



THE HAGUE JOURNAL OF DIPLOMACY

BOOK AWARD 2023

The Hague Journal of Diplomacy is pleased to announce the winner of the 2023 HJD Book Award: *Ascending Order: Rising Powers and the Politics of Status in International Institutions*, by Rohan Mukherjee, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Ascending Order is a theoretically novel and empirically rich book addressing one of the biggest questions of our time: will rising powers reject, reform, or uphold international order? The book's theory is multidisciplinary, integrating insights from security studies and international organization in political science, identity theory in social psychology, and club theory in economics to explain the behavior of rising powers towards core institutions of international order. The design and functioning of these 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. The book's empirical methodology organizes two centuries of evidence. It is the first to study the United States as a rising power in the mid-nineteenth century and uncovers new causal processes in familiar cases such as Japan in the interwar period, India during the Cold War, and China in the post-Cold War era.

PRAISE FROM THE JURY

'The most interesting part of this book is its ability to explain variation in rising powers' policies toward the status quo: they can either support or challenge it. Most existing literature in IR has shown a tendency to make a one-way assumption that the only path for rising powers is to upend

the order of which they have been part. Furthermore, this book offers the theoretical account of why and how this variation is observed by highlighting the role of status politics in international institutions. This argument is also practically important as it can suggest how we can manage and avoid the worst situation of conflicts between rising powers and status quo powers.'

'In contrast to more simplistic, deterministic interpretations of rising power behaviour, Mukherjee finds that power transitions do not necessarily result in war, nor do they always stem from inherent dissatisfaction with the status quo. Indeed, the drivers of rising actors' behaviour can vary greatly, resulting in a range of approaches to the international order. The structure of global power is of perennial importance to diplomats and foreign policy makers/analysts, and at present that structure is not only in flux, but hotly contested by a range of actors. Hence the pertinence and timeliness of this publication.'

'This volume offers a very refreshing way to study the relevance of status in international affairs, and manages to look if and how this dynamic phenomenon shapes international relations. For the scholarship on diplomacy this volume will certainly become a centerpiece that will be referenced as 'the' study on status and how it is used, shaped and presented while conducting everyday diplomatic activities. Most importantly, this volume brings forward an argument that emphasizes the role of international institutions, and the rules that emanate within those systems, as a precursor of how perceptions of status are developed and projected.'

'The book provides a novel and powerful argument why the politics of status seeking by rising great powers is an important variable in evolving international orders. Although its central focus is more on the broad spectrum of great power tools (and only in this context also on diplomacy in a more narrow sense) it does show the reach and limits of diplomatic tools in attaining, preserving and losing status in shifting great power hierarchies.'