

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

CONSERVATIVE REFORMERS
LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL ORDER, GLOBAL COMMON PROBLEMS,
AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPING POWERS

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DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS

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12 JUNE 2017

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ABSTRACT

How have diplomats from democratic developing powers —democratic and developing middle-income countries, generally in the global south and with rising material capabilities— influenced the negotiations for the creation of multilateral agreements to confront global problems? Arguing that existing ideas about the capacities of democratic middle and rising powers from the global south to influence global governance are inadequate, I aim to reinterpret the actions of these countries by paying attention to their rhetoric and strategies during the discussion of multilateral agreements. The dissertation proposes that diplomats from democratic developing powers have influenced the creation of multilateral agreements to confront global problems by appealing to traditional liberal internationalist values —such as equality, self-determination, and constraints on power. Moreover, they have used similar justifications, strategies, and coalitions throughout different issue areas and international distributions of power. In a comparative perspective and guided by historical institutionalism, I study the actions of diplomats from Brazil, India, and Mexico, countries that traditionally defended self-determination and sovereignty-preserving legal norms, to influence the negotiations of the agreements to confront nuclear proliferation, crimes against humanity, humanitarian crises, and climate change in United Nations fora, promoting principles that seemingly endanger their sovereignty. By paying attention to (1) contentious multilateral politics that emerge during the negotiation of multilateral agreements and to (2) the actions, strategies, and rhetoric of these three democratic developing powers, my dissertation project seeks to understand how democratic developing powers participate in the maintenance and development of the liberal international order, especially when global problems threaten international stability.

CONSERVATIVE REFORMERS
Liberal International Order, Global Common Problems,
and Democratic Developing Powers

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INTRODUCTION

At the end of November of 2010, and for more than ten days, a hot air balloon from the non-governmental environmental organization Greenpeace hovered over the Temple of Kukulcán, within the archaeological site of Chichen Itzá, with the command “rescue the planet.” The message was intended for the more than eleven thousand delegates, representing 194 countries, who flew to the city of Cancun in Southeast Mexico to start a new round of the United Nations climate change discussions. After fifteen years of failed attempts to negotiate a global agreement on climate change, the representatives pessimistically started a new round of deliberations: the Sixteenth Conference of the Parties in 2010 began marked by the chaos and resentment from the previous year talks in Copenhagen, but it was at least framed by the white sand and turquoise sea of the Mexican Riviera Maya. Diplomats from all over the world ran through hotels hallways and packed conference rooms trying to find some common ground between the various fractious negotiating blocs, but the contention politics that emerged made different analysts anticipate another year of unsuccessful debates. To the surprise of almost every observer, on December 10, during the final day of the Conference, participating delegates announced the “Cancun Agreement,” which paved the way for the more encompassing understanding achieved in the Paris Conference in 2016. At the end of the Cancun Conference, the Mexican diplomatic team “emerged as the new engineers of consensus” on climate change (Edwards and Roberts 2015: 2); the representatives of a democratic and middle-income country managed to influence a complex and delicate episode of contentious multilateral politics, pulling together a carefully-crafted multilateral agreement.

The actions of diplomats from democratic and developing middle-income countries, generally in the global south and with rising material capabilities, seem to be paradoxical for analysts of global governance. Democratic developing powers are either too weak in terms of their material capabilities to shape the actions of multilateral organizations or too savvy and numerous to profit from these organizations; they are either too dangerous and irresponsible to be stakeholders, especially when their material capabilities improve or rise, or too unimportant in comparison with great powers given their limited resources; and they are either too democratic and liberal to defy and contradict democratic and liberal great powers or too conservative to support progressive agendas in multilateral fora. Democratic developing powers are treated, therefore, as contradictory creatures within international society, a sort of non-Western Janus in terms of their capacity to influence multilateral organizations, the effects of their material capabilities, and the consequences of their domestic regimes and value systems. Given these paradoxes, the overarching and general question guiding my research is: How do democratic developing powers operate in the liberal international order?

To limit the scope of my research, my project traces and maps out the actions of the diplomats from three democratic developing powers —Brazil, India, and Mexico— during the negotiation process within the United Nations of four agreements dealing with global problems. The empirical question this project addresses is: How have diplomats from Brazil, India, and Mexico influenced the negotiations of the agreements to confront nuclear proliferation, crimes against humanity, humanitarian crises, and climate change in United Nations fora? The tentative answer I propose for this empirical question is that diplomats from these three countries have influenced the negotiation of these agreements in UN fora by appealing to equality and sovereignty, using similar justifications, strategies, and coalitions throughout different issue areas and international distributions of power. During these negotiations, the Brazilian, Indian, and Mexican diplomats have attempted to simultaneously (1) be responsible actors during the negotiations and as part of the international society, (2) limit the leeway of Western great powers and other powerful international actors, and (3) maintain their autonomy to define domestic policies.

THE QUESTION AND THE ARGUMENT

By paying attention to the empirical question about the multilateral actions of Brazilian, Indian, and Mexican diplomats, my dissertation project intends to analyze a broader group of countries that I define as *democratic developing powers*, i.e. democratic and developing middle-income countries, generally in the global south and with rising material capabilities. My project investigates:

Question: How have diplomats from democratic developing powers influenced the negotiations for the creation of multilateral agreements to confront global problems?

I argue that

Claim₁: Diplomats from democratic developing powers have influenced the creation of multilateral agreements to confront global problems by appealing to traditional liberal internationalist values, such as equality, self-determination, and constraints on power.

Claim₂: Diplomats from democratic developing powers have used similar justifications, strategies, and coalitions during the negotiations of multilateral agreements in different issue areas and international distributions of powers, perhaps due to path dependency.

Claim₃: In order to be influential, diplomats from democratic developing powers have claimed to (1) be responsible actors in the negotiation of multilateral agreements to address global problems, (2) constrain the actions of Western great powers and more powerful international actors, and (3) maintain their autonomy to define domestic policies.

In terms of the overarching and general theoretical question I posed in the last section, my dissertation project analyzes:

Theoretical question: How have democratic developing powers participated in the maintenance and development of the liberal international order?

I argue that

Theoretical claim: By emphasizing the polysemy of core elements of the liberal international order, democratic developing powers participate in efforts to address global problems at the same time that they promote constraints on the leeway of more powerful international actors, promoting a sort of *Republicanism from below*.

To summarize, I am studying the actions and strategies that diplomats from Brazil, India, and Mexico have used during the negotiation processes to create multilateral agreements dealing with nuclear proliferation, crimes against humanity, humanitarian intervention, and climate change. I focus on the multilateral campaigns of these countries because I want to find out how diplomats from democratic developing powers have influenced the negotiations for the creation of multilateral agreements to address global problems. The main purpose of this research is to help the reader understand whether and how democratic developing powers participate in the maintenance and development of the liberal international order.

Even though I focus on negotiation dynamics, norms, and rules, my argument is not ideational *per se*. My main assumption is that it is necessary to pay attention to both social or ideational and material aspects in order to understand the multilateral campaigns of democratic developing powers. Great powers designed the liberal international order based on social relationships of differentiated authority, i.e. powerful international actors emphasized and promoted the stratification of the international society and used the institutions of the order to reinforce and legitimize unequal power and status (Goh 2014). However, with the aim of getting the acquiescence of the international society, great powers gave other actors opportunities to repair or improve the institutions within the order,¹ especially through multilateral organizations where, at least *de jure*, every country can legitimately question the rules and norms of the order as a whole and attempt to tame inequalities (Ikenberry 2011, Buzan and Lawson 2015).

The negotiation of multilateral agreements opens up episodes where democratic developing powers can attempt to shape international norms and thus amend the hierarchical social foundations of the liberal international order. Hence, the redefinition of core shared norms and rules, especially the ones guiding international interactions, catalyze and influence changes within the order (Hurrell 2008, Nexon 2009). My focus, therefore, is on the processes and practices by which democratic developing powers negotiate the nature, social compact, and mechanisms of the institutions that conform the liberal international order (Goh 2014), i.e. on dynamics of mobilization and negotiation. I pay attention to their

¹ Opportunities to have “voice,” using a concept developed by Albert O. Hirschman, i.e. attempts “at changing the practices, policies, and outputs,” especially when the option of abandoning an organization is not available (Hirschman 1970, 30 and 33).

positions in multilateral debates to craft and implement multilateral solutions, or *modes* of governance, to global common problems, like nuclear proliferation, crimes against humanity, humanitarian crises, and environmental degradation using United Nations fora as *sites* of governance.²

THEORETICAL SIGNIFICANCE, OR “WHY DOES THIS MATTER?”

My dissertation project is significant because it will help us to understand three key global governance aspects: (1) how the international society deals with global problems, (2) how developing countries have historically participated in global governance, emphasizing the actions of a neglected number of countries to avoid global problems, and (3) how developing powers have historically attempted to amend and modify international organizations where a small number of countries enjoys more privileges than the majority.

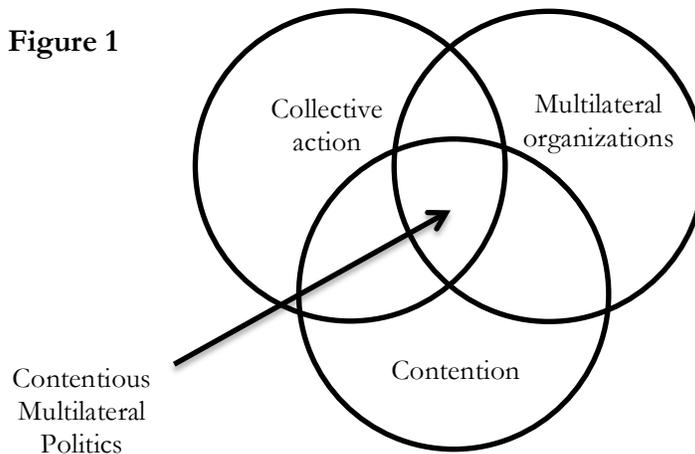
Changes in transportation, communication, and organizational capacities have increased what Daniel Deudney defines as violence interdependence. Violence interdependence, or the rising capacity of actors to damage one another independent of the distribution of power between them, plus the porosity of international borders and the globalization of problems created and amplified shared vulnerabilities in the international society (Deudney 2007, Deudney 2016). There are different ways of facing global problems; collective action and multilateral organizations are two different possibilities to confront these challenges, and they overlap but are not identical options —i.e. collective action can take other forms than multilateral responses, and not all the policies and deeds promoted by multilateral organizations represent coordinated efforts among state representatives on behalf of shared interests (Tilly and Tarrow 2015). Moreover, in some instances, contention emerges when state representatives try to coordinate actions through multilateral organizations, since diplomats might make “claims that bear on someone else’s interests” (Tilly and Tarrow 2015: 7). Hence, I limit the scope of my dissertation project to understanding the strategies, or ‘campaigns’ to use a military analogy,³ of developing powers

² “‘Sites’ of governance are not literal locations, but rather arenas of governance within the broader structure of global governance in which actors interact and make decisions. ‘Modes’ of governance are ways of crafting and implementing [...] regulations and initiatives” (O’Neill 2009, 6).

³ Campaigns are “familiar and standardized ways in which one set of political actors makes collective claims on some other set of political actors” that “focus on a particular policy and usually disassemble when that policy is implemented or overturned” (Tilly and Tarrow 2015: 14-16, based on Almeida 2014: 6).

during moments of *contentious multilateral politics* that emerge during the design and negotiation of global-problem-solving mechanisms (see figure 1).

Figure 1



Different international actors have promoted problem-solving mechanisms to face shared vulnerabilities, but International Relations scholars have focused their analyses on the actions of either great powers or powerful nonstate actors, at the expense of neglecting the contributions of developing countries to global governance. The epistemological decision to focus on certain international actors might be one of the reasons why most scholars assume, contrary to policymakers, that developing powers have limited or little influence in the design of common problem-solving mechanisms—they end up reifying epistemological decisions into ontological assumptions (Holbraad 1984, Cox 1989). In this sense, I see my dissertation project as part of an effort by scholars to study and review how actors from the periphery and semi-periphery of the international society can participate in the creation of solutions to global problems and can be sources of global norms (Helleiner 2014).

In an international scenario marked by modifications in the interaction capacity among actors, the problem of hierarchy and stratification in the international order has taken new characteristics. When the mechanisms to solve global common problems are being designed, diplomats from developing powers promote the codification of clear and efficient rules and norms to guide international interactions and to confront global shared vulnerabilities. At the same time, these actors foster arrangements that avoid the cession of their autonomy to define domestic policies and the further institutionalization of the prerogatives of powerful international actors, especially great powers. Hence, I argue that diplomats and policymakers from developing powers promote the creation and maintenance

of international legal mechanisms to confront global problems, institutionalized and codified through multilateral organizations and international law (i.e. international regimes),⁴ at the same time that they try to preserve their autonomy and change hierarchies through diplomatic bargaining and negotiations. This dilemma can lead to a tragedy that developing powers will face, since diplomats from developing powers can end up (1) giving up autonomy and institutionalizing hierarchies in their attempt to confront global problems and avoid the absence of international rules and norms, or (2) precluding multilateral agreements and thus worsening global problems in an attempt to protect their autonomy and to avoid the ossification of hierarchies. Democratic developing powers will attempt to change the practices, policies, and outputs of multilateral organizations even more in moments when they perceive that their material capabilities are rising (Paul 2016, Stuenkel 2016), since (1) their interests will potentially expand, and (2) they will probably consider that their capacities to participate in the maintenance and redefinition of liberal international order rise together with their material capabilities. Thus, understanding how democratic developing powers have faced the anarchy-hierarchy dilemma and promoted multilateral solutions to global problems, especially when they have rising capabilities, is necessary to comprehend if they have been responsible stakeholders or spoilers of the liberal international order.

LITERATURE REVIEW

At the end of World War II, American policymakers reconstructed the liberal international order that Great Britain used to lead before the conflict. The United States formed an order-building coalition with mainly, but not exclusively, liberal developed countries, placing itself as the managing director of an orchestrated effort (Kissinger 2014, 89). The United States included liberal operational characteristics in the order —open, rule-based, and consensual rules, rights, and institutions— and liberal values —free markets, economic interdependence, human rights promotion, and liberal democracy. According to Liberal Internationalists, liberal international order are the result of a bargaining process between great powers and the rest of the international society; the liberal operational features of the order convinced other states to work with the United States instead of balancing against it, since they were invited, at least *de jure*, to share authority and responsibilities in the new

⁴ “International regimes are defined as principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue-area” (Krasner 1983, 1).

order, even if they did not secure the same prerogatives and privileges as the great powers (Ikenberry 2006, 14; Nye 2015, 10).⁵ Moreover, developing countries have the opportunity and the channels to voice their concerns within the architectures of the order, since there are institutionalized and multifaceted arenas for negotiation and coordination, i.e. sites of governance like the United Nations. The existence, at least *de jure*, of these sites of governance solidifies the legitimacy of the order, gathering the support of great powers, which enjoy privileges, and of developing countries, which have spaces to voice their concerns (Ikenberry 2011, 73-75).

Below the surface of apparent equality among states, however, “power and authority is informally manifest in hierarchical ways” (Ikenberry 2011, 37). The different hierarchies of authority within the liberal international order benefit the goals and aims of the original order-building coalition, as they reflect and reinforce asymmetries among states (Buzan and Lawson 2015, 84-87). The liberal international order provides common obligations and opportunities, but privilege the interests of the “core” of the international society, i.e. of great, mainly Western powers (Buzan and Lawson 2015, 195-196). Some authors, especially Critical Theorists, have pointed out a fundamental and pernicious dynamic of the liberal international order: since hierarchies are reinforced through institutions and organizations, “social stratification takes on a self-evident dimension of routine and taken-for-grantedness” (Pouliot 2016, 266). Subordinate players, therefore, become either complicit in maintaining subordination patterns, since hierarchies push “alternatives out of sight or political possibility,” or they have a hard time changing established ways since they consider the liberal international order as the “natural order of things” (Pouliot 2016, 269-270).

According to Daniel Deudney and John Ikenberry, the order-building coalition led by the United States promoted interdependence and relations of restraint among states as a way to confront increasing violence interdependence (Deudney and Ikenberry 1990). The United States secured a leading role in the international order, safeguarding benefits and privileges and, in exchange, American policymakers offered the provision of public goods, especially stability in the international system and multilateral organizations that could help other state voice their interests (Deudney and Ikenberry 1990). Multilateral organizations, therefore, were intended to ease potential problems, both as platforms and actors: they

⁵ The distinction between leading states and the rest was perhaps necessary to secure the support of great powers toward the order, especially from the American public (Ikenberry 2011).

provide “information, increase credibility, and generate focal points, thus reducing uncertainty” and safeguarding commitments (Keohane 1984, xi). As sites of governance, multilateral organizations promote stability in the international system, foster the intersection of interests among states, and encourage the acceptance of liberal ideas, thus deepening the commitments of different actors towards maintaining the liberal international order (Drezner 2014). The high institutionalization of the liberal international order is, however, a double-edged sword: when the material context changes, due to increasing economic and violence interdependence, the superstructure of the order should, in theory, evolve together with said material modifications, but these organizations have proved to be difficult to amend, producing gridlocks and episodes of contention (Hale, Held, and Young 2013).

Gaps in the literature on democratic developing powers

Developing countries with rising material capabilities have received sporadic attention in International Relations (IR). Scholars in the discipline tend to focus on these countries either when their material capabilities increase considerably, because these countries could catalyze crises, or during international crises, because these countries could take advantage of unsettled moments to propose changes in the international system. A new wave of attention to the actions of emerging market economies started in academia after Goldman Sachs published a report identifying four countries with rising economic capabilities —the BRICs, Brazil, Russia, India, and China (O’Neill 2001), and, especially after the Great Recession in 2008, when these countries were not as affected by the problems in the international financial system as other developed countries, including the United States. In the midst of what some analysts characterized as the beginning of a new international distribution of power, IR scholars from different theoretical standpoints decided to study the actions of these countries and their strategies to amend international structures, especially to update multilateral organizations to reflect the new international context or to supplant them with new ones. Despite the diversity of theoretical assumptions and methodologies, it is possible to identify a number of gaps in the literature that run through different theoretical perspectives, which I classify in five categories.

Conceptual quagmire: analysts of rising and middle powers have not reached a consensual definition of the concepts, and thus, even when they use the same words, they might be talking about totally different entities. Both terms describe countries using two

criteria: *ex ante*, using power resources indicators to create a hierarchy of international power that would predict the behavior of the countries, or *ex post*, studying the actions of non-great powers and cataloguing those countries that follow a certain performance pattern, especially consultation and multilateral policies, as rising and middle powers. The term middle power implies a more static category, a “meeting place of once great but declining powers [...] and of lesser but ascending powers” (Holbraad 1984, 3), while the concept of rising power has a connotation of movement into the great-power category (Ikenberry and Wright 2008).

Despite this difference, there are four common approaches that have been used to understand both middle and rising powers, based on: (1) hierarchies of material resources, where authors assume the automatic translation of economic resources into a specific type of actions, or the translation of economic capabilities into influence (see Ping 2005, Stairs 1998), (2) normative commitments, where scholars classify countries according to the norms they defend and promote, especially in relation to Western values (Cox 1981, Lyon and Tomlin 1979), (3) functions, where students look for the policy niches that non-great powers fill and analyze their efficiency and responsibility (see Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal 1993, Cooper 2011, Keohane 1969), and (4) identities, where analysts focus on how diplomatic elites describe their country and on the historical development of foreign policy ideologies (see Carr 2014, Hurrell 2003, and Ravenhill 1998). The conceptual confusion increases even more when authors use both terms, middle and rising, interchangeably, as in Ikenberry and Mo 2013.

Alarmism. Robert Gilpin’s work has helped IR scholars understand that leading states build international orders. The most powerful actors in the international system secure their interests by establishing institutions and codifying relationships, not only through coercive means. When the distribution of power changes, however, states with increasing material capabilities seek to modify the order as to reflect their interests, and the change has been usually brought about by hegemonic wars, when the rising power takes control over the system and overturns the existing order (Gilpin 1981). Authors influenced by Gilpin patrol the international system in the look for countries with rising capabilities, since they expect these countries to repeat a recursive and consistent cycle of war and change; they pay attention to non-great powers, therefore, only if their material capabilities grow (see, for example, Mearsheimer 2014 for a Realist assessment, and Rasler and Thompson 1994 and Copeland 2001 for a World Systems examination). The alarmism of this interpretation is

based on “a rigid cyclical view of the rise and decline of states and international order,” on an overemphasis on material aspects without paying equal attention to ideational elements, and on the assumption that the maintenance of the order is almost impossible once a state starts to rise (Ikenberry 2014, 2, 14, and 15). In recent years, authors from different theoretical standpoints have questioned a cyclical view of power shifts and order change—perhaps the most explicit criticism of this view can be found in Buzan 2014.

Presentism and Futurism: while the first gap is the assumption of a cyclical dynamic over long periods of time, the second gap is the limited focus of some authors on the last decade and the extrapolation of present conditions into the near future. The combination of the rise of emerging market economies and the Great Recession during the last decade led some scholars to study the actions of rising powers in ‘snapshots,’ without properly locating them in historical context. The analytical strategy of rising power analysts propelled the interests of other IR scholars towards these countries, but it overemphasized the innovative, disruptive, and challenging nature of the actions of these actors. My assertion is not that the conclusions of these authors are wrong, but sometimes these scholars engaged in a process of prospective analysis predicting multipolarity, and they did not take into account some challenges that rising powers would face in order to move from the semi-periphery to the core of the liberal international order (for examples of authors that predicted that rising powers would replace Western great powers as leaders in the international system see Khanna 2008, Kupchan 2012, Narlikar 2010, and Stuenkel 2016). Given the problems that emerging market economies have had to face in recent years, especially due to episodes of international and domestic recessions and financial problems, some authors have infused a more historical perspective into their analyses as to propose more cautious explanations about the actions of rising and middle powers—see, for example, the comparison that the authors in Paul 2016 make between historical and contemporary cases of rising powers.

Assumption of *uniformity*: BRICS analysts in academia are aware of the differences between Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—they have different political regimes, economic models, and geopolitical conditions, among other circumstances—, but emphasize the similarities between them in an effort to find shared structural conditions that would either preclude or promote their ascension. The academic attention on the countries that Goldman Sachs identified as emerging market economies peaked especially after the leaders of the five countries decided to forge close political ties through annual meetings

(see, for example, Alexandroff 2008, Alexandroff and Cooper 2010, Cooper and Antkiewicz 2008, Gray and Murphy 2013, Nadkarni and Noonan 2013, and Stuenkel 2014 and 2015). Some authors acknowledge the importance of the differences among rising powers, but they usually propose dichotomies without fully explaining the reasoning behind their categorizations. For example, some scholars argue that “Western” rising powers could potentially respect the liberal order and its regimes while “non-Western” ones might seek to overthrow them (see, for example, Ikenberry 2011).⁶ Even certain authors in the global south use the Western/Non-Western powers dichotomy to find common structural conditions sustaining the hierarchies of the liberal international order, but they recognize the difficulty to define the categories and the potentially racist implications of assuming that non-Western actors pose a fundamental threat to the West (Stuenkel 2016, 5). Other analysts have made a distinction between democratic and non-democratic rising powers, focusing on the similarities in both structural and domestic conditions that “Southern Democracies” face, especially the three democratic countries in the BRICS, but they tend to implicitly posit a “rising democratic peace theory,” since they suggest that democratic developing powers might cooperate more among each other in global governance debates given their similarities (e.g. Husar 2016, Stuenkel 2015). As a reaction to scholars that assume uniformity among rising powers or cooperation among democratic developing powers, some authors have emphasized the differences in domestic conditions, regional contexts, multilateral traditions, and national interests between democratic and non-democratic rising powers and among democratic developing powers (see especially Jaffrelot and Singh Sidhu 2013 and Piccone 2016).

Assumption of *irresponsibility* or *insufficient liberalism*: there are some analysts that argue that rising powers will either not be responsible players in global governance or that they are not ready to be delegated with international responsibilities. Some authors recognize that there are different interests and priorities between established and rising powers and among the latter, which could catalyze conflict, but sometimes they conflate disagreeing with the United States with disagreeing with the values and norms that the liberal international order is supposed or intended to protect. They posit, for example, that developing powers with rising capabilities will promote domestic growth at the expense of fostering liberal values,

⁶ “The question is whether non-Western rising states such as China and India will seek to use their increasing power to usher in a substantially different sort of international order” (Ikenberry 2011, 31).

such as human rights or green growth (Patrick 2010), or that their domestic regimes have no or weak check-and-balances systems and thus their national interests will be mainly short term goals and primarily economic interests, unlike liberal democracies who have long-term ends and promote liberal norms and values (Castañeda 2010). The main problem with this assumption is that authors presume that liberal values and norms have only one consensual definition and that only Western countries are liberal and promote liberal values (see Brooks and Wohlforth 2008 and Hurd 2007 for a critique against the first point, and Acharya and Buzan 2010 and Gaskarth 2015 against the second point).

Alternative explanations

The multilateral campaigns of democratic developing powers can be analyzed from different theoretical standpoints; in this subsection I need to acknowledge and address the alternative explanations to my “Republicanism from below” account. I group these explanations into three main camps: Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist. The *Realist explanation* argues that non-great powers are forced or ‘accommodated’ to accept the institutional and normative framework proposed by great powers (Paul 2016). Realists would pay attention to the actions of democratic developing powers when their material capabilities seem to improve exponentially since, following a pessimist assumption, rising capabilities could improve the bargaining capacity of these countries to amend or limit multilateral rules and norms. The most influential and sophisticated explanation for the multilateral actions of democratic developed powers offered by Realists argues that weaker countries mobilize non-military tools to constrain the actions of great powers, especially the hegemon—they engage in soft-balancing (see Pape 2005, Paul 2005, Walt 2009). The soft-balancing explanation misses the nuances and intricacies of bargaining dynamics: it focuses on the actions of and against the United States, posing a simplistic two-camps model between the United States and its allies and the rest; moreover, by overemphasizing structural conditions, these scholars ignore the frictions and factions that emerge during policy bargaining and domestic elements influencing multilateral strategies (Brooks and Wohlforth 2005, Lieber and Alexander 2005). I intend to address this gap by adopting a mechanism-process approach to explanation of contention (Tilly and Tarrow 2015), which allows me to track how agentic and structural elements interact, how coalitions emerge and develop, and the different elements in the multilateral campaigns of democratic developing powers.

The *Liberal account* pays more attention to both domestic conditions and to the bargaining strategies that democratic developing powers use in multilateral negotiations. Liberal intergovernmentalism pays attention to how small states have used multilateral organizations and voting coalitions in multilateral negotiations to rise to prominence and constrain more powerful international actors (Keohane 1969, Krasner 1985); while this view accounts for changes in interests and the interaction between domestic and foreign policies, it has a hard time analyzing (1) bargaining contexts that include more than just two competing groups, (2) strategies that evolve and change over time, and (3) long-term goals instead of immediate aims, a result perhaps of the choice-theoretic terms it uses to explain multilateral campaigns (Freedman 2013). This strand of liberalism also posits that countries accept new principles when their domestic interests change (Moravcsik 1998), it would pay attention to the actions of democratic developing powers during moments of domestic changes, especially during democratic transitions, since the governments in turn could use the international scenario as a means to lock in domestic reforms; the problem with this view is that it focuses on short periods of time, assuming that changes in regime catalyze changes in interests and thus in bargaining preferences and strategies—an assumption that I problematize instead of taking it as a given by studying the historical development of multilateral campaigns. Liberal internationalists pay more attention to changes over time in the bargaining sustaining the liberal international order, an effect of their use of historical institutionalist approaches (Ikenberry 2011, Slaughter 2004); however, they tend to downplay the importance of non-great powers in the creation and maintenance of the liberal international order, implying that democratic developing powers are unimportant unless they have rising capabilities, or semi-passive audiences with no voice in the maintenance of the order or in decision making processes, whose loyalty and acquiescence is easily bought. To address the issues I have identified in the Liberal explanation, I intend to use a Pragmatist understanding of preference formation: Pragmatism accounts for actors having multidimensional preferences, which helps to explain coalitions among seemingly contradictory allies depending on issue areas, and pays attention to historical contingencies by analyzing the concatenation of short and long-term actions (Berk and Galvan 2013, Dewey 1922, Fligstein and McAdam 2011, and James 1979).

The *Constructivist explanation* of the multilateral campaigns of democratic developing powers would focus on how rule-makers socialize or stigmatize the rest of the international

society into certain rules and norms and how these norms are constituted. For Classical Constructivists, stratification through international norms is neither static nor a process of claims and counterclaims, but a performance of rule application (Kratochwil 1989); I complement this view of norm application with the study of the performances of rule construction, especially by combining a focus on ideational elements with attention to material components during the negotiation of multilateral agreements. Contemporary Constructivists focus on how powerful international actors and international organizations teach conventional or acceptable ways of behaving to other units in the international society (see, for example, Checkel 2005, and Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990 for a Liberal account of socialization), but sometimes they center a one-way direction of socialization, without acknowledging the bidirectional nature of this dynamic, an aspect that Constructivists looking at non-European contexts have grasped (e.g. Acharya 2004). Practice Theorists have a more micro and meso-level account of the dynamics of socialization and stigmatization in multilateral organizations, and they pay close attention to the multitude of interactions between the performances of powerful and less powerful international actors (Carstensen 2011, Pouliot 2016, Zarakol 2014); these authors, however, tend to see practices and performances as either static or ephemeral, emphasizing a sort of *prêt-à-porter* nature and thus losing sight of the modular characteristics of practices that authors in Comparative Politics emphasize (Tilly and Tarrow 2015), meaning that actors improvise base on existing ‘modules’ of practices that they assemble depending on the context—a point that some authors in IR have tried to address (e.g. Jackson and Nexon 1999, Nexon 2009, Schmidt 2014). Finally, Critical Theorists would warn us about the interplay between power asymmetries and the legitimacy of multilateral rules and norms (Pouliot 2016, Linklater 2007); they would pay special attention to non-great powers to analyze if they engage in a process of legitimizing multilateral principles in order to justify their own intrusive or oppressive actions against less powerful countries, especially in their geographical regions.

CASE SELECTION

My dissertation project aims to build a theory on the multilateral campaigns of democratic developing powers by systematically analyzing their actions, rhetoric, and strategies to influence the negotiations for the creation of multilateral agreements to face global problems. To achieve this end, I plan to use to three strategies of comparative analysis:

(1) controlled comparisons to analyze the negotiations of the multilateral agreements I focus on, (2) paired comparisons to study the campaigns of three democratic developing powers—Brazil, India, and Mexico—, and (3) within case comparisons to trace the continuities and changes in the multilateral campaigns of each country across time and issue area.

Cases: multilateral agreements

My purpose is to grasp variations and continuities in multilateral campaigns and agreements across time and issue areas, not individual actions, discourses, or strategies in a single case. Thus, I use small-N controlled comparisons (Slater and Ziblatt 2013, 7) in order to dissect and understand the processes and mechanisms leading to specific multilateral agreements. Small-N controlled comparisons are primarily inductive in nature; they “require intense theoretical engagement [...] because theory serves an essential methodological purpose—namely, guiding case selection” (Slater and Ziblatt 2013, 13). Thus, I compare the actions, strategies, and rhetoric of democratic developing powers during the negotiations of four multilateral agreements to solve global problems—the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document on the Responsibility to Protect, and the 2016 Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. I study four negotiations in United Nations fora where democratic developing powers advocated for and were able to include points in the final agreement. Despite variation and differences in issue areas, historical contexts, and international distributions of power, there is a similar outcome across the four negotiations: the final agreement reflected at least one of the three general goals of democratic developing powers. As part of my research, I study the specific expressions of the goals that democratic developing powers have promoted during the negotiation of these four agreements, and I trace the compromises that democratic developing powers bargained or agreed to during the negotiations.

Table 1					
Type of disaster to avoid	Global problem solving mechanism	Distribution of power	Responsibility goal	Autonomy goal	Anti-hierarchy goal
Crash (international system breakdown or dysfunction)	1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons	Bipolar system	Avoid nuclear Armageddon	Protect capacity to develop domestic nuclear energy policies	Avoid the institutionalization of a nuclear club
Crush (the possibility of subjugation and totalitarian control)	1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court	American hegemony before 2001	Investigate and prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression	Protect traditional understandings of sovereignty and non-intervention	Investigate and prosecute crimes committed by actors from great powers
Crush	2005 World Summit Outcome Document on the Responsibility to Protect	American hegemony after 2001	Avoid crimes against humanity through the clear codification of procedures, rules, and standards	Protect traditional understandings of sovereignty and non-intervention	Avoid the legitimation and justification of intervention by great powers
Crash	2016 Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Multipolar system with American primacy	Confront climate change by emphasizing both adaptation and mitigation	Protect capacity to develop domestic development and economic growth policies	Avoid stratification as side effect of the agreement

Cases: democratic developing powers

I use paired comparisons to dissect the multilateral campaigns that the diplomats from Brazil, India, and Mexico have used during the negotiations for the creation of multilateral agreements. Paired comparisons facilitate an intimate and causal-process inquiry (Brady and Collier 2004, 277, Gisselquist 2014); this strategy of comparative analysis allows me to specify the scope conditions of my explanations, to identify the impact of specific conditions

or mechanisms on the outcomes of interest, to detect how these conditions and mechanisms interact with each other, and to reduce the possibility of over determining the importance of the conditions and mechanisms I distinguish (Tarrow 2010, 244). Brazil will be the flagship case in my dissertation project; the South American country “has aspired to great power status for a century,” it has experienced different periods of ascendance and decline, it has “articulated the need to reform [the] order to more adequately reflect the interests of developing nations,” and it has also contested “the legitimacy of great power exceptions to the norms and rules” (Mares 2016, 247-248, and Mares and Trinkunas 2016). In this sense, Brazil is one of the clearest examples of a democratic developing power actively participating in global governance debates.

I compare Brazil with two democratic developing powers, India and Mexico, especially because the three countries share a history of promotion of nonintervention and self-determination in multilateral fora. Moreover, Brazil, India, and Mexico share similar elements that facilitate the comparison: they are countries that had non-democratic or not fully democratic regimes and are currently in a transition to democracy, they are developing in economic terms and their domestic policies have varied from protectionism to liberalism, they have actively participated in multilateral debates and in the creation of agreements to confront global problems, they are the countries with more resources in their respective regions —Brazil in South America, India in Southeast Asia, and Mexico in Central America—, and they have experienced different episodes of material rise and decline. Brazil and India share similar rhetoric and quests in global governance debates, aspirations and foreign policy identities, and coalitions in multilateral campaigns —three elements in which Brazil and Mexico differ. Thus, the first paired comparison is between Brazil and India (two cases of democratic developing powers with similar domestic and multilateral policies conditions), and the second comparison is between Brazil and Mexico (two cases of democratic developing powers with similar domestic conditions but different multilateral policies conditions).

Figure 2

Brazil

Domestic conditions:

1. Political regime: in transition to democracy
2. Economic regime: developing country, policies have moved from protectionism to liberalism
3. Capabilities: moments of ascendance and decline

Multilateral policies conditions:

4. Participation in global governance: reformist rhetoric and asks to be included in policymaking circles
5. Foreign policy: aspiration for great power status — elites identify the country as a rising power
6. Coalitions: non-aligned movement, BRICS



India

Domestic conditions:

1. Political regime: in transition to democracy
2. Economic regime: developing country, policies have moved from protectionism to liberalism
3. Capabilities: moments of ascendance and decline

Multilateral policies conditions:

4. Participation in global governance: reformist rhetoric and asks to be included in policymaking circles
5. Foreign policy: aspiration for great power status — elites identify the country as a rising power
6. Coalitions: non-aligned movement, BRICS



Mexico

Domestic conditions:

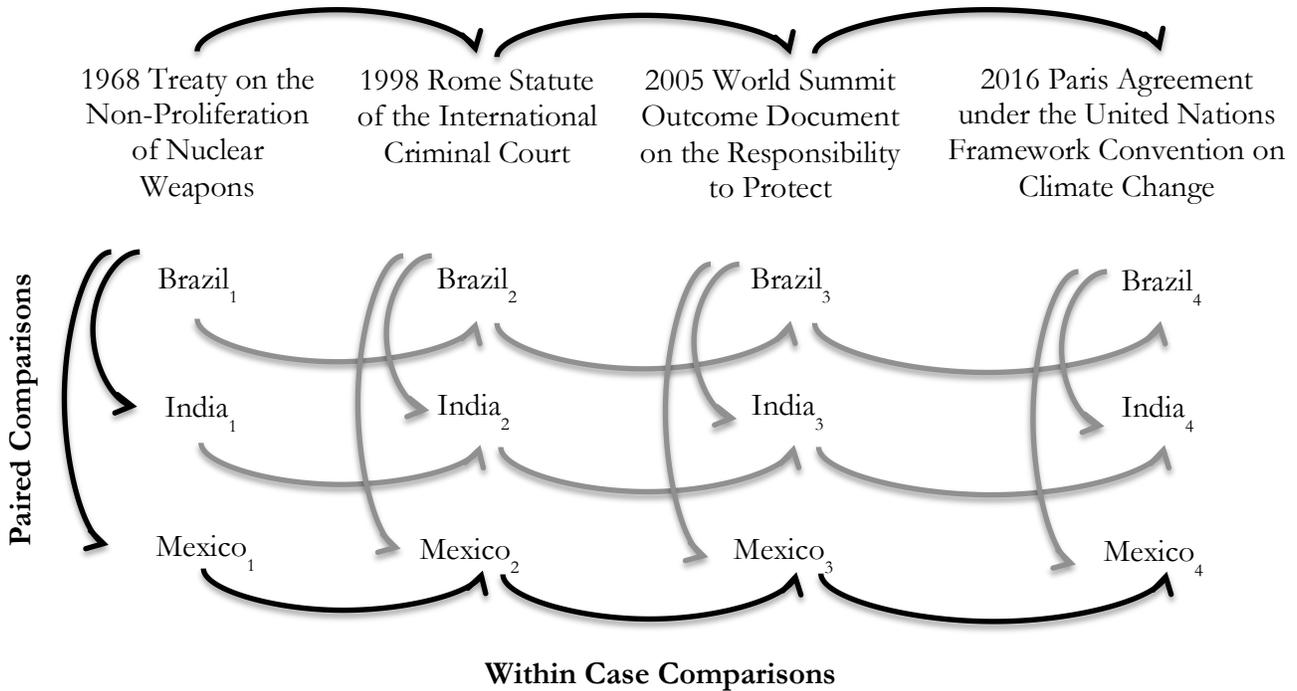
1. Political regime: in transition to democracy
2. Economic regime: developing country, policies have moved from protectionism to liberalism
3. Capabilities: moments of ascendance and decline

Multilateral policies conditions:

4. Participation in global governance: reformist rhetoric, but does not ask to be included in policymaking circles
5. Foreign policy: no or little aspiration for great power status — elites identify the country as a middle power
6. Coalitions: OCDE, MIKTA

Finally, in order to trace continuities and changes in the multilateral campaigns of each country across time and issue area, I use within case comparisons. I compare the multilateral campaigns that the diplomatic elites of each country used during the four different negotiations.

Figure 3 **Controlled Comparisons**



METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

A historical institutionalist approach and a sociological-relationalist understanding inform the techniques I use to gather and process data on the multilateral campaigns of democratic developing powers. My emphasis is in understanding the campaigns themselves and how Brazil, India, and Mexico managed to include clauses reflecting their interests in the agreements —i.e. I focus on international diplomacy dynamics. In other words, by paying attention to the *processes* and *mechanisms* behind multilateral campaigns, I investigate how democratic developing powers have influenced the negotiations for the creation of multilateral agreements to confront nuclear proliferation, crimes against humanity, humanitarian intervention, and environmental degradation. The methods I use, therefore, are intended to map out historical sequences so that I can identify said processes and mechanisms.

Data collection

I will collect data using different methods, depending on the specific agreement to be analyzed. In the case of the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, data is declassified and thus I can visit the archives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the three countries and the archives of the United Nations —during the summer of 2016 I visited the Mexican Ministry’s archives, and during the summer of this year I will visit the archives of the Brazilian Ministry and the archives of the Fundação Getulio Vargas, which has the most important collection of personal archives of the Brazilian diplomats that participated in the NPT negotiations. I will file official information requests in the three countries to gather declassified information on the most recent negotiations. After mapping out the diplomats of the three countries that participated in the missions negotiating the four agreements I analyze in the United Nations fora (especially the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Conferences of the Parties, and the International Criminal Court), I plan to collect data from interviews with these representatives. Finally, I plan to retrieve the declarations and statements by diplomats and government officials from the three countries; I can potentially find this information either in the historical archives or in the webpages of the Ministries and diplomatic missions of the three countries.

Data processing

In order to process data for *Claim₁*—diplomats from democratic developing powers have influenced the creation of multilateral agreements to confront global problems by appealing to traditional liberal internationalist values, such as equality, self-determination, and constraints on power—, I will use discourse analysis techniques to identify and classify the values and principles that diplomats used to justify their actions and protect their interests. I will use computer-assisted content analysis since I will examine the discourses of diplomats, which are arguably stable, conventionalized, and instrumental among different diplomatic missions; moreover, since the discourses were delivered in the same organization, the United Nations, comparability will potentially not be a problem —I need to evaluate, however, whether diplomats used the same language in their communications with their Ministries and in the multilateral debates. I will categorize the norms, values, and principles that diplomats invoked in order to dissect the meaning that diplomats attached to them and the frequency with which diplomats used each of them.

In order to process data for *Claim₂*—diplomats from democratic developing powers have used similar justifications, strategies, and coalitions during the negotiations of multilateral agreements in different issue areas and international distributions of powers—, I plan to do a comparative-historical analysis of the Brazilian, Indian, and Mexican bargaining dynamics and social interactions in multilateral negotiations. Using the comparative sequential method developed by Tulia Falleti and James Mahoney (2015), I will temporally map out the sequences of events informing the design and development of the multilateral campaigns of democratic developing powers. Using inductive process tracing, my aim will be to discern the specific events behind the multilateral campaigns of the three countries, with the goal of assembling them into coherent and connected sequences (Checkel 2015).

In order to process data for *Claim₃*—in order to be influential, diplomats from democratic developing powers have claim to (1) be responsible actors in the negotiations of multilateral agreements to confront global problems, (2) constrain the actions of Western great powers and more powerful international actors, and (3) maintain their autonomy to define domestic policies—, I will combine the results from the content analyses and inductive process tracing I will conduct. My goal will be to understand which category of norms, values, or principles better served diplomats in their quest to protect their interests in the codification of multilateral agreements.

Finally, in order to process data for the *theoretical claim*—by emphasizing the polysemy of core elements of liberal international order, democratic developing powers participate in efforts to confront global problems at the same time that they promote constraints on the leeway of more powerful international actors, promoting a sort of *Republicanism from below*—, I will use the mechanism-process approach to understand episodes of contentious politics that Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow (2015) propose, combined with elements of “relational institutionalism,” an institutionalist approach developed by Daniel Nexon (2009). My goal is to identify (1) the sets of diplomats from Brazil, India, and Mexico that carried out collective action using network analysis, (2) the claims they made and how they bore on other countries’ interests, relying on the results of content analysis, (3) the standardized ways in which they made collective claims and how these ways clustered into modular repertoires in order to trace said clusters into other agreement negotiation episodes, using process tracing, (4) the characteristics of the sites of governance, i.e. the United Nations fora, and how they shaped contention, (5) and the sequences of collective claims at

those sites. Once I identify these aspects, I will break the streams of contention into coherent and bounded sequences of continuous interactions with the aim of facilitating the comparison of the different cases I study. The strategies of comparative analysis I use will help me to identify similar processes across issue areas and time in order to establish the conditions, mechanisms, and multilateral campaigns that democratic developing powers have used to influence the creation of multilateral agreements to confront global problems.

Data management plan

I will implement a long-term sharing and preservation plan to store and guarantee public accessibility to the data gathered for this project. I will consult the Data Management Services office at the Johns Hopkins University to tailor a plan. I will maintain three copies of the research data, with frequent backups. I will have digital versions of archives, interview recordings and transcripts, and government and institutional data, which will be deposited into the Small Data Collections Archiving Service at Hopkins. Additionally, I will use a specific dropbox account and hard drive to keep copies while working on the project. I will respect law regulations about data storage, access, and sharing, e.g. copyrights and timelines for sharing secondary and primary sources. I will avoid disclosure risks, especially with elite interviews. While I acknowledge restrictions on protecting identities of research subjects, I will build a de-identified dataset that could be shared. I will keep subject ID codes and master keys separate from data (one copy on a firewalled encrypted server, and a hardcopy printout in a locked file cabinet). I will share non-sensible data, respecting law restrictions and Institutional Review Board guidelines post-publication. I will ask the interviewees for their consent to share the transcripts of their interviews post-publication. The archiving services at Hopkins offer easy discovery of and access to the data in the publicly available JHU Data Archive for 5 years; the timeframe for archiving begins with the final data deposit and upload into the system.

EXPECTED CONTRIBUTIONS AND *TENTATIVE* DISSERTATION TABLE OF CONTENTS

The principal aim of my dissertation project is to reinterpret the actions and influence of democratic developing powers in the development of liberal international order. I will craft conceptual tools to study the multilateral campaigns of democratic and developing countries, generally in the global south and with rising material capabilities, and, “like mariners at sea or

shepherds in the wilderness, to help tell us where we are and how we might travel safely to where we want to be” (Deudney 2007, 206). With this kaleidoscopic toolkit constructed to analyze the rhetoric, actions, and practices of democratic developing powers, I intend to offer an alternative to studies that augur disruptive tendencies by focusing almost exclusively on the measurement and categorization of middle and rising powers’ capabilities or on the assessment of their potential behavior based on these rankings.

I divide the expected contributions of my dissertation project in two main categories, empirical and conceptual contributions. Empirically, my dissertation project will potentially help to (1) categorize the normative and ideational justifications that diplomats from democratic developing powers have used to influence the negotiation of multilateral agreements to confront global problems, to include points and measures in agreements, and to protect their interests in negotiations, (2) classify the multilateral campaigns —i.e. coalitions, rhetoric, and strategies— that diplomats from these countries have used during episodes of contentious multilateral politics, (3) identify the justifications —i.e. pro-autonomy, pro-responsibility, or anti-hierarchy— that have improved the results and efficiency of their multilateral campaigns. Conceptually, my research will hypothetically serve to (4) understand the effects of regime type, international distributions of power, and self-identification on both the type and efficiency of the multilateral campaigns of democratic developing powers, (5) analyze the interaction between material elements (distribution of power and violence interdependence) and social factors (networks and relations, rhetorical justifications and identities, and the polysemy of the elements of liberal international order), (6) recognize the processes and mechanisms behind these countries’ multilateral campaigns (e.g. path dependence, learning, feedback loops), and, more importantly, (7) investigate the modular campaigns that actors that have experienced stratifications use to simultaneously question great power management and core-periphery arrangements (Buzan and Lawson 2015), amend social relationships of differentiated authority, constrain more powerful international actors, and avoid international instability — in other words, to grasp *Republicanism from below*.

CONSERVATIVE REFORMERS
Liberal International Order, Global Common Problems,
and Democratic Developing Powers

Chapter 1: Introduction

- 1.A Introduction and the argument
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- 1.C Defining terms
- 1.D Literature
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- 1.G Plan or rest of the dissertation

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Chapter 7: Restraining Extremes: Environmental Troubles and Democratic Developing Powers Disputes

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- 7.B From the spotlight to underperformance in climate change negotiations
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- 7.F Defining environmental responsibilities: leaders and spoilers in Paris

Chapter 8: Conclusion: Liberals, Orders, and Agencies

- 8.A On polysemy and artificial simplicity
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- 8.C Supporters, amenders, and spoilers
- 8.D Facing shared vulnerabilities
- 8.E Defining global responsibilities
- 8.F On scope and implementation
- 8.G Toward a new research agenda

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