

FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGIES OF EMERGING POWERS IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD: AN INTRODUCTORY REVIEW

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The global scenario has been reflecting for a long time the needs and interests of the most powerful States, at least until the emergence of new developing countries outside of the western model and the shift from a bipolar system to a multipolar one. For both historical and ideational reasons, these States are developing and entering in the international system in different ways from the original Western powers, nonetheless they represent a challenge to the current international order. Typically based on the interdependence between its actors for common material interests, this system requires now that both developed States and emerging powers work together under the same multilateral institutions, however it is still debated the degree of autonomy those new powers want to preserve, and this will determine the impact they have on the balance of power achieved from in the international system after a difficult and long journey.

Powers like the USA are opposing these new developments, even if emerging countries are still far from the level of challenging the current international hierarchies; consequently, the efforts in creating a New International Economic Order were disappointing because of this resistance and emerging countries switched to a new approach: *claiming a central place in world capitalism rather than challenging it*. The international system is continuously evolving, this can be seen in the creation of the G20, with the aim of addressing financial issues, global imbalances and currency valuations, in a discussion involving both developed and developing countries. As developed countries open up to new powers, different views of how the international order should look like clash with each other and this rises the need for more cooperation and coordination of foreign policies of each State. One huge compromise is undoubtedly accepting that not all States considered legitimate will be democracies and that conducting what is considered *good governance* is enough to be recognized as part of the international order.

The main example of emerging powers challenging the international system is certainly BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, even though these countries present considerable differences between each other. China, for example, has an incredible huge GDP compared to the other countries and affirms to be not only a rising power but also a poor country. Indeed, when looking at the GDP per capita's data, China is way far behind its BRICS colleagues, but also other smaller emerging powers like Indonesia or Turkey. Moreover, China is also seen not only as an economic threat but also as a security threat, in particular by Japan, because of its lack of transparency when it comes to military forces and its continuous investments on armaments. India, Brazil and South Africa, on the contrary, adopted a more cooperative approach to global security by working within the United Nations system. The debate on nuclear non-proliferation also sees BRICS countries divided within each other and some of them still have ongoing bilateral issues, from cross-border issues between India/Russia and China to worries about rising energy prices from Russia and China's competitive exports for Brazil. Lastly, only three out of these five countries are officially recognized democracies, meanwhile Russia and China present authoritarian regimes. The combination of all those factors makes international actors question whether BRICS countries as a whole – at the current state – can effectively undertake a leading role in the international system.

Nevertheless, these countries still share – beside an expanding economic growth - common views on neo-Westphalian state sovereignty, adopted the principle of non-intervention and support inclusive global growth. They also place the fault of the financial crises on Western economies, since each national bank adopted aggressive policy actions in order to save their own domestic economy and this led to excessive capital flows and negative consequences for developing countries as well. This is because States tend, of course, to prioritize domestic affairs and stability over international matters and this applies to emerging countries as well, which leaves open questions on whether these countries are ready to join the international system and to what degree of involvement and dedication.