

Bargaining in the Security Council: Setting the Global

Agenda. By Susan Hannah Allen and Amy Yuen. Oxford: Oxford

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In the absence of explicit criteria, what determines when and how the United Nations Security Council takes action to maintain or enforce international peace and security? Susan Hannah Allen and Amy Yuen rightly note that much previous research on Security Council decision making has focused on the five permanent members and on adopted resolutions and vetoes. In *Bargaining in the UN Security Council*, they shift focus to the processes that precede meetings and votes, presenting both quantitative analyses and case studies of agenda setting, bargaining, compromise, and decision making.

The model underlying most analyses is a unidimensional policy space, along which Council members' preferences on various issues can be placed next to the status quo policy and any alternative policy option (p. 43). This is based largely on Erik Voeten's work ("Outside Options and the Logic of Security Council Action," *American Political Science Review* 95 [4], 2001) and is further developed by Allen and Yuen in this book. It analyzes three primary factors: (1) the preferences of permanent members, (2) the preferences of the Council presidents for which new monthly agenda-item data are introduced, and (3) public accountability costs related to various actions. The analyses result in several useful conclusions.

One is that when Council presidents decide which issues to include on the agenda, elected members prioritize countries with which they have greater political affinity, regardless of geographic distance. Conversely, when permanent members are presidents, political affinity has little impact on agenda setting, but geography matters. They prioritize countries outside their own region, "suggesting that they want to handle regional issues on their own but want to influence the way distant threats are handled" (p. 91).

Further, whereas previous research has largely attributed increased cooperation in the Council after the Cold War to decreasing tensions among the permanent members, Allen and Yuen suggest an alternative explanation: this increasing cooperation is a way to handle the dominant position of the United States. They conclude, "The other permanent members have demonstrated a willingness to concede some ground to the US, but in doing so, they are reining in American influence" (p. 114).

Whether to meet at all and, if so, whether in a public meeting or a private consultation is a strategic decision made by the Council president. Allen and Yuen argue that this decision depends not only on the president's own preferences but also on accountability costs and the

credibility of unilateral action by some member outside the Council. Such factors are rarely considered in previous research on Security Council decision making. Allen and Yuen, in their case study of Kosovo, find that "public costs affect bargaining inside the Council such that Russia privately approves of NATO bombing without Council approval and then leverages the bombing into a grandstanding opportunity to reinforce its public position on Kosovo" (p. 148). Such findings are interesting and should stimulate future research.

Unfortunately, despite these contributions, this book has several important shortcomings. First, poor proofreading and editing have left the text with numerous errors that tarnish the overall impression of the book. For example, figure 2.1 (p. 24), titled "Security Council actions, 1946–2015," is identical to figure 4.1 (p. 78), titled "Security Council Activities, 1985–2015", yet both figures in fact cover the period 1994–2018.

It is also claimed that procedural decisions are made by simple majority and substantive decisions by a supermajority plus acceptance by all permanent members (p. 17). But a supermajority has always been required for procedural decisions. The "double veto" is described as elected members' killing a resolution by voting as a bloc against it (p. 19). But the double veto occurs instead when a permanent member uses its veto twice: first to prevent a matter from being treated as procedural and then again to prevent a decision on the matter. The authors also argue that "only one Security Council resolution has been passed concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict" (p. 33n25). The source for this claim is Peter Wallensteen's and my chapter (see David Malone, ed., *The UN Security Council: From the Cold War to the 21st Century*, 2004). What we write is that "of all the resolutions that have been adopted on the Arab-Israeli conflict, only one has been adopted under Chapter VII" (p. 21). Allen and Yuen state that "prior to 1990, Chapter VII was only invoked twice" against Korea and the Congo (p. 20), ignoring sanctions against South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, the determination of a breach of the peace in the Falklands Islands, and several other instances.

There are also conflicting descriptions of types of UN resolutions. First, it is argued that General Assembly resolutions are nonbinding, whereas Security Council resolutions are (pp. 13 and 18). This is a well-grounded interpretation of Article 25 of the UN Charter. It is also correctly noted that whereas Chapter VI does not provide for enforcement measures, "Chapter VII resolutions are used to enforce decisions of the Council—either using military or non-military means" (p. 108). However, Allen and Yuen also repeat a common misunderstanding about the difference between the chapters; namely, that Chapter VII resolutions are binding, but that Chapter VI resolutions are nonbinding (p. 20), thus contradicting their earlier claim based on Article 25. In

addition, writing about Chapter VII resolutions, they claim, “These resolutions are also notable because they are binding on all members of the broader UN community, not just the Security Council” (p. 108; see also p. 78). But no resolutions are binding only on the Security Council, so I was not persuaded of the need to emphasize this in their discussion.

More than once I was surprised at the selection of references. Allen and Yuen refer to many relevant titles from the 1990s and early 2000s, but overlook numerous later publications. For example, in section 5.1, “Powerful States and Multilateral Action,” the authors argue, “The benefits and drawbacks of working multilaterally are well-studied in the literature on international institutions. *More recently*, these ideas have given way to understanding the conditions under which states will work inside or outside of an institution” (pp. 102–3; my emphasis). Yet, only 3 of 21 titles referenced in the five-page section were published in the last decade, and these three were chapters from the same edited volume. The claim that “there exists a virtual blind spot in scholarly attention to the workings of security institutions” (p. 6) is thus not convincing.

Allen and Yuen conclude their preface by stating that, despite being the result of a long process of research, the book represents a beginning. I think this is a good way to approach the book as a reader. It is difficult to ignore several of the problems that I point to in this review, and reading the book is often frustrating because of them; yet, as a beginning to an analytical approach to the Security Council, *Bargaining in the UN Security Council* is promising and leaves one looking forward to the next step. With a better-developed dialogue, more recent research, and more refined measurements of central concepts, Allen and Yuen are likely to make important contributions to our understanding of Security Council decision making.

Renegotiating the Liberal Order: Evidence from the UN Security Council. By Brian Frederking. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2023. 203p. \$95.00 cloth.

Liberalism and Transformation: The Global Politics of Violence and Intervention. By Dillon Stone Tatum. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2021. 218p. \$80.00 cloth, \$34.95 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592723002153

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Brexit, the election of Donald Trump, the growth of populism, democratic backsliding, and a resurgence of authoritarian bravado all have at least one common feature: they all reflect a growing dissatisfaction with the postwar liberal international order (LIO). This so-called LIO is founded on the promotion of democratic values, human rights, free trade, cooperation, and international

organization. Nevertheless, after 75 years of relative stability, this order is currently facing grave challenges, and so the time is right to reflect on its successes and shortcomings. Dillon Stone Tatum provides a rich historical survey of liberalism. Brian Frederking presents empirical evidence of liberal principles guiding the UN Security Council. Both books contribute to our understanding of the origins and future of the liberal order.

Tatum’s *Liberalism and Transformation: The Global Politics of Violence and Intervention* is a sweeping survey of nearly two centuries of liberal international thought. Tatum focuses on one strand of liberal ideology that he calls *emancipatory liberalism*. He emphasizes the paternalistic aspects of emancipatory liberalism as a project requiring “the fortunate and enlightened to ‘save’ those who are in trouble”; this discourse justifies “institutions of war, interventions, and force” in the international system (p. 3). Liberalism “mobilizes nations to arms, and it (re)produces patterns and practices of conflict, violence, and intervention” (p. 137).

Tatum approaches the history of emancipatory liberalism from a discourse perspective. His narrative draws from scholars, intellectuals, activists, policy makers, novelists, and editorial writers. Jane Addams, Isaiah Berlin, Frederic Bastiat, George Orwell, and John Stuart Mill are but a few who contribute to this rich and engaging survey. Tatum marshals these eclectic figures to demonstrate the pervasiveness of emancipatory liberal thought. By focusing on how emancipatory liberal narratives justify violence, he seeks to cast doubt on “triumphal liberals” like Francis Fukuyama and others who have celebrated the peacefulness of the liberal order. Tatum is driven by the normative aspiration that a better understanding of the power of this flawed emancipatory narrative could help pivot liberal aspirations to a more humane and peaceful order. He concludes with a discussion of what he terms “minimalist liberalism,” which emphasizes agonistic and pragmatic politics with a robust pluralism, substituting the paternalistic certainties associated with emancipatory liberalism. This shift, Tatum argues, will reduce the violence, intervention, and war characterizing the current liberal order.

Taking a social constructivist approach to demonstrate how emancipatory liberal ideas forge a social reality and various policy outcomes, Tatum presents a wide variety of case studies. His first case explores how emancipatory liberal narratives shaped British policies in Burma in the mid-nineteenth century. Armed with a liberal civilizing mission, the British sought to wage war against the Burmese who “were holding up progress, trade, and the march of civilization” (p. 58). For the interwar period, Tatum explores the French intervention in Syria and the British interventions in Iraq. For his Cold War case, he presents the Dominican Crisis of 1965 and the American efforts to quell its violence. Finally, for his post-Cold War cases, Tatum addresses how liberal democracies responded