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Redistribution *and* recognition: what emerging regional powers want

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Abstract. Regional powers of the Global South are perceived to be agents of change. But what exactly is the nature of the change that they want? This article argues that there is some continuity between the goals of the current generation of regional leaders and that of their predecessors. The current generation tend to have more confidence in their ability to effect the redistribution of wealth, prestige, and power in the global political economy, though, and tend therefore to be more integrationist than the first generation of post-colonial leaders. The goal of redistribution is premised on a more fundamental unfinished struggle of developing countries, one that Brazil, India, and South Africa in particular have taken up. This is the struggle for recognition of developing countries as full and equal partners in the society of states, but also as states with specific development needs that are too easily ploughed-under in the spurious universality promoted by the developed North. The struggle for recognition focuses on inclusive multilateralism and 'non-indifference' towards the development needs of the Global South. Using recent contributions to the theory of recognition, the article interprets these two goals as linked to the unfinished struggle against disrespect and humiliation.

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Introduction

There is a widespread assumption that the emergence of regional powers such as Brazil, India, and South Africa, and the impetus that they are providing for assertive tri-continental diplomacy of the South, is the harbinger of change to the global system. But what is the substance of the change that the regional powers of the South supposedly want? Some twenty five years ago, Stephen Krasner answered the more general question about the wishes and aspirations of developing states by pointing out that all states want to maximise their power and augment their wealth. Third World states, he argued, given their structural position in the global

* The assistance of Matthew Stephen in research on the foreign economic policies of India, Brazil, and South Africa is gratefully acknowledged. Helpful comments by the other contributors to this special section are also gratefully acknowledged. I bear sole responsibility for the remaining shortcomings of the text.

political economy, pursue these goals by opting for authoritative regimes and against the international liberal order. Hence, North-South relations are characterised by a zero-sum 'structural conflict'.[1] Some critics of global liberalism share the assumption of a zero-sum structural conflict between North and South.[2] It would be in the best interests of the people of the developing world if their leaders pursued policies that would shift the structural balance in their favour, these authors argue. The fact that some leaders of the first and second generation of Third World leaders did/do not live up to this expectation is regarded as a betrayal of the structural cause of the developing world.

Whether these realist and critical theorists are correct in their assessment of the structural interests and behaviour of the emerging South in the 1970s and 1980s or not, their diagnoses and prescriptions are of little use today. For one, the notion of a structural divide between North and South rings increasingly hollow in an era in which prominent developing countries enthusiastically embrace the major tenets and principles of the essentially liberal global order, and seem to be doing pretty well out of it. Global structural *transformation* is not on the agenda of the current leadership of these states. And it seems to me too easy to dismiss this as simply the result of elite betrayal, or as due to these leaders being coopted by the forces of neo-liberalism *tout court*. Instead, this article is premised on a more nuanced treatment of the visions and tactics propounded by current-day regional powers of the South. These states' visions and tactics are formulated by a generation of post-decolonisation leaders who share the general distrust of their predecessors towards the way in which the global order operates, but they have much more confidence than their predecessors in their own ability to *reform* and exploit this order to meet their domestic and global visions. Once one fully recognises the agency of these states, and begins to appreciate how they perceive the world and their own role in it, it becomes easier to identify both continuities and discontinuities in the unfinished struggles of the developing world.

This article is thus terribly old-fashioned. Not only can it be accused of privileging methodological individualism over structural analysis, it also assumes that states are indivisible agents in global politics, and it 'normalises' states and the society of states as units of political analysis. *Mea culpa*. In its defence, though, one is reminded of the major institutional and functional role that states as units play domestically and internationally. The state continues to be a viable agent (not the only one, though) of human development in much of the world, despite its doubtful archaeology. The society of states, with its embedded norms and procedures, provides the only functioning and credible universal institutional framework for order, relative peace, and socio-economic progress, despite all its shortcomings. How states as units behave and what their goals are, and how they pursue these through the channels and institutions provided by the society of states, are relevant and appropriate concerns, also for critical theory. Agency matters. As Robert W. Cox puts it: 'Agency focuses attention on the forces that

[1] Stephen Krasner, *Structural Conflict: The Third World Against Global Liberalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 3.

[2] See, for example, Samir Amin, *Unequal Development: An Essay on the Social Formations of Peripheral Capitalism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1996); and Patrick Bond, *Talk Left, Walk Right: South Africa's Frustrated Global Reforms* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004).

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change structures.'[3] As collective units, states can act as agents of change in global affairs, although they may face many constraints, including the problems of who does the state speak for and who speaks on behalf of the state. This is especially true of those developing states that have attained the status of regional powers due to the preponderance of material and ideational power that they evince within their respective regions, and as a result have developed a significant role in global governance. The IBSA states – Brazil, India, and South Africa – stand out in this regard, also because these states have combined forces to pursue a specific reformist agenda in global politics. What these states want is important, and is a question worth pursuing even though one has to make some limiting assumptions in search of an answer.

As far as change to the global system is concerned, the *relative* goals of the IBSA states do not differ much from what the developing countries have always sought. Like their predecessors who opposed neo-colonialism and propounded a New International Economic Order, Brazil, India, and South Africa continue to be concerned about the unequal distributional outcomes of the global political economy. As their predecessors did, they are also trying to influence the processes of a number of global regimes in order to secure better distributional outcomes for them and for their allies among the non-aligned countries of the world. In short, the IBSA states are as committed to securing a *redistribution* of power, wealth, and privilege in the global economy as were the first generation of post-colonial leaders. As their predecessors did, they prefer negotiation and dialogue with the industrialised and post-industrial North as the means to achieve such redistribution. Like their predecessors, they see South-South solidarity and cooperation as a means to strengthen their position in the North-South dialogue.

There is nothing especially new to this way of looking at the goals and behaviour of the current regional powers of the South. Where this article does part ways with similar analyses, though, is in arguing that these regional powers also have a further goal – an *absolute* goal and one that has gone relatively unnoticed. This goal relates to the communicative, dialogical dimension of the politics of the international society of states and is best captured by the notion of *recognition*. Recognition refers to the inter-subjective process through which agents are constituted as respected and esteemed members of a society, in this case the society of states, and is thus a co-determinate of their identity. Recognition involves more than simply the acknowledgement of prestige, that is, the reputation for power that a realist such as Gilpin regards as an important relative gain for states.[4] Inter-subjective recognition, instead, operates on a level that is constitutive of identity and hence of interests. In short, what states want strategically – including prestige – is constituted by the inter-subjective process of recognition through which states are acknowledged as full and equal members of the society of states,

[3] Robert W. Cox, 'The Way Ahead: Towards a New Ontology of World Order', in Richard Wyn Jones (ed.), *Critical Theory and World Politics* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 55. Both Cox and I would of course recognise that there is a dialectical relationship between structure and agency, but given the privileging of structure in much of neo-realism and some critical theory, it is an important corrective to reaffirm the importance of agency, specifically in the context of considering change in world politics. States and state leaders are by no means the only relevant agents of change, though.

[4] Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 30–4.

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but also as agents with distinct needs and interests that may or may not coincide with the presumed universal interests of established states. As this process is not tangible it is most of the time ignored in the study of the interaction between North and South in world politics.[5] But this is a mistake, as the struggle for recognition has been part and parcel of the South's 'revolt against the West' from the very beginning.[6]

I summarise and interpret in what follows the goals of these states in terms of the two notions of *redistribution* and *recognition*. The argument starts with a discussion of why these states can be treated as a coherent unit of analysis, and then proceeds to employ the notions of redistribution and recognition as analytical tools. Some time is spent in developing the argument for treating recognition not simply as supplementary to redistribution, but as the logically and ethically primary concept.

Before we get to that, warning must be given of some challenges faced by the ensuing analysis, and specifically by the introduction of the notion of recognition to unpack the foreign policies of the IBSA states.[7] For one, the leaders and spokespeople of states are not prone to interpret their goals and interests in any other language than that of relative gains. This much we should grant realists. This makes the tracing of recognition – and its denial – a difficult empirical challenge, forcing us to look beyond the diplomatic and political discourses in which everyday North-South interaction is conducted most of the time. But we have no other choice but to engage in such depth hermeneutics, or else we will simply be reconfirming the assumption that states are strategic actors only. We know that states are more, and in particular that they also partake in dialogue and deliberation, that is, public communicative action through which the norms and principles of the society of states are formulated, challenged, and sometimes changed. We also know that what happens on this communicative dialogical level is constitutive of the interests that states pursue in their strategic interactions within the society of states.[8] If we are interested in tracing patterns and scope for change, and in the role that leading developing countries can possibly play in this regard,

[5] One important exception is the volume edited by Heloise Weber and Mark T Berger, *Recognition and Redistribution: Beyond International Development* (Routledge, 2008). The reader would soon notice, though, that the contributors to this volume use these two terms for a different purpose than they are used here. On a more general level, Richard Shapcott's *Justice, Community, and Dialogue in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) is also relevant, although failing to deal with the insights of Axel Honneth, it treats recognition in a rather undifferentiated manner.

[6] The phrase 'revolt against the West' was coined by Hedley Bull. See, 'The Revolt against the West', in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 217–28. Bull was one of the first IR theorists to have some understanding of the importance of communicative interaction and intersubjective recognition in North-South relations, although his own theoretical approach provided him with few tools to analyse it in any great detail.

[7] For a very useful discussion of the analytical challenges in this type of empirical research, see the German article by Reinhardt Wolf, 'Respekt: Ein unterschaetzter Faktor in den Internationale Beziehungen' ('Respect: An Underestimated Factor in IR'), *Zeitschrift fuer International Beziehungen*, 15:1 (2008), pp. 5–42.

[8] See Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), pp. 1–33; Neta Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonization and Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 49–81; Marc Lynch, 'Why Engage? China and the Logic of Communicative Engagement', *European Journal of International Relations*, 8:2 (2002) and pp. 187–230; Thomas Risse Kappen, '"Let's Argue!" Communicative Action in World Politics', *International Organization*, 54:1 (2000), pp. 1–39.

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we have to look at what is taking place at the discursive level in the society of states. In what follows, this article identifies and starts to unpack a few of the clues that point towards these deeper constitutive experiences, and suggest ways in which the pursuit of strategic interests by the emerging regional powers of Brazil, India, and South Africa articulate or reflect them. Specifically in the context of potential global change, Brazil, India, and South Africa have donned the mantle of spokesmen for the interests of developing countries in general. In particular, they are seeking, firstly, recognition in the form of respect for developing countries in terms of full and equal membership and participation in multilateral institutions in general. But they are also seeking recognition, secondly, in the form of esteem for the specific and idiosyncratic developmental needs of developing countries, having joined the struggle against the invisibility of Third World concerns that have troubled North-South relations since the 1950s. These two forms of recognition are constitutive of the self-respect and the self-esteem that state agency in the society of states ultimately depends upon. In their promotion of a more inclusive and egalitarian multilateralism, and in their insistence that the developmental challenges of the South must be tackled on terms prescribed by developing countries themselves, these regional powers of the South continue to carry the torch not only for redistribution, but also for recognition.

The second challenge relates to the fact that the search for individual *prestige* and the gaining of the more general *recognition* that I claim the IBSA states are after, could be seen as being in conflict with one another. My suggestion is that this conflict is only superficial, and that the former is instrumentally important for the latter. Prestige, in Gilpin's words, 'refers primarily to the perceptions of other states with respect to a state's capacities and its ability and willingness to exercise its power'.[9] There can be little doubt that all three of our regional leaders are pursuing prestige in this sense of the word, partly in order to balance against the perceived hegemony of established powers with global reach, such as the US, and partly to secure leadership within their own regions.[10] As a relative, zero-sum outcome, pursuit of prestige is bound to lead to rivalry and resentment, particularly within the very regions that the IBSA states are aspiring to lead. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the pursuit of permanent membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC), which is the ultimate prestige-prize in international politics. Brazil and India have joined forces with Japan and Germany in the G4 of states actively pursuing their elevation to that status. South Africa has to tread somewhat more cautiously given the African Union's consensus position that Africa's permanent presence on the UNSC must be a rotational one, but it nevertheless supports the candidacy of India and Brazil. Needless to add, not all of Brazil and India's neighbours are prepared to support their candidacies, and South Africa's ambitions in Africa and on the global stage are treated with suspicion in its neighbourhood.[11] Furthermore, the aspiration to join and thereby

[9] Gilpin, *War and Change*, p. 31.

[10] See Daniel Flemes, '"Emerging Middle Powers" Soft Balancing Strategy: State and Perspectives of the IBSA Dialogue Forum', German Institute of Global and International Studies Working Papers No. 57 (2007).

[11] Brendan Vickers summarises well the resentment that South Africa, is evoking in Africa. See his 'South Africa: Global Reformism, Global Apartheid, and the Heiligendamm Proces', in Andrew F. Cooper and Agata Antkiewicz (eds), *Emerging Powers in Global Governance: Lessons from the*

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legitimising the hierarchical world security order sits uncomfortably with the hypothesis that what the IBSA states are seeking is the flattening out of hierarchical patterns of world order by means of the recognition of full and equal membership rights for all states in multilateral institutions. There is no denying, hence, that the struggle for general recognition as will be explained in more detail below, could be in conflict with the relative prestige that these states are pursuing in terms of UNSC reform. This also applies to the other contexts in which the prestige of these three states have been acknowledged, such as the so-called Heiligendamm Process which is the semi-institutionalised dialogue between the G8 group of industrialised countries and the emerging economies of Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa, and the G20, whose summits are replacing those of the G8 as the primary coordination venue in the global economy today.[12]

In what some critics may regard as being too generous a move, the argument that follows is based on the assumption that the prestige that Brazil, India, and South Africa have achieved to gain, and are seeking to further, plays an instrumental role in the broader unfinished struggle for recognition by the developing world. The redistribution of relative gains – power, prestige, and wealth – is thus a necessary but by no means sufficient condition for gaining the recognition that developing countries largely have been denied over the past sixty years of North-South interaction. It is indeed true that the relative gains made by the IBSA states in terms of power, wealth, and prestige are not universally applauded by all their allies and neighbours. But it is also true that the IBSA states have aligned their attempts to make international decision-making bodies more inclusive and participatory with the programmatic ideals of representative Third World bodies, such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). It is also worth noting that the vision of reform of the UN that NAM is proposing entails more than just the inclusion of more states as permanent members. What the NAM wants is change to the decision-making rules in the UNSC, including the phasing-out of the *veto*, and the reconfiguration of relations and competencies between the various organs of the UN.[13] In their own statements in this regard, the IBSA states have taken care to stay close to the programmatic vision of NAM, and it is thus not correct to assume that all that they are after is to join at the existing table. For them, as for the developing word in general, reform of the UN (and other multilateral bodies) entails more than enlarged membership.

Redistribution

The focus in this article falls on a particular sub-set of emerging regional powers, namely India, Brazil, and South Africa. As a co-author and I have argued

Heiligendamm Process (Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), p. 168.

[12] On the Heiligendamm Process, see Andrew F. Cooper, 'The Heiligendamm Process: Structural Reordering and Diplomatic Agency', in Andrew F. Cooper and Agata Antkiewicz (eds), *Emerging Powers in Global Governance: Lessons from the Heiligendamm Process* (Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), pp. 1–18.

[13] For a discussion of the programmatic vision of NAM, see Hennie Strydom, 'The Non-Aligned Movement and the Reform of International Relations', in A. von Bogdandy and R. Wolfrum (eds), *Max Planck Yearbook of UN Law*, 11 (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2007), pp. 1–46.

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elsewhere, there are good reasons to consider these three states as a single unit of analysis in the study of regional powers, despite the obvious and not-so-obvious differences between their histories and contemporary experiences and policies. The three states loom quite large globally and regionally. Brazil is a middle-sized power globally, but it has a continental scale and regional preponderance economically and militarily. It has more than half of South America's population, territory, and gross domestic product (GDP). India is an emerging global power, with one sixth of the world's population and a fast growing economy with a global reach. South Africa is a middle-sized, regionally prominent state, having only 6 per cent of the population of sub-Saharan Africa, but a third of its GDP. They share the aspiration to shape the agendas and outcomes of their regional settings, with more or less success. All three rely on a preponderance of material and ideational resources and institutional capacities to project their interests and values beyond their immediate borders and provide some cohesion to their respective regions by delivering one or more public goods on which this cohesion depends. In all three cases this process is incomplete and uneven.[14] Using the conceptual distinctions developed by Destradi in her contribution to this special section, the regional roles of India, Brazil, and South Africa can be classified as clustering in the categories of intermediate to soft hegemony.[15]

In terms of the central thesis of this article, it is important to note that these three regional powers also share a global redistribution role. Their foreign economic policies have sought *absolutely* to secure access to external markets for their goods, capital, and services, and to sources of credit and foreign direct investment. These policies also aim at *relative* gains, trying to alter the distribution of the benefits generated by the global economy more in favour of developing countries. IBSA states rely on their predominant regional and emerging global stature to try and shape the international economic environment to bring it closer to what they perceive to be optimal conditions for the domestic and global advancement of the developing world. In their individual capacities, but also collectively through the establishment of the 'trilateral developmental initiative' or Dialogue Forum of IBSA, the three have come to articulate and defend what they perceive to be the common developmental position of the Global South: These include a fairer distribution of the benefits of trade and the removal of non-tariff obstacles obstructing access to markets in developing countries, increased development-focused capital flows from North to South, larger technology transfers from developed to developing countries, and more recently, securing significant financial and technological assistance from Annex I States in terms of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

[14] Philip Nel and Matthew Stephen, 'The Foreign Economic Policies of the IBSA States', in Daniel Flemes (ed.), *Regional Leadership in the Global System: Ideas, Interests and Strategies of Regional Powers* (Aldershot: Ashgate 2010), pp. 71–90.

[15] Sandra Destradi, 'Regional Powers and Their Strategies: Empire, Hegemony, and Leadership', this special section, *Review of International Studies*, 36:4 (October 2010). Note, however, that this generalisation hides considerable variation and fluidity, especially in the behaviour of India. India follows a more hard hegemonic approach as far as Bangladesh and particularly Pakistan are concerned. There are signs, however, of a moderation of India's approach to Pakistan. In the wake of the Mumbai terror attack of November 2008, India did suspend its Composite Dialogue with Pakistan, but was careful not to exacerbate tensions by avoiding any threat of military action. The dialogue with Pakistan was resumed in February 2010. See Jim Hardley, 'Balancing Act for India as Talks With Pakistan Resume', *New York Times Online Edition* (24 February 2010).

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Kyoto Protocol to assist developing countries in the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to its effects.[16] All three pursue an agenda that aims at linking policies pursuing economic growth closely with broad programmes of income and wealth redistribution within but also between countries. Finally, all three have committed themselves to strengthening and deepening South-South cooperation as a means of re-building the industrialising world after the decades of decimation by poorly phased, externally induced programmes of structural adjustment and trade liberalisation, fluctuating aid flows, and unfulfilled promises of technology transfer. However, South-South cooperation is perceived to be at best a complement, and not a replacement, for North-South cooperation.[17]

The global redistribution role shared by the IBSA states is driven by a number of supply and demand factors. On the supply-side, all three states are attempting to balance a conservative economic agenda which is premised on integration with the global economy on the one hand, and on the other hand a distinctly developmentalist foreign policy aimed at redistribution via balancing against the perceived mercantilist behaviour of Europe, Japan, and the US – the trilateral gate-keepers of global neo-liberalism.[18] Of the three, India is the most explicit counter-hegemon and displays the clearest commitment to a distributive developmental strategy in trade and climate change negotiations, while nevertheless pursuing an essentially conservative economic policy at home and abroad.[19] As the most recent breakdown of World Trade Organization (WTO) trade negotiations (July 2008) shows, India has not taken leave of its aggressive distributive approach to international negotiations, pitting it against the US in particular, despite the progress in recent years towards what India and the US describe as a 'global strategic partnership'. India's trade minister, Kamal Nath, was reported to have accused the US of trading off the livelihoods of a billion of the world's poorest people against 'the commercial interests of developed countries'.[20] India has a long and well-entrenched tradition of identifying with and leading the 'value-claiming' negotiation strategies of Third World bloc coalitions such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the G77.[21] In terms of regional policy, India's approach of

[16] If realised, the schedule for climate-related aid as proposed by the leading developing countries would amount to an annual figure that could equal the amount of official development assistance provided by the members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee annually. The developing countries are insisting that climate-related aid should be an add-on and not a replacement of existing aid. Potentially, thus, assistance to help developing countries to mitigate climate change and to adapt to its effects could constitute one of the largest transfers ever of funds and technology from North to South. The Copenhagen Accord agreed to at the December 2009 Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the UNFCCC, commits developed countries to supplying such assistance. Of course, this Accord is non-binding. For a discussion of the Copenhagen Accord, see Martin Khor, 'After Copenhagen, the Way Forward', *South Bulletin*, 43 (8 February 2010), pp. 1–3.

[17] See paragraphs 11–13 of the 2008 New Delhi IBSA Summit Declaration, available at: {http://www.ibsa-trilateral.org}.

[18] The notion of such a balancing act is suggested by Alexandre de Freitas Barbosa, Thais Narciso, and Marina Biancalana, 'Brazil in Africa: Another Emerging Power in the Continent?', *Politikon*, 36:1 (2009), pp. 59–86.

[19] A distributionist negotiation strategy consists of making 'very high opening demands, refusing to make any concessions, and holding the other's issues hostage'. See Amrita Narlikar, 'Peculiar Chauvinism or Strategic Calculation? Explaining the Negotiation Strategy of a Rising India', *International Affairs*, 82 (2006), p. 62.

[20] Heather Stewart, 'Doha: India accuses US of sacrificing world's poor at trade talks', *The Guardian* (31 July 2008), available online at: {http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/jul/31/wto.india}.

[21] Andrew Hurrell and Amrita Narlikar, 'A New Politics of Confrontation? Brazil and India in

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distributive hard balancing involves attempts to expand the boundaries of its sphere of influence by presenting itself as an Asian, rather than just as a South Asian power. The eagerness with which India has pursued regional free trade agreements in Asia in recent years is a major manifestation of this.[22] With Brazil, India has emerged as a major deal-maker or deal-breaker in the Doha Round of multilateral WTO trade negotiations, and in the post-Kyoto negotiation process of the UNFCCC these two and South Africa (plus China) emerged as some of the most vocal opponent to Third World countries being saddled with quantified emission-abatement targets.[23]

Against the background of a history of isolation and self-imposed exclusion, it is understandable that South Africa's main external goal has been to secure its, and its region's, full reintegration with the global economy. Based on what has been termed 'a gamble on investment' South Africa has used the post-apartheid window of opportunity to redefine the terms of Africa's engagement with the global economy in ways that would give its own business sector the maximum opportunity to expand into Africa, and to increase Africa's access to investment capital and development assistance.[24] But this has not prevented South Africa from playing a leading role in multilateral fora to highlight the cause of development in Africa in particular. Lacking the confidence that comes with size and the long diplomatic experience of an India, post-apartheid South Africa has followed a more cautious approach to distributional issues than has India, not wanting to alienate any potential developmental partner. For South Africa, the path to Africa's development leads through the capitals of Europe, Japan, and the US, hence its emphasis on promoting dialogue and partnership, instead of confrontation. However, since the launching of the tri-continental IBSA Dialogue Forum in 2003, and the status that South Africa has gained as a founding member of the G20, it has become markedly more bold in its distributional demands, especially so in the context of the post-Bali UNFCCC negotiations leading to the Copenhagen Accord of December 2009. The South Africa state under Presidents Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, and Jacob Zuma has been welcomed in the main financial and commercial centres of Japan, Europe, and the US as an important 'partner' and 'the last hope for Africa'. This has created problems for South Africa in its region, but has also opened up opportunities for South Africa to influence policy coordination in multilateral fora, beyond its objective capacities as a middle-sized African state.[25]

Brazil's commitment to the cause of global redistribution has become quite pronounced since 2002 with the inception of the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Historically, Brazil has played an active role in Third World

Multilateral Trade Negotiations'. *Global Society*, 20:4 (2006), p. 422.

[22] Shadan Farasat, 'India's Quest for Regional Trade Agreements: Challenges Ahead', *Journal of World Trade*, 42 (2008) pp. 433–60.

[23] These four became known as the BASIC group (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China). See Martin Khor, 'After Copenhagen', p. 2.

[24] See Nicoli Nattrass, 'Gambling on investment: competing economic strategies in South Africa', *Transformation: Critical perspectives on Southern Africa*, 31 (1996), pp. 25–42.

[25] See Philip Nel, Ian Taylor, and Janis van der Westhuizen, 'Reformist Initiatives and South Africa's Multilateral Diplomacy: A Framework for Understanding', in Nel, Taylor, and van der Westhuizen (eds), *South Africa's Multilateral Diplomacy and Global Change: The Limits of Reformism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 1–30.

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coalitions, such as the G77, participation in the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)-centred movement for a new international economic order (NIEO), and participation in the G10 leading to the launch of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1986.[26] In contrast to India, which developed a strongly protectionist position during negotiations, Brazil supported the most favoured nation (MFN) principle at the GATT, primarily to curb the mercantilist policies of developed countries.[27] Continuing this tradition of exposing the hypocrisy of the West and using multilateral alliances to oppose it, Brazil led the way in forming the group of twenty (G20) developing countries in response to the release by the US and EU of a joint draft agreement on agriculture that fell far short of the expectations of developing countries, especially as far as the reduction of export subsidies and non-tariff barriers to agricultural imports were concerned. Brazilian participants and observers saw the creation of the developing country G20 as a direct political challenge to the developed world, aimed at undermining the developed world's skewed and self-serving understanding of what multilateralism means.[28]

Although it continues to be at best ambivalent towards its own region, initiating and presiding over only very 'thin' regional institutions, the Lula government has sought to establish strong tri-continental links with Asia and Africa in particular.[29] It has also used Brazil's growing economic weight and increasing pulling power in multilateral institutions to counter what it experiences as the intrusive hegemony of the US in South America. Brazil has had little choice but to pursue a close 'partnership' with the hegemon in Western hemisphere affairs. At the same time, Brazil increasingly uses multilateral alliances with other developing nations 'as a means of enhancing its status as a global player of significance'[30] and to balance what the current government in Brasilia perceives to be mercantilist trappings of rampant neo-liberalism. However, it has been careful not to alienate Washington and has received acknowledgement of its emergence as a global power from the Bush administration in 2005.[31] Its foreign policy is best described as a mixture of cooperative redistribution through multilateral alliances, combined with attempts to make Brazil itself a major benefactor of the emerging liberal regional order in South America and to transform it from a net borrower to a net exporter of capital. Brazil has sought to increase its bargaining power at international multilateral organisations such as the WTO through participation and leadership of Third World coalitions, such as the group of 20 developing countries

[26] The G10 arranged itself in opposition to US proposals to extend GATT liberalisation negotiations to areas such as intellectual property, services and investments, representing 'traditional Third Worldism'. Andrew Hurrell and Amrita Narlikar, 'A New Politics of Confrontation?', p. 421.

[27] Maria Regina Soares de Lima and Monica Hirst, 'Brazil as an Intermediate State and Regional Power: Action, Choice and Responsibilities', *International Affairs*, 82 (2006) pp. 26–7.

[28] Pedro da Motta Veiga, 'Brazil and the G20 Group of Developing Countries', in Paul Gallagher, Patrick Low, and Andrew L. Stoler (eds) *Managing the Challenges of WTO Participation: 45 Case Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 115.

[29] Matias Spektor discusses the ambivalence of Brazil's attitude towards its region and the thinness of the regional architecture that Brazil has helped to create in the region. See his 'Brazil as a Regional and Emerging Global Power', Policy Briefing 9 of the Emerging Power Programme (Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs, November 2009), p. 3.

[30] Chris Alden and Marco Antonio Vieira, 'The New Diplomacy of the South: South Africa, Brazil, India and Trilateralism', *Third World Quarterly*, 26 (2005), p. 1084.

[31] Spektor, 'Brazil as a Regional and Emerging Global Power', p. 3.

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in the WTO and as part of the 'Quartet' (with the US, the EU, and India) that constitute an inner circle of trade negotiations.

The three regional powers enthusiastically pursue the goal of redistribution, both in their individual foreign policies but also through the collective means provided by the India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum. IBSA was conceived of in the spirit of what one can refer to as 'tri-continentalism', harking back to initiatives taken at the Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung in 1955, the first meeting of the non-aligned nations in Belgrade in 1961, and the first UN Conference on South-South cooperation in Buenos Aires in 1978.[32] The IBSA Dialogue Forum was launched on 6 June 2003 with the Brasilia Declaration signed by the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Celso Amorim, of South Africa, Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, and of India, Yashwant Sinha. Its roots lie in a series of high-level *intergovernmental*, *transgovernmental*, and *transnational* conversations and consultations held by representatives of the three countries since the late 1990s. The idea of a new powerful alliance of the Global South was spurred on by the initiative for a larger and more decisive role for 'emerging powers' in the global financial architecture since the meeting of the 'Willard-Group' of 22 states in 1998, the creation of the G20 of finance ministers in 1999 under the tutelage of the IMF, and the initiative taken by the Japanese host of the 2000 G8 meeting in Japan to invite President Olusegun Obasanjo of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Thabo Mbeki of the Republic of South Africa, President Abdelaziz Bouteflica of the Democratic People's Republic of Algeria, and Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai of the Kingdom of Thailand for consultations with the G8. But it was the Evian Summit of the G8 of 1–3 June 2003 that could be associated most directly with the formation of IBSA. The G8 at Evian as part of an 'enlarged dialogue' initiative hosted Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa and Senegal as prime movers of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD – launched in 2002 at the Kananaskis G-8 Summit in Canada) plus the leaders of six large and influential countries, namely Brazil, Mexico, Morocco, India, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. It was reported – but only quite some time after the event[33] – that the then South African President, Thabo Mbeki, approached Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Mexico, Nigeria, and Saudi Arabia to join South Africa in forming a 'G8 of the South', but that it was eventually only Brazil and India who took up the offer. Brazil acted as the main driver of the IBSA initiative.[34]

Through institutionalising policy coordination on a range of fronts between regional powers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, by encouraging bilateral trade and reciprocal investment, by developing infrastructural links between the member states, and by coordinating negotiation strategies in the areas as diverse as multilateral trade talks and the UNFCC, the IBSA states have attempted also to affect the process and distributional outcomes of global governance in a number of issue areas.[35] Notable is that IBSA's goals are not exclusively aimed at the

[32] For a broad discussion of 'tri-continentalism' as a manifestation of South-South solidarity, see Jacqueline Anne Braveboy-Wagner, *Institutions of the Global South* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), pp. 13–54.
[33] Peter Fabricius, 'IBSA defends its apparent exclusivity', *The Star (Johannesburg)* (19 October 2007).
[34] See Gladys Lechini, 'Middle Powers: IBSA and the New South-South Cooperation', *NACLA Report on the Americas*, 40 (Sep-Oct 2007), p. 29.
[35] See Alden and Vieira, 'The New Diplomacy of the South', pp. 1077–95.

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well-being of the three states alone, but rather seek to contribute to the consolidation of a strategic partnership between developing countries more generally. In this context, IBSA serves as a means to promote trade between the three members, but also between regions. By 2009, trade between the three countries grew to 10 billion US dollars, and by 2015 it is expected to be worth US $25 billion. But IBSA is also looking at ways in which to promote integration between the MERCOSUR and the SACU economies in general. The broader focus of IBSA is also evident from its institutionalisation of South-South ODA in the form of the IBSA facility for hunger and poverty alleviation, which have financed poverty-relief initiatives in Haiti, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Laos, Burundi, Timor-Leste, and Palestine.[36]

On the demand-side, the pressures of globalisation-fed interdependence have stimulated the desire by the leading states of the North to engage prominent Southern states in networks of at-the-border and beyond-the-border policy coordination and cooperation. This desire extends across issue areas as diverse as nuclear non-proliferation, financial regulation and management, securing liquidity in a post-recession era, deepening of world trade, and the mitigation of climate change. In all of these issue areas, and many beyond this list, one or more of the three states have developed the capacity to act as spoiler, if not as *veto* power.[37] As the leading OECD states have learnt most forcefully in the breakdown of the WTO negotiations at Cancun in 2003, and in the hammering out of the Copenhagen Accord in late 2009, norm development and successful regime building in a variety of areas depend on gaining the cooperation of the IBSA states. The well-established nature of liberal democracy in all three states have made it easier for the North to accept this marked redistribution of power in favour of the IBSA. Decision makers and voters in G8 states regard them as credible counterparts with whom they share a number of norms and values.[38] However, this degree of acceptance has not been enough to meet the goal of recognition as pursued by developing countries in general, and the three prominent regional powers that we are focusing upon. It is to this goal that we now turn.

Recognition

Redistribution refers to the *who gets what, when, and how* of international politics and is fundamentally about the dispersal of what Barnett and Duvall call 'compulsory' and 'institutional power'.[39] Important as these distributional issues

[36] Fabiana Frayssinet, 'Brazil, India, South Africa to broaden "Voice of the South"'. Inter Press Service News Agency, (1 September 2009), available at: {http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=48291}, accessed on 2 September 2009.

[37] The one issue area in which this is not yet true is international security, but there the IBSA states often rely on China, and sometimes Russia, to augment its institutional power.

[38] Other regional powers of the Global South, notably Egypt, Libya, and Venezuela, to name but three, also aspire to play roles on the stage beyond their regions, and these roles include some element of opposition to the hegemony of the Global North. However, exactly because these states lack the credibility among their interlocutors that flows from the robust democratic institutions that India, Brazil, and South Africa have, they do not deserve to be categorised together with the IBSA states.

[39] Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, 'Power in Global Governance', in Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall (eds), *Power in Global Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 1–32.

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are, they do not exhaust our contemporary conception of what international politics is all about, nor do they fully cover the wish list of regional powers of the South. International politics, as are all forms of politics, is not only about who gets what, but also, and perhaps more fundamentally, about how *people are treated*.[40] This brings us to a second reason why the notion of a structural conflict between North and South is less useful today than it may have been before. The notion, shared by both realists and critical theorists, tend to reduce states to strategic, instrumental actors, seeking to maximise interests that are ultimately determined by material structural factors. In contrast to the intellectual era in which Krasner wrote, we today appreciate that states engage also in communicative social action which fundamentally constitute them as distinct social units with specific desires and wants within a society of states. As a number of social theorists have pointed out recently, the core constitutive moment of communicative events is the inter-subjective process of *recognition*.[41] For my purpose, 'recognition' refers to the communicative process in the international society of states through which states mutually acknowledge the status and social esteem of other states. The struggle of the Global South has been and is ultimately a struggle for recognition – as I explain below, a struggle against discrimination, disrespect, and humiliation. This is by no means a new insight, as Frantz Fanon already in the early 1960s emphasised that the struggle of the developing world is a social-psychological revolt for recognition and against humiliation.[42] But it is an insight that deserves to be exhumed and analytically restored if we want to understand the contribution that regional powers of the South can make towards global change.

The notion of recognition has gained currency, also in International Relations (IR) circles, due to a renewed appreciation in social theory of the role that inter-subjectivity plays in constituting subjectivity and identity. The literature on recognition has focused almost exclusively on the individual and domestic groups as units of analysis. There are a number of reasons, however, why the literature can also be made relevant to the interaction between states. To start off, the very notion of a society of states opens the way for applying social theories to the international level of analysis. Following Watson and Bull, the society of states can be conceived of not only as a collection of units in which

> the behaviour of each is a necessary factor in the calculations of others, but also have established by dialogue and consent common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognize their common interest in maintaining these arrangements.[43]

In addition, as Alexander Wendt argues, 'states are people too', although he would be the first to impose limits on how far one can push this analogy.[44] But in terms

[40] On the contrast, see Rainer Forst, 'Radical Justice: On Iris Marion Young's Critique of the "Distributive Paradigm"', *Constellations*, 14 (2007) pp. 260–5.

[41] The contributions of these theorists are discussed below.

[42] Fanon summarises the connection between recognition and self-identity well: 'Because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask the question constantly: *In reality, who am I?*' Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), p. 200.

[43] Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, 'Introduction', in Bull and Watson (eds), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 1.

[44] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 215–24.

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of the fundamental social process of communicative interaction and identity formation, states are indeed social actors. This is suggested both by the very definition of the society of states above, but is also emphasised in the communicative turn in recent IR literature. This literature not only highlights the social practices of argument and persuasion as central to world politics,[45] but also that these dialogical processes – as are all social relations – can be evaluated in terms of the critical concepts of 'inclusion' and 'exclusion'.[46]

What follows is based on various insights developed by authors such as Axel Honneth, Paul Ricouer, Avishai Margalit, and others, who in recent years have developed the notion of recognition – and its absence in the form of discrimination, disrespect, and humiliation – into both analytical tools for the analysis of the causes of social conflict and into ethical standards by which societies can be measured.[47] Drawing on a tradition of thought that can be traced back to Hegel's analysis of the formation of self-awareness as an evolutionary process determined by the quality of inter-subjective relations, analysts have argued that the failure/withholding of recognition is a crucial if underappreciated factor in the pathology of social conflict. While the maldistribution of tangible goods such as wealth, power and income can fuel social conflict, these conflicts of grievances relate directly or indirectly to the discrimination, disrespect, and humiliation of individuals and groups by their societal counterparts. For Axel Honneth:

> Conflicts over distribution, as long as they are not merely concerned with just the application of institutionalized rules, are always symbolic struggles over the legitimacy of the sociocultural dispositive that determines the value of activities, attributes and contributions. In this way, struggles over distribution, contrary to Nancy Fraser's assumption, are themselves locked into a struggle for recognition. The latter represents a conflict over the institutionalized hierarchy of values that govern which social groups, on the basis of their status and their esteem, have legitimate claim to a particular amount of material goods.[48]

The focus on recognition is thus important because it helps us to expand the ethical debate beyond the narrow confines of the liberal debate on distributive justice, specifically as represented in the debates around the work of John Rawls and other contractarians. This endeavour finds inspiration in the fact that Rawls singled out 'the bases of self-respect' – which is dependent on the social process of recognition, as the primary social good that has to be distributed fairly.[49]

I suggest that the notion of recognition is relevant to the society of states in at least two distinct but related ways. The first has to do with *respecting* all states as

[45] See sources cited in fn. 8 above.

[46] Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), pp. 113 and further.

[47] Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Axel Honneth, '"Recognition or Redistribution?" Changing Perspectives on the Moral Order of Society', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 18:2–3 (2001), pp. 43–55; Avishai Margalit, *The Decent Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996); Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). For a general discussion of the application of Honneth's approach to recognition to the field of International Relations, see Juergen Haacke, 'The Frankfurt School and International Relations: on the Centrality of Recognition', *Review of International Studies* (2005), pp. 31, 181–94.

[48] Axel Honneth, 'Recognition or Redistribution?', p. 54. The reference is to Nancy Fraser, 'From Redistribution to Recognition? Dilemmas of Justice in a "Post-Socialist" Age', *New Left Review*, 212 (1995), pp. 68–93.

[49] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 440–6.

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equal and full members of the society of states, and acknowledging each state's legitimate claim on the rights and privileges that full membership affords. The second relates to the concept of *social esteem*. This goes beyond the acknowledgement of equal membership rights, and also includes an appreciation of what is distinct and *valuable* about each individual in his or her own right. The denial of the first form of recognition constitutes *disrespect*, while that of the second can be seen as a form of *humiliation*.

Respect

Although recognition in the first sense of the word clearly refers to the international law of formal recognition of statehood, more is involved than the mere acknowledgment that an aspiring state has met the formal criteria of statehood. In terms of customary international law, membership of the society of states and its institutions is granted on the basis of formal criteria. The formal criteria in terms of customary international law are contained in the Montevideo Convention of 1933: A permanent population linked to a defined territory, a government exercising effective control, and the capacity to enter into relations with other states. The application of these criteria has been accompanied by a large degree of discretion, though, and it is clear that considerations other than legal have often determined the granting of recognition. This seems inevitable, given the very nature of the inter-subjective process involved. In terms of what has become known as the *constitutive* interpretation, the act of recognition by others is regarded as itself being part of the constitution of a state as such. This contrasts with the *declaratory* interpretation in terms of which others states are obliged to acknowledge and declare that when an aspiring political entity meets the objective criteria set out in the Montevideo Convention, it is a state.[50] So, already from the legal perspective, the recognition of statehood entails more than the mechanical matching of facts and criteria, but involves a social process in which facts and criteria themselves are open for deliberation and contestation.

Furthermore, formal acknowledgement of statehood does not exhaust the relevant meaning of the term recognition in international politics. As the history of the past two hundred years show, the formal recognition of statehood has not led in all cases to the granting of full and equal access to the rights and privileges that are associated with membership of the society of states. The society of states, as Bull and Watson remind us, is first and foremost a creation of a number of influential European states who have gradually, but not always uniformly and evenly extended the invitation to others to join, but largely on the terms determined by the founders of the society. Up until relatively late into the 20th century, formal acknowledgement of statehood has not always been accompanied by respect for the full equality and agency of new society members. Much of the early 'Revolt against the West' was due to the resentment that this denial of equal membership, and the consequent denial of rights, privileges, and responsibilities, evoked.[51]

[50] For a discussion of the contrasting interpretations, see Michael Akehurst, *A Modern Introduction to International Law* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987), pp. 57–67.

[51] Hedley Bull, 'The Revolt against the West', in Bull and Watson (eds), *The Expansion of International Society*, pp. 217–28.

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The denial of full and equal membership rights – as evinced for instance in the way in which some newly independent states were denied membership of the UN in the early 1950s, and the restriction of potential non-permanent membership of the UNSC on the basis of the so-called 'London agreement' – is more than just a case of formal discrimination. From the viewpoint of the critical social theory of recognition, it boils down to a fundamental *disrespect* of the moral agency of the victim. Viewed from the interactive evolutionary perspective introduced by Hegel and explored by Honneth, the denial of full and equal membership rights and privileges interrupts the process of gaining awareness of the self and appreciation of the self as the bearer of societal rights and privileges, but therefore also of gaining self-respect as the bearer of responsibility towards the norms and principles of society. Recognition is thus linked to self-respect, which Paul Ricoeur in his more general theory of ethics sees as the cognitive and affective correlate of norm-following behaviour, of *morality*. In drawing on a range of insights generated by phenomenologists of the inter-subjective, being a moral person – that is, the observer of established rules of behaviour – is possible only on the basis of me being acknowledged by others and by myself as the bearer of moral value – on the respect that others have for me and my own self-respect.[52] Translated into the society of states, states can be expected to behave as responsible world citizens only on the basis of their being respected as full members of that society, that is, bearers of all the rights, privileges, *and* responsibilities in terms of the principles and values that are embedded in international society. The denial of this first form of recognition, which in many cases flow from a well-meaning appreciation of the presumed moral innocence of the Other, constitutes *disrespect:*

> We are here dealing with the denial of rights and with social exclusion, where human beings suffer in their dignity through not being granted the moral rights and responsibilities of a full legal person within their own community. Accordingly, this type of disrespect has to have, as its corresponding relation, the reciprocal recognition through which individuals come to regard themselves as equal bearers of rights from the perspective of their fellows.[53]

The struggle for recognition on the part of developing states has included resentment against formal and more informal forms of such disrespect. In the early days of the North-South confrontation, such disrespect was blatant. Immediately after the creation of the UN, the primary struggle for leading states of the developing world was focused on speeding up the process of decolonisation, securing membership for newly independent states to the UN, and securing an equitable distribution of non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council. The Afro-Asian Bandung Conference of 1955 was partly the result of the frustration experienced with the deadlock over new UN membership and tardiness in the process of decolonisation.[54] There was also frustration on the part of developing countries about the way in which power actors in the UN contrived to exclude certain Third World states from being considered for the rotational non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council. The passing of Resolution 1514 by the UN General Assembly in 1960 – 'Declaration on the Granting of Independence to

[52] Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, pp. 169–71.
[53] Honneth, 'Recognition or Redistribution?', p. 49.
[54] Peter Lyon, 'The Emergence of the Third World', in Bull and Watson (eds), *The Expansion of International Society*, pp. 229.

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Colonial Countries and Peoples' – the wording of which echoed the language used at Bandung,[55] and increasing the number of UNSC non-permanent seats in 1963 were important victories of recognition for the South.[56]

Based on these early experiences, it is perhaps in their commitment to the promotion of equitable multilateralism that the three IBSA states have voiced their deepest concerns over the disrespect that remains inherent in the world society of states. This is not the place to review the many twists and turns that multilateralism has taken over the past six decades, but it is noticeable that the IBSA states have made a point of advocating in each of the four Leaders' Summit *communiqués* to date a thorough democratisation of the main multilateral institutions in the world, and a thorough reform of the institution of multilateralism itself. Realists may want to argue that this commitment to multilateralism is simply a reflection of an instrumental approach of a bunch of middle-powers who aim to maximise their power *vis-à-vis* stronger states that they cannot take-on all alone. There can be no doubt that such instrumental and strategic considerations do play a role in the foreign policies of all three states, and that they indeed appreciate the strategic value of and transaction-costs reduction brought about by multilateral institutions in a hierarchic world.[57] But what this realist assessment ignores is that the self-perception and identity of each of the three IBSA states is fundamentally linked to multilateralism. All three are founding members of the UN, and all three have built their foreign policies and domestic credibility around the collective peaceful pursuit of solutions to global and regional challenges. All three prefer North-South dialogue – instead of an all-out confrontation. Brazil's participation in multilateral institutions goes back to the 19th century, and it was involved in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 (as the only South American state who participated in the First World War), in the League of Nations, and in the creation of the multilateral order after the end of the Second World War. In all of this, it viewed itself as a mediator between the great powers and smaller nations.[58]

In the case of South Africa, the founding of the post-apartheid South African state is intimately linked to multilateralism, both globally and regionally. The UN General Assembly, but also major coalitions of developing countries such as the G77, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Organization of African Unity all played a major role in placing pressure on apartheid South Africa, and were instrumental in its demise. This has led to a deep sense of loyalty by post-apartheid decision makers towards these institutions, and an honest desire by Mandela and his successors to revitalise and sanitise multilateralism, both on a global but also on a regional scale.[59]

[55] See Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics*, pp. 317–9.

[56] On the initiative of forty-four African and Asian states, the general Assembly in 1963 decided to enlarge the UN Security Council to fifteen members by adding another 4 non-permanent seats (and the Economic and Social Council from 18 to 27 members). See Sydney D. Bailey and Sam Daws, *The Procedure of the UN Security Council* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), pp. 152–3.

[57] For a discussion of the instrumental value of multilateralism for the Global South, see Braveboy-Wagner, *Institutions of the Global South*, pp. 1–9. My contention is that the commitment of the three IBSA states to multilateralism goes further than instrumental concerns, but that it is in fact constitutive of their very identities as states.

[58] de Lima and Hirst, 'Brazil as an Intermediate State and Regional Power', p. 25.

[59] Nelson Mandela, 'South Africa's Future Foreign Policy', *Foreign Affairs*, 72:5 (Nov-Dec, 1993), pp. 86–97. This article is widely regarded as the founding document of the foreign policy of post-apartheid South Africa. See Philip Nel and Walter Carlsnaes, 'Introduction', *In Full Flight:*

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India's role in strengthening the anti-colonial and anti-racist credentials of the UN in the early years of the latter's existence, is well known. This included India's success in persuading the UN General Assembly to condemn racist practices against Indians in South Africa, and its important role in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[60] It is also easily forgotten that the original concept of non-alignment, as formulated by Nehru at the Bandung Conference, was not to propose a third way between the Communist World and the West, but rather 'to keep everyone talking, to build harmony and consensus, *in order to make One World real*. Non-alignment, in the protean form practiced in the early UN, simply meant dealing with everyone, despite differences'.[61]

It is against this background that the vehement opposition of the IBSA states to the inherent hierarchy in many multilateral institutions, and the misuse of power by stronger states to pursue unilateral or at best plurilateral aims under the banner of multilateralism, must be appreciated. As others in the developing world also do, these states view these practices as deeply offensive and disrespectful. Some recent examples are the so-called 'Green Room' practices during the WTO ministerial meetings, strongly opposed by a coalition of developing states led by India and Brazil,[62] and the unilateral initiative by the Danish host of the 2009 Copenhagen COP meeting to produce a final document circumventing the broader negotiations.[63] More systematically, the IBSA states have resisted the selective and discriminatory interventionist intentions of some of the UNSC permanent members, including the 2003 invasion of Iraq, in an attempt to protect the sovereignty of developing states against unilateral and discriminatory interventions in the domestic affairs of the target states. Most noticeable in this regard has been South Africa's behaviour during its most recent term as UNSC non-permanent member (2006–2008). In 2007, South Africa voted against including a resolution condemning human rights abuse in Myanmar on the Security Council Agenda. It also opposed a briefing to the Security Council on the situation in Zimbabwe, insisting

South African Foreign Policy after Apartheid (Midrand, Johannesburg: Institute for Global Dialogue, 2006), pp. 17–22. For collections of discussions on the importance of multilateralism in South Africa's foreign policy, see Philip Nel, Ian Taylor, and Janis van der Westhuizen (eds), *South Africa's Multilateral Diplomacy and Global Change* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), and Donna Lee, Ian Taylor, and Paul Williams (eds), *The New Multilateralism in South African Diplomacy* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2006).

[60] See Manu Bhagavan, 'A New Hope: India, the UN and the Making of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights', *Modern Asian Studies*, 44:2 (2010) pp. 311–47.

[61] Bhagavan, 'A new hope', p. 338.

[62] The 'Green Room' refers to the practice at WTO ministerial meetings in which representatives of the developed world meet in closed sessions to coordinate their negotiating position, often circumventing the more inclusive plenary sessions of the WTO negotiating fora. The frustration and humiliation that this causes developing countries is well captured by this comment by an Al-Ahram journalist following the WTO meeting in Sydney in 2002: 'At the Seattle WTO summit the hullabaloo started with the mysterious "green room", a privileged and exclusive meeting ground for the rich countries' delegations. Providing privacy behind closed doors, the green room was definitely where it was at. In the shared intimacy of the green room, Northern countries defined and fine-tuned their own version of the WTO agenda, while Southern delegations aimlessly roamed the hallways, accompanied by hordes of journalists waiting for their scoop. Humiliated, marginalised and literally locked out of any meaningful negotiating process, Southern delegations finally walked out in protest. At the end of the day, the ministerial broke down in chaos as Southern dignitaries began to echo the discourse of militant anti-capitalist street protesters.' See Faiza Rady, 'The "green room" syndrome', *Al-Ahram Weekly Online* (21–27 November 2002), available at {http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2002/613/in4.htm}.

[63] On the Danish unilateral initiative and opposition to it from the IBSA states, among others, see Martin Khor, 'After Copenhagen, the Way Forward', pp. 2–3.

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that such domestic issues do not belong on the UNSC's agenda. It also opposed proposed financial and arms sanctions to 'punish' Iran. Such behaviour has met with some criticism that South Africa 'isn't bringing its moral weight to diplomatic deliberations'.[64] Such criticism ignores the larger moral focus of South Africa's attempt to gain unambiguous recognition of the rights of developing countries to be respected as full members of the society of states in terms of the UN Charter. In this, it has counted on the support of its IBSA partners.

The programme of IBSA to gain recognition and respect for developing countries also involves agitation for democratising the procedures and norms of the international financial institutions, and the enlargement of the permanent membership of the UNSC.[65] As part of the G4 of aspiring permanent members, Brazil and India are openly and actively promoting their candidacies. South Africa, on the other hand, is much more cautious in how it is approaching the matter, given the African Union's position that an enlarged permanent membership of the UNSC must make provision for rotating African membership. Nevertheless, all three are committed to 'genuine reform of the Security Council, with expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories of membership, with greater representation for developing countries in both, to ensure that its composition reflects contemporary realities'.[66] In terms of the sympathetic reading developed here, note must be taken of the fact that IBSA conceives UN and global governance reform to be a collective and comprehensive enterprise, involving and benefiting all developing countries and not only themselves. In this, they echo the general approach to UN reform as formulated by the Non-Aligned Movement.[67] Recognition and respect are indivisible gains for developing countries, they seem to

[64] Michael Wines, 'South Africa isn't bringing its moral weight to diplomatic deliberations', *New York Times* (23 March 2007).

[65] Paragraph 6 of the Delhi Summit Declaration by the IBSA Heads of Government states: 'The leaders reiterated the need to make the structures of global governance more democratic, representative and legitimate by increasing the participation of developing countries in the decision-making bodies of multilateral institutions.' New Delhi Summit Declaration (15 October 2008).

[66] Ibid., para. 15.

[67] In para. 5 of the Ministerial Communiqué following the sixth trilateral commission meeting of IBSA (Brasilia, 1 September 2009), the Parties 'Reaffirm their commitment to multilateralism and to increase participation of developing countries in the decision-making bodies of multilateral institutions. Also reiterate the need for the UN to be reformed so as to become more democratic and coherent with the priorities of developing countries. Support a reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC) that includes the creation of new permanent and nonpermanent seats, with increased participation of developing countries in both categories. Such reform is of the utmost importance for the UNSC to have the representativeness and legitimacy it needs to face contemporary challenges.' Available at: {http://www.ibsa-trilateral.org//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=53&Itemid=27}. See also para. 10 of the Declaration following the First Summit of Heads of State and Government of the IBSA states (Brasilia, 13 September 2006), available at: {http://www.ibsa-trilateral.org//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=60&Itemid=27} and para. 3 of the Somerset West IBSA Ministerial Communiqué (11 May 2008): 'The Ministers reaffirmed their call to make the structures of global governance more democratic, representative and legitimate by increasing the participation of the South in their decision-making. In this regard, the Ministers reiterated that the international system cannot be reordered meaningfully without a comprehensive reform of the UN, and the Security Council, in permanent and non-permanent categories of membership. Ministers reiterated that inter-governmental negotiations on the issue of Security Council reform must commence forthwith.' Available at: {http://www.ibsa-trilateral.org//index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57&Itemid=27}.

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believe, despite the fact that developing countries may not agree amongst themselves how best to achieve these goals.

Esteem

The second type of recognition that plays an important part in the considerations of the South and its aspiring regional leaders has to do with the validation of *social esteem*. For Honneth, the recognition of social esteem goes beyond the acknowledgement of equal membership rights, but also includes an appreciation of what is distinct and *valuable* about each individual in his or her own right. Social solidarity, the critical criterion of societal wellness in his conception, is only possible on the basis of such recognition. While self-respect is the correlate of the more generalised recognition that flows from one's acceptance as an equal, a moral agent entitled to all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the generalised Other, self-esteem is the correlate of this second moment of recognition. Self-esteem flows from being accepted for what you are in your own right, an appreciation of what is important to you in terms of your self-conception, in contrast to the general expectations that society may impose on you. This process of individuation contains 'within itself increasing scope for self-realization'.[68] In his general theory of the ethical, Ricoeur links self-esteem to the ability to become a virtuous person, that is, a person who can contribute to defining and refining the standards of what it means to lead an ethical life.[69] While morality – compliance with the generalised rules of society – is dependent on self-respect that flows from being treated as a subject with valid claims to full and equal rights, privileges and responsibilities, activation and realisation of the virtuous/the ethical depends on self-esteem. According to Honneth:

> The positive attitude a subject can take towards itself, when recognized in this way, is that of self-esteem: finding itself appreciated for its specific qualities, the subject is able to identify itself wholly with its specific attributes and achievements. The unique aspect of such an ethical relationship of recognition for Mead, consists in the fact that it contains within itself increasing scope for self-realization. The ethical norms that allow individuals reciprocally to recognize their individuality, are open to the process of detraditionalization, in the course of which they shed their hierarchic and prescriptive character, as they come to be more and more generalized. For this reason, the relationship of recognition associated with solidarity incorporates the principle of egalitarian difference, which, as a result of pressure coming from individualized subjects, can develop more fully.[70]

Conversely, the denial of the second, more subtle and less formal type of recognition can be associated with the self-experience of *humiliation*, that is, a fundamental disregard or dismissal of one's humanity. The decent society, in

[68] Honneth, 'Recognition or Redistribution?', p. 50.
[69] In Ricoeur's own words: '(T)o the ethical aim will correspond what we shall henceforth call, self-esteem, and to the deontological moment, self-respect. According to the thesis proposed here, it will be made apparent: (1) that self-esteem is more fundamental than self-respect; (2) that self-respect is the aspect under which self-esteem appears in the domain of norms and, (3) that the aporias of duty create situations 'in which self-esteem appears not only as the source but as the recourse for respect [. . .]' Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, p. 171.
[70] Honneth, 'Recognition or Redistribution?', p. 50.

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Margalit's terms, is the society that 'fights conditions which constitute a justification for its dependents to consider themselves humiliated'.[71] The quality of being decent, he is at pains to explain, is not *guaranteed* by the granting of formal rights of participation, but by the inter-subjective agreement of its members to treat each other in such a way that self-esteem is nurtured.[72]

For much of the past six decades, the struggle of the developing world has been a struggle to turn the society of states into a decent society in which their distinctiveness is recognised, their self-esteem nurtured, and fundamental humiliation is avoided. While the struggle for recognition in the first sense can be described as flowing from the desire to be treated the same as every other member (equality), the second sense of the term relates to a desire to gain acknowledgement also of what is distinct and valuable about your way of life and concerns, even though they may be radically different from that of the generalised Other. In essence, this has been a struggle against their own *invisibility* in terms of the reigning discourses of development, modernisation, and global economic and cultural integration, the contemporary correlates of a century-old process of humiliation. As Sophie Bessis argues, Western supremacy in the post-colonial era is continued through the universality 'embodied in the single form given it by Europe',[73] a universality that renders the specific developmental needs of Third World states as of secondary importance and to be assumed under the larger project of Western-style modernity.

The struggle of developing countries against their discursively embedded humiliation has manifested itself in many ways over the past 60 years, and there is need for a comprehensive history of North-South relations that can record these manifestations. However, one example stands out for its intensity and longevity: The struggle against their own 'invisibleness' in the post-WWII trade regime, as presided over by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The struggle to gain acceptance of the development needs of developing countries as distinct and worthy of 'special' and 'preferential' treatment, against the general tendency of liberal developmentalism which equates development with economic modernisation and global integration. A number of authors have pointed out that the campaign for the establishment of the UN Conference on Trade and Development was a campaign for recognition of the specific concerns of developing countries, and for securing 'the sovereignty of Third World states over their national economies'.[74]

This struggle against the invisibility of specific Third World attributes and needs in the processes of global governance continues today in a variety of contexts, from keeping the focus on development issues in the Doha 'development round' of WTO negotiations, to the forceful formulations by the IBSA partners of the specific needs and concerns of developing countries in the current UNFCCC post-Kyoto negotiations about a global climate change mitigation strategy. In voicing concerns about what is happening in these contexts, the Brazilian President

[71] Margalit, *The Decent Society*, p. 10.
[72] Ibid., pp. 2–3.
[73] Sophie Bessis, *Western Supremacy: The Triumph of An Idea?* (London: Zed Books, 2003), p. 180.
[74] Jennifer Bair, 'From the Politics of Development to the Challenges of Globalization', *Globalizations*, 4 (December 2004), p. 489. See also, Sidney Dell, 'The Origins of UNCTAD', in Michael Zammit Cutajar (ed.), *UNCTAD and the South-North Dialogue: The First Twenty Years* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1985), pp. 10–32.

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and his Foreign Minister have explicitly agitated for an attitude of 'non-indifference' to the concerns of the developing world:

> Brazil stands firm in its defence of principles that have guided the attitudes of the Non-Aligned Movement, such as non-interference in domestic affairs and the peaceful settlement of disputes. In particular we condemn every form of unilateral action, such as embargoes and sanctions, not to mention the use of force that is not authorised by the Security Council. Increased interdependence calls for enhanced solidarity among nations. This is especially necessary with regard to the many parts of Africa in which men, women and children are doomed to a life of poverty and despair. President Lula has therefore become an advocate for what we describe as an attitude of 'non-indifference'.[75]

This struggle against 'indifference' is also powerfully reflected in the way in which South Africa and a number of its allies, both on the African continent and beyond, have used the opportunities awarded to them by their incorporation into newly created fora of North-South dialogue, have tried to articulate the concerns and aspirations of Africa in a way that contributes to the esteem that Africa should/can claim. The notions of an Africa Renaissance, and of a New Partnership for Africa's Development, have been central to this attempt. It is noteworthy how the primary driving force behind these programmatic idea have presented them as means through which Africa (and the South in general) can define itself for itself and for the international society in general.[76] Thabo Mbeki, in one of his most well-known speeches to the South African National Parliament famously declared that:

> At the centre of all the engagements [. . .] is the critical question of our time, of how humanity should respond to the irreversible process of globalisation while addressing the fundamental challenges that face the bulk of humanity. These include poverty, underdevelopment, the growing North-South gap, racism and xenophobia, gender discrimination, ill-health, violent conflicts and the threat to the environment [. . .] These problems cannot be solved except in the context of the global human society to which we belong. We must and will actively continue to engage the rest of the world to make whatever contribution we can to ensure that the process of globalisation impacts positively on those, like the millions of our people, who are poor and in dire need of a better life. This engagement must necessarily address [. . .] the restructuring of the UN, including the Security Council, a review of the functioning of such bodies as the IMF and the World Bank, the determination of the agenda and manner of operation of the WTO and an assessment of the role of the G7. Central to these processes must be the objective of reversing the marginalisation of Africa and the rest of the South, and therefore compensating for the reduction of national sovereignty by increasing the capacity of the South to impact on the system of global governance.[77]

The marginalisation of the South's legitimate concerns in the global economy, and the failure of developed countries to give them due recognition, are persistent

[75] Speech by the Foreign Minister of Brazil, Ambassador Celso Amorim, at the 14th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement – Havana (16 September 2006). Available at: {http://www.brazil.org.uk/press/speeches_files/20060916.html}.

[76] See Thabo Mbeki, 'The African Renaissance: Africans Defining Themselves', in Thabo Mbeki, *Africa: Define Yourself* (Cape Town: Tafelberg and Mafube, 2002), pp. 72–81. It is an open question whether the term 'African renaissance' will survive the political demise of ex-President Mbeki. NEPAD is firmly institutionalised in South Africa's foreign policy, though, and Mbeki's successors have been careful to echo its main ideals. See the budget vote address by the South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, to the National Assembly (18 June 2009). Available at:{http://www.dirco.gov.za/}.

[77] Speech of the President of the Republic of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, on the occasion of the consideration of the budget vote of the Presidency, National Assembly (13 June 2000). Cited in Nel, Taylor, and van der Westhuizen, 'Reformist initiatives', p. 6.

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themes in Indian pronouncements. While addressing the 15th Non Aligned Movement Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt on 15 July 2009, Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh reiterated that:

> The Non-aligned Movement gave voice to the colonial world, leading to their political emancipation. It heralded their hope that their new found political freedom would translate into economic progress and the removal of poverty, hunger and disease; that they would become active and equal participants in shaping a world order that would facilitate the realisation of their development objectives. We are still far from achieving that objective [. . .] The Non-aligned Movement has a great stake in ensuring that steps planned to revive the global economy take into account the legitimate concerns of the developing countries. These include the challenges of food security, energy security, the environment and the reform of institutions of global governance. They are embedded in the economic crisis and must be dealt with comprehensively and with a sense of great urgency. We have a crucial stake in a rule based multilateral trading system and in an early conclusion of a balanced and fair agreement in the Doha round.[78]

These *cris de coeur* reflect the unfinished challenge that regional powers of the South face in getting the traditional G7 countries to recognise the former's concerns and needs as legitimate and worthy of systematic and sustained attention. On such recognition depends the self-esteem of the developing world, but also the social solidarity that would enable the international society to deal with the challenges of planetary and human development.

Conclusion

Against the assumption of a material structural conflict between North and South, the implication of which is that leaders of the South should/do want to disengage from the processes of global integration, this article has argued that the leading regional powers of the developing world are much more overtly integrationist in their outlook and approach to the global political economy. This reflects a growing confidence in their ability to advance their agendas on the world stage, but also of the significant presence of the extractive, manufacturing, financial, agricultural, and service sectors of these states in the global economy.

India, Brazil, and South Africa have used their regional status and global presence and credibility to pursue a programme of global change that is not yet well understood. Fundamentally, their concern is to change the way in which developing countries are treated in the society of states. This treatment constitutes the basis on which redistribution of wealth and power can or cannot take place. The concept of recognition gives us a useful analytical handle on this fundamental and logically prior concern, assisting us to appreciate that the IBSA states' demand for inclusive and transparent multilateralism and attempts to render the developmental needs of the Global South more visible, are dimensions of a continuing struggle of developing countries against disrespect and humiliation.

While it is important to appreciate the agency of the current leadership of the IBSA states and the specific nature of the change that they are seeking, this

[78] Available at: {http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/document/papers/primeministersaddress_alignedmovement_summitEgypt.htm}.

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conceptualisation of the reform programme pursued by the IBSA states should not be read as an uncritical appreciation of it. In particular, the question must be asked whether the attempts by all three IBSA states to balance conservative economic policies at home and in their near abroad with a more reformist global set of goals, is contradictory. The leaders of these states are concerned about changing the way in which the rest of the world behaves towards and treat them and their peoples. But does the liberal discourse underpinning their conservative economic policies not lend credence to those very Western universalistic assumptions that these want to oppose? Are they not contributing to their own dis-recognition by embracing the neo-liberal macroeconomic framework, or is it the case that the relatively powerless have no other choice but to address the powerful in terms that the latter understands? It is also legitimate to ask if the IBSA states are themselves contributing sufficiently to redistribution and recognition within their own countries, and within the regions that they are supposed to lead?

These questions have been explored partially elsewhere, but I would suggest that a full assessment must await the maturation of the various IBSA initiatives and the evolution of the domestic political-economic policies of all three states, which are all still very fluid.[79] For the time being, though, we should acknowledge that the redistribution and recognition programmes pursued by the IBSA states lie in the extension of what Third World leaders always have been after in the post-WWII era, as was suggested above. We can also agree that the current leadership is more optimistic about their chances for success, and probably with good reason, given the distinct shift in bargaining power that has accompanied the emergence of Brazil, India, and South Africa as *veto*-players in a number of issue areas. That distinct power shift has been made possible, at least to a large degree, by the success of these regional powers in introducing conservative domestic and international economic policies. If that is what it takes to progress the unfinished struggle of the developing world for redistribution and recognition, then surely we cannot dismiss their agenda and strategy and tactics from the outset? This agenda has the potential not only to delegitimise particular norms and practices in a global order that for too long has been dismissive of the interests and concerns of the developing world.[80] More fundamentally, it can lead to a reform of the inter-subjective relations of recognition, respect, and esteem, on which the redistribution of wealth, privilege, and power ultimately depends.

[79] See Philip Nel and Matthew Stephen, 'The Foreign Economic Policies'; Chris Alden and Marco Antonio Vieira, 'The New Diplomacy of the South', pp. 1077–95; and Ian Taylor, '"The South Will Rise Again"? New Alliances and Global Governance: The India-Brazil-South Africa Dialogue Forum', *Politikon*, 36:1 (April 2009), pp. 45–58.

[80] See Taylor, "The South Will Rise Again?", p. 47.

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