

DSS SDR 4 – THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER IN TRANSITION

Syndicate Lead: Comdt. McNamara.

Article One: Friender Parrat, C. (2024) Change in international order? An institutional analysis. *European Journal of International Security*. 9(3) 449 -467.

Author: *Dr. Charlotta Friedner Parrat; Swedish senior lecturer of war studies Swedish Defence University. Specialises in international order, English School theory and industrial change in world politics. Holds PhD in International Relations Uppsala University (2018) (Uppsala Sweden, research university, 52,000 students). Widely published in leading journals. Research focus on international society, war and global governance.*

Article Summary:

Core Question: How do we know if International Order (IO) is stable, changing or disappearing? Is there a possible demise of US led liberal IO?

IO is not fixed but is dynamic & adaptive, revolves around institutional change. Order can exist beyond liberal US Led order it can survive as long as states consent, if consent weakens order erodes i.e. collapse of Trusteeship. IO is maintained by Institutions; Primary Institutions like sovereignty, diplomacy, law. Underpinned by Secondary Institutions, formal organisations UN, WTO, etc. which provide rules and governance (English School Theory)

Institutional Evolution Model presented: 5 Steps: (1) emerges (2) gains legitimacy (3) becomes formalised (4) loses support (5) collapse or decouples from justification.

Trusteeship case study: Institution rises from colonial trust, to UN charter stabilises, trust fades, loses support, norms change and institution fades away (collapse of UN Trusteeship council). IO continuity can remain through other institutions (laws, sovereignty, and trade.) Transformation occurs when some institutions evolve or erode, full disorder requires multiple institutions to collapse simultaneously.

Current Status: Author contends Liberal order may be transforming, from western dominance to multipolar less liberal but still ordered system, IO not disappearing entirely.

Article Two: Sanaei, M. (2024) The Transition of International Order :Current Debates and Future Directions. *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies*. 10(2) 133-153.

Author: *Dr. Mehdi Sanaei; Iranian diplomat, professor of International Relations University of Tehran. Founder of Institute for Iran-Eurasia Studies. Former Iranian ambassador to Russia (2013 -2019), member of Iranian parliament. Specialises in Iran- Russia relations and Eurasia cooperation.*

Article Summary:

Core Theory: IO is undergoing structural transition rather than collapse. Moving from post 1945 US led unipolar liberal order towards uncertain configuration. Major events such as COVID-19, Ukraine war, Gaza conflict reveal how world events expose fragility in governance structures.

Multipolarity is presented as the rise of several major powers (China, EU, Russia, and India etc.) seen as the defining feature of the new order, challenges western unipolar order. Global south rise, demanding equal voice in multilateral institutions, BRICS & African Union entry into G20 (2023). These countries display ambivalent stance on Ukraine & Gaza which demonstrates a move towards strategic autonomy. China advances as an architect of IO, offering non-western models of governance and mediation i.e. diplomatic engagement in Middle East post Gaza.

Signs of institutional overload, the WHO contested authority during COVID-19 and UN Security Council paralysis over Ukraine & Gaza shows lack of current efficiency, diminishing strength of World Bank & IMF. Emergence of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) & Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) shows institutional diversification rather than collapse. Double standards evident, western emphasis on law and rights in Ukraine but not consistently in Gaza, accusations of selective liberalism erodes trust in western led rules based order. Digitalisation and AI creating new networked interdependence which U.S. or China cannot control alone. Power is becoming increasingly diffused among states, corporations and non-state actors, therefore governance depends on negotiation and legitimacy, not domination.

Proposed Future Direction: Author combines English School and realist views; order changes when institutional norms and power relations evolve together. He concludes the world is heading towards a hybrid international order; neither purely liberal nor fully fragmented, will be characterised by coexistence and negotiated multipolarity.

Syndicate discussion questions:

1. Are we witnessing the end of the liberal order or its transformation into something more multipolar?
2. Has the Ukraine war and Gaza conflict exposed the limits of western leadership and the credibility of liberal norms?
3. Will the west have to become accustomed to a world where others dominate? If so, what are the implications?