

## **Roles and Reality: Turkish and Brazilian Engagement with Africa**

Roller ve Gerçekler: Türkiye'nin ve Brezilya'nın Afrika ile Bağı

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### **Abstract**

In the enthusiasm to declare a second 'scramble for Africa' by emerging powers, China has dwarfed the debate, fuelled by the zero-sum perception that its gain is the United States' loss. Although middle powers such as Turkey and Brazil have equally global ambitions, their growing engagement with the continent has received little critical attention. This article identifies the roles that Turkey and Brazil have adopted in their foreign policy towards African countries, and analyses these roles against the realities on the ground. It finds that their discourses of sustained partnership and support are belied by the kinds of resource-hungry economic interests favoured by prior colonial projects, and misleadingly selective histories of affinity that amplify partial connections to a continental scale.

**Keywords:** *Turkish Foreign Policy, Brazilian Foreign Policy, Africa, Turkey-Africa, Brazil-Africa, Role Theory, MSSD*

### **Öz**

Çin'in kendi kazancını ABD'nin kaybı olarak değerlendiren sıfır toplamlı oyun anlayışı, yükselen güçlerin ikinci 'Afrika kapışması' sürecindeki tartışmaları gölgede bırakmıştır. Brezilya ve Türkiye gibi orta güçler de küresel hedefleri olmasına rağmen çok az dikkat çekmişlerdir. Bu makale Türkiye ve Brezilya'nın Afrika ülkelerine yönelik dış politikalarında belirledikleri rolü tanımlamakta ve bu rollerin sahadaki gerçeklikle ne kadar uyduğunu analiz etmektedir. Afrika'daki işbirliği ve destek söylemlerinin geçmişte sömürgeci güçler tarafından da benimsenen doğal kaynak odaklı iktisadi çıkarlarla çeliştiğini vurgulayan makale, bölgedeki yanıltıcı ve tarafsız olmayan tarihsel ilişkileri de ortaya koymaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Türk Dış Politikası, Brezilya Dış Politikası, Afrika, Türkiye-Afrika, Brezilya-Afrika, Rol Teorisi, MSSD*

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## INTRODUCTION

Observers have been quick to declare a second “scramble for Africa.” Unlike the first, this time the actors involved come with the self-awareness of the failures and injustices of their predecessors, and are keen to present themselves in opposition to them. China is perhaps the best-known of these new actors,<sup>1</sup> with Taylor observing that “the burgeoning of Sino-African links is unprecedented and is becoming *the* main topic of interest in respect of Africa’s international relations”;<sup>2</sup> China’s rise is taken to indicate the United States’ fall, and a shift in the balance of power across the continent. The Chinese example is just one from a broader rise in the prominence of non-DAC aid donors,<sup>3</sup> described by some as “a silent revolution” in which “emerging donors [...] are introducing competitive pressures into the existing system”.<sup>4</sup> According to Özkan, “Since the early 2000s, there is a growing visibility of the “rising powers” in international development cooperation especially in Africa that has led to claims that they represent a ‘challenge to the development paradigm’ [...] This suggests the emergence of a new paradigm, with major implications for traditional aid donors”.<sup>5</sup>

From these new actors, Habiyaemye identifies both Turkey and Brazil as examples of a “‘global swing state’ in regard to [their] ability to affect the outcome of the global game of influence between China and the West.”<sup>6</sup> He suggests that Turkey’s role will be particularly pivotal because it may bring it into conflict with its fellow NATO members.<sup>7</sup> Some have gone so far as to say that “Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRICs) have literally invaded the African continent, but not with arms. Instead, they have invaded Africa with money, goods, ideas, and drilling and mining equipment”.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Harry G. Broadman, “China and India Go to Africa: New Deals in the Developing World,” *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 2 (March 1, 2008): 95–109. Campbell, Horace. “China in Africa: Challenging US Global Hegemony.” *Third World Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (February 1, 2008). Raphael Kaplinsky, Dorothy McCormick, Mike Morris. “Impacts and Challenges of a Growing Relationship between China and Sub-Saharan Africa.” (2010).

<sup>2</sup> Ian Taylor, “China’s Oil Diplomacy in Africa,” *International Affairs* 82, no. 5 (September 1, 2006), 937.

<sup>3</sup>Peter Kragelund, “The Return of Non-DAC Donors to Africa: New Prospects for African Development?” *Development Policy Review* 26, no. 5 (September 1, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Ngairé Woods, “Whose Aid? Whose Influence? China, Emerging Donors and the Silent Revolution in Development Assistance,” *International Affairs* 84, no. 6 (November 1, 2008), 1221.

<sup>5</sup> Mehmet Özkan, “Does ‘Rising Power’ Mean ‘rising Donor’? Turkey’s Development Aid in Africa,” *Africa Review* 5, no. 2 (July 1, 2013), 140.

<sup>6</sup> Alexis Habiyaemye and Tarik Oguzlu. “Engagement with Africa: Making Sense of Turkey’s Approach in the Context of Growing East-West Rivalry,” *Uluslararası İlişkiler-International Relations* 11, No. 41 (SPR 2014), 67.

<sup>7</sup> *A.g.e.*, 66.

<sup>8</sup> Mwangi S. Kimenyi, and Zenia Lewis, “The BRICS and the New Scramble for Africa” in *Foresight Africa: The Continent’s Greatest Challenges and Opportunities for 2011*, 19–21, Brookings Institute: Africa Growth Initiative, 2011, 19.

This paper examines Brazilian and Turkish foreign policy in Africa. By focusing on these lower-profile but pivotal powers, each of which have demonstrated their capacity and ambition to build their influence on the continent, it hopes to contribute to the literature on the shifting balance of power between competing foreign influences in Africa. It identifies the roles that Turkey and Brazil have adopted in the discourse espousing their respective policies, and then critically analyses those roles in light of the realities on the ground, comparing the cases throughout. I first offer an outline of Turkish and Brazilian relations with Africa, and detail my methodology and conceptual framework.

## 1. TURKISH AND BRAZILIAN RELATIONS WITH AFRICA

### 1.1. Turkey in Africa: A Brief History

The Ottoman Empire had strong relations with North Africa, its rule at its height extending across parts of modern-day Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, as well as through Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, and beyond. “In the northern part of sub-Saharan Africa, the Ottomans were a part of the balance of power, with friendship and an alliance with the Kanem-Bornu Empire that prevailed in modern-day northern Nigeria, Niger and Chad”.<sup>9</sup> As part of this balance of power, it worked to counter Portuguese incursions in Eastern Africa, and Spanish advances in the north.<sup>10</sup>

The foundation of the republic in 1923, however, saw Turkey reorientate towards the West, and in the subsequent decades it had few relations with Africa, “if they even existed” at all.<sup>11</sup> An “Opening to Africa Action Plan” (Afrika’ya Açılım Eylem Planı) was announced in 1998 under then Minister of Foreign Affairs İsmail Cem, “aimed at improving the political, economic, development, and cultural relations between Turkey and African countries”.<sup>12</sup> But the opening took on new impetus with the election of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002, whose new foreign policy was articulated in then Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu’s book *Strategic Depth* (2001), which gave Turkish foreign policy a newly multi-dimensional character that sought to secure Turkey’s future by exerting soft power far beyond its borders.<sup>13</sup> Since its rise to power, “the AKP has developed a new regional vision originating mostly from historical and cultural depth”,<sup>14</sup> in a bid to redefine

<sup>9</sup> Mehmet Özkan, “Turkey’s Rising Role in Africa,” *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Winter 2010/2011), 533-34.

<sup>10</sup> Mehmet Özkan, “Turkey’s Opening to Africa,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 48, No. 4 (December 2010), 95.

<sup>11</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *Turkey’s Rising Role in Africa*, 533.

<sup>12</sup> Ali Bilgic and Daniela Nascimento. *Turkey’s New Focus on Africa: Causes and Challenges*, NOREF Policy Briefs. Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF), September 2014, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Ahmet Davutoglu, *Stratejik Derinlik / Türkiye’nin Uluslararası Konumu*, 32 edition, Aksaray, İstanbul: Kure Yayınları, 2009.

<sup>14</sup> Mehmet Özkan, “A New Actor or Passer-By? The Political Economy of Turkey’s Engagement with

“its international identity from being a passive pro-Western state to an active and constructive global actor”.<sup>15</sup>

Accordingly, the AKP launched its own “Strategy for the Development of Economic Relations with African Countries” in 2003, which appeared to be consolidated only two years later, when the government declared 2005 the “Year of Africa,” was welcomed as an observer country of the African Union, and then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Ethiopia and South Africa, making him the first Turkish head of government to visit Sub-Saharan Africa. President Abdullah Gül continued this direct contact, visiting Kenya and Tanzania in 2009, and Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2010. More recently, Erdoğan led a full tour of the Horn of Africa, now as president, consolidating a focus on Somalia that had begun in 2011 when he became the first leader from outside Africa to visit the conflict-ravaged country in 22 years.

In the meantime, Turkey was active in organising and hosting bilateral meetings to bring together its politicians and business community with their counterparts from Africa. Some of the most prominent of these included a “summit of religious leaders of Muslim countries and communities in Africa” held in Istanbul in 2006;<sup>16</sup> the inaugural Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit in Istanbul, which drew representatives from 49 African countries and was followed with a second summit in Guinea in 2014; the International Donor’s Conference for the Reconstruction and Development of Darfur in 2010, which it co-chaired with Egypt; and the Istanbul-Somalia Conferences, which it hosted in 2010 and 2012. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ webpage on Africa also boasts that Turkey “eagerly hosted” the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in 2011.<sup>17</sup>

These contacts have paid clear dividends. In Somalia, for example, one analyst observed that “The Turkish embassy is now the first stop for any newcomers seeking advice”.<sup>18</sup> This diplomatic influence is reflected in the Somali public too, with streets and newborn children named after Erdoğan, Istanbul and Turkey, and Erdoğan himself named as “Man of the Somali People” by the government. In 2008 Turkey was a non-regional member of African Development Bank, and a strategic partner of African Union, and it later secured almost every African country’s vote in its bid for a non-permanent UN Security Council seat in 2009-10. The 12 embassies that Turkey had in Africa in 2009

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Africa,” *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 14, no. 1 (2012), 118.

<sup>15</sup> Mehmet Özkan, “What Drives Turkey’s Involvement in Africa?” *Review of African Political Economy* 37, No. 126 (2010), 526.

<sup>16</sup> Tom Wheeler, “Ankara to Africa: Turkey’s Outreach since 2005,” *South African Journal of International Affairs* 18, No. 1 (April 2011), 50.

<sup>17</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Turkey-Africa Relations,” <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa>.

<sup>18</sup> Julia Harte, “Turkey Shocks Africa,” *World Policy Journal* 29, No. 4 (December 2012), 27–38.

have expanded to 39, and the country's international aid branch, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), has established 15 offices on the continent.<sup>19</sup> This has been partially reciprocated too, with 32 African diplomatic missions represented in Ankara. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, bilateral trade between Africa and Turkey exceeded 23.4 billion US dollars in 2014, a more than tenfold increase since 2000, and trade with Africa represents roughly 19 percent of Turkish contractors' total international business volume.<sup>20</sup> These diplomatic contacts have had more banal, public repercussions too, with Erdoğan boasting at the Second Turkey-Africa Summit that Turkish Airlines' expanding flight network was now transporting 2000 people between Africa and Turkey every year.<sup>21</sup>

## **1.2. Brazil in Africa: A Brief History**

Like Turkey, Brazil went from having extremely close relations with Africa to all but severing its ties, albeit for different reasons. The South-Atlantic slave trade was dominated by Brazil,<sup>22</sup> According to Stuenkel, "Of all African slaves brought to the Western Hemisphere, only 4.4 percent arrived in North America whereas 35 percent came to Brazil."<sup>23</sup> The contemporary consequence of this is that almost half of Brazil's population claims descent from African slaves, and the country retains strong cultural, religious and linguistic ties with Africa's Lusophone countries.<sup>24</sup> In the wake of the Second World War, however, "Brazilian elites sought to minimize the role blacks played in Brazil's national identity, and topics related to Africa were removed from the curriculum in Brazil's schools [...] Brazil refrained from actively supporting independence movements, principally because it sought the help of industrialised nations to develop economically, and also because it was reluctant to offend its old ally Portugal, a colonial power in Africa".<sup>25</sup>

Again similar to Turkey, Brazil has more recently sought to expand its influence both regionally and globally. One instance of this regional drive is its mediation in long-running border disputes, for example between Peru and Ecuador, "Building on the successful negotiation of territorial issues with its own

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<sup>19</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey-Africa Relations*

<sup>20</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey-Africa Relations*

<sup>21</sup> Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Speech at the Second Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit," Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, November 21, 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Jerker Carlsson, "Brazilian Trade with West Africa and Angola within the Portuguese Colonial Empire, 1500-1950: The Dialectics of South-South Exchange," in *Newly Industrializing Countries and the Political Economy of South-South Relations*, edited by Jerker Carlsson and Timothy M. Shaw, 151-83. Macmillan International Political Economy Series, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1988, 161.

<sup>23</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, "The BRICS' African Safari," *The Diplomat*, January 17, 2014.

<sup>24</sup> Maxi Schoeman, "Of BRICS and Mortar: The Growing Relations between Africa and the Global South," *The International Spectator* 46, No. 1 (March 1, 2011), 33-51.

<sup>25</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, "Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?" *KAS International Reports*, January 2, 2013, 28-39.

neighbours”.<sup>26</sup> For Lafer, this ambition is a natural reflection of the sheer scale of the country’s territory, population and GDP.<sup>27</sup> Today “Brazilian international cooperation is not confined to the bilateral and trilateral levels; Brazil also supports multilateral agencies, most notably the UN, and provides debt relief and emergency assistance”.<sup>28</sup> Malamud suggests that Brazil may have become “A leader without followers,” an acknowledged emergent global power, but one which has failed to consolidate its acronymic hype into effective regional leadership, citing its failure to obtain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council as its “most resounding international disappointment”.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, Stuenkel notes that “it was thanks to African votes that Brazil’s Joseano da Silva was elected FAO’s [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations] Director-General in January 2012.”<sup>30</sup>

Specifically in terms of foreign policy, the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s administration in 2003 echoes key aspects of that of the AKP in Turkey. Whilst South-South cooperation had been pursued before, for example under the Cardoso government from 1995-2003, “The Lula administration takes an assertive stance in the defence of national sovereignty and interests, seeking privileged alliances in the South”.<sup>31</sup> This new agenda is perceived as an attempt to diversify ties and thus to reduce reliance on advanced industrialised countries.<sup>32</sup> But Burges goes further, arguing that “the Lula government in Brazil is pursuing a psychologically transformative foreign policy agenda in the global south.”<sup>33</sup> The longstanding emphasis on multilateralism, he suggests, “has assumed a subordinate role to a conceptual agenda that explicitly questions the neat division between developed and developing [...], seeking to reshape notions of southern and Brazilian identity in the international political economy.” The most-cited example of these ambitions to expand Brazil’s influence is its leadership of the United Nations Stabilization Mission In Haiti (UNSTAMIH). For Vigevani and Cepaluni, “The Haitian case perfectly exemplifies the meaning of autonomy through diversification. Diversification not only means the

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<sup>26</sup> Chris Alden and Marco Antonio Vieira, “The New Diplomacy of the South: South Africa, Brazil, India and Trilateralism,” *Third World Quarterly* 26, No. 7 (January 1, 2005), 1084.

<sup>27</sup> Celso Lafer, “Brazilian International Identity and Foreign Policy: Past, Present, and Future,” *Daedalus* 129, No. 2 (April 1, 2000), 208.

<sup>28</sup> Peter Kragelund, “Back to BASICS? The Rejuvenation of Non-Traditional Donors’ Development Cooperation with Africa,” *Development and Change* 42, No. 2 (March 1, 2011), 592.

<sup>29</sup> Andrés Malamud, “A Leader without Followers? The Growing Divergence Between the Regional and Global Performance of Brazilian Foreign Policy,” *Latin American Politics and Society* 53, No. 3 (September 1, 2011), 1,16.

<sup>30</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, *Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?*

<sup>31</sup> Tullo Vigevani and Gabriel Cepaluni, “Lula’s Foreign Policy and the Quest for Autonomy through Diversification,” *Third World Quarterly* 28, No. 7 (October 1, 2007), 1316.

<sup>32</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa: Just Another BRICS Country Seeking Resources?*, Briefing Paper, Chatham House, November 2012., 9.

<sup>33</sup> Sean W. Burges, “Auto-Estima in Brazil - The Logic of Lula’s South-South Foreign Policy,” *International Journal* 60 (2005 2004), 1134.

search for broadening the range of relations with non-traditional partner states. It also implies the capacity for intervention in areas that are not of immediate interest and refer to internationally recognised public goods”.<sup>34</sup>

Brazil’s “turn to Africa” was more gradual than Turkey’s. Saraiva disputes the “consensus that establishes that the rebirth of Brazil’s foreign policy towards Africa started in early 60’s [sic].”<sup>35</sup> After analysing papers from the Parliament and Foreign Ministry, he finds instead that “initial elements of Brazilian policy towards Africa have their origin between the end of the 40’s and beginning of the 50’s.” For Carlsson, however, “Brazil’s African policy, emphasizing historical links between Africa and Brazil and a common colonial heritage, was firmly established under President Geisel between 1974 and 1978”.<sup>36</sup> This coincides with Angola’s independence from Portugal in 1975. Brazil and Angola have had a particularly close relationship ever since, and Brazil was the first country to recognize Angola’s new-found sovereignty.<sup>37</sup>

Though these inroads have existed for some time, Brazil shares with Turkey a sudden and exponential surge in engagement with Africa, beginning with Lula’s election to the presidency in 2003. In his first term, Lula declared Africa a priority. His predecessor, Fernando Cardoso, had concentrated on courting Brazil’s major trade partners, the US and EU. Under Lula, a special trade promotion strategy was developed, and the mission of the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex-Brasil) organised meetings between Brazilian and African businessmen, encouraging Brazilian companies to promote their products in African trade fairs.<sup>38</sup> By 2009, bilateral trade had reached \$26 billion.<sup>39</sup> In 2008, Brazil became the only non-African country to be invited to join the regional conference of African Ministers of Social Development, held by the African Union. Lula made 12 trips to Africa in the course of his two terms from 2003-10, visiting 29 different countries, more than any of his predecessors combined.<sup>40</sup> His successor, Dilma Rousseff, has since visited three African countries “despite her reluctance to travel and her rather low interest in foreign policy”, suggesting a warm

<sup>34</sup> Tullo Vigevani and Gabriel Cepaluni, *Lula’s Foreign Policy*, 1316.

<sup>35</sup> José Flávio Sombra Saraiva, “The New Africa and Brazil in the Lula Era: The Rebirth of Brazilian Atlantic Policy,” *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional* 53, No. SPE (December 2010), 174.

<sup>36</sup> Jerker Carlsson and Timothy M. Shaw, eds. *Newly Industrializing Countries and the Political Economy of South-South Relations*, Macmillan International Political Economy Series, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1988, 193.

<sup>37</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 5.

<sup>38</sup> *A.g.e.*, 5.

<sup>39</sup> Pablo Uchoa and Maputo, “Brazil’s President Lula Makes Final Visit to Africa,” *BBC News*, September 11, 2010.

<sup>40</sup> “Lula on His Legacy: An Interview with Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva.” *The Economist*, September 30, 2010.



willingness to continue her predecessor's policy.<sup>41</sup> Lula's foreign minister, Celso Amorim, made 67 official visits to Africa, and Brazil in turn received 47 visits from the rulers of 27 different African countries.<sup>42</sup> Between 2002 and 2012, meanwhile, Brazil more than doubled its diplomatic presence in Africa from 17 to 38 embassies.<sup>43</sup> In turn, Stuenkel found in 2013 that there were "more African embassies in Brasilia (34) than in any other capital in the Western Hemisphere except Washington, D.C".<sup>44</sup> Lula also founded Instituto Lula, a non-profit organisation that lists on its website its main objective as boosting "Brazil's cooperation with Africa and Latin America."<sup>45</sup> Through the work of his institute, the former president has continued to visit Africa since leaving office.

### **1.3. Methods**

My research adopts a comparative approach based on a most similar systems design (MSSD), as outlined by Landman.<sup>46</sup> Turkey and Brazil have in common a sudden, explicit and almost contemporaneous "turn" towards Africa, in terms of diplomatic engagement, aid, and high-level political visits, which contrasts with a previous period of comparatively cool relations. Moreover, in both countries these shifts come amid a broader attempt to diversify their trading partners and reposition themselves in the international system, including the common goal of securing a presence on the United Nations Security Council.<sup>47</sup> Both are middle powers, aspiring to be regional leaders, and occupy the ambiguous position of recipient and provider of international assistance.<sup>48</sup> With regard to their Africa policies, both have sought to present themselves as alternatives to the traditional actors, as I will demonstrate in further detail below.

For all these similarities, the cultural and historical particularities through which they perform this engagement, and the means through which they do so, differ. This paper explores these particularities for each case in turn and then compares them critically with one another. These roles are identified from a thorough review of the extant literature on Turkish and Brazilian foreign policy in Africa, about which several authors have acknowledged a relative

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<sup>41</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 2.

<sup>42</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, *Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?*, 30

<sup>43</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 1; Instituto Lula, "With a New Embassy in Malawi, Brazil Now Has Diplomatic Representation in 38 African Countries," May 27, 2013.

<sup>44</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, *Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?*, 31

<sup>45</sup> "Sobre O Instituto," <http://www.institutolula.org/sobre>.

<sup>46</sup> Todd Landman, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, Psychology Press, 2003, 29-34.

<sup>47</sup> Talha Kose, "Turkey's Power in the Middle East and North Africa: An Assessment of the Potential and the Limits of Non-Coercive Power," *Uluslararası İlişkiler-International Relations* 11, No. 41 (SPR 2014), 60.

<sup>48</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *Does 'rising Power' Mean 'rising Donor'?*, 141



dearth, and which has so far not seen a comparison of the Turkish and Brazilian cases.<sup>49</sup> I also use primary sources such as politicians' speeches and foreign ministry statements, which I analyse using content analysis, specifically the "conventional" and "directed" forms of content analysis outlined by Hsieh and Shannon, in which – for the former – "coding categories are derived directly from the text data" and – for the latter – "analysis starts with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes".<sup>50</sup> My codes correspond to roles, and the roles I take up in my analysis are chosen to bring together several sub-roles, so as to give my findings further explanatory power.

#### 1.4. Conceptual Framework

As a conceptual framework, I follow I also follow Cason in rejecting "The classic formulation provided by Waltz (1959),"<sup>51</sup> which claims that the sources of foreign policy are at the international, national *or* individual level, instead positing that all three levels can illuminate foreign policy making, and that "none of the levels really overrides the others." More specifically, I adopt role theory as outlined by Sekhri and Holsti.

"The Role Approach is a theoretical framework devoted to the study of behavior using the notion of role. In the field of foreign policy, decision-makers imagine and suppose that their state should adopt and accomplish a range of duties, tasks and commitments in the international system or in subordinate regional systems. According to the proponents of the Role Approach, these duties, tasks and commitments are known in the field of foreign policy as "roles"<sup>52</sup>

Sekhri stresses that "an individual state may play several roles simultaneously",<sup>53</sup> whilst Beneš specifies that "role theory produces interpretative knowledge rather than causal explanations. Role theory allows us to reconstruct the meaning attributed to *national role* by the domestic elite".<sup>54</sup> According to Holsti, Role Theory's central concept is national role conception (NRC), "the policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments,

<sup>49</sup> Alexis Habiyaemye and Tarik Oguzlu, *Engagement with Africa*, 66.; Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 2.

<sup>50</sup> Hsiu-Fang Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," *Qualitative Health Research* 15, No. 9 (November 2005), 1277.

<sup>51</sup> Jeffrey W. Cason and Timothy J. Power, "Presidentialization, Pluralization, and the Rollback of Itamaraty: Explaining Change in Brazilian Foreign Policy Making in the Cardoso-Lula Era," *International Political Science Review* 30, No. 2 (March 1, 2009), 118.

<sup>52</sup> Sofiane Sekhri, "The Role Approach as a Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Foreign Policy in Third World Countries," *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, Vol. 3, No. 10 (October 2009), 424.

<sup>53</sup> Sofiane Sekhri, *The Role Approach as a Theoretical Framework*, 425.

<sup>54</sup> Vit Beneš Beneš, "Role Theory: A Conceptual Framework for the Constructivist Foreign Policy Analysis?" 8.

rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional systems.” These roles in turn “give meaning and purpose to the foreign policy”.<sup>55</sup>

Role theory is particularly useful in the analysis of foreign policy, firstly because “the definitions of foreign policy are ambivalent,” and secondly because “it allows its users to combine procedures and principles drawn from different paradigms and approaches within the same framework and leaves the analyst free to employ a range of tools”.<sup>56</sup>

By identifying and critically comparing the roles of Turkey and Brazil, I hope to contribute to our understanding of their foreign policy in Africa.

## **2. ROLES**

### **2.1. Turkey’s Roles**

By reviewing the secondary literature and additional primary resources, I have identified three dominant roles adopted by Turkey: the anti-colonial solidarity figure, the natural partner and the benevolent protector. I take each one in turn.

#### **2.1.1. Anti-colonial Solidarity**

One of the most common ways in which Turkish politicians present themselves in Africa is by trying to distinguish themselves from Western actors, who they in contrast present as colonialists. Davatoğlu, for example, formerly foreign minister and now prime minister, “has repeatedly highlighted that Turkey is not like ‘others’ – referring specifically to Western states – that had a colonial past in Africa”.<sup>57</sup> Whilst Gül, during his time as president, was known to say things such as “We are different from the Europeans. We do not take raw materials like they do. Instead, we bring high technology and invest here” and “there is no colonialism in our past, thus we are very free to be in Africa”, or even “we have never sought only our interest”.<sup>58</sup> Compared to the history-stained West, Turkey comes to Africa as “a clean state,” according to Gül.<sup>59</sup> Habiyaemye observes that this anti-colonial posture has been effective, writing that the fact “That Turkey gained its territorial independence against the same colonial powers also strikes a sympathetic chord with the African people”.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> *A.g.e.*, 4-5.

<sup>56</sup> Sofiane Sekhri, *The Role Approach as a Theoretical Framework*, 427- 428.

<sup>57</sup> Ali Bilgic and Daniela Nascimento, *Turkey’s New Focus on Africa*, 2.

<sup>58</sup> Gokhan Bacik, and Isa Afacan, “Turkey Discovers Sub-Saharan Africa: The Critical Role of Agents in the Construction of Turkish Foreign-Policy Discourse.” *Turkish Studies* 14, no. 3 (September 1, 2013). p.490-91, 489.

<sup>59</sup> *A.g.e.*, 489.

<sup>60</sup> Alexis Habiyaemye and Tarik Oguzlu, *Engagement with Africa*, 81.

Related to this is a narrative that presents Africa as belatedly achieving its long-suppressed potential, now that it is rid of colonialism – and by extension, now that it has more benevolent allies. Hence the Ministry of Foreign Affairs says that “we see a *re*-emerging Africa” (emphasis added), praises governments for “increasing their efforts to overcome their challenges with their own resources and through their own mechanisms,” and declares as one of its main policy tenets its support for ““Upholding the principle of ‘African solutions for African problems’ in according with the policy of the African Union.”<sup>61</sup>

### 2.1.2. Natural Partner

The discourse of the anti-colonial solidarity role finds its positive counterpart in what I call the natural partner role, which encourages closer links with Africa on the grounds that it and Turkey have much in common. Whilst the anti-colonial discourse emphasises difference, the natural partner discourse stresses likeness. For example the Ministry of Foreign Affairs describes the Ottoman Empire as “an African State” and modern-day Turkey as “an Afro-European state,” and Davutoğlu – whilst serving as foreign minister – likewise stated “we see ourselves as African”.<sup>62</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not simply present the fact that “Turkey has long-standing historical and cultural relations with the African continent, dating back centuries.”<sup>63</sup> It goes further and, within this historical narrative, frames parts of Africa as though they were *Turkish* states, going on to recount that “The first state founding by the Turks in Africa was the Tulunids, which ruled today’s Egypt in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries.”<sup>64</sup>

Not only do Turkish politicians frequently mention the Ottomans’ historical ties with Africa, but they do so in a way that emphasises that these “good” links *preceded* the “bad” links later established through Western colonialism, and were lost alongside the African potential that was lost and is only now being tapped. Turkey of course suffered colonialism of its own – though not on the same scale – but it appears to prefer to embed itself with Africa’s history of subjugation and liberation rather than draw parallels with its own. Hence the Ministry of Foreign Affairs claims that “Turkey’s policy of opening up to Africa is not just the reflection of a transient political and economic expectation. [...] It is, foremost, the expression and *natural* result of the firm feelings of friendship and partnership between Turkish and African peoples” (emphasis added).<sup>65</sup> This last sentence was repeated word for word in a speech by Deputy Undersecretary for African Affairs Ali Kemal Aydın, at Second Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit in 2014. Again not simply stressing similarity over

<sup>61</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Turkey-Africa Relations.”

<sup>62</sup> Ali Bilgic and Daniela Nascimento; *Turkey’s New Focus on Africa*, 2.

<sup>63</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Turkey-Africa Relations.”

<sup>64</sup> *A.g.e.*

<sup>65</sup> *A.g.e.*

difference, but elevating that similarity to an *original* position, he added: “Despite the fact that they are located in different continents, Turkey and African countries were never distant from each other in the sense of taking care one another. Historical and cultural bonds bind their past and today.”<sup>66</sup> Both institutionally and individually, therefore, the current diplomatic intimacy is framed by the Turkish side as an original position from which both parties were forced to deviate, and moreover one that has re-emerged to prove its superior strength over the *transient* colonial period.

### **2.1.3. Benefactor-Protector**

If the anti-colonial solidarity role distances Turkey from its Western competitors for influence in Africa, and the natural partner role discursively brings Turkey closer to the continent, the benefactor-protector role introduces an element of hierarchy into that intimacy, presenting Turkey as a powerful ally and humanitarian benefactor who not only *can* protect Africans, but – in combination with the other roles – the one who they would logically *want* to protect them. Again this is effected through historiography, for example when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs boasts that “the Ottoman Empire prevented colonial expansion in North Africa” and “played a major role in preventing the penetration of colonialism in East Africa,” or that “In the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, the Ottoman Navy [...] defended the people of the Zanzibar Island against the occupying forces.”<sup>67</sup>

But the same role is also present in current policy. Noting that Turkey contributes funds and personnel to five different UN security missions in Africa, Bilgic and Nascimento see Turkey “attaching particular importance to peace and stability in the continent,”<sup>68</sup> something that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has indeed declared as one of the “main tenets” in its Africa policy.<sup>69</sup> In terms of the qualitative content of Turkey’s investment in Africa, Harte notes that it is focusing on projects that will have a direct impact on the lives of individuals on the ground, “advancing a more intimate model for foreign investment in Africa than the sometimes alienating method favored by the Chinese”.<sup>70</sup> For example Rifat Hisarciklioğlu, president of the Africa-Turkey Chamber of Commerce, has said: “We are not coming to Africa for raw materials and in search of a supermarket,” as the West did in its colonial project – “we are interested in lending our manufacturing expertise to Africa”.<sup>71</sup> The literature suggests a consensus over the benevolent-protector role that such statements represent.

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<sup>66</sup> Ali Kemal Aydın, “Speech at the Second Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit,” Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, November 19, 2014.

<sup>67</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Turkey-Africa Relations.”

<sup>68</sup> Ali Bilgic and Daniela Nascimento. *Turkey’s New Focus on Africa*, 2.

<sup>69</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Turkey-Africa Relations.”

<sup>70</sup> Julia Harte, *Turkey Shocks Africa*, 28.

<sup>71</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *A New Actor or Passer-By?*, 125.

Özkan writes that “By concentrating on lower profile development issues such as agriculture, Turkish initiatives arguably carry the promise of effecting genuine change in the lives of masses of Africans”.<sup>72</sup> Wheeler too, adds that Turkey’s Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) “sought to build religious ties with countries and communities in Africa. Scholarships were arranged for Muslim students from Mozambique, Togo, Mauritania, Sudan, Uganda and Cote d’Ivoire to study as imams in Turkey”, bringing young African Muslims under the wing of the Turkish state.<sup>73</sup>

Another way in which the hierarchical element of the benevolent-protector role is consolidated is through a discourse of representation. Gül for example, courting (with great success) on a 2009 visit to Kenya and Tanzania African support for Turkey’s UN Security Council ambitions, promised that Turkey “will be the spokesman for Africa at the UN”,<sup>74</sup> and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs explicitly states its intention to begin “acting as the *voice of Africa*, defending the legitimate rights and interests of African countries.”<sup>75</sup> This ambition to represent Africa in international organisations was also echoed with regard to the G-20, whose presidency Turkey took over in 2014. Speaking at the Second Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit in Equatorial Guinea, current Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu said: “one of our objectives is to address the concerns of the African countries at the G20 platform. We will also exert every effort to strengthen the dialogue and interaction between the G-20 and Africa.”<sup>76</sup> The transcendent associations of this representative relations are also manifested in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ goal of mediating in conflicts and, “When requested, playing a role through diplomacy in the peaceful settlement of disputes in the Continent.”<sup>77</sup>

Before moving on to discuss the Brazilian case, I will demonstrate how the three positions I have outlined – anti-colonial solidarity, natural partner, and benefactor-protector – combine, by reference to an extract from President Erdoğan’s speech at the 2014 Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit, which I quote here in full.

“Turkey founded two great states in the last millennium: the Grand Seljuk Empire and the Ottoman Empire. [...] These two major states, both our ancestors and predecessors, never considered the countries in their regions or in Africa with racist, slavery or colonialist view. To the contrary, we have

<sup>72</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *What Drives Turkey’s Involvement in Africa?*, 103.

<sup>73</sup> Tom Wheeler, *Ankara to Africa: Turkey’s Outreach since 2005*, 50.

<sup>74</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *What Drives Turkey’s Involvement in Africa?*, 102.

<sup>75</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Turkey-Africa Relations.”

<sup>76</sup> Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, “Speech at the Second Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit,” Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, November 20, 2014.

<sup>77</sup> Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Turkey-Africa Relations.”

always treated African people as our heartfelt friends and comrades. Although our languages, our values, our ethnicities and our appearances may differ, we have felt ourselves on board the same ship as Africa. We have always admired the ancient civilization of the African Continent. We have never belonged to those circles who have watched the tragedies in Africa from the angle of their political or strategic interests. Instead, we have always approached Africa in humanitarian and conscientious terms. Likewise, we have seen the happiness and successes of Africa as if they were our own happiness and successes and we have taken pride in them.”<sup>78</sup>

Here Erdoğan distinguishes Turkish policy from Western colonialism, framing this contrast in the historiography of an original position of Afro-Turkish unity. He then presents this affinity as the motivation for the current “humanitarian” policy that sees Turkey adopt positions of equality and (benevolent) superiority. Turkey is perhaps a brother to Africa, but it is a distinctly elder brother.

## **2.2. Brazil’s Roles**

The roles played by Brazil which emerge from the literature and from additional statements by the country’s political elite are twofold: the natural partner and the benevolent-protector. Whilst they do also make reference to anti-colonial solidarity – the one role that Brazil does not share with Turkey – these are subordinated to the other roles, as I will demonstrate.

### **2.2.1. Natural Partner**

Interestingly, if there is a negative discourse in Brazil’s policy that can be said to be equivalent to Turkey’s anti-colonial rhetoric, it is a snub of other emerging powers in Africa, such as China, rather than of the West. For example, speaking in 2007, at the height of Lula’s influence, one Brazilian politician said: “China is going to Africa after mining, copper, iron, manganese as well as oil and gas. We are going after the vacuum left by them”.<sup>79</sup> According to Stolte, the Brazilian government “sees ‘cultural affinity’ as the real trump card against more powerful Chinese state-backed companies. Brazilian businessmen and government officials alike therefore stress their common cultural roots with Africa and maintain that, unlike China, they enjoy a common business culture”.<sup>80</sup> As mentioned in my introduction, the size of Brazil’s black population – second only to Nigeria – demonstrates a genuine demographic fact behind this “cultural affinity.” This affinity is also grounded geographically. Since “the two continents were “united in a single landmass (‘Gondwana’)

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<sup>78</sup> Erdoğan speech at the 2014 Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit.

<sup>79</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 8.

<sup>80</sup> *A.g.e.*, 8

200 million years ago, they have geological similarities”.<sup>81</sup> Hence “Brazil has presented itself as a ‘rising power of the South’ familiar with the development challenges faced by African countries.”<sup>82</sup> This has immediate implications in terms of political economy, since the similarity in the soil and climate conditions eases the transfer of Brazil’s agricultural expertise.<sup>83</sup>

Whilst Turkey used an anti-colonialist discourse to differentiate itself from historical (Western) actors in Africa, Brazil emphasises instead the *contemporary heritage* of that system of colonialism, and uses the injustices of the current structure to explicitly court support for its broader aim of rebalancing the scales of global power. For example, Uchoa quotes Lula celebrating Brazil’s racial diversity on a visit to Mozambique, his last African visit as president.

“This [diversity] in fact should be our strength compared to the rest of the world, but because we had our minds colonised for centuries, we were taught that we were inferior. [...] When we make a choice for Africa, we want to stand up and lift our heads together. We want to build together a future in which the South is not weaker than the North, not dependent on the North, a future in which, if we believe in ourselves, we can be just as important and as smart as they are.”<sup>84</sup>

Likewise, addressing politicians in Equatorial Guinea on an African tour in the same year, he deployed the same rhetoric of Southern resurgence. Referencing the negative consequences of the (developed world’s) 2008 financial crisis upon the developing world, he argued: “the account of this adjustment should not be paid by emerging nations, which must act together to obtain a new world governance”.<sup>85</sup> He then proceeded to flesh out his vision for such a new world order.

“It is not possible that a continent such as Africa with 53 countries has neither a representative on the Security Council, as it is not possible that Latin America, with 440 million people also has no representative. It is not possible that only five countries to can decide what to do, how to act”<sup>86</sup>

This is a prime example of the “psychologically transformative foreign policy agenda” that I outlined above.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, two of the most common

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<sup>81</sup> *A.g.e.*, 7.

<sup>82</sup> *A.g.e.*, 10

<sup>83</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, *Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?*, 36.

<sup>84</sup> Pablo Uchoa and Maputo, *Brazil’s President Lula Makes Final Visit to Africa*.

<sup>85</sup> Blasco Nuria, “Stirring Speech by Former President Lula Da Silva,” *Equatorial Guinea’s Official Government Webpage*, January 7, 2011.

<sup>86</sup> *A.g.e.*

<sup>87</sup> Sean W. Burges, *Auto-Estima in*, 1134



tropes in Lula's discourse on Africa are the idea of repaying a "moral debt" to Africa,<sup>88</sup> whose people built Brazil as slaves, and his intention to "bridge the Atlantic".<sup>89</sup> Brazilian elites of course have a discursive advantage in the fact that the moral transgressions they are seeking to repay were committed and institutionalised under Portuguese colonialism, not by Brazil as such, and before Brazil existed as a state. When Brazil plays the role of natural partner, then, it emphasises *current* injustice at the structural level of the state system, as opposed to the Turkish case, which emphasises *historical* affinity.

### **2.2.2. Benefactor-Protector**

Though not emphasised in the discourse of political elites, one role that Brazil is clearly but quietly adopting in its policy towards Africa is that of military powerhouse. Kahn observes that "The South Atlantic is becoming a Brazilian lake, the more so given the security required for the exploitation of Brazil's Tupi and Jupiter oilfields. Brazil's naval interests include a Naval Commission in Windhoek, Namibia, and the intended purchase of four [nuclear] submarines from France."<sup>90</sup> Stuenkel meanwhile suggests this buildup may reflect shrewd economic interests rather than be a straightforward show of force that might be motivated by, for example, Brazil's designs on the UN Security Council. "As ever larger ships can no longer pass the Suez Canal, Brazil expects to see a revival of the Cape of Good Hope route".<sup>91</sup>

The military manifestations of this protector role also take "softer" forms, in terms of the projects that Brazil chooses to support in Africa. Like Turkey, Brazil appears to be "advancing a more intimate model for foreign investment".<sup>92</sup> Brazil has relieved US\$1 billion of African countries' debts, and "more than half of Brazil's technical cooperation resources is directed towards the continent".<sup>93</sup> It is also selectively transferring expertise and technology "based on its own development experience. Biomedical and health research and agricultural research have been turned into effective foreign policy instruments".<sup>94</sup> In the private sector, Brazilian companies such as Odebrecht have been active, particularly in Angola, where it has "contributed significantly to rebuilding the [Angolan] infrastructure – from dams to housing and hospitals – in the war-ravaged country".<sup>95</sup> Brazil has not, however, secured the broader reputation that Turkey has for its direct work on-the-ground. Its impulse to "protect"

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<sup>88</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 11

<sup>89</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, *Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?*, 30

<sup>90</sup> M. J. Kahn, "The BRICs and South Africa as the Gateway to Africa," *Journal of the Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy* 111, No. 7 (July 2011).

<sup>91</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, *Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?*, 37

<sup>92</sup> Julia Harte, *Turkey Shocks Africa*, 28.

<sup>93</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 2

<sup>94</sup> *A.g.e.*, 1

<sup>95</sup> *A.g.e.*, 6

African countries is more often articulated in terms of the natural partner role, as a leading state in a South-South coalition, as described above.

### 3. REALITIES

#### 3.1. Turkey

When one looks closer at Turkey's current foreign policy in Africa, and sets it in context, fractures begin to emerge. For example, whilst the rhetoric is usually on a continental scale, addressing and courting Africa as a whole, the historic links that are used to ground this rhetoric are in fact only partial. For example Özkan finds that, compared with Northern Africa, Turkey's "relations with Sub-Saharan Africa are a more recent development, dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century".<sup>96</sup> He finds support in Bacik and Afacan, who write that Sub-Saharan Africa is an unknown region for Turkey", and therefore "Turkey's grand [Ottoman] narratives are inapplicable in Sub-Saharan Africa".<sup>97</sup> Jenkins likewise finds that the Turkish Republic "hasn't really had any diplomatic or political relations with black [i.e. Sub-Saharan] Africa".<sup>98</sup> The contemporary legacy of this is the fact that the majority of Turkey's embassies in Africa remain on the Mediterranean littoral.<sup>99</sup> There is in this sense a deficit between the projected Turkey that engages Africa via the roles outlined above, and the historical Turkey upon which the former is based. The former is presented as a natural progression of the latter, but it is in fact a rhetorical device of a more selective historiography.

Related to this way in which Turkey's Africa policy skirts over gaps in history in order to justify its contemporary continental scope is its apparent determination to ignore intra-Africa conflicts. Though the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' webpage states Turkey's readiness to act as a mediator in conflict situations, Bacik and Afacan find Turkey's foreign policy to be an "apolitical" one that produces a reductionist picture of Africa in which trade is seen to be totally risk free".<sup>100</sup>

Indeed, not only has Turkey not had relations with some parts of Africa, it has in some cases had extremely bitter ones. For example, efforts to buy Rooivalk attack helicopters from South Africa in the 1990s failed because Nelson Mandela's government supported the Kurds who were fighting their insurgency against Turkey, and Mandela himself famously refused to accept Turkey's peace award.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *What Drives Turkey's Involvement in Africa?*, 94.

<sup>97</sup> Gokhan Bacik and Isa Afacan, *Turkey Discovers Sub-Saharan Africa*, 485-487.

<sup>98</sup> Julia Harte, *Turkey Shocks Africa*, 28.

<sup>99</sup> Tom Wheeler, *Ankara to Africa: Turkey's Outreach since 2005*, 49.

<sup>100</sup> Gokhan Bacik and Isa Afacan, *Turkey Discovers Sub-Saharan Africa*, 490

<sup>101</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *What Drives Turkey's Involvement in Africa?*, 104.

According to Özkan, “What is different and unique in this new orientation of Turkish foreign policy is that it aims to overcome the two previously outlined, geographical [northern vs sub-Saharan] conceptions of Africa, in order to create a new and united image of Africa in Turkish society”.<sup>102</sup> Another interpretation would be the reverse – that this reductionism is a foreign policy, rather than a domestic political tool, employed to enhance the image of Turkey in African society.

One can also challenge Turkey’s claim to be different from its European colonial predecessors in Africa. Some scholars, such as Deringil, argue that the Ottomans performed a “borrowed colonialism,” which, although lacking the violence of the Europeans’, likewise “subscribed to the belief that ‘the savages and heretics’ in Africa were in need of ‘the true faith’”.<sup>103</sup> But even the contemporary political economy of Turkey’s turn to Africa suggests that the gulf may not be as wide as it is presented. According to the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists (TUSKON), which is one of the main organisations active in organising bilateral trade meetings between Turkish and African industry, “African countries are mostly demanding furniture, apparels, durable house products, home textiles, processed food, packaging devices, iron-steel, electrical devices, and construction materials.”<sup>104</sup> Turkey’s roster of imports from Africa, on the other hand, “consists of oil, raw material, gold and minerals”,<sup>105</sup> the very products that Brazil’s Lula, for example, was keen to stress that his country – unlike the Europeans previously and China today – was not seeking, when he said: “China is going to Africa after mining, copper, iron, manganese as well as oil and gas. We are going after the vacuum left by them”.<sup>106</sup> The nature of these imports is glossed over in the official discourse, which instead emphasises the sustainability of Turkey’s investments.

This problematic nature of this ambivalence does not appear to be confronted on the Turkish side. Hence the editors of *Afrika*, a recently founded Turkish journal dedicated to the study of the continent, state that “‘the first-hand knowledge of Turkish entrepreneurs, teachers and doctors living in different parts of the continent seems to be generating a peculiar Turkish Orientalism.’ These Turks often posit their pure and altruistic intentions in coming to naïve and needy Africa, and contrast them with the Western World’s ‘opportunistic, exploitative and cruel presence on the continent for so many centuries’”.<sup>107</sup> In this sense, Turkey’s very insistence on its qualitative distinction from European colonialists may be reproducing some of the most problematic aspects of that European experience.

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<sup>102</sup> *A.g.e.*, 97.

<sup>103</sup> Gokhan Bacik and Isa Afacan, *Turkey Discovers Sub-Saharan Africa*, 495

<sup>104</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *Turkey’s Opening to Africa*, 94

<sup>105</sup> Mehmet Özkan, *What Drives Turkey’s Involvement in Africa?*, 102.

<sup>106</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 8

<sup>107</sup> Gokhan Bacik and Isa Afacan, *Turkey Discovers Sub-Saharan Africa*, 498-499.

### 3.2. Brazil

Like Turkey, Brazil differentiates itself from prior Western and contemporary new actors in Africa (such as China and India) by emphasising that its engagement with the continent is about more than simply the short-term acquisition of resources. This exceptionalism is one of the foundations of the natural partner role outlined above. Yet although Brazil is indeed different from China in already being highly rich in resources and indeed an oil exporter,<sup>108</sup> scholars have noted quantitatively linked Brazil's interest in Africa to its acquisition of resources. According to Stolte, oil and other natural resources make up almost 90% of its imports from Africa.

“Its most important trade partners on the continent also seem to fit neatly into the pattern of a resource-hungry BRICS country coming to Africa: its major trade partners Nigeria, Angola, South Africa and Libya are all rich in resources. Moreover, nearly all the big Brazilian companies investing in the continent are involved in the resource sector.”<sup>109</sup>

Carlsson likewise emphasises Brazil's interest in Nigerian petroleum resources.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, Brazil is not simply taking Africa's resources back home, it is exporting its own companies to further its capacity to do so. Odebrecht, the biggest private employer in Angola, is “involved in the oil, biofuel, diamond and supermarket sector” and Petrobras has significantly stepped up its activities by acquiring further exploration rights and increasing production.”<sup>111</sup>

Secondly, and again as we have seen in the Turkish case, Brazil's pan-African rhetoric is belied by both the uneven distribution of its contemporary policy, and by omissions in its history. Just as Turkey historically had few relations with Sub-Saharan Africa, Brazil had never made inroads in West Africa, even in the 1970s, when “Brazil was quite active in extending its presence in Africa and in going beyond its traditional trade markets”.<sup>112</sup> Perhaps motivated by the raw material interests discussed above, the outstanding exception to this trend is Nigeria. If Western Africa was an area of relative indifference for Brazilian expansion, South Africa – as in the Turkish case – was one of overtly bitter relations. Throughout the 1950s, as South Africa was being ostracised by the international community over apartheid, “Brazil's pro-colonial policy endured” and its “links with Portugal implied a built-in endorsement for colonialism and racism in Southern Africa.”<sup>113</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, *Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?*, 31

<sup>109</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 4

<sup>110</sup> Jerker Carlsson and Timothy M. Shaw, eds. *Newly Industrializing Countries*, 193.

<sup>111</sup> Christina Stolte, *Brazil in Africa*, 6

<sup>112</sup> Jerker Carlsson and Timothy M. Shaw, eds. *Newly Industrializing Countries*, 184-185.

<sup>113</sup> David Fig, “The Political Economy of South African Penetration of Brazil: The Case of the Anglo American Corporation,” 1988, 209.

Where then, is Brazil focusing its efforts in Africa? Although “Some 34 African nations benefit from 250 projects with Brazil, according to the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), including in health, education and agriculture”,<sup>114</sup> the majority of its aid resources

“are going to the Portuguese-speaking countries, and in a few cases are executed in close collaboration with the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, or CPLP. Brazil has helped establish a fund within the CPLP for the promotion of the Portuguese language in Africa and East Timor and is now offering more scholarships to train Portuguese language teachers than Portugal itself. [...] Brazil is also providing funds (500 million U.S. dollars) to help Sao Tome and Principe, a former Portuguese colony, to feed children at schools”.<sup>115</sup>

Even its efforts to promote democracy appear to be filtered through these cultural biases. For example in 2011 Brazil agreed to provide electoral support in Portuguese-speaking African countries and Timor-Leste.<sup>116</sup>

Brazil’s attempts to woo Africa with a pan-African, anti-colonial rhetoric, then, become more problematic when one notes the (resource-hungry) nature of Brazil’s investments, and the distinctly Lusophone emphasis of their distribution.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has used role theory to identify the poses that Turkey and Brazil have adopted in their Africa policies. In the Turkish Case these were subsumed into the anti-colonial solidarity figure, the natural partner and the benevolent protector, whilst in Brazil they were consolidated under the natural partner and the benevolent-protector. Critical analysis then drew out the internal contradictions of those roles. For example both countries play the natural partner role, but when Brazil does so it emphasises current injustices that resulted from colonialism(s), whereas Turkey emphasises historical affinity in itself. Both countries also instrumentalise historical and cultural connections to justify their new-found interest in the continent, but to do so they amplify specific, partial connections to a continental scale. These selective self-fashioned historiographies see Turkey skirt over its past negative relations with South Africa, and allow Brazil to play down its Lusophone bias. Elsewhere in the countries’ rhetoric, their anti-colonial postures are belied by data demonstrating that their economic interests are much the same as the resource-hungry colonialists of the pasts, and even the transfer of technology to further those interests. Turkish

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<sup>114</sup> Pablo Uchoa and Maputo, *Brazil’s President Lula Makes Final Visit to Africa*.

<sup>115</sup> Oliver Stuenkel, *Brazil in Africa: Bridging the Atlantic?*, 32.

<sup>116</sup> *A.g.e.*, 33.

and Brazilian foreign policy in Africa, then, is not the pan-African engagement that the ministries and politicians suggest, but a more targeted set of engagements that seek to instrumentalise particular affinities in order to amplify their potential gains. Whilst reality often proves these roles to be genuine, it also contradicts them, or reveals unexpected limits to their purported scope. If they are to sustain their current successes in Africa, and take advantage of opportunities on the continent in the future, Turkey and Brazil must work to close this deficit. If they fail to do so, they risk not only the rewards of their African partnerships, but also the credibility that made them attractive partners in the first place.

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