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Introduction

Norms and Global Order

The United States and China are the two most important states in the international system. The global economic crisis of 2008–09 has, unusually in the post-1945 period, hurt the United States disproportionately in the short term and may accelerate an erosion of its military, economic, and cultural preponderance. Many now see China as the major beneficiary, but the longer-term consequences of this crisis are very uncertain. America's primacy in global politics and economics, including its position in many global institutions, remains considerable, and its impact on key global issues – either through its neglect of or participation in their management or resolution – will remain a central influence upon the evolving global order for decades to come.

At the same time, China's influence in global markets, its military modernization, and active diplomacy in all major regions of the world have demonstrated its growing potential to shape the global order of the twenty-first century and to reduce US preponderance in certain contexts. China is the state commonly viewed as most likely to be both willing and able to expand these areas of challenge in the future. There is a strong perception in both Beijing and Washington that they are each other's most important interlocutor on a range of crucial issues, arising as much from their interdependence as from the competitive nature of their relationship. Although it is uncertain as to how the global economic crisis will affect their long-run relative positions, it has reinforced the centrality of their bilateral relationship within the contemporary global order.

We argue for the importance of these two states and their bilateral state-to-state ties in what follows even though we acknowledge that the scope of world politics goes well beyond intergovernmental relations.

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Significant as these two countries may be, they operate within a global order that contains spheres of authority beyond the actions and behaviour of states and governments. The global system is a contested arena that includes non-official actors and processes that do not always operate coterminously with the territorial spaces we associate with states (Rosenau 1997). In this conception, civil society actors, for example – both transnational and domestic – exert influence over policy choices. They may also affect each state differently: the US government is relatively open to civil society influence compared to China, but both states are often wary of transnational claims of authority. The ways in which the United States and China manage their relationship within this complex system of global order affects their attitudes towards the norms that influence its stability and evolutionary path.

This book asks three main questions. First, what factors shape the degree to which actor behaviour is consistent with global order norms? Second, what has determined the degree of Chinese and American consistency with global norms in different policy areas? Third, how has their bilateral relationship influenced those levels of consistency? This chapter sets out to provide a framework for responding to the first question. We answer the second and third questions by investigating five key areas of historical and contemporary importance: the use of force, macroeconomic policy surveillance, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, climate change, and financial regulation. The United States' and China's changing attitudes towards and behavioural consistency with regard to each of these issues are addressed in the next five empirically based chapters. This introductory chapter also provides further justification for our focus on the United States and China as actors that are central to any evaluation of the prospects for global order issues as well as for our decision to select these five particular global order issues and their associated norms, principles, rules, and standards. Finally, it provides a brief preview of our major findings.

1 What is Global Order?

As with many concepts in International Relations, that of global order is essentially contested. Our understanding of global order further complicates its application because we see order as dynamic and as a matter of degree. Over fifty different meanings of order have been noted (Alagappa 2003: 36); however, various authors have tried to distil what is essential to the concept. Steve Chan, for example, refers to definitions

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that range among "de facto patterns, normative ideals, and strategic conduct." These roughly correspond to order as an existing arrangement among relevant political actors; a vision that outlines a future, preferred set of relations; or actual policy conduct out of which we might discern a country's broad attitude to global order (Chan 1999: 197). Andrew Hurrell, who emphasizes patterns, distinguishes among minimalist, pluralist, and solidarist conceptions of order. The first relies on power, and occasional coincidences of interest rather than negotiated rules or common understandings to sustain some form of order; the second privileges the preservation of the society of states through mechanisms that acknowledge difference but seek to regulate the use of violence as a means of resolving the tensions that derive from difference; and the third requires a broad consensus on core principles among state and non-state actors with respect to the governance of global society, together with acceptance of the processes that are necessary to give effect to those principles (Hurrell 1998, 2007).[1]

Such classifications do not imply that only one definition provides an accurate description of reality. Within most countries, at the conceptual level, there are always competing ideas of what constitutes national interest, desirable foreign policy goals, and associated views of global order. These varying conceptions compete for policymakers' attentions and often coexist over long periods, including within the minds of individual policymakers. For example, in the 1990s, humanitarian arguments figured in some nine cases of conflict that came before the UN Security Council, although Council members debated possible responses on the basis of interest-based considerations as well (Roberts 2004: 81). Conceptions of order also evolve, and not necessarily in a progressive direction. G. John Ikenberry (2001), in his analysis of the "greater West" during the Cold War era, contrasts the pluralist order of coexistence between the West and East with a Western liberal order promoted via rules, institutions, and partnerships. This dualistic order gave way, he argues, to the emergence of a more solidarist liberal order in the post–Cold War era. Writing in 2005, however, he argued that the solidarist order of the 1990s may have given ground again in the George W. Bush era – this time to a more

[1] James Mayall defines pluralist and solidarist conceptions of international society more narrowly. Pluralist refers to "a society of sovereign states" with a commitment to territorial integrity and non-interference. Solidarist implies "a society of peoples in which sovereignty would not be regarded as absolute and where, when necessary, the international community would intervene for humanitarian reasons and to protect the victims of massive and sustained human rights abuse" (Mayall 2004: 121).

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minimalist neo-imperial logic based on unipolarity and eroding norms of state sovereignty (Ikenberry 2005).

Our own position is closer to those of Ian Clark (2007) and Andrew Hurrell (2006, 2007). We do see some continuity between the Cold War and post–Cold War eras. US power, the maintenance of Cold War institutions, and the effects of globalization blur the differences that can be attributed to the systemic change of 1989–91. We would also argue that the development of global normative frameworks in a range of areas critical to global order provide some stability to the system, as shown by the inability of a materially powerful United States during the George W. Bush administration to reinterpret successfully the rules in areas such as climate change and use of force. As Hurrell points out, however, contestation is a persistent phenomenon in the global system, which remains characterized by inequality. As a result, where you stand on matters of order depends on where you sit in the global hierarchy. He notes the continuing "unhappy coexistence" between traditional pluralism, including the unequal power that underpins it, and liberal solidarism, which is often promoted by transnational actors or powerful states. For example, when the superpowers during the Cold War used the nuclear non-proliferation regime to restrict access to the nuclear club, some among the excluded saw this not as a global public good, but as a way of freezing the distribution of world power and maintaining hierarchy. While liberal solidarists in the post–Cold War era celebrated the increased opportunities to promote a set of core principles that intruded into traditional areas of state sovereignty, pluralists asserted a strong and continuing preference for sovereign equality, non-interference, and non-intervention.

These understandings of global order demonstrate both its evolutionary and contested nature and the complexities involved in any attempt to capture its contemporary essence. We still witness strong elements of pluralism where the role of great powers and international institutions remain prominent, and where mechanisms such as international law, the balance of power, and diplomacy that help to sustain a state-based order retain their relevance. The United States is notable for its often vigorous defence of the sovereignty of its national democratic institutions and their primacy vis-à-vis international institutions – witness its hostility to the International Criminal Court despite the various safeguards for national institutions that were built into its procedures. China's sense of itself as a formerly victimized state has prompted its vigorous support of pluralist norms to defend its policies from external demands for change. In other

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circumstances, China has used its growing economic and political leverage to assert its rights as a great power.

Yet, the normative and material processes associated with globalization have brought to the fore a wide range of issues beyond the capacity of individual states to regulate and have exposed the insufficiency of pluralist mechanisms for addressing them.[2] In order to deal with the demands these issues have thrown up, states in conjunction with other state-based and non-state-based institutions of a transnational and domestic kind have devised measures that are often intrusive in form and ambitious in their aims. Globalization has also led to an expansion of global norms in a range of areas, including human rights, self-determination, trade, finance, investment, and the environment. Technological advances in communication have provided opportunities to develop a global discourse of shared values. Some individuals and groups have found community in these values rather than in membership of a state, and see the promotion of a particular global or communal goal as their primary aspiration. Both intrusive rules as well as shared discourses have challenged the centrality of the state, in the former case through the devising of regulations that impact directly on the organization of domestic society, and in the latter through the development of new foci of loyalty. However, those same assumptions of interconnectedness can be overdone. Many states, and our two states in particular, retain autonomy in certain key areas of decision making, as we shall show in the empirical chapters that follow.

2 Order and its Constituent Parts

We accept, then, the argument that both pluralist and solidarist conceptions of order are present in uneasy coexistence. As Hurrell has put it: "We are … not dealing with a vanished or vanishing Westphalian world, … but rather with a world in which solidarist and cosmopolitan conceptions of governance coexist, often rather unhappily, with many aspects of the old pluralist order" (Hurrell 2007: 9). The challenge this mixed conception of order poses for the creation, course, and legitimacy of global order norms is considerable given the different perspectives on what should be preserved and how this should be done. Nevertheless, whether this uneasy coexistence necessarily spills over into systemic instability or portends a crisis for global order is a question that this book is in part aimed

[2] For one important analysis of Chinese debates on globalization, see Kim (2009).

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at answering. To prefigure this part of our argument, we do not see such a crisis as imminent, but the nature of the contemporary global order is such that many crucial collective action problems are likely to remain unresolved.

One way of capturing more concretely and with greater precision the implications of the uneasy coexistence at the heart of the global order is to focus on certain specific issues and the norms associated with them.[3] We take norms to be both regulative and as Katzenstein has defined them, "collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors with a given identity" (1996: 5). Sometimes, but not always, these may be embodied in international rules and standards. We understand "international rules" to mean the specific prescriptive and proscriptive contents of international treaties. "International standards" are prescriptive technical solutions and best practice policy principles usually set by specialized international bodies and intended to apply across different political, regulatory, and legal jurisdictions; most often they are voluntary and lack treaty status. Both international rules and standards are usually associated with or assume adherence to more general global norms.

Our argument is that unpacking global order into a series of separate norms in specific issue areas allows us to explore more effectively the extent to which the United States and China challenge or support the evolving global order. This approach, we suggest, permits a more finely grained treatment of global politics and actor behaviour than that offered through the analytical lens of globalization. Importantly, it enables us to determine the extent of contestation and consensus between the United States and China about key global order norms.[4] If the levels of contestation between them are great, then, given the significance that we and

[3] We have chosen to situate our study within the literature on norms rather than on regimes. The work on regimes has tended to accept the central realist premise that power and interest are at the core of state behaviour. In addition, it has neglected the role of global actors other than states, as well as the social basis of world politics. See *International Organization*, Special Issue, 1982, for further elaboration of the concept of regimes.

[4] These differences in perspective are implicitly accepted by Western politicians who call on China to become a "responsible stakeholder." The term implies that Beijing does not yet, but should, accept the norms and associated rules that are allegedly adhered to by the more established powers. For discussion of the "responsible stakeholder" concept by US officials, see Zoellick (2005) and Christensen (2006a, 2009). As Christensen put it in 2009, after his return to Princeton University: "While China is still quite far from becoming the 'responsible stakeholder' that former deputy secretary Robert B. Zoellick envisioned in his famous speech in September 2005, China has made positive adjustments in its foreign policy that would have been hard to imagine just several years ago" (2009: 90).

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others impute to them as global actors, we might expect growing conflict or a future radical revision of the norms and associated rules and standards.

It is worth underlining at this point that our three central questions are primarily concerned with elucidating the extent to which the behaviour of these two crucial states conforms to key global order norms. This is quite different from the concern of many constructivists with the question of whether norms constrain behaviour. Our study therefore fits with what has been described as the second and third waves of scholarship on norms and global politics (Acharya 2009). The first wave argued that norms matter for actor behaviour (Klotz 1995; Finnemore 1996). One criticism of this early literature was that norms "do not float freely" and that it is necessary to show how they "are attached to real physical environments and are promoted by real human agents" (Kowert and Legro 1996: 490). Later work made clear that anchoring global norms in particular domestic political structures can be important for their progress (Cortell and Davis 2000; Checkel 2001; Acharya 2009). We agree with these refinements but wish to push this further to uncover the wide range of conditions – both domestic and global and including the characteristics of the norms themselves – that promote norm-consistent behaviour. Our framework allows for the possibility that norms do shape behaviour, but also that other factors, sometimes operating in tandem with norms and sometimes not, may be more important determinants of behavioural outcomes. For this reason, we think it is artificial to divide the ideational from the material, and like other analysts find it unhelpful to impose barriers between materialist and constructivist approaches (Tannenwald 2007; Hurd 2008).

3 What Factors Shape Behavioural Consistency with Global Norms?

There is a large body of existing literature that throws light on this question, much of which we summarize later. Determining levels of behavioural consistency is complicated by at least three factors: norms may strengthen or weaken over time, may vary in terms of their specificity, and differ in the extent to which they are binding upon political actors. These features are likely to matter in a global order that contains contested understandings of what best contributes to that order and disagreement over whether particular norms should be viewed as legitimate. However, we show in each of our empirical chapters that it is possible to specify the

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core characteristics of key global order norms against which behaviour may be assessed.

In this section, we outline the domestic and global factors that might promote behavioural consistency. We recognize that this domestic/global distinction is artificial and that there is much interaction between the two levels, but this division is nevertheless analytically useful. We also discuss how particular features associated with the norms themselves may shape behaviour. Our objective here is not to offer a simple predictive theory of which particular factors promote behavioural consistency with global norms but instead to delineate those we see as worthy of investigation in our empirical chapters. We use our empirical investigations to determine which among these various factors have the greatest explanatory power.

The Domestic Level

Actor behaviour is most likely to be consistent with global norms when domestic institutions and actors reflect or share material interests, values, and causal beliefs that are broadly consistent with these norms (Underdal 1998; Checkel 2001; Acharya 2009). Should this sharing be supported by authoritative or valued global civil society groups, this consistency is likely to be reinforced. However, this need not mean that the global norms themselves directly influence these actors' values and hence behaviour.[5] Indeed, as Acharya notes, the direction of influence may run in the other direction: there are examples where external norms have adapted to meet local practices (Acharya 2009: 19).

In the absence of well-developed local norms, global norms may provide focal points for behaviour (Garrett and Weingast 1993). As we show later, they can also act as focal points for domestic debate and normative contestation, as in the case of the debate over Kyoto in US domestic politics. In this sense, states and other political actors can be seen to be "unavoidably embedded in social relationships and norms" (Hurd 2007: 196).

Crises may play an important part in dislodging or undermining existing local norms. In these instances, global norms sometimes provide

[5] For example, a norm of open trade will be more likely to be observed if domestic employer and labour organizations share a preexisting preference for open trade (as has been broadly true in countries in Scandinavia, as well as the Netherlands and Germany). On the other hand, if domestic social actors draw on global norms and point to the benefits of behavioural convergence to strengthen their influence over national policy, we can say that global norms have influenced state behaviour and promoted behavioural consistency (Keck and Sikkink 1998).

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the basis upon which new "common knowledge," institutions and patterned behaviours are built (Culpepper 2008).[6] Constructivists have often emphasized that "deeper" socialization or norm internalization is more likely to occur in situations of uncertainty. As Cortell and Davis (2000: 75) put it: "*Ceteris paribus*, the absence of preconceptions and other unique national beliefs enhances the probability that the proponents of an international norm – domestic or transnational – can establish the legitimacy of the international norm in domestic discourse, laws, and institutions."

Policymakers may or may not share the normative beliefs of domestic and transnational social movements and policy entrepreneurs. Public officials may adopt policies consistent with global norms either to acquire a reputation as a generally reliable or responsible international actor, or to remain in power, or because they have been persuaded to change their beliefs. Persuasion may be more likely to happen when policymakers participate actively in a wide range of international institutions in which global norms are negotiated and embedded (Checkel 2001; Johnston 2008).[7] When policymakers are relatively autonomous of domestic interest groups and where the policy in question has ambiguous consequences for their political survival, global norms may provide a focal point for state policy. But the relationship between domestic societal interests and policymakers is not a one-way street in which the former only make demands upon the latter. Officials can also play off different societal groups against one another to achieve their own goals, and may also attempt to shape the preferences of these groups.

Domestic institutions will likely be important in shaping the degree of behavioural consistency with global norms, but they will not have a unidirectional effect. For example, behavioural consistency is more likely when global norms are consistent with the norms embedded in domestic institutions (Goldstein 1993), or when domestic institutions privilege the voice of groups that favour conformity. On the other hand, domestic institutions can also work against behavioural consistency with global norms, such as when they allow narrow but well-organized interest groups to block international cooperation (Milner 1997). Political constitutions

[6] There is disagreement in the literature on norms over the extent to which local norms are displaced, adapt, or themselves act to localize the global (Acharya 2009).

[7] Whether this will affect behavioural consistency will depend upon whether socialized public officials are in a powerful domestic policymaking position, and whether they are in a position to persuade other domestic political actors and social groups who are opposed to behavioural convergence.

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that disperse political power can provide multiple veto points for actors who oppose policies aimed at producing behavioural consistency with global norms. This can also happen at the level of policy implementation, where the strength of institutions can affect the degree to which policies consistent with global norms are implemented.[8]

The Global Level

There is a range of global factors that conceivably can affect the level of actors' behavioural convergence upon global order norms. We divide these into two main groups: first, those that concern how the processes of global governance operate in relation to normative frameworks and, second, those that concern how the particular characteristics of global norms affect behavioural convergence.

In addressing the first question, we focus on three main groups of actors: those who are directly involved in the processes of global governance and who can be designated as "norm providers"; those who are "free riders" because they largely accept the outcomes of global governance processes but have not actively involved themselves in those processes; and "norm takers" who are excluded from these processes. We would expect behavioural consistency with global norms to be more likely for norm providers and free riders than for norm takers, because the first two categories of actors are more likely to view the processes of global governance as having an acceptable degree of "input" and "output" legitimacy (Scharpf 1999).

Hegemonic coalitions of norm providers – which may include states, international organizations, transnational activists, market actors, and even powerful private individuals – form to put new or revised norms onto the global agenda.[9] More importantly still, they will be in a position to determine to a considerable degree the specificities (treaties, rules, and

[8] For example, China's ability to abide by its commitments to impose nuclear export controls and to protect intellectual property have been limited by divisions within the party-state apparatus and by the sometimes weak enforcement capacity of the state. By contrast, relatively strong institutions enforcing competition law can favour conformity with the norm of open trade, as has occurred within the EU.

[9] There are clearly similarities between our idea of hegemonic coalitions and that of a transnational activist network (TAN) favoured by Keck and Sikkink (1998). These two authors use the term *networks* in order to "evoke the structured and structuring dimension in the actions of these complex agents, who not only participate in new areas of politics but also shape them" (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 4). Our preference reflects our desire to place more weight on power and hierarchy rather than on the notion of horizontal linkages. (For the Keck and Sikkink definition of which actors make up a TAN, see 1998: 9).

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