

Foreword: The Launch of Rising Powers Quarterly

Emel Parlar Dal, Ali Murat Kurşun

Editors of Rising Powers Quarterly

There is no doubt that the significant transformation the world has been undergoing is being accompanied with the rise of various actors that bring with themselves not only a re-ordering in the hierarchical structure of world politics, but more importantly a redistribution of the roles played by these actors positioned in different levels of this hierarchical structure. It is no longer only the great powers that set the rules of the governing system, but rather rising, emerging and middle powers started to have significant shares in the process of rebuilding of the global architecture. In this regard, it is important to comprehend the consequences of this transformation since the 'rising' phenomena of this transformation do not only include the states, but also various groupings, organizations and institutions. More importantly, the interaction between the rise of these different actors at the global level has an important share in the shaping of the rules and tools of today's global governance architecture.

For this very reason, the rise of these different actors in world politics and their impact on the world order have become an attractive area of study in order to better understand the changing dynamics of the ruling structure and status quo. The roles played by these rising actors, their interactions at the global level, their positive/negative contributions to the governance architectures, their challenges to the Westphalian and the liberal world system, their collective bargaining strategies, their proposed solutions for the crises, their roles in the underdeveloped world and so many related topics gained significant attention, not only in these rising countries but also in the Western academia.

There has been an upsurge in the number of publications on the above mentioned topics not only in the field of politics and international relations, but also in other related disciplines such as economy, sociology and law. It is also important to note that the recent studies on rising powers have utilized an interdisciplinary approach in analyzing their roles in the global governance system. Many of these articles have been published in leading academic journals such as *Global Governance*, *Third World Quarterly*, *Global Policy*, *International Affairs*, *International Relations*, *International Organizations* and *International Journal*. However, the

absence of a journal that is exclusively dedicated to the study of rising powers in global politics seems to be a major problem for the development of scholarly research on this topic.

Rising Powers Quarterly aims to fill this void in international relations research and introduce a breath of fresh air to scholarly research on rising powers. The idea of publishing a special journal on this topic emerged during the process of a research project funded by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK), which analyzed Turkey's contribution to global governance in comparison to the BRICS countries. The necessity to establish an academic network between the scholars of Turkey and other rising powers has prompted our research team to develop the *Rising Powers Quarterly* journal as a new initiative to facilitate the spread of new ideas and works on this topic in a more solid and continuous basis.

Rising Powers Quarterly is particularly interested in original scientific contributions that analyze the operations and policies of regional and international organizations, international groupings such as the BRICS, IBSA, MIKTA and G-20 as well as their member states around the main themes of international political economy, global governance, North-South relations, developing world, changing international order, development, rising/emerging/middle/regional powers, development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, peace, peacekeeping, security, democracy and international terrorism. Country-specific case studies with regard to their interactions at the global level are also of particular concern of *Rising Powers Quarterly*.

The inaugural issue of *Rising Powers Quarterly* is devoted to China and aims to focus on this country's growing role in global politics. The articles touch upon the various political, economic and normative dimensions of China's position in the global governance architecture. To this end, they particularly try to understand how the Chinese governments plan and coordinate their actions in the global governance system and which tools they utilize in order to achieve their global aspirations. Some of the articles further analyze the implications of Chinese foreign policy especially with regard to the Middle East and Africa.

Suisheng Zhao's "China as a rising power versus the US-led world order" sets the normative framework of the discussion on this issue by exploring China's relative position between the roles of status-quo power and revolutionary power by putting forward the argument that China does not have any problems with the current order, but is rather concerned about its position within this order.

Departing from this question, Tim Summers, Stephan Klingebiel and Yixian Sun analyze China's rising role at the global level. In "Thinking inside the box: China

and global/regional governance”, Tim Summers takes the question one step further and tries to explore whether China’s impact is in accordance with the Euro-American order while concluding that China’s global engagement is in conformity with the capitalist modernity. Stephan Klingebiel’s “Global problem-solving approaches: The crucial role of China and the group of rising powers” attempts to locate China in world order by discussing different and conflicting definitions of rising powers. The articles of Summers and Klingebiel which set the general framework for understanding China’s role in global governance in this issue is supported with Yixian Sun’s “Problem or solution? The changing role of China and the group of rising powers” at the level of a significant issue area of global governance: environmental politics. Sun does not only analyze the question at the governmental level, but also evaluates how non-state actors in China engage in environmental governance and contribute to the progress in environmental adjustments.

The issue then engages the discussion at the institutional level. “China’s leadership in global economic governance and the creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Banks” by Jonathan R. Strand, Eduardo M. Flores and Michael W. Trevathan asks whether China plays a complimentary role in global economic governance and analyzes China’s engagement with the World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (AsDB). The authors demonstrate how the creation of AIIB reflects the relative change in the American-dominated order. Clara Brandi’s “Rising powers in the global trading system – China and Mega-Regional trade negotiations” investigates the role of rising powers with a specific focus on China within the World Trade Organization and argues that G20 can invest more on playing an important role in the global trading system. M. Sait Akman’s “Global trade governance and G20: A response to Mega-Regional trade agreements” analyzes the role of regional trade agreements with regard to G20 and compares the two preceding term presidents of this organization: Turkey and China.

Finally, the issue addresses China’s rising role at the regional level. Barnett R. Rubin and Tom Gregg’s “China-U.S. cooperation in Central and South Asia” deals with the China-U.S. cooperation in Afghanistan and Pakistan by analyzing the initiation of various infrastructure projects in the region and concludes that the two countries have a partial convergence in their attitude towards these projects. Adriana Erhal Abdenur’s “Rising Powers and International Security: the BRICS and the Syrian Conflict” explores the main positions the BRICS regarding armed conflicts with a particular emphasis on the Syrian conflict and argues that BRICS can play a significant role in the post-conflict period rather than being a direct player in this conflict. Lina Benabdallah’s “Towards a Post-Western Global Governance? How Africa-China Relations In(form) China’s Practices”

analyzes Chinese involvement in Africa from a different aspect and tries to assess China's gains from its involvement in the continent at the global level. The author argues that these relations provide China with the opportunity to acquire global experience especially through its trade implementations and investment projects.

We believe that all the articles in this inaugural issue of *Rising Powers Quarterly* offer an important opportunity to grasp China's role in the world order through its governance practices at the global, institutional and regional levels. Keeping in mind that these three levels are interconnected with each other, this issue proposes an integral analysis of China's engagement with global governance. By doing so, it aims to set the scene for further comprehensive research on China's rising role in world politics.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all scholars who contributed to the launch of *Rising Powers Quarterly* particularly contributors of this inaugural issue and who accepted to be included in our editorial board. We sincerely hope that this new initiative will encourage further scholarly research on rising powers in global governance.

