Ciudadana), which signed the Unasur treaty.

PARTIAL CONCLUSIONS

As showed in this chapter, the legislative is a primordial player in the foreign policy, considering that in the presidential systems the president needs the approval of the legislative in order to move forward with the international agenda. In short, the legislative is not a passive player that would support the president’s international agenda regardless the ideology, being important to consider that variable to understand the influences of those players in the foreign policymaking.

Covering from 2008 to 2019, a database with 1140 rollcall votes was built in order to test the H1: Both periods of voting, to approve the Treaty of Unasur and to withdraw from it, were influenced by ideology demonstrating that the political polarization of Unasur existis. More specifically, it is going to be tested if left-wing legislators tend to vote in favor of Unasur while right-wing legislator tend to vote against. Along with the models, other variables were tested as position, if he/she is a senator or a deputy, if it is Bicameral or not, and, for the last, if data of trade are significant statistically to explain the support or not to Unasur.

As results the variables Ideology, Position, Senate, and Bicameral were all significant variables, explaining somehow the support or not to Unasur. Besides ideology is significant statistically, the negative coefficient shows how there is an inversion logic that confirms the hypothesis that right-wing legislators tend to not

support the Unasur while left-wings would support it more. Another interesting data is that data exports show the stronger the trade relations between the territories that the legislators represent more in favor they are to Unasur. Furthermore, the results showed that left-wing parties support more Unasur, although as soon as the trade of exports increases in territories of the legislators more right-wing players voted in favor of the Unasur. Finally, moving from the ideology of the presidents to the ideology of legislators, confirming both as polarized ideologically, with the left-wing players supporting more the Unasur than right-wing, the next chapter will discuss the roll of the public opinion and test if left-wing people support the bloc, while the right-wing are against.

3. PUBLIC OPINION AND FOREIGN POLICY

3.1 Overview of the literature

In 1922, the publication of “Public Opinion” would be a landmark to the area of public opinion and the relation to public policy formulation. A classical definition of public opinion would be a ‘statistical distribution of utterances, expressed by various segments of the population, which also should be classified and distinguished by the degree of competence (Lazarsfeld, 2006). According to Mouron (2018), the area of public policy analysis is sufficiently delimited, so it has created several subfields, being foreign policy one of them.

At the beginning of the studies between public opinion and foreign policy, most scholars agreed that foreign policy was far from the average citizen, which would cause little influence on foreign policy formulation (Lippmann, 1922; Almond, 1956). In other words, it was called the ‘Almond-Lippmann consensus’, the skeptical belief that the people could understand international issues, as well that they would influence in the foreign policymaking. The same path was followed by Realists that defended that foreign policymaking should be isolated from unstable and irrational mass opinion (Morgenthau, 1950; Rosenau, 1961). Those ideas still remain, reinforcing that public opinion has no important effects on foreign policymaking (Jacob and Page, 2005; Baum and Potter, 2008).

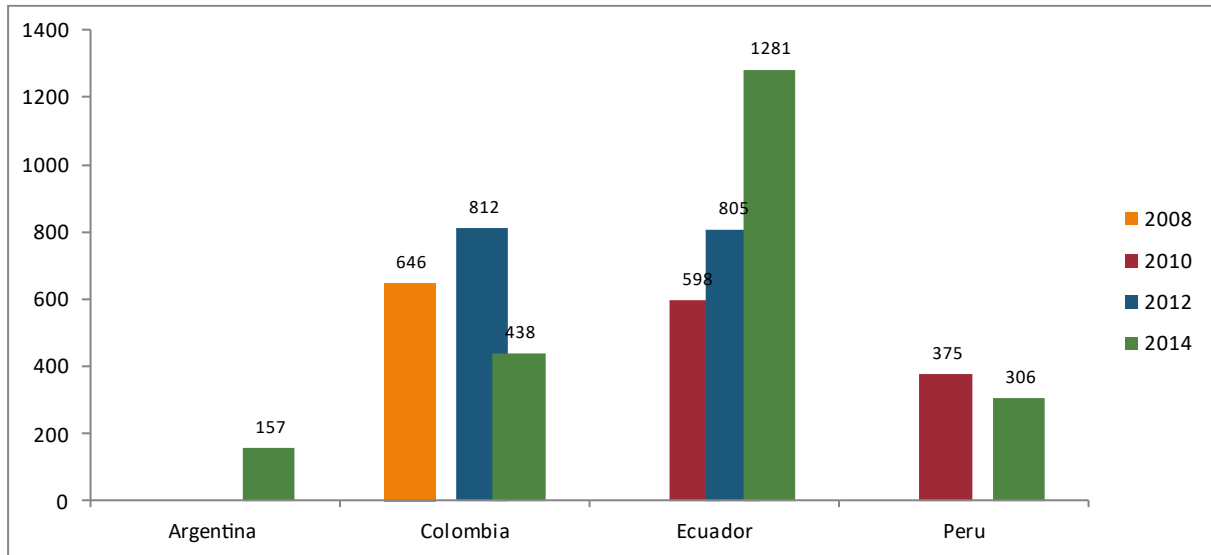
Despite pioneer scholars having defended for a century the idea of the little influence of public opinion on foreign policy, technological changes opened a path to democratize the access of information, what was once a monopoly of the elites. That would set a trend in which public opinion matters to foreign policy (Burstein, 2003), an idea that this thesis follows. In that way, it has become clearer that public opinion is increasingly influencing foreign policy (Holsti, 1992; Sobel, 2001). In other words, the public opinion has been showed itself as relatively informed about international issues, presenting stable standard and perceptions, values and rational e coherent priorities (FARIAS, 2008).

Finally, elite politicians are not aliens completely divorced from the publics they represent; socialized within the same national contexts, they share ideologies and international attitudes as their constituents. Besides, ideology has an indirect impact on foreign policy via public opinion as revealed as changes in American public opinion preceded also changes in the U.S Foreign Policy (YAM & GRIES, 2020). In the case of public opinion and foreign policy in Latin America, several papers show the importance of that relation (SELIGSON, 2000; FARIA, 2008; ALVAREZ, 2008; LOPES & FARIA, 2014).

3.2 Methodology and Database

The surveys used in this chapter were carried out by “Las Americas y el Mundo”, that is presented in eighteen Latin American countries. The first idea would be to compare how the public opinion reacted during the rising of Unasur and later when the States began to withdrawal from the bloc. However, unfortunately, it was not possible to do that because the surveys of “Las Americas y el Mundo Unasur” only had data for the years of 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014, way before the decline process as it is possible to be seen in the chart. Nevertheless, the “Las Americas y el Mundo” is important as many of the surveys included the opinion about Unasur and the ideology of the people being interviewed as other variables related to international politics.

Figure 3 – Database of Public Opinion by Country and Year



Source: Elaborated by the author.

Besides only four countries of the twelve participants of Unasur being used from the Las Americas y el Mundo, another problem to run the statistical model is that many answers from the surveys have been taken out since a lot of people preferred not to answer some questions or showed themselves indifferent to some of the variables. Therefore, the database got smaller because of those empty/indifferent answers. Nonetheless, the results and the variables presented are meaningful and import to the study.

The database built includes countries as Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru. Four of the twelve countries that participated in the Unasur bloc. Despite other countries were carried out surveys, just those four countries included a question specifically about Unasur in their surveys. Considering that, the following hypothesis will be tested:

H1: Ideology is a significant variable statistically to explain if people support or not the Unasur. More importantly, the coefficient of the variable would be negative. In

other words, more to the left in the scale of a person, more in favor of the Unasur will be this person.

In total, there 4137 completed answers from people from the years 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014 for the first aggregated linear model of the public opinion. The second aggregated model has 1.767 answers, since the number goes down because of many indifferent or missing answers of the variables used in the model. Later, the models are run separated by country: Argentina (157), Ecuador (963), Colombia (1250), and Peru (543). However, before the results, the following section will explain the variables used in the models.

3.3.1 Dependent Variables

1. Unasur: This variable is a scale from 0 to 100 which the person answers if they are against 0, indifferent 50 or in favor 100 of the Unasur. The interviewed could use any other number from 0 to 100. Important to mention that all the indifferent answers were erased from the database. The following question was done for the interviewed people:

la misma escala del 0 al 100, siendo 0 una opinión muy desfavorable, 100 una opinión muy favorable y 50 una opinión ni favorable ni desfavorable, ¿cuál es su opinión de las siguientes organizaciones internacionales? Si no tiene opinión al respecto o no conoce esa organización, por favor dígamelo. La Unión Sudamericana de Naciones (UNASUR). (Las Americas y el Mundo, 2014)

3.3.1 Independent Variables

1. Ideology: The ideology of the people is scaled from 0 to 10 in this variable, being 0 the extreme-left and 10 extreme-right. The question is “*Hablando de su orientación política, ¿dónde se ubica usted en una escala de 0 a 10, donde 0 significa “políticamente de izquierda” y 10 “políticamente de derecha”? Puede utilizar cualquier punto de la escala*” (Las Americas y el Mundo, 2014).

2. Education: This variable is about how many years the person studied. “*¿Hasta qué año escolar estudió usted (grado máximo)? Año de (Primaria,*

Secundaria, Preparatoria/Bachillerato o carrera técnica, Universidad, Postgrado)” (Las Americas y el mundo, 2014).

3. Participation: This variable shows If the person is in favor or against engagement in the international relations. In other words, if she/he is an isolationist or not. *En su opinión, ¿qué es mejor para el futuro de _____, tener participación activa en asuntos mundiales, o mantenerse alejado de los asuntos mundiales? 1 – Participación activa; 0 – Mantenerse alejado de los asuntos mundiales. (Las Americas y el Mundo, 2014)*

4. Region Focus: This variable shows the preferences for the international relations in the world, asking where it should be the focus of the foreign policy of the country. *Dígame, ¿a qué región del mundo debe _____ prestar más atención? 1 – America Latina; 0 – Another region mentioned (North America; Europe, Asia; Middle East; Africa; Oceania). (Las Americas y el mundo, 2014)*

5. Trust in the USA: If the person trusts or not in the USA. *De las siguientes palabras, ¿cuál describe mejor sus sentimientos hacia Estados Unidos? 1 – Confianza; 0 - Desconfianza. (Las Americas y el mundo, 2014)*

6. Admiration for the USA: If the person admires or not the USA. *De las siguientes palabras, ¿cuál describe mejor sus sentimientos hacia Estados Unidos? 1 – Admiración; 0 - Desprecio. (Las Americas y el mundo, 2014)*

3.4 Results

As first results, the table 4 shows the aggregated database covering Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, 4 of the 12 countries of Unasur, 33% of the membership. As all of them have left the bloc, therefore, the database represents 50% of the members that have left or suspended its participation from the bloc, since eight states have done it.

Table 4 –Linear Regression: Aggregated Database: Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

	(1) UNASUR Model 1	(2) UNASUR Model 2
IDEOLOGY	-0.594*** (-3.74)	-0.654** (-2.73)
PARTICIPATION		10.64*** (5.65)
REGIONFOCUS		2.363 (1.76)
EDUCATION		0.376** (2.84)
TRUST in the USA		8.152*** (4.11)
ADMIRATION for USA		-5.896* (-2.41)
_cons	65.28*** (65.91)	53.21*** (17.64)
<i>N</i>	4137	1767

t statistics in parentheses
 * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The first linear regression of Unasur, model 1, is straight between the dependent variable Unasur and Ideology variable. As it is shown in the table 4, the p-value of ideology is statistically significant to $p < 0.001$ and its coefficient is -0.594 . In other words, there is a significant correlation between Unasur and ideology of the people interviewed, it means higher the scale of the Unasur from 0 to 100, lower the scale of ideology 0 to 10. Closer to the extreme left of the scale of ideology, 0, closer would be to 100 in the scale someone would give to Unasur. In the model 2, the same result is presented in the ideology. In other words, both results confirm H1, which ideology of

the Public Opinion is polarized when it comes to the Unasur. Besides, one more time both negative coefficients confirm that left-wing people tend to be in favor of Unasur while right-wing tend to be against.

In the model 2, it is also presented other variables as Participation; Region Focus; Education; Trust in USA; Admiration for USA. The significant variables in this case are also Participation; Education; Trust in the USA and Admiration for the USA. The ideology has presented itself as the same result before, significant and as with negative correlation. Participation is significant and has a positive coefficient, it means if someone is in favor of the participation of the country in international organizations closer to 100 would be the scale of Unasur. The education variable shows that higher the years of education, higher the scale of the Unasur. Trust in USA is also statistically significant, and it shows a counter-intuitive result but that could be also interesting to discuss. People interviewed that trust in the USA have higher scale for Unasur what could reinforce the argument that Unasur, in the vision of public opinion, was not anti-USA bloc as some critics may say. For last, people that admire the USA has a lower scale for the bloc. To confirm and understand better the data, a model was run for each country to find which dependent variables are more significant statically to each case.

Table 5: Linear Regression: Model separated by country: Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

	(3) Argentina 2014	(4) Ecuador 2010-2012	(5) Colombia 2008	(6) Peru 2010-2014
IDEOLOGY	-2.371* (-2.23)	-0.672* (-1.98)	-0.692* (-2.56)	0.431 (0.88)
PARTICIPATION	0.0967 (0.02)		-2.441** (-2.82)	10.57* (2.41)
REGION FOCUS	-0.418 (-0.26)		-0.368 (-0.92)	3.794 (1.50)
EDUCATION	0.954 (0.86)		-0.117 (-1.34)	
ADMIRATION IN THE USA		-1.327 (-0.50)	-0.131 (-0.16)	
TRUST IN THE USA			-0.610 (-0.63)	8.736*** (3.65)
_cons	66.43*** (5.73)	66.97*** (22.54)	76.71*** (27.54)	39.21*** (7.51)
<i>N</i>	157	963	1250	543

t statistics in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Elaborated by the author.

From all the countries of the aggregated database, Argentina, Ecuador, and Colombia have confirmed H1, having the ideology as a significant variable and with a

negative coefficient. On the other hand, Peru is an outlier and did not present the ideology variable significant statistically.

Outlier: Peru

Peru is the only country of the database that does not to show results with political polarization over the Unasur in the public opinion. At the same point, it is interesting that Peru is the only country from the withdrawal's moment to nowadays has never voted in Congress to leave the bloc differently from what Ecuadorian congress did it. Therefore, technically Peru still maintains its participation in the organizations, since Congress has never voted its withdrawal law project. Besides never voting the withdrawals of Peru, now it has become an issue since former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the President Pedro Castillo has mentioned in his first speech the governments' willing to take it back the project of withdrawal from congress and on the other hand reinforce Unasur's project.

En el año bicentenario seremos coherentes y consecuentes con esta tradición histórica de la diplomacia peruana y retiraremos del Congreso la solicitud para que el Perú denuncie el tratado que instituyó UNASUR. Por el contrario, impulsaremos su reconstitución y modernización, como el organismo de cooperación y consulta que afirme en este mundo global la entidad propia de Sudamérica en la política mundial (Bejar, 2021).

Also, according to the Bejar (2021) Peru will also reinforce the integration and cooperation without ideological distinctions. Later, Bejar was replaced due to some controversial declarations. Nevertheless, it is symptomatic that the first Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pedro Castillo, Hector Bejar, in his first speech was clear in defending Unasur's project and giving up of its withdrawal. Furthermore, evident defense of Unasur's legacy is also seen in an editorial from Peru as this one written by former Minister of Foreign Affairs that took part of Unasur's rising: "*El Perú, respetando la constitución y el acuerdo nacional, no debería formalizar el retiro de UNASUR. Actualmente el Ejecutivo ha suspendido su membresía. No es prudente ir más allá de esta decisión*" (CUADROS, 2020).

Regardless the reason Peru still takes part of Unasur, despite the Executive's decision of suspension of the bloc, it sounds more predictable that Congress would not be in a hurry to vote the law project to leave the bloc since the public opinion in Peru is not polarized over the issue. According to Cuadros (2020) "*A diferencia de los otros cinco países, para el Perú el retiro de UNASUR plantea problemas reales que exceden la ideología*". At the end, the former Peruvian minister defends not going further with decision to leave Unasur, since new elections could change the scenario in the region: "*Este año hay elecciones en Bolivia; el próximo en Perú, Chile y Ecuador; y, el 2022 en Brasil y Colombia. La rosa de los vientos de la diplomacia regional puede reencontrar el norte de su identidad y acción conjunta*" (CUADOR, 2020).

In sum, despite being an outlier in the results, Peru did not seem like in a hurry to withdraw from Unasur since it has been more than three years of the Executive's suspension, differently from what Ecuador did. It is the only country that suspended its participation, but it has not moved forward with the process of leaving the bloc. Both Ecuador and Peru constitutionally must vote the withdrawal from Unasur in congress, but only the first country did it properly. This scenario could explain why Ecuador, differently from Peru, showed significant polarization towards the Unasur in the public opinion while Peru has not. At the end, with Peru's reluctant or with lack of interest to truly leave the bloc, Pedro Castillo's government clearly shows a shift on how Unasur's process should be dealt. In case Unasur remains a non-polarized issue to the public opinion or less controversial nowadays, the president's shift towards Unasur's reinforcement could be easier accomplished in Peru's foreign policy.

PARTIAL CONCLUSIONS

The Public Opinion has been showed itself as relatively informed about the international issues (FARIAS, 2008), besides elite politicians are not completely divorced from the publics they represent, having the ideology an indirect impact on foreign policy via public opinion as revealed as changes in American public (YAM; GRIES, 2020). Despite relatively a new subfield, especially in Latin America but several papers have showed the importance of deepening the subfield (SELIGSON, 2000; FARIA, 2008; ALVAREZ, 2008; LOPES & FARIA, 2014).

Unfortunately, it was not possible to run models for all the countries in South America. However, four of the eight countries that left Unasur are quite a representative number of the countries that withdrew from the bloc and shows trends as in the chapters before. As results, again it is possible to visualize and reinforce the argument that the ideological polarization marked by left-wing and right-wing spectrum were primordial domestic factors that led the dismantlement of the Unasur. Argentina, Colombia and Ecuador had all presented the variable ideology as significant statistically, showing how the ideology of the public opinion reflects its position towards Unasur. More importantly, it has been showed how people from left-wing spectrums tend to be in favor of Unasur while right-wing spectrum ones tend to be against. At last, Peru presented it itself as an outlier of the model run. As presented, Peru's congress had never truly finished the withdrawal from Unasur. Besides, the scenario in Peru points to shifts on the countries position to Unasur, what it could be seen as a fierce of the Executive ideology over the subject.

CONCLUSIONS

Why Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay left the Unasur, while Bolivia, Guyana, Surinam, and Venezuela remained on the bloc? As demonstrated along this essay, the ideology of the Executive, the Legislative and the Public Opinion marked by right-spectrum and left-spectrum presented a relevant factor that demonstrate how the Unasur was polarized even from its early beginning, and most importantly, demonstrate their preferences.

Diplomatic cables showed how the differences always existed among the presidents, not being a consensus how the integration process of south America would be. Due to that, institutional flexibility and lack of supranational institutions were a result not only of Argentinean's desire to assure there were no restrains to its foreign policy (Nolte and Comini 2016), but also the Venezuelan and Colombian's governments. Later, the polarization that has always existed was worsened with the Venezuelan crisis. The scenario of dismantlement then was accelerated with the drastic changes that occurred in the Brazilian Foreign Policy as well with the decline of the economical growth in the region.

As the domestic factors were the focus of this research, it is important to highlight that the international scenario was relevant to Unasur's dismantlement, specially to accelerate the decline of Unasur, but as demonstrated, the players inside the foreign policy-decision had always been polarized ideologically through left-wing and right-wing the regional process and had their preferences explained by the ideologies. Then, why changes on the ideology of players would not influence their country's policy toward Unasur?

As a result of that, a conservative wave as lived in the last years in South America is a plausible explanation to how Unasur rose declined. Unasur struggled to be accomplished as it is possible to see from diplomatic cables, the specialized literature, and the results, since the differences were still great among the countries, and not only ideologically speaking since most of them were from left-wing spectrums.

As pointed out by Jaeger (2019), the current collapse of Unasur rises as a symbol of a broader process, resulted from a conservative offensive in the region. On

that path, this research tried to demonstrate empirically what it has been already discussed somehow in the Unasur's literature, but not taken a lot attention. In other words, the focus on the domestic players empirically demonstrated how Unasur had been already polarized ideologically and how the process continued through the conservative offensive.

Finally, according to Eilstrup-Sangiovanni (2019), Unasur would have had more chances if had been active for longer, with centralized institutions and technical mandates. From the exposed results and considering that each government sees the integration process on its own policy preferences, (MORAVCSIK 1991), ideology from the presidents, the legislative and the public opinion presented as a strong empirical data of the preference of these internal players.

Moravcsik (1991) explains the regional international as an intergovernmental regime, which the decisions and preferences of the State are influenced by organized pressures of the internal coalitions formed by the elites. Therefore, the ideology as showed as factor influenced the behavior of the elites to leave the bloc. In the national level, domestic groups pursue their interests pressuring the government to adopt favorable politics to its interests as at the same time the politicians pursue the power creating coalitions with those groups (PUTNAM, 2010). All these authors point on how the elites could change the foreign policy of its country according to their preferences.

At the end, other prospects could be imagined from the results presented. If a conservative offensive led to the decline of Unasur, could newly left-wing presidents elected in South America, legislators or the public revitalize/reinforce the Unasur again? A shift on the ideology of the region would bring back Unasur to its active days? Another topic to discuss would be the relation between traditional trade issues and the post-liberal regionalism since the results in this research pointed that higher percentage of trade more incentives the right-wing legislators had to vote in favor of the Unasur. Finally, this research opens a path to deepen the empirical results and the discussions over the issue of the ideological polarization of Unasur, especially considering the difficulties to present results over ideology.

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