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Public opinion and emerging powers: perceptions of the assertive diplomacies of South Africa, Brazil, and Turkey in national and regional surveys

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This article investigates whether there is evidence of a "rise and fall" of emerging powers over the past 20 years in the eyes of public opinion. We compared several national and regional surveys on the foreign policies of South Africa, Brazil, and Turkey in search of signs of endorsement or disapproval of the more assertive foreign policies exercised by these countries. The results suggest a pronounced rise and decline for Ankara and some decline for Brasília; however, the results are inconclusive for Pretoria. The present work seeks to contribute to the debate on status and regional leadership by adding a public opinion and comparative regionalism perspective, in addition to offering a convenient summary of diplomatic surveys for countries of the Global South.

Keywords: emerging powers; South Africa; Brazil; Turkey; public opinion; regional leadership

Introduction[2]

After the euphoria of the past decade surrounding emerging countries such as the BRICS, the relevance of intermediary countries has dwindled, either because of declining economic strength, corruption, domestic instability, or an inability to sustain larger ambitions in global governance. As some had anticipated (Jacobs; Van Rossem, 2014), rising powers previously grouped together now clearly differ in degrees of economic (China) and military-strategic (Russia) protagonism. For the other putative powers of the multipolar world, the ambition of the past decade has been replaced by less daring roles in the international system. In fact, for some authors, the "rise and fall" of emerging powers is already complete (Nossel, 2016).

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The objective of this article is to seek empirical evidence of this rise and fall curve. Analyzing the last 20 years, is it possible to identify a moment when the foreign policy executed by emerging powers reached higher levels of prestige? Can we also detect the instant when their status began to decline?

The trajectory of these powers has often been framed as a status pursuit. We find in the literature attempts to measure growth in political status, for example through appointments to governing positions in international organizations (Schirm, 2010; Malamud, 2011a; Lopes; Oliveira, 2017; Paiva; Mesquita, 2022), diplomatic networks (Duque, 2018), and other composite indices (Volgy et al., 2014). Yet, this research agenda has left public opinion largely underexplored. Since status is an intersubjective artifact, it depends on the perception that other actors have of the country (Paul et al., 2014). Thus, one of the best types of empirical evidence of a government's success in raising its prestige can be obtained from the impression of the population within the state, as well as the evaluations from residents in neighboring countries. Domestically, public approval confers legitimacy on governmental practices, including foreign relations. Externally, the opinions in countries that supposedly follow the regional powers offer an indication of whether such leadership is truly recognized. Some recent works have explored the link between public opinion and the achievement of a regional leadership status for Latin America (Onuki; Mouron; Urdinez, 2016; Rocha, 2018) and the Middle East (Özcan; Köse; Karakoç, 2015), and between BRICS' presidential diplomacy and its effect on approval ratings (Goldsmith; Horiuchi; Matush, 2021), but there are no comparative studies between regions to date. This article compares public opinion data between regions of the Global South, contributing to scholarship on the foreign policies of regional powers as well as to works on comparative regionalism (Börzel; Risse, 2016).

Due to the greater availability of data for developed countries, surveys on diplomacy are one of the fields susceptible to what Lall (2016, p. 415) called "advanced democracy bias": an abundance of data for the "OECD world" and scarcity when it comes to less developed countries. For this reason, this article also has the secondary benefit of providing a summary list of existing databases on public opinion and foreign policy for the selected countries, making them easily accessible to other researchers. This list can be found in the Appendix.

The article focuses on three countries: Brazil, Turkey, and South Africa. These are classic examples of regional and/or emerging powers[3], with comparisons between them abounding (Sandal, 2014; Westhuizen; Milani, 2019; Mesquita; Chien, 2021). Their diplomatic efforts were relatively synchronous, expanding in the 2000s and tailing off in the following decade. The assessment of such endeavors is inconclusive in scholarship, given

[3] For distinction between emerging and regional powers, see Lima (2019, p. 50-71).

their brevity and controverted achievements (Oğuzlu, 2016; Milani; Pinheiro; Lima, 2017). Manifestations of this decline in the eyes of public opinion, however, have been less studied.

Operationally, we sought evidence of the rise and fall in the prestige of the three countries through two exploratory research questions: (1) What are the public opinion evaluations of these countries' foreign policies, especially their most assertive demonstrations in recent decades? (2) Which diplomatic relationships are perceived as desirable or beneficial for the country? We label these two dimensions (i) programmatic and (ii) relational, since they refer, respectively, to the evaluation of the programs and initiatives executed by the foreign ministries and to the preferred relationships for the country. We chose them for substantive and methodological reasons, explained below.

We gathered information on these two dimensions (a) at the domestic level of each state and (b) in neighboring countries, to the extent to which data were retrievable. Thus, our synthesis looks at how the South African, Brazilian, and Turkish populations evaluated their governments' bolder diplomatic moments, and how these states were perceived by neighboring states. This segmentation is exemplified in the matrix in Table 1, which illustrates some of the typical questions for each dimension.

Table 1
Matrix of programmatic and relational dimensions, applied to domestic and external public opinion, with examples of typical questions

Level/Dimension	(i) Programmatic	(ii) Relational
(a) Domestic	"How do you evaluate your country's foreign policy?"	"With which countries should your country deepen relations?"
(b) External (regional neighbors)	"How do you evaluate the foreign policy of South Africa/Brazil/Turkey?"	"Should your country deepen relations with South Africa/Brazil/Turkey?"

Source: Elaborated by the author.

This article is divided into five sections: first, we conduct a literature review; the next three sections present the data for Brazil, Turkey, and South Africa; the fifth and last section presents the conclusions of the analysis. Lastly, we provide an Appendix with a summary list of the main surveys for the countries studied.

Public opinion and foreign policy in the emerging powers of the Global South

Not all countries labeled as emerging powers are comparable with respect to public opinion and foreign policy. For Russia and China, being autocratic regimes, public opinion is not a relevant factor in the foreign policy process. India, for its part, is a democracy - the largest in the world as a matter of fact. However, it is also a nuclear power and for that reason it occupies a higher level in the global hierarchy of power.

Brazil, Turkey, and South Africa share characteristics that allow us to expect greater homogeneity concerning the link between public opinion and foreign policy: they are semi-peripheral countries with relatively democratic and non-nuclear regimes.[4] Beyond these structural similarities, the three countries have also shown similar attitudes and ambitions in the last 20 years.

The combination of moderate power capabilities, internal democracy, and external ambition makes the analysis of these three cases promising. Their contrast will provide an understanding of the dynamics of legitimation of new and bold policies against the backdrop of relative deprivation and underdevelopment in these societies. As argued by Milani, Pinheiro, and Lima (2017, p. 595-596):

> foreign policy decision-makers confronted with a graduation dilemma have to consider the economic, social and political costs of their choices. If a state has high levels of domestic economic inequality and marked social stratification, key decision-makers may be obliged to justify to their national audience those foreign policy choices attributable to an ambition for regional and global prominence and for an international rule-making role. The dilemma here is that there are audience costs that leaders may incur from publicly announcing economic, financial, technical, or political support to developing or least developed countries.

Programmatic and relational innovations

Despite their differences, Brazil, Turkey, and South Africa show similarities in their diplomatic behavior at the beginning of the 21st century. All three countries have invested in assertive foreign policies aimed at securing a position of greater international status, with consequences for both their diplomatic profile and their geographic compass. Such revision of external emphases, as well as the greater energy in pursuing them, was fostered by common post-Cold War developments: redemocratization (Battaglino, 2012; Siko, 2014); macroeconomic and political stabilization (Vigevani; Cepaluni, 2011; Altunişik, 2014); disenchantment with previous orthodox diplomatic agendas (Oğuzlu, 2008; Mielniczuk; 2013; Sandal, 2014); the rise of anti-status quo political leadership (Öniş, 2013; Westhuizen, 2013). Comparing each country with its own recent past, we detect changes in the content of their foreign policies, as well as in the network of relationships. We denote these two innovations as (i) programmatic and (ii) relational.

(i) Changes in content refer to the objectives and programs pursued. They comprise both adjustments of priorities in existing programs and the inclusion or removal of

[4] This shortlist comes close to the group of "second-tier states" suggested by Milani et al. (2017), although the latter does not take regime type into account.

goals and activities in the country's foreign agenda (Hermann, 1990). Updates of this nature were visible in the international relations of all three countries. For the most part, these changes were more revisionist than revolutionary, allowing for new emphases in the set of national interests. Usually, these gestures were interpreted as a search for a more autonomous and innovative global insertion (Vigevani; Cepaluni, 2011). The three emerging powers also aspired for modest reforms in global governance, notably their admission into the circles of greater international authority (Milani; Pinheiro; Lima, 2017). On a regional scale, these powers articulated clearer ambitions for leadership (Nolte, 2010; Mesquita; Chien, 2021). The growth in the capabilities and ambitions of Brazil, Turkey, and South Africa led to an expectation that these countries would also pay their fair share in maintaining regional and international order. Thus, their external activism also grew more robust in the period, for example in the form of participation in peacekeeping missions and crisis mediation (Mesquita; Seabra, 2022), development cooperation and humanitarianism (Schanzer; Tahiroglu, 2016; Westhuizen; Milani, 2019), and other high-profile endeavors.

(ii) These projects led to reorientations in the relationships of each state. Still in the 1990s, South Africa and Brazil conferred a prominent position to their regional partners, becoming pivots of integration processes. This prominence intensified in the following decade, with increasing diplomatic, institutional, and economic engagement with the regions, as well as diversification of extra-regional ties (Vigevani; Cepaluni, 2011; Moore, 2014). While the South African and Brazilian relational shift reflects the ideology of South-South diplomacy (Westhuizen, 2013), the Turkish reorientation is more localized and moves from the West to the Middle East. Having firmly allied itself with the Western bloc during the Cold War and seeking entry into the European Union (EU) at the turn of the century, Ankara eventually lost its enthusiasm for Brussels and shifted its emphasis elsewhere (Oğuzlu, 2008). Although initially several destinations across the former Ottoman sphere of influence were courted, such as the Caucasus, Balkans, and Central Asia (Davutoğlu, 2008), finally the greatest attention fell on the Middle East/North Africa (MENA). Once a source of suspicion and instability, the MENA became in the 2010s the main stage on which Turkey sought to consolidate a leadership role (Altunişik, 2014). A recent comparison of the three powers' respective levels of regional diplomatic engagement reveals that, while South Africa prioritized its region more intensely and exclusively, Turkey's attention to MENA was brief and dispersed, and Brazil occupied an intermediate position (Mesquita; Chien, 2021).

It is worth noting that the slogans employed by policymakers at the time commonly emphasized either assertiveness or geographic *foci*. Thabo Mbeki gave centrality to the "African Renaissance" discourse (Alden; Soko, 2005). Celso Amorim (2015) classified Brazilian foreign policy under his tenure as "haughty and active". Ahmet Davutoğlu (2008), for his part, advocated regional relations with "zero problems with neighbors". The fact that the decision-makers themselves perceived the novelty of their endeavors in such terms gives

us confidence that the programmatic and relational dimensions competently capture the studied phenomenon.

Since many of these reorientations were high-profile and visible, they were often the subject of public attention, and instruments such as surveys began to include questions about them. Thus, items on greater diplomatic activism (e.g.: "should the country contribute more to peacekeeping missions?") and preferential ties (e.g.: "with whom should the country seek greater international cooperation?") offer useful data to assess the programmatic and relational dimensions.

Naturally, there is an overlap between the relational and programmatic dimensions. The project of becoming a regional leader, for example, implies dense relations with the region. Analytically, however, it is useful to treat them as autonomous axes for the substantive reasons already explained and for methodological methodological ones too – i.e., as the number of compared entities increases, the number of common attributes decreases. Thus, it is only possible to compare opinion surveys applied in Brazil, Turkey, and South Africa on elements present in the surveys of all three countries and regions. Although the instruments consulted for this article varied significantly in format and content, it was possible to find in almost all of them questions about the programs followed by the foreign ministry of each country, and about the image of other countries. Such items offer us a common denominator for comparing the cases. In fact, a respondent can judge whether a particular diplomatic initiative is in the interest of the nation, without necessarily specifying who the recipient of the initiative is. To consider relationships and programs as distinct corresponds to assessing foreign policy first in terms of its directionality, and then in terms of its intensity and/or objectives.

To conclude, it is useful to highlight two arguments that support the validity of public opinion polls as instruments to test for signs of a "rise and fall" of emerging powers. First, we consider the intersubjective nature of status in the international system and, second, the usefulness of more granular metrics. Since the emergence of the BRICS, the literature highlights that the vertical mobility sought by emerging powers is largely a relational phenomenon (Lage, 2022). Status is a social attribute that can only be conferred on those who seek it by their peers (Paul et al., 2014). Public opinion, both internal and external, can be considered one of these interlocutors. Second, although the literature recognizes the intersubjective dynamic between *ego* – those who claim the role – and its counterparts – those who decide whether or not to grant it – it has favored government manifestations as a way to measure acceptance or refutation (e.g.: Alden; Soko, 2005; Schirm, 2010; Malamud, 2011b). Governmental reaction, however, is a unit of observation at a high level of aggregation. Observing only gestures by state officials misses out on much information, so that differences between countries are thought of in terms of quality (e.g., countries are either followers or challengers) when they could be differences of degree. Survey results

offer a finer quantification, allowing us to scale the range of acceptance or opposition to different initiatives.

Hence, we turn now to the analysis of the available data for the three cases, dividing the exposition between domestic and regional surveys.

Brazil

The established sources for public opinion and Brazilian foreign policy are: the project "The Americas and the World" (TAW)[5], including seven other Latin American countries, which also has a specific segmentation "Brazil, the Americas, and the World" (BAW)[6]; and the studies titled "Brazil's International Agenda" led by Amaury de Souza (2001, 2009) with diplomatic elites. Multi-thematic surveys that occasionally mention diplomatic topics include the *Latinobarómetro*[7] and the *Proyecto Elites Latinoamericanas* of the University of Salamanca (PELA-USAL)[8], for the region, and the "Brazilian Legislative Survey" (Power; Zucco, 2014) for national members of congress[9]. Experts are another audience that has been frequently consulted on diplomatic matters, whose impressions feed databases used in individual articles (Merke; Reynoso, 2016).

Domestic public opinion

We begin by analyzing the programmatic dimension. It encompasses questions involving the approval of foreign policy by Brazilian public opinion, more precisely the endorsement or disapproval of a more assertive foreign policy globally and regionally. Generic questions about the approval of foreign policy show a trend that is mostly supportive, albeit declining in the long run. At the elite level, a 2009 poll revealed more positive evaluations for Cardoso's foreign policy than for Lula's (62% versus 46%) (Souza, 2009, p. 125). At the popular level, in 2010, 72% of Brazilians "agreed" in part or totally with the government on foreign policy while in 2014 only 49% did so.

We found in the BAW a question about how important Brazil was on the international scene, which allows us to detect whether there is a perception of rise and fall. The perception that the country was "very important" internationally grew from 49% in 2010 to 52% in 2014 but fell to 39% in 2019. If in 2010, 79% thought Brazil was at that point a more important country than 10 years earlier, in 2019 that percentage dropped to 57%.

[5] Available at: <https://www.lasamericasyelmundo.cide.edu/>. Access on: 20 July 2022.
[6] Available at: <https://las-americas.github.io/cebrap/>. Access on: 20 July 2022.
[7] Available at: <www.latinobarometro.org>. Access on: 20 July 2022.
[8] Available at: <https://oir.org.es/pela/en/>. Access on: 20 July 2022.
[9] Available at: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/bls>. Access on: 20 July 2022.

Symmetrically, those who thought the country was less important compared to the previous decade jumped from 9% to 36% over the period.

There is little endorsement of isolationism and consistent support for active diplomatic participation. At the elite level, such an impression is practically unanimous (in 2001, 99%, 2008, 97%) (Souza, 2009, p. 14); at the popular level, according to BAW data, the idea that the country should actively participate in international politics grew from 69% (2010) to 77% (2014) and 87% (2019).

Some of the initiatives commonly associated with the Brazilian prestige agenda are mentioned in the BAW. Specifically, the campaign to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the set of redistributive or paymastering policies towards poorer countries, and, more diffusely, the claim for a leadership role. Faced with the hypothetical question, "If the UNSC could have a new seat to represent Latin America as a whole, which country should occupy that seat?", Brazilians largely chose their own country, although this percentage was higher in the first wave (in 2010, 81%) than in the last (67% in 2019).

Approval of redistributive gestures can be indirectly accessed through a set of BAW questions. In 2014, 44% of Brazilians responded that it was "very" or "somewhat" important that Brazil invest more resources "in providing development money to other countries," versus 48% who deemed it "not very" or "not at all" important. In contrast, in the same year, questionnaire items applying this question more specifically to South America obtained more endorsement than rejection of the redistributive role. In 2019, 59% thought such spending was important, compared to 39% who did not. At a first glance, therefore, there is evidence that Brazilian public opinion has gradually become more favorable to redistributive cooperation with asymmetric partners – although by a modest margin[10].

At first, the fact seems to run contrary to the expectation that residents of underdeveloped countries are impervious to spending resources far from home (Westhuizen; Milani, 2019). However, recent literature has cautioned against the face value of these percentages. As Hardt, Mouron, and Apolinário Júnior (2020) have shown, affirmative answers to questions about "helping the least developed" in the abstract may suffer from a "social desirability bias". When exposed to framing experiments (e.g., comparing how many hospitals could be built at home with the money spent on UN peacekeeping missions), respondents are massively in favor of reducing spending abroad and prioritizing domestic needs[11].

[10] Also noteworthy is the survey conducted by Milani and Klein in 2016 with 349 Brazilian diplomats (corresponding to 22% of active diplomats) on South-South Cooperation and development policy, in which they explore other aspects beyond just endorsement, for example: assessment of the main bottlenecks, position regarding the adoption of political or economic conditionalities, among others (Milani; Klein, 2021).

[11] Among Brazilian members of congress, the focus on national needs has always been in the majority: when asked if BNDEs should prioritize projects inside Brazil, 68% agreed in 2013 and 81% in 2017, according to BLS data.

Finally, there is a loss of enthusiasm for the option of explicit regional leadership. In 2010, 49.5% said that Brazil should seek to be a leader in Latin America, against only 10.4% who advised against such a pursuit. In 2014, the leadership option drops to 33.8% and the isolation option increases to 17.3% (BAW, 2010, 2014, 2019).

Turning to the relational axis, this concerns the reorientation of the privileged partners in foreign relations. For 2008, we found at the elite level the perception that Brazil should prioritize trade negotiations with developed countries in the Global North (26%), South America, and other emerging countries in the Global South (31%), both options, and other answers (41%) (Souza, 2009, p. 26). As of 2010, we found in three waves of the BAW a question related to the theme, which put the option in regional terms, as seen in Table 2:

Table 2
"In your opinion, which region of the world should Brazil pay more attention to?" (%)

	2010	2014	2019
North America	11.8	9.6	17.1
Latin America	24	15.9	18.7
Europe	11.4	13	11
Asia	9.8	6.9	6.1
Middle East	11.3	8.6	5.8
Africa	10.3	24.3	18.1
Oceania	1.7	1.2	5.5

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on BAW (2010, 2014, 2019).

The trend reveals that, at the beginning of the decade, there was a concentration of preferences in Latin America. In 2014, unusually, Africa becomes the most cited destination, followed by Latin America and regions in the Global North, until finally, in 2019, Latin America and Africa occupy a leading position, followed by North America. Thus, the most significant change in the decade was the rise of the African continent, which is now in equal footing with the Latin American region and the more developed areas[12].

External public opinion

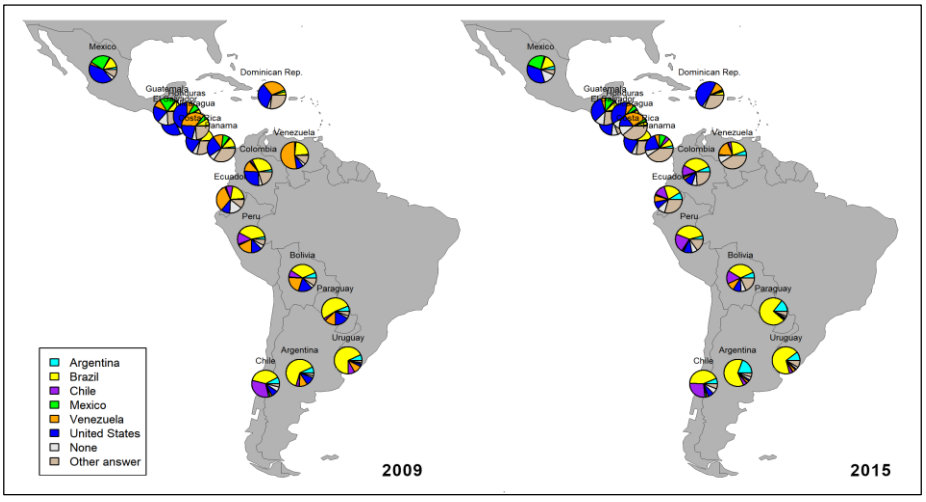
Brazil's neighbors have varied collections of polls on public opinion and foreign policy that sometimes mention the country's leadership claims, for example the reports *La Opinión Pública Argentina sobre Política Exterior y Defensa* published by *Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales* (CARI)[13]. For this article, we focus mainly on TAW and *Latinobarómetro* because their waves are applied synchronously across the region.

[12] In contrast, among Brazilian members of congress, a reversal was seen over the decade: while in 2009 only 35% agreed that it would be more beneficial for the country to associate with OECD countries instead of South America, in 2017 that number jumped to 53% (BLS, 2017).
[13] Available at: <https://www.cari.org.ar/>. Access on: 20 July 2022.

For TAW, the 2014 wave was successful in this sense, as it collected impressions at the same time from all eight participating countries. As demonstrated by Onuki, Mouron, and Urdinez (2016) with regional data from this wave, it is mainly the smaller countries that accept that Brazil should be the "representative" of the region in a hypothetical new permanent seat in the UNSC, while larger countries, such as Mexico, Argentina, and, to some extent, Chile, claim the privilege for themselves.

Latinobarómetro presents a recurring section on international relations, although the issue of regional leadership is not always present. The waves between 2009 and 2015, however, have questions that directly address Brazil's claim. The countries "with the most regional leadership" cited in each location are indicated in the pie charts in Figure 1:

Figure 1
"Which country in Latin America has more leadership over the region?"



Source: Elaborated by the author, based on *Latinobarómetro* (2009, 2015).

There is a geographical concentration of the perception of leadership: statements of US primacy were much stronger in Central America, while the perception of Brazil as a regional leader was restricted to South America and especially in the three Mercosur partners. In these, the notion that Brazil was a leader was always a majoritarian one and tended to increase from 2009 to 2015. In the other South American countries, although Brazil was not the majoritarian option, in almost all cases it was the top ranked. This edge was slimmer among the Andean countries in 2009 due to Venezuelan competition. In 2015, however, with the meltdown of the regime in Caracas well advanced, the Bolivarian influence evaporated, remaining strong only in some Caribbean countries. There is also a slight increase in the Chilean option in 2015, especially among the Pacific coast countries, although Brazil remains the most recalled neighbor.

In summary, we find in Brazilian domestic opinion a continuous support for a more active and vigorous foreign policy. Although this support is always significant, we note a steady decline in enthusiasm for this agenda. In regional terms, the perception of Brazilian leadership is geographically restricted to the Southern Cone in relation to the rest of Latin America. Nevertheless, the country is frequently cited, especially in the absence of other competitors for local leadership.

Turkey

As enumerated by Özcan, Köse, and Karakoç (2015, p. 198), the main surveys involving Turkish foreign policy are applied by the Pew Research Center (Global Attitudes Program, GAP), by the German Marshall Fund (GMF), and by Kadir Has University (KHU). The International Strategic Research Organization (*Uluslararası Stratejik Araştırmalar Kurumu*, USAK) and the United States Information Agency (USIA) have also applied pertinent research on the topic in previous years.

Domestic public opinion

Looking first at the programmatic dimension, we see a long trend of moderate evaluations of the Turkish foreign policy by its citizens. Generic questions about how successful foreign policy is can be found in the USAK (2004-2009) and KHU (2013-2019) questionnaires and resulted in fairly equal splits between positive, negative, and neutral evaluations. Only in 2009 is some prevalence of positive evaluations seen (49%) (Laçiner et al., 2010, p. 167).

Questions about specific policies are more erratic, as surveys are intercepted by the agenda of the day. In recent years, for example, the Syrian conflict and its consequences have become more salient (KHU, 2019). These one-off measurements allow us to recover some cross-cutting data – e.g., that most of the population approved of the breakdown in Turkish-Israeli relations in 2008 (Laçiner et al., 2010, p. 198) and disapproved of the presence of Syrian refugees in the country (KHU, 2019; Zogby, 2019, p. 56).

Turkey's accession to the EU, meanwhile, is a topic that appears repeatedly over the years. The data show an initial enthusiasm that was eventually overcome by skepticism. In 2004 only 14% of Turks were opposed to joining the bloc, but by 2006 as many as 44% were against (Laçiner et al., 2010, p. 128). Recently, opposition has dropped from a high of 58% (2015) to 38% (2019) (KHU, 2019). The percentage of those who believed Turkey would "never" be a member of the EU jumped from 28% (2004) to an impressive 81% (2017).

The European phenomenon refers to the broader problem of Turkey's ambiguous identity between West and East. In 1991, 52% of Turks identified themselves as "Easterners," compared to 26% who said they were "Westerners" and 13% "Europeans". When asked with which countries Turkey should establish greater cooperation, "Muslim countries" came first (43%), followed by Western European countries (31%), and the United States (19%) (United States Information Agency, 1991).

Over time, Western/European perceptions became more popular, although still not a majority. In 1997, 41% of Turks believed that the country belonged to the Muslim community of nations, 31% to Europe, and 16% to both (Çarkoğli, Eder, and Kirişci, 1998). In 2008, 55% of Turks felt that they had such different values that they could not be considered part of the West. In 2010, that number dropped to 48%, but it was still higher than the 30% who said they shared enough values to be Westerners ("Transatlantic Trends: Key Findings 2010", 2010).

The mirror-image of this Western orientation lies in the enduring narrative of resentment and suspicion against the powers north of the Bosporus (Arda, 2015, p. 213). The so-called Sèvres Syndrome describes a public paranoia about foreign agents who, with the help of domestic minorities, plot to divide and conquer Turkey. According to USAK, this is often a majority impression in Turkey: between 72% (2005) and 56% (2009) of Turks believe that foreigners are plotting to dismember the nation (Laçiner et al., 2010, p. 162).

Suspicions against the West help explain some contradictory survey results; for example, the US was always, and by an important margin, the most recalled partner when asked "which country would support Turkey in a crisis situation?"[14], but it is also seen as Turkey's greatest security threat. Table 3 combines the results of the question "Who is the greatest threat to Turkey's security?" from USAK and KHU. Due to the difference of the instruments, to ensure comparability of the results, we show which countries were ranked among the top five threats.

Table 3
"Who is the greatest threat to Turkey's security?" (ranking, USAK and KHU)

Ranking	2004	2005	2009	2013	2015	2016	2017	2018
1	US	US	US	US	Israel	US	US	US
2	Greece	Israel	Israel	Israel	US	Russia	Israel	Israel
3	Armenia	France	France	Syria	Syria	Syria	EU	EU
4	Israel	Greece	Armenia	Iran	Armenia	Israel	Russia	Syria
5	UK	UK	Greece	Iraq	Iran	EU	Armenia	Armenia

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on data from USAK (2004-2009) and KHU (2013-2018)[15].

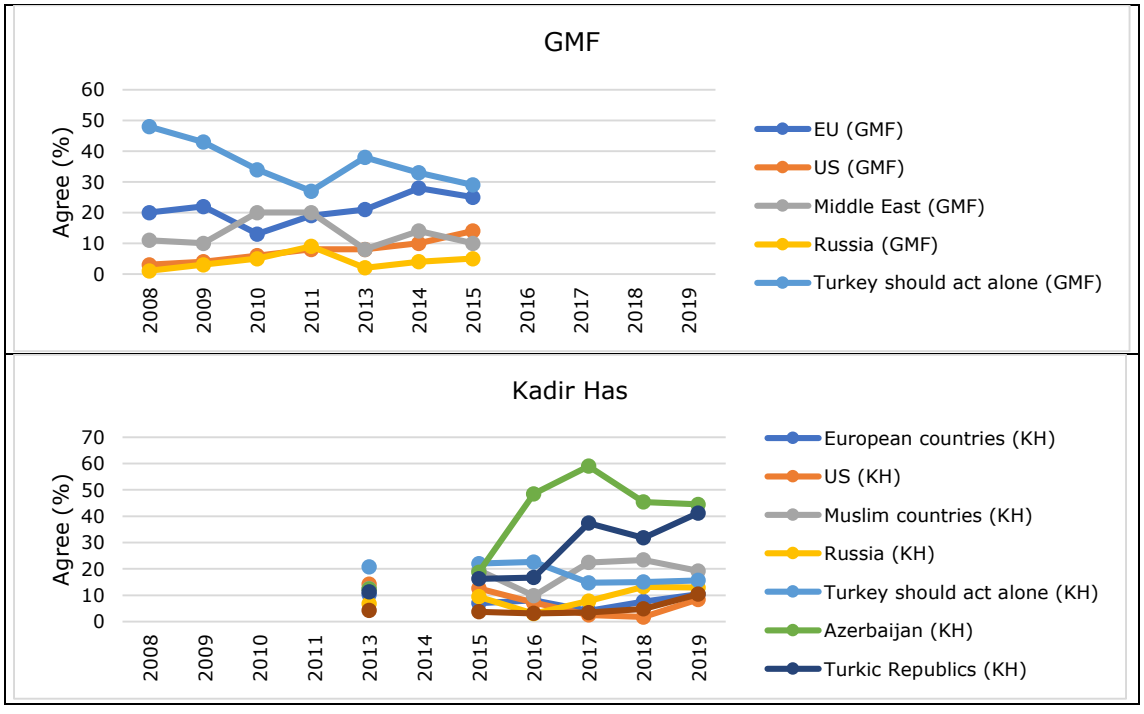
[14] The number of respondents indicating the US was always higher by at least 22% in the period between 2004 and 2009. The second candidates recorded much lower scores: Azerbaijan 11% (in 2009), Islamic countries 15% (in 2005), Germany 15% (in 2004) (Laçiner et al., 2010, p. 157).

[15] We chose to display the ranking of countries rather than the percentages of responses because of the differences between the USAK and KHU questionnaires. USAK respondents could choose only one country as a threat. In the KHU survey, more than one answer was possible.

In all years except 2015, the US was listed as the biggest threat, often accompanied by Israel. In addition, there is a decline in the perception of traditional rivals (Greece and Armenia) and a rapid rise of new threats coming from MENA, especially in the context of the Syrian civil war (Russia and Syria).

The opposite pole of threat perception is that of allies' perception. This item can be tracked over the last 10 years in the GMF and KHU surveys.

Figure 2
Answers to the question "On international matters, with which one of the following do you think Turkey should cooperate most closely?" (GMF and KHU)



Source: Elaborated by the author, based on data from GMF (2015) and KHU (2019).

The 2008 to 2015 GMF results closely track the development of Turkish protagonism in the MENA. One can see that, at all times, the main opinion for Turkish respondents was that "Turkey should act alone". However, this option was losing popularity from 2008 to 2011, as the willingness to cooperate with MENA countries also grew. In 2010, MENA countries overtook the EU. By 2013, however, in light of the failures of the Arab Spring, isolationist sentiment was reinvigorated, and the EU once again became the most desired partner. However, the values found in the overlapping years of GMF and KHU (2013 and

2015) are not entirely consonant: the two indicate a predominance of isolationism ("Turkey should act alone"), but GMF reveals in both periods a preference for the EU and close numbers for the MENA and the US, while KHU shows an inferior position for European countries. A one-off survey by the EDAM think-tank (2015) showed a structure closer to the GMF results: faced with the question "With whom should Turkey cooperate to have a stronger economy and foreign policy?", the EU was the first choice among respondents (22.7% at mass level, 73.2% elite), followed by "Arab states" for the masses (11.1%) and the US for the elites (16.9%). GMF's 2015 survey also pointed out, in another item, that 70% of Turks believe that the country should "solve its own problems first," while only 20% favor a more active role in the MENA, the Balkans, and Central Asia. The most recent KHU record is slightly divergent: European countries are never a majority option, the isolationist sentiment loses primacy from 2016 onward, and the most mentioned partners are Azerbaijan, the Turkic republics, and Muslim countries. Some methodological differences between the two polls advise against trying to fully harmonize their results[16]. Nevertheless, Azerbaijan's privileged position in the KHU is consistent with other results of the GMF survey: the latter indicates, for example, that 63% of Turkish respondents have a positive view of Azerbaijan, the highest score given to any country in the poll. This primacy also appears in USAK data from 2004 to 2009, in which Azerbaijan was consistently voted, and by a wide margin, as Turkey's "greatest friend".

To conclude the analysis of the relational dimension, we found in the KHU specific questions about the region in which Turkey should be more active. The most mentioned destinations are the MENA and Europe, in that order, consistently over the years. It is important to note that while at the beginning the gap between the two was larger (MENA 61.8% and Europe 35.9% in 2016), over the years it has diminished (47.5% and 44.9% in 2019), showing some loss in popularity for the Arab destination.

External public opinion

Given Turkey's unique location between West and East, it is important to delimit which external audience should be assessed. Perceptions about Turkey are covered by European and Euro-Atlantic surveys. One of the classic applications of Eurobarometer data, for example, concerns the opinion of European citizens on Turkish accession to the EU

[16] Although GMD and KHU have an identical question ("On international matters, with which one of the following do you think Turkey should cooperate most closely?"), the answers provided by GMF are only: "The countries of the EU"; "The US"; "The countries of the Middle East"; "Russia"; "Turkey should act alone"; "All of the above". The KHU names individual countries ignored by the GMF (e.g.: "Azerbaijan", "China", etc.) and some of the proposed groupings diverge from GMF (e.g., "Muslim countries" and "Turkic republics"). The sum of responses in KHU also exceeds 100%, which may explain the disproportionate number of votes given to Azerbaijan.

(Gerhards; Hans, 2011). Since 1996, there have been items in Eurobarometer polls about Turkey's admission. The trend over the years has drifted towards rejection: the number of opponents of the idea grew from 44% to 59% between 1996 and 2010[17]. However, as highlighted previously, the innovation tested by the AKP party consisted in distancing itself from the Euro-Atlantic axis and seeking leadership in new regions, mainly in the Arab world. Therefore, for this article it is more informative to follow the surveys applied to the Middle Eastern countries.

Our survey of available sources indicates that studies on Turkey in Middle Eastern public opinion emphasize three issues: general assessments of Turkish foreign policy, the notion of the "Turkish model", and the Arab Spring (including the war in Syria). The first question is generalist and similar to that seen for the other powers in this article, while the next two items are peculiar to the Turkish situation.

Even in the pre-AKP years, Turkey had already tried to project an image of itself as a role model to other neighbors (Altunişik, 2014). This attempt to radiate influence was seen first in the 1990s and directed towards the Turkic republics that had emerged from the Soviet bloc (Hale, 2000). Previously, Turkey's dialogue with the MENA lacked legitimacy due to issues such as Ankara's pro-West leanings, its cooperation with Israel, and secularism (Altunişik, 2014). However, the AKP's political Islam has increased the country's credibility in front of its Muslim peers. In fact, we find in regional[18] and global counterparts[19] some approval of either Turkey or the AKP party in the early 2010s. However, the attractiveness of this model was soon challenged by the reduction of growth rates, the authoritarian turn of the AKP, and the developments of the Arab Spring (Bank; Karadag, 2014).

The wave of pro-democracy protests that swept MENA between 2011-2013 was initially perceived by Ankara as an opportunity to gain prestige. The AKP had high hopes in countries where the Muslim Brotherhood was present, in Egypt above all. Despite some initial success, with the 2013 deposition of Morsi, it became clear that Ankara's charismatic offensive was failing. For some countries, such as Egypt and Syria, the post-Arab Spring scenario was one of diplomatic deterioration (Altunişik, 2014).

These three topics (generic perceptions, the Turkish model, and the Arab Spring) are present in the consulted surveys. We found only one regional-scale survey applied to Middle

[17] Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Chart/getChart/chartType/lineChart//themeKy/14/groupKy/71/savFile/703>. Access on: 20 July 2022.

[18] Moderate Islamist movements in Arab Spring countries have mentioned the AKP as a role model: *An-Nahda* in Tunisia; the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Syria; the *Parti de la Justice et du Développement* in Morocco (Bank; Karadag, 2014).

[19] A 2011 article in *The Economist* stated "[f]rom North Africa to the Gulf, the region seems to be going through a Turkish moment", adding that "whatever the flaws of the Turkish experiment, it is clearly true that Turkey under the AK party presents a more benign picture than many other versions – real and hypothetical – of Islamist rule" ("A hard act to follow", 2011).

Eastern countries with an exclusive focus on Turkish foreign policy: "The Perception of Turkey in the Middle East", applied by the TESEV think-tank between 2009 and 2013. Nevertheless, with Ankara's increasing involvement in regional politics, other important pollsters of the Arab world (Zogby, Arab Barometer), began to occasionally include questions about Turkey. Compiled longitudinal results are available in the books "The World through Arab Eyes" (Telhami, 2013) and "The Tumultuous Decade" (Zogby, 2019).

The Arab world's impressions of Ankara were not very warm in the early 2000s. In a 2002 survey, favorable perceptions of Turkey in seven Arab countries[20] were rather minoritarian: on average 34% held positive views (cf. 59% for Iran, 25% for the US) (Furia; Lucas, 2006, p. 594). A first turning point came with Erdoğan's forceful condemnation of Israel in the context of the Gaza conflicts in 2008. Erdoğan was cited as the "most admired world leader" in polls in 2009 in six Arab countries[21] and again in 2011, at the beginning of the Arab Spring (Telhami, 2013, p. 82-83). Visibly, Turkey's prime hour was at the onset of the Arab Spring. Positive perceptions peaked between 2010 and 2012, declining rapidly after that. In the TESEV survey, reductions were most acute in Syria and Egypt, ironically the targets of special attention from the AKP earlier in the decade. Table 4 shows disaggregated results by country regarding a "favorable view" of Turkey and Table 5 shows aggregated results for the region for questions on the country's role in the region.

Table 4
Favorable views of Turkey in MENA countries (%, 2009-2013)

Country/Year	2009	2010***	2011	2012	2013
Egypt	72		86	84	38
Jordan	82		81	72	71
Lebanon	76		78	63	63
Palestine	87		89	81	75
Saudi Arabia	77		89	77	76
Syria	87		44	28	22
Iraq	69		74	55	67
Iran*			71	59	69
Tunisia**			91	80	74
Gulf Countries**			76	77	65
Yemen**			79	74	76
Libya**			93	90	79
Regional Weighted Average	**75**	**85**	**78**	**69**	**59**

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on TESEV, "The Perception of Turkey in The Middle East" (Akgün and Gündoğar, 2012a, 2012b, 2014; Akgün, Perçinoğlu, Gündoğar, 2009)[22].

[20] Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, UAE
[21] Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, UAE
[22] (*) Iran was not included in the 2009 survey.
(**) Tunisia, Gulf countries, Yemen, and Libya were not included in the 2009 and 2010 surveys. The "Gulf countries" category includes Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and UAE.
(***) The 2010 TESEV survey did not present regional data disaggregated by country.

Table 5
Views on Turkey's regional role (%, regional averages, 2009-2013)

Question/Year	2009*	2010	2011	2012	2013
Should Turkey play a greater role in the region?	77	78	71	66	60
Can Turkey be a model for the MENA countries?	61	66	61	53	51

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on TESEV, "The Perception of Turkey in The Middle East" (Akgün and Gündoğar, 2012a, 2012b, 2014; Akgün, Perçinoğlu, Gündoğar, 2009)[23].

The same pattern is identified by Zogby (2019, p. 135), who monitors perceptions in Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. Views favorable to Turkey peak in 2011-2012 and decline soon after, with Egypt and Saudi Arabia recording the steepest declines. The data reach until 2018 and suggest that the trend of deterioration has continued among the Gulf monarchies.

When it comes to the attractiveness of the Turkish model, the surveys point to evidence confirming the arguments within the literature, albeit moderately. Bryant and Hatay (2013, p. 13) argue that the Turkish trajectory of Westernizing secularism left an impression in Arab societies that Ankara "is not Muslim enough". According to TESEV, not being "Muslim enough" was the main reason Turkey could not be a model for the region (23% of respondents in 2011; 17% in 2012), followed by its close relations with the West (16% in 2011; 13% in 2012), and secularism (13% in 2011; 14% in 2012) (Akgün; Gündoğar, 2012b, p. 21; 2014, p. 22). Gürzel (2014, p. 98) suggests that the desire of Middle Eastern countries to emulate Ankara is mainly due to its economic success, rather than its political achievements. According to TESEV in 2013, the top answers to the question "why can Turkey be a model?" are its "economy" (34%) and its "democracy" (24%) (Akgün; Gündoğar, 2014, p. 22). However, the 2011 Arab Barometer results show that Arabs in all countries studied by the survey[24] tend to consider Turkey as more democratic than their own countries (Ceyhun, 2018). As Table 5 has shown, there seems to be a positive contagion between the wave of prestige at the beginning of the Arab Spring and the approval of the Turkish model. Telhami's (2013, p. 155-156, 178) data for Egypt in 2011-2012 show enthusiastic support before bilateral relations worsened. However, the author interprets that the endorsement is not explained by democratic nor economic credentials, but rather by Turkish demonstration of diplomatic autonomy[25].

With respect to the Turkish role in the Arab Spring, we found specific questions in the TESEV questionnaire from 2011 onward.

[23] (*) For 2009, the question was "in the Arab world".
[24] In 2011: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen.
[25] "Arab preference for a Turkish superpower is less about the nation's democracy and more about its embrace of Arab and Muslim aspirations and its projected ability to go its own way, to stand up to Israel on Gaza and to the United States on Iraq, and, as a Muslim country, to persist in the face of its rejected membership in the European Union, despite its role in NATO" (Telhami, 2013, p. 179).

Table 6
"Do you believe these countries had a positive impact on the Arab Spring?"
(regional average %, 2011-2013)

Country/Year	2011	2012	2013
Turkey	56	42	37
Saudi Arabia	-	45	47
Qatar	-	45	39
USA	35	30	24
China	31	29	38
Russia	30	29	38

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on TESEV, "The Perception of Turkey in The Middle East" (Akgün; Gündoğar, 2014).

Turkey was the highest rated country at the beginning of the series in Table 6. This is also the result of Telhami's (2013, p. 103) 2011 survey: for Arabs, Turkey was the country that played the "most constructive" role of all in the episode. Data from Özcan, Köse, and Karakoç (2015) from January 2012 for Egypt, Iraq, and Iran also show a predominantly positive assessment. However, as the TESEV data show, Ankara declined and was overtaken by Gulf neighbors such as Qatar and especially Saudi Arabia, which ended the series as the new favorite. Growth in positive ratings of extra-regional powers, such as Russia and China, is also noticeable.

Some surveys also devoted attention to the most serious outcome of the Arab Spring: the Syrian civil war. Zogby (2019, p. 49-53) shows that, for MENA respondents, the countries that played the most positive roles in the Syrian war were first Turkey, followed by Saudi Arabia. The most negative were Iran, the US, and Russia. This hierarchy tended to remain from 2011 through 2018. Only among the Gulf monarchies did a greater disapproval of Ankara's participation emerge.

Another aspect of regional assessments on Turkish foreign policy concerns the effect of religious or sectarian identification. The literature on regionalism in MENA has emphasized the role of religion as a moderating variable in the perception of regional politics. Although religious affiliation is neither the first nor the only polarizing dimension in the region, divisions between Sunni and Shia have become increasingly salient in politics, especially in the post-Arab Spring (Abdo, 2017).

AKP foreign policy seems to lend itself to sectarian categorization. Data from TESEV indicates that the perception in the MENA that Turkish foreign policy had a pro-Sunni bias grew from 28% (2012) to 39% (2013). Also, in data from Özcan, Köse, and Karakoç (2015) and Zogby (2019, p. 138), it is evident that Sunni Muslims tend, on average, to perceive Turkish foreign policy more favorably, with some variations. Based on data from the GAP survey (2012) applied in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia, Ciftci and Tezcür (2016, p. 389) conclude that for these countries "religiosity matters more than attitudes about democracy in shaping perceptions of regional states". Individuals who self-identify as Sunni

are 14% more likely to have favorable views of Saudi Arabia, 3% of Turkey, and 30% less likely to have a favorable view of Iran.

In summary, Turkey very clearly demonstrates a curve of rise and decline for both domestic and external public opinion. Until approximately 2011, we could see domestic support for reducing isolationism and for shifting emphasis from Europe to MENA. At the same time, regional perceptions of Turkey also improved significantly, going from 34% (2002) to 85% (2010) of positive perceptions. From 2011 onward, however, Ankara's regional approval declined systematically and severely in multiple countries, although on certain items, such as its actions in the Syrian war, the country still elicits good evaluations. The domestic public, meanwhile, views the MENA with less enthusiasm and expresses preference for Central Asian partners (mainly Azerbaijan) and, depending on the instrument consulted, Europe again.

South Africa

The main public opinion surveys about South Africa's international performance have been conducted by Nel (1999), Westhuizen and Smith (2015), the Human Sciences Research Council (HRSC), and the Afrobarometer project. The first three are monothematic and focus specifically on South African foreign policy. The Afrobarometer is a regional-scale survey, which now has seven waves from 1999 to 2019. Having started with 12 countries, the latest wave at the time of writing the present article covered 34 African states. South Africa has participated in every wave. Since it is a generalist survey, its focus is more diffuse and its usefulness for foreign relations is incidental.

Domestic public opinion

The first survey we identified on foreign policy in post-apartheid South Africa is by Philip Nel (1999). The study was comprehensive and covered two levels (mass and elite), covering an important range of topics. Later, Westhuizen and Smith (2015) published results of a similar survey but applied only at the mass level. In 2015 and 2018, the HRSC published two policy briefs containing the results of items on foreign policy included in the 2013 and 2017 waves of the South African Social Attitudes Survey (SASAS) (Roberts et al., 2015; Kotze; Bohler-Muller, 2018).

Despite the nearly 20-year gap between the studies, some results show continuity. The major concerns of public opinion are primarily domestic, and the value of foreign policy is tributary to this domestic focus. In 1999, "unemployment" and "crime" were the top problems cited by respondents, and between 50-60% agreed that Pretoria should defend national interests first in its foreign relations (Nel, 1999, p. 130-132). In 2015,

"unemployment" remained the top problem, and "promoting the country's economic growth" was the main goal of South African foreign policy for 44% of respondents (Westhuizen and Smith, 2015, p. 325-326). In 2017, the biggest "global problems" were poverty (58%), corruption (43%), unemployment or lack of economic opportunities (25%), and the top priority of diplomacy was "protecting jobs of South African workers" (43%) (Kotze; Bohler-Muller, 2018, p. 4-5).

Westhuizen and Smith (2015, p. 344) call this economic prioritization "pragmatic internationalism":

> committed to improving the world if that means improving the quality of life at home. Our survey suggests that the kind of internationalism underlying South Africans' sense of their place in the world is fundamentally driven by the extent to which international and regional engagement results in economic growth and jobs at home.

At the elite level, 61% of respondents believed it was important that South Africa be recognized as a regional leader (Nel, 1999, p. 133). After 15 years, 64% of the population agreed that the country should be recognized as a leader on the continent (Westhuizen; Smith, 2015, p. 343). Views on South Africa's success in being a leader or gaining prestige regionally and globally were also updated in HRSC policy briefs. In 2017, 52% agreed that "South Africa is an influential and powerful country on the African continent". Asked if South Africa plays a more important role "as a world leader" today than it did 10 years ago, 40% said yes, 24% said it played the same role, and 28% said it played a less important role. Interestingly, when the question is changed to ask instead whether South Africa is "respected" in the world, the sample gets divided symmetrically: 36% agree, 36% disagree, and 21% believe that South Africa has about the same respect as 10 years ago (Kotze; Bohler-Muller, 2018, p. 3-4). Thus, there seems to be a more consolidated impression of regional rather than global influence.

The end of apartheid in South Africa instilled its new political leadership with a strong ethos of promoting human rights. Indeed, human rights advocacy was one of the pillars of South African foreign policy outlined by Mandela (1993). Thus, one of the programmatic issues that persists in the South African polls is the place of human rights and whether the country's insertion should be more principled or pragmatic. The 1999 data show that almost 80% of the population (and just over 50% of the elites) supported South Africa's promotion of human rights. However, in concrete terms, if asked what should be done about a trading partner that violates human rights, the public was roughly split in half between interventionist positions (support insurgents, denounce to the UN) and non-interventionist ones (do not denounce to the UN, wait and see), while the elites were more in favor of non-intervention (Nel, 1999, p. 135). In 2015, 53% of respondents agreed that "if an African government violates the human rights of its citizens, other African governments should not

openly criticize that government," 51% agreed that "South Africa should trade with all countries, even those known to abuse the human rights of their citizens", and 16% said that "promoting human rights" should be the main goal of South African foreign policy (versus 44% who mentioned economic development) (Westhuizen; Smith, 2015, p. 332-333). In summary, South African public opinion, while rhetorically recognizing the importance of human rights, shows slightly more pragmatism, preferring sovereignty and non-intervention. With respect to redistributive gestures, 63% agreed that Pretoria should "help other African countries by providing [aid]" (Westhuizen; Smith, 2015, p. 343), with the same high numbers remaining in the subsequent survey by HRSC (66%).

While the programmatic dimension has remained stable over 15 years, the relational dimension has shown important changes. In the 1999 survey, the question about which region or country should receive priority focus produces a converging hierarchy for elites and masses: the sub-region of Southern Africa is a priority for both groups, followed by the US and Europe. The "rest of Africa" comes next, and finally the other regions – among them Asia, which at the time was barely mentioned (Nel, 1999, p. 138).

A major shift is seen in the 2010s. Both the study by Westhuizen and Smith (2015) and the Afrobarometer reveal a growing attention to China. In the former, China becomes the most promising partner in the population's view, followed by the US and the rest of Africa. Interestingly, Southern Africa, the first choice in Nel's study, is now ranked last.

Table 7
South Africa's priority partnerships (%)

	Nel (1999) "First priority in foreign policy focus"	Westhuizen and Smith (2015) "With which country or group of countries in the list should South Africa be seen to be an ally or close friend?"
Southern Africa	21	13
North America / USA*	21	19
Europe (Western + Eastern) / Europe*	19	15
Rest of Africa	16	16
Asia / China*	6	26

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on Nel (1999), Westhuizen and Smith (2015)[26].

As for the Afrobarometer, we found few questions about international politics and only in the most recent waves. Specifically, waves 4 (2008) and 6 (2016) feature items on South African perception of other countries[27]. The results corroborate China's growing influence over time.

[26] Options with an asterisk (*) have wording distinct from the options in Westhuizen and Smith (2015).
[27] Wave 7 (2019) had questions about plans for migration, which can also be seen as befitting international relations.

Table 8
Perceptions of influential countries in South Africa (%, Afrobarometer 2008, 2016)

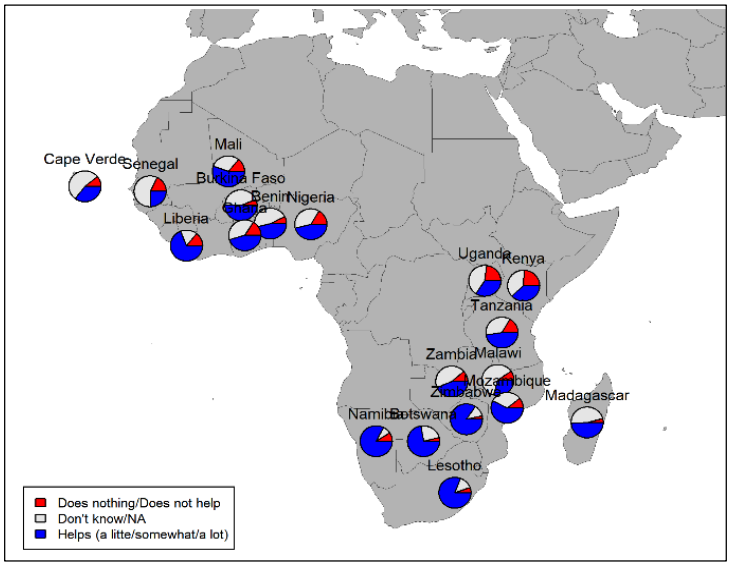
	Round 4 (2008)	Round 6 (2016)	
	"How much do each of the following do to help your country"	**"Which of the following do you think has the most influence?"**	**"Which of the following countries, if any, would be the best model for the future development of our country?"**
USA	No help (16) Help a little + somewhat + a lot (42)	28	37
EU	No help (19) Help a little + somewhat + a lot (34)	Not an option	Not an option
UK	No help (18) Help a little + somewhat + a lot (37)	7	12
China	No help (17) Help a little + somewhat + a lot (41)	41	26

Source: Elaborated by the author, with data from Afrobarometer 4 (2008) and 6 (2016).

External public opinion

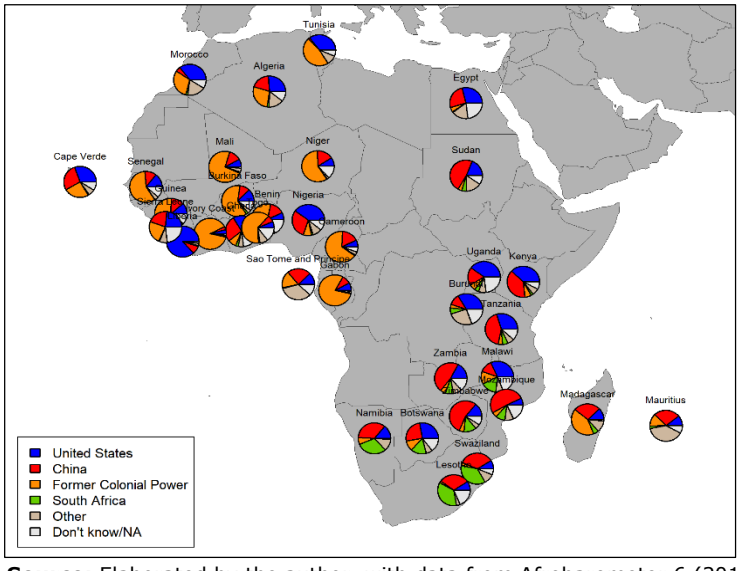
Currently the main source of data on public opinion across Africa is the Afrobarometer. Although still unable to cover the entire continent, at each wave the survey has expanded the number of participating countries (Jerven, 2016, p. 352). Looking again at waves 4 and 6, we find in both at least one question that allows us to infer the importance of South Africa as perceived by its neighbors.

Figure 3
"In your opinion, how much does the following country [South Africa] help your country?"



Source: Elaborated by the author based on Afrobarometer 4 (2008). The totals for "help" are the sum of the answers "helps a little", "helps somewhat", "helps a lot".

Figure 4
"Which of the following do you think has the most influence on your country?"



Source: Elaborated by the author, with data from Afrobarometer 6 (2016).

The results for this last question show that in some countries, such as Swaziland, Lesotho, and Namibia, approximately 1/3 of respondents think that South Africa is the most influential actor. Nonetheless, South Africa is not the most frequently cited country in terms of influence on the continent. An average of the national percentages of the 35 countries places former colonial powers (26%), China (23%), and the US (21%) as the most influential, while South Africa registers only 6%, concentrated almost exclusively in its sub-region. The combination of the 2008 and 2016 results suggests that there is a continued perception of South African influence among immediate neighbors such as Lesotho, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Swaziland. For some cases, such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique, however, the perception that South Africa was "helping" the country in 2008 does not match the perception that it is the most influential actor in 2016.

In summary, based on the data for South Africa, it is not possible to clearly detect a pattern of rise and fall. Domestically, the endorsement of a regional leadership project has been in the majority from 1999 to the present day. In terms of global leadership, although the perception of South African influence was lower, it was still prominent. Externally, longitudinal data are scarcer. It is not possible to see clearly over time whether South Africa's status on the continent has improved or declined, but we see geographically that its prestige is strongly concentrated in its immediate neighborhood.

Conclusion

This article sought to verify whether there were indications of a rise and fall of emerging powers in the eyes of domestic and regional public opinion. Specifically, we organized the investigation around the programmatic and relational axes to highlight the main vectors of innovation in the foreign policies of Brazil, Turkey, and South Africa over the past 20 years. The article sought to contribute to the state of the art both by exploring these substantive questions and by providing a convenient list of surveys on foreign policy in the Global South – an area challenged by the scarcity of systematic data.

Substantively, we can conclude that only for Turkey was it possible to clearly observe a rise and fall cycle. Both internally and externally, the endorsement of Ankara's innovations in content and geographic focus increased at first, but, after a peak, this support waned. A decline is also observed in the Brazilian case, although less marked. Since for South Africa the time series are less regular, no precise conclusions can be reached. In terms of external opinion, we notice the importance of geography for South Africa and Brazil, since the perceived influence of these actors is more pronounced in the immediate neighborhood. In the Turkish case, regional assessments are strongly marked by the pendulum of rise and decline, and there is also relevant sectarian modulation. Summarizing these patterns at a high level of aggregation, the main trends regarding the evaluation of the (i) programmatic

and (ii) relational dimensions at the (a) domestic and (b) external levels are presented in Table 9:

Table 9
Summary of the main trends in (a) domestic and (b) external public opinion on the (i) programmatic and (ii) relational dimensions

Level/Dimension	(i) Programmatic	(ii) Relational
(a) Domestic	**Brazil** - Support for an active foreign policy rather than isolationism, but loss of enthusiasm and a declining perception of prestige. **Turkey** - Strong isolationism, although it was abated during the more assertive period. **South Africa** - Perception of regional leadership. Pragmatism trumps principled positions.	**Brazil** - Support for greater attention to new destinations, such as Africa. **Turkey** - Rejection of EU on some items in favor of the MENA, though the gap between destinations oscillates. In recent years, focus on Central Asian partners, such as Azerbaijan. - Perception of allies and threats partially altered by developments in the Syrian War. **South Africa** - Reversal of geographic focus from Southern Africa to Asia/China.
(b) External (regional neighbors)	**Brazil** (Specific policies not evaluated by neighbors) **Turkey** - Negative perceptions among Arab countries early in the series. Rise in popularity under Erdogan (condemnation of Israel and start of Arab Spring). After peak in 2011–2012, steep decline. Assessment remains positive on the specific issue of management of the Syrian conflict. **South Africa** (Specific policies not evaluated by neighbors)	**Brazil** - Brazilian leadership perception is geographically concentrated in South America and mainly Mercosur. Absence of competitors (e.g.: Venezuela) favors the perception of leadership. **Turkey** - More negative views at the end of the series tended to cluster on Egypt and Gulf monarchies. **South Africa** - Perceptions of South African support and influence are geographically concentrated in Southern Africa.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

As limitations of the current article, we cite problems of validity and reliability of the data and their scope as indicators of international status. At several points we found conflicting results, such as Brazilians' simultaneous endorsement of an active, non-isolationist foreign policy, but at the same time, fatigue with the idea of regional leadership or the divergent results on the attractiveness of relations with Europe for Turkish respondents. This variation discourages firm conclusions about reliability (the certainty that

applications of the same instrument would lead to the same result) as well as validity (the collected responses actually capture the desired underlying concept).

Another limitation to our inferences concerns the heterogeneity of the sources. Africa, South America, and the MENA have faced unique developments in the last decades, a fact reflected in some items of the questionnaires. Besides the intrinsic differences in our three countries and their regions, the combination of diverse surveys introduced another source of difference in the data, placing limits to their comparability. Other reputable surveys, such as the Gallup World Poll, circumvent these idiosyncrasies by applying harmonized instruments across countries and regions. Although this solution has high reliability, the high cost of subscribing to such services makes them impractical for most International Relations researchers in the developing world. Given that free online data and affordable book compilations are available, the summarizing effort carried out by this article offers an accessible contribution to the community. We believe that the utility of collating the various open sources covering these countries and regions should balance the inferential limits arising from this juxtaposition.

In conclusion, given the potentials and limitations cited, we were only able to focus on high-level conclusions and general trends. We agree with the recent literature that the combined use of experiments and more intentional response extraction techniques are necessary for reliable and valid inferences about perceptions of the foreign policy of emerging countries, beyond what we were able to accomplish here (Hardt; Mouron; Apolinário Júnior, 2020).

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Appendix

List of surveys, data bases, and articles

SOUTH AFRICA and AFRICA				
Reference	**Type**	**Scope**	**Period**	**Obs**
Nel (1999)	Article	South Africa	Jun 1997 - Mar 1998	Levels: elite and mass
Westhuizen and Smith (2015)	Article	South Africa	2013	Level: mass
HRSC	Policy briefs	South Africa	2015, 2017	Level: mass
Afrobarometer	Data base	12-36 countries	7 waves since 1999	Waves 4 and 6 contain more specific questions about IR
BRAZIL and LATIN AMERICA				
Reference	**Type**	**Scope**	**Period**	**Obs**
"A Agenda Internacional do Brasil: um Estudo sobre a Comunidade Brasileira de Política Externa"; "A Agenda Internacional do Brasil: a Política Externa de FHC a Lula" (Souza, 2001, 2008)	Books	Brazil	2001, 2007	Level: elite
The Americas and the World	Data base	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay	Variable, according to country. Typically, 2010 onwards.	Level: mass and, for some countries, elites
Latinobarómetro	Data base	19 Latin American countries, plus Spain	1995-2020	Level: mass
Proyecto Elites Latinoamericanas	Data base	18 Latin American countries	Variable, according to country. Typically, 1995 - late 2010s	Level: elites (members of congress). Some items on foreign policy and evaluation of foreign leaders.
Brazilian Legislative Survey (Power; Zucco, 2014)	Data base	Brazil (Members of Congress)	1990-2017	The BLS consists of a wave of 8 surveys conducted with members of congress. Every legislature since redemocratization was interviewed: 1990, 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2009, 2013, and 2017. Questions on foreign policy were only introduced starting in 2009.

TURKEY and the MENA				
Reference	**Type**	**Scope**	**Period**	**Obs**
Arab Barometer	Data base	14 countries	2007-2021	Level: mass. Turkey not surveyed, but there are occasional items on its foreign policy.
USAK	Books	Turkey	2004, 2005, 2006, 2009	Level: mass
GMF	Survey report	Several	2003 on (Transatlantic Trends), 2015 (Turkish Perceptions)	Level: mass
KHU	Survey report	Turkey	2013, 2015-2019	Level: mass
TESEV	Survey report	Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Tunisia, Gulf countries, Yemen, Libya	2009-2013	Level: mass
"The World Through Arab Eyes" (Telhami, 2013)	Book	Mainly Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, UAE (for some items USA, Israel, and Palestine)	2003-2006, 2008-2012	Level: mass
"The Tumultuous Decade: Arab Public Opinion and the Upheavals of 2010-2019" (Zogby, 2019)	Book	Arab countries, for some items Turkey and Iran	2010-2018	Level: mass

Resumo

Opinião pública e potências emergentes: percepções das diplomacias assertivas da África do Sul, Brasil e Turquia em surveys nacionais e regionais

O artigo investiga se há evidência de uma "ascensão e queda" das potências emergentes nos últimos 20 anos aos olhos da opinião pública. Comparamos diversos *surveys* nacionais e regionais sobre a política externa da África do Sul, Brasil e Turquia em busca de indícios de endosso ou reprovação das políticas exteriores mais assertivas exercitadas por esses países. Os resultados sugerem uma ascensão e declínio pronunciados para Ancara, algum declínio para Brasília, mas são inconclusivos para Pretoria. O artigo busca contribuir com o debate sobre status e liderança regional agregando perspectivas de opinião pública e regionalismo comparado, além de oferecer um sumário conveniente de *surveys* diplomáticos para países do Sul Global.

Palavras-chave: potências emergentes; África do Sul; Brasil; Turquia; opinião pública; liderança regional

Resumen

Opinión pública y potencias emergentes: percepciones de las diplomacias asertivas de Sudáfrica, Brasil y Turquía en encuestas nacionales y regionales

El artículo investiga si hay evidencia de un "ascenso y queda" de potencias emergentes en los últimos 20 años en la opinión pública. Comparamos encuestas nacionales y regionales sobre las políticas exteriores de Sudáfrica, Brasil y Turquía en busca de evidencia de apoyo o desaprobación de las políticas exteriores más asertivas ejercidas por estos países. Los resultados sugieren un pronunciado aumento y declive para Ancara, algo de declive para Brasilia, pero no son ciertos para Pretoria. El artículo busca contribuir al debate sobre status y liderazgo regional agregando una perspectiva de opinión pública y regionalismo comparado, además de ofrecer un resumen conveniente de las encuestas diplomáticas para los países del Sur Global.

Palabras clave: potencias emergentes; Sudáfrica; Brasil; Turquía; opinión pública; liderazgo regional

Résumé

Opinion publique et puissances émergentes : perceptions des diplomaties assertives par l'Afrique du Sud, le Brésil et la Turquie dans les enquêtes nationales et régionales

L'article examine s'il y a des indices d'une « ascension et déclin » des puissances émergentes au cours des 20 dernières années aux yeux de l'opinion publique. Nous avons comparé plusieurs enquêtes nationales et régionales sur les politiques étrangères de l'Afrique du Sud, du Brésil et de la Turquie à la recherche de signes d'approbation ou de désapprobation des politiques extérieures plus assertives menées par ces pays. Les résultats suggèrent une augmentation et un déclin prononcés de la part d'Ankara, un certain déclin pour Brasilia, mais ne sont pas conclusifs pour Pretoria. L'article cherche à contribuer au débat sur le statut et le leadership régional en ajoutant une perspective d'opinion publique et de régionalisme comparé, en plus d'offrir un résumé pratique des enquêtes sur la diplomatie des pays du Sud Global.

Mots-clés : puissances émergentes ; Afrique du Sud ; Brésil ; Turquie ; opinion publique ; leadership régional

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