

# BRICS in the Global Order: Global South View

## *Book Review:*

*Locating BRICS in the Global Order:  
Perspectives from the Global South. (2023).  
Ed. by Rajan Kumar, Meeta Keswani Mehra,  
G. Venkat Raman, Meenakshi Sundriyal.  
Routledge India. 258 p.*

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### **Abstract:**

Book Review: Locating BRICS in the Global Order: Perspectives from the Global South. (2023). Ed. by Rajan Kumar, Meeta Keswani Mehra, G. Venkat Raman, Meenakshi Sundriyal. Routledge India. 258 p.

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The book “Locating BRICS in the Global Order: Perspectives from the Global South” is a timely publication which includes contributions from eminent scholars from across the globe. Global South is not a political entity, nor it has any representative organisation. However, the countries of the Global South do share a sense of solidarity vis-a-vis the West. BRICS cannot be taken as a representative organisation of the Global South, and its import lies in including key members of the South. The significance of the BRICS is often overlooked by Western scholars. Western scholars dismiss the value of BRICS due to its heterogeneity and internal rivalries. But these differences have not stymied the growth and evolution of the BRICS.

The book “Locating BRICS in the Global Order” is divided into three parts: the first part focuses on evolution of the BRICS in the existing liberal international order, the second part underlines specific interests of BRICS states, and the third part covers new vistas of cooperation within BRICS.

There are 20 chapters in the book. Internationally renowned authors have critically delineated various themes related to the BRICS and its relevance in the contemporary global world. The book rightly argues that BRICS has emerged as one of the most critical organisations in the contemporary multi-polar world order.

The edited book is highly relevant in the context of fast-changing geo-politics, economic cooperation and global governance. The editors argue that due to the decline of the United States and the rise of China, the institutions of the liberal international order are under stress. The contemporary world is witnessing a multi-polar world order. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa have become vital players in the contemporary global world. The practical and dynamic role of Russia, India, Brazil, and South Africa in BRICS have challenged the hegemony and hierarchy of the United States.

**Locating BRICS in the  
Global Order**  
Perspectives from the Global South



Edited by Rajan Kumar, Meeta Keswani Mehra,  
G. Venkat Raman, and Meenakshi Sundriyal



The book further explains that BRICS countries have strongly advocated and demanded reforms in the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. BRICS represents each continent of the Global South, i.e. Africa, Asia and Latin America. BRICS countries, barring Russia, share the common colonial experience. They have vehemently condemned the hegemony of the USA and western dominance in the global order.

The book argues that BRICS is diverse, but members still have common perspectives and agendas on contemporary global issues. BRICS has been implementing policies very effectively to influence contemporary global politics. It has extensively discussed various issues ranging from reforms in multilateral institutions, disaster management, climate change and public health to terrorism.

Editors contend that western scholars dismiss the significance of BRICS due to the following factors : (i) BRICS countries are diverse and heterogeneous, (ii) there is an asymmetry among BRICS countries (iii) and India and China have border issues.

G. Venkat Raman and Rajan Kumar have explained the overall outline of the book in the chapter 'Introduction'. The authors have presented the historical background and evolution of BRICS in the contemporary world order. They argue that Jim O'Neill coined the word BRICS, but the organisation owes its origin to RIC (Russia, China and India), which predates BRICS. Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov conceived the idea of RIC trilateral summit during his visit to India.

Authors have explained that liberal internationalism and liberal international order have provided the basis for the emergence of BRICS. BRICS has provided an alternative set of rules and systems to the liberal international order. BRICS countries have challenged the hegemony of the U.S. in the Liberal International Order (LIO). BRICS countries are very cautious and maintain their autonomy while accepting the principles of the LIO.

Authors have pointed out that India is not happy with the nature and functioning of the Security Council of the United Nations. India strongly advocates reforms in the Security Council of the United Nations. It believes that active

participation in BRICS will further its foreign policy agenda. Rajan Kumar and Venkat Raman have pointed out that “Status seeking’ and ‘hedging” are two core motives of India and China at BRICS.

The book has critically elucidated that India would like to further its multilateral strategy through BRICS. India’s main objective is to develop a good network with BRICS countries. India has been working with the BRICS countries on various issues, i.e. maritime security, culture, global climate change, institutional reforms, education, terrorism and pandemic control. India strongly believes in democracy, human rights, sovereignty and non – intervention. India is consistently playing an active role in BRICS.

Despite diverse political regimes in BRICS countries, member countries endorse the spirit of BRICS. China is a strong economic power, Russia is a robust military power, and India, Brazil and South Africa are democracies. But they are united in their demands for an equitable world order.

The book explains that China has emerged as a significant player after the 2008 financial crisis. While preserving its ideological core and values, China has eventually emerged as one of the major global economic powers in the U.S. – led Liberal International Order (LIO). Ideological rigidity and flexible pragmatism have strengthened BRICS countries economically. South Africa made a lateral entry into BRICS in 2010. BRICS became more inclusive by adding South Africa as one of its members. It has added equity and inclusivity to the BRICS. Nelson Mandela fought against the anti-apartheid movement, and it added the southern paradigm of BRICS.

BRICS countries are economically influential in several aspects. China has emerged as the world’s largest industrial and manufacturing hub and achieved milestones in research and development. India has been doing exceptionally well concerning the pharmaceutical industry, information and communication technology, services, and science and technology. Brazil and South Africa are endowed with ecological, mineral, water, and other natural resources. Russia has emerged as one of the largest energy suppliers to the world.

The political economy of BRICS countries can be strengthened through effective maritime interactions. The covid-19 pandemic and natural disasters have affected globalisation and the economy worldwide. Economic development can be achieved through cooperation among the BRICS countries. BRICS nations

have firmly dealt with the Covid -19 scenario. They adopted various monetary policies and new programmes to empower the citizens through various welfare programmes. BRICS called for improvement of public health, digitisation along with financial assistance, artificial intelligence, supply networks, and improvement of humanitarian and medical supplies to combat the COVID -19 situation in the global world.

There are some irritants in cooperation among BRICS countries. Military standoffs between Indian and Chinese forces and growing polarisation have led to tensions among BRICS countries. Strategic rivalry between India-China and complex geopolitics have created tensions in the BRICS. Russia seems to have played a mediating role in resolving the crisis between India and China.

But BRICS countries have initiated various programmes to develop diagnostic and preventive measures for the control of diseases, joint epidemiological R&D section with financial aid from the New Development Bank. Further, the BRICS countries have launched many cooperative measures to deal with climate and other natural disasters. They have established Disaster Response Fund and a Disaster Management Centre to deal with natural disasters. A BRICS Network university can play a vital role in strategic management and knowledge sharing.

BRICS countries have brought out dynamic changes in the Global South by strongly envisaging postcolonial/decolonial discourse, which had created ideational value to the BRICS idea.

The idea of BRICS is a novel and innovative step towards institutionalisation in a fragile geo-political environment.

The book provides non-western perspectives to the understanding of BRICS. The book's strength lies in the fact that it includes scholars from each country of the BRICS and seeks to place their chapters in the larger narrative of the Global South. It is a well-structured and empirically grounded book. However, the book needs a substantial discussion on the idea of the Global South.

Finally, the book is highly readable and will benefit academics, scholars, students, journalists, and diplomats in understanding BRICS and the politics of the Global South.

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Международные отношения / рецензия

**БРИКС в глобальном порядке: взгляд с глобального Юга**

**Рецензия на книгу:**

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**Ключевые слова:** БРИКС, глобальный порядок, глобальный Юг, глобальное управление, Бразилия, Россия, Индия, Китай, ЮАР

*Конфликт интересов:* автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликтов интересов

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