

“How do we know a rising power when we see one, what do rising powers want and under what conditions might they be satisfied? Rohan Mukherjee’s *Ascending Order* tackles these questions and provides compelling answers that are backed up by solid historical scholarship. The book’s distinctive contribution lies in its argument that rising powers seek symbolic equality with the established great powers, and that they look to the institutional openness and procedural fairness of the core institutions of the international system to determine if that equality is achievable. The emphasis on equality, openness, and fairness is truly original and it adds a fascinating normative dimension to the analysis of power transition politics. Mukherjee’s arguments warrant the attention of scholars and policymakers grappling with the rise of China and India, and the implications for the established powers such as the United States.”


Yuen Foong Khong, Li Ka Shing Professor of Political Science,
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy,
National University of Singapore

“Despite two decades of intensifying struggle – particularly between the United States, Russia, and China – over international order, scholars still know very little about what drives states to contest, reform, or accept the ‘rules, norms, and arrangements’ of international politics. Based on careful historical research, Rohan Mukherjee argues that key institutions of International order are essentially clubs for great powers. Rising states care about the rules and regulations of those clubs: Can they join? Will they get the same rights as the existing members, or be treated like second-class citizens? The answers to these two questions, Mukherjee shows, have major consequences for the fate of international orders – including the current one. *Ascending Order* is an important and insightful contribution to the academic clubs studying status, power transitions, and international order.”

Dan Nexon, Professor of Government and Foreign Service,
Georgetown University, and co-author of *Exit from
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“International institutions have been key arenas of contestation and accommodation of the status aspirations of rising powers since the nineteenth century. Here is one of the rare historical treatments of how and when institutions matter for states seeking great power status and the socio-psychological calculations that go behind it. This book is a great addition to the growing literature on international status and power transitions.”

T.V. Paul, James McGill Professor of International Relations,
McGill University, Canada, and co-editor of *Status in World Politics*



Ascending Order

Why do rising powers sometimes challenge an international order that enables their growth, and at other times support an order that constrains them? *Ascending Order* offers the first comprehensive study of conflict and cooperation as new powers join the global arena. International institutions shape the choices of rising states as they pursue equal status with established powers. Open membership rules and fair decision-making procedures facilitate equality and cooperation, while exclusion and unfairness frequently produce conflict. Using original and robust archival evidence, the book examines these dynamics in three cases: the United States and the maritime laws of war in the mid-nineteenth century; Japan and naval arms control in the interwar period; and India and nuclear nonproliferation in the Cold War. This study shows that the future of contemporary international order depends on the ability of international institutions to address the status ambitions of rising powers such as China and India.

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Ascending Order

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Ascending Order

Rising Powers and the Politics of Status
in International Institutions

ROHAN MUKHERJEE
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Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-18679-7 — Ascending Order
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www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009186797

DOI: 10.1017/9781009186803

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First published 2022
First paperback edition 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-009-18681-0 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-009-18679-7 Paperback

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978-1-009-18679-7 — Ascending Order
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For Shailey

Any claim enforced by equals on equals without recourse to arbitration, no matter whether the issue is of the greatest or the least significance, amounts still to enslavement.

Pericles, in Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*,
1.141 (Martin Hammond, trans.)

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Acknowledgments

In my journey from doctoral dissertation to first book, I have experienced the tremendous decency, kindness, and generosity of individuals and institutions, many of whom owed me nothing and simply took a chance on a set of ideas shared at a conference or some written words that landed on their desk. The following is my wholly inadequate attempt to acknowledge their contributions.

Aaron Friedberg, John Ikenberry, and Keren Yarhi-Milo helped me light a tiny intellectual flame and keep it alive in the Department of Politics at Princeton University. First drafts took shape during a pre-doctoral fellowship at MIT, where Owen Cote, Brendan Green, Galen Jackson, Vipin Narang, Barry Posen, and Dick Samuels shared their deep knowledge of everything from military technology to archival sources.

The book gained substance during my time as an assistant professor at Yale-NUS College. My colleagues in Global Affairs in particular – Chin-Hao Huang, Steven Oliver, Anju Paul, Navin Rajagopal, Kate Sanger, and Risa Toha – left their imprint on it through innumerable personal and professional kindnesses. Meenakshi Annamalai, Grace Kwan, Vicky Poon, Sarah Ruslan, Jolene Tan, and Kden Tan helped keep the project ticking through grant management, administration, and library resources.

At a workshop on the first draft of the manuscript, Aaron Friedberg, Stacie Goddard, John Ikenberry, Jennifer Lind, Vipin Narang, Jack Snyder, and Keren Yarhi-Milo helped revise and reassemble my arguments and evidence into something worth sharing with the world. I am grateful to Cynthia Ernst for her help in organizing this meeting. Rajesh Basrur, Stephen P. Cohen, Deborah Larson, George Lawson, Manjari Miller, and Jayant Prasad offered vital feedback at other academic gatherings. If there is anything meritorious in this book, it is due to the care and acuity with which all the above scholars treated its evolving contents.

Acknowledgments

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My research benefited immensely from the institutional assistance of librarians and archivists in Princeton, New Jersey; Cambridge, Massachusetts; Singapore; Washington, DC; and New Delhi. Several institutions supported my work, including the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies, the Center for International Security Studies, the Mamdouha S. Bobst Center for Peace and Justice, the Niehaus Center for Globalization and Governance, the Stanton Foundation, and Yale-NUS College.

The gargantuan task of research for a book would have been impossible without the help of friends and colleagues who lent a hand at key moments. Nate Hodson and Michelle Mangan put me up in their beautiful home in Washington, DC. Miklos Bankuti made sure I had wheels to get to College Park and back efficiently. As a summer research assistant at Yale-NUS, Ruchika Goel returned to Washington and New Delhi for a second pass at the archives. When the pandemic precluded travel to New Delhi to address a reviewer's queries, Yogesh Joshi most generously shared his own haul of primary documents on India and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) negotiations.

When it came to the publishing process, Courtney Fung, Evelyn Goh, Devesh Kapur, Raymond Kuo, Darren Lim, Manjari Miller, Nuno Monteiro, Vipin Narang, Dick Samuels, Ben Schupmann, Patrick Thoendel, Srdjan Vucetic, and Keren Yarhi-Milo all took the time to read and critique my book proposal. Alexandre Debs and Rahul Sagar have the dubious distinction of doing the same for the entire manuscript, with Rahul reading multiple drafts of each chapter. Kudrat Virk masterfully copyedited the final version of the manuscript. John Haslam at Cambridge University Press was the perfect editor, not least for picking three anonymous reviewers who read my work sympathetically and offered valuable suggestions that resulted in a much stronger final product than I could have imagined. I am grateful to the editors of Cambridge Studies in International Relations for subsequently adding the book to their series.

I fully expected friends to get tired of hearing about the same project for years on end. On the contrary, they rallied around me, making every little bit of progress worth celebrating. For this, I appreciate Lester Ang, Kokila Annamalai, Kanti Bajpai, Graeme Blair, Nienke Boer, Varanya Chaubey, Courtney Fung, Nirmala George, Kevin

Goldstein, Sinja Graf, Zach Howlett, Caitlin Hutchinson, Ulas Ince, Shalini Jain, Alexander Lanoszka, Nick Lotito, Neena Mahadev, Anit Mukherjee, Karthik Nachiappan, Swapna Kona Nayudu, Elizabeth Nugent, Mridhula Pillay, C. Raja Mohan, Rahul Sagar, Ben Schupmann, Nick Smith, Christina Tarnopolsky, Kriti Vikram, Abhijit Visaria, Christine Walker, and Sara Watson.

Two friends and mentors, Devesh Kapur and David Malone, have profoundly impacted my intellectual and personal development. I continue to learn from and be humbled by the extent to which they have given of themselves to build communities of scholarship that span disciplines, institutions, and continents.

My family is a consistent source of support and encouragement. Utpala Mukherjee, Siddhartha Mukherjee, Navneet and Tekchand Hingorani, and Richa Hingorani are among my greatest cheerleaders. Simita and Tanmoy Brahma were down the road for many years in New Jersey, and have remained so metaphorically, always present when I have needed them.

This book is dedicated to my wife, Shailey Hingorani, who after eleven years still laughs the loudest at my jokes and whom I still find the most interesting person in any room. Her fierce intellect and dedication to leading a life of consequence are the necessary antidote to the moments of self-doubt that accompany academic life. I am excited for the rest of this journey, in our leaky cardboard gondola, toward the salty open sea (with due apologies to Margaret Atwood).

In my better moments, I am also thankful for our cats, Charles and Frida, who engage in constant positional conflict despite living in a world of abundant resources.

Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEC	Atomic Energy Commission (US)
AIBB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party (India)
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CINC	Composite Index of National Capability
CTBT	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DAE	Department of Atomic Energy (India)
DSS	dispute settlement system (WTO)
ENCD	Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament
EU	European Union
G8	Group of Eight
G20	Group of Twenty
GDP	gross domestic product
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa group
ICBM	intercontinental ballistic missile
IFI	international financial institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IST	Institutional Status Theory
LGBTQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/ questioning, and others
LIO	liberal international order
MP	Member of Parliament
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NDB	New Development Bank
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty)

NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
P-5	five permanent members (UNSC)
PTBT	Partial Test Ban Treaty
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SDR	Special Drawing Rights (IMF)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCHR	United Nations Commission on Human Rights
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization