and Pickering hang most of their conclusions on the historical narratives and QCA assessments, and as a result we really do not know if African interventions are distinct.

I suspect that African international relations are distinct in many ways from patterns found in other regions. But I wish this had been better substantiated because a consistent conceptual lever supporting their expectations is border fixity. The near-inviolability of interstate borders after 1945 is not exclusive to Africa (President Putin nevertheless notwithstanding). What, then, makes Africa exceptional? I just wish Kisangani and Pickering had made a stronger case. Of course, there is only so much one can accomplish in one volume. Had Kisangani and Pickering not restricted themselves primarily to Africa we would not learn so much about African interventions and, to be sure, we do learn a great deal about that here. This is now *the book* about military interventions in Africa; it has no peers.

The Rise of Responsibility in World Politics. Edited by Hannes Hansen-Magnusson and Antje Vetterlein. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. 280p. $97.92 cloth.

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Since the end of the Cold War there has been increasing academic interest in how the concept of responsibility plays out in international politics, whether in specific policy areas like the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), in particular configurations of responsibility (global responsibility, international responsibility, national responsibility), or in specific understandings of it (historical, moral, political, or special responsibilities, etc.). *The Rise of Responsibility in World Politics*, edited by Hannes Hansen-Magnusson and Antje Vetterlein, is an important addition to this emerging field of research, with a rigorous (if too dense) theoretical framing by the coeditors, followed by a carefully coordinated set of contributions from senior as well as junior scholars. The ambition of the volume appears twofold: (1) to show how ethics, history, law, and politics are inextricably linked through specific practices of responsibility in world politics; and (2) to suggest that responsibility, as a focal point for analysis of international politics, should be a major concept within the discipline of International Relations (IR), similar, therefore, in theoretico-empirical stature to concepts like "sovereignty," "balance of power," and "international order." While the volume meets the first ambition, the second is a tall order, one that depends as much on historical reality as on the quality of the academic assessment of that reality. In regard to this ambition the following comments focus on the achievements of *The Rise of Responsibility* and then considers some shortcomings.

As said, there is increasing work on responsibility in IR, mirroring in the academic world its emergence in the international policy world over the last 30 years. The innovation of this volume is, through both practice theory and critical norms theory, to frame responsibility (chapter 1) as a set of *practices* and to rehearse their evolution across three policy areas: security (chapters 2–4), environment (chapters 5–7), and business (chapters 8–10). The editorial framing of these contributions is dense (chapter 1 should be a book), but the basic theoretical setup is clear. Practices of responsibility, "ways in which responsibility is enacted and instantiated by what actors do [and] say" (p. 4), are composed of subjects (actors of responsibility), objects (the specific issue), and the particular normative context that they shape and that shapes them (R2P in security, Common but Differentiated Responsibilities [CDBR] in global climate politics, and Corporate Social Responsibility [CVSR] in corporate management). Within this setup the editors emphasize *both* the moral agency of the subject of responsibility that forges the normative context of the practice *and* the sites of contestation and struggle that define this practice and the communities around it. All contributions work to this editorial line. As a result, moving beyond disciplinary distinctions between the abstract and the concrete, the normative and the empirical, the volume successfully considers responsibility as "*a policy norm*" (p. 13) and as a "compromise" negotiated within particular communities (pp. 11–13). This argument, together with its rehearsal across the volume, form an important contribution to the literature.

The three parts of the book, devoted to each norm, are divided into three chapters. The first focuses on the rise of the policy norm, highlighting critical conjunctures in its historical and discursive formations; the second focuses on the specific policy community promoting the norm and on the practices in action (promotion *and* contestation); the third then considers the values at play as well as the struggles around the interpretation of each policy norm. The volume is successful at holding to this framework although the final chapters of each part, while excellent in themselves, are not systematically aligned. For example, chapter 5 of part 2 looks at the formation of global environmental responsibility from the end of the nineteenth century to the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, following the transition from civic concern with the environment to state responsibility toward ecosystem threats, a transition that culminated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its policy norm (CBDR). Chapter 6 then focuses on CBDR as the site of contention between developed and developing countries and the policy compromise that structures responsible climate politics. Chapter 7 concludes by looking at this responsibility in more political than moral terms. Rather than focusing, however, on state responsibility toward climate mitigation and adaptation, it uses the

Arendtian concept of "collective responsibility" to show how nonstate actors (the UN secretariat, NGO actors at the annual conference of the parties) have helped generate political change as responsible members of the climate community. The final chapter thus pluralizes the concept of political responsibility beyond state-centric conceptions of it. The two parts on human security and business trace similar movements on R2P and CSR, with their final chapters respectively reinforcing the moral duty of alliances to assume responsibility for mass atrocities and the political necessity of governance reform to make MNCs truly commit to social purposes. There are therefore strong cross-sector similarities of analysis in the volume, but also real differences of emphasis on the practices of responsibility needed *to effect change.* The conclusion by the coeditors assumes these differences while making a further theoretical move that responsibility constitutes a form of judgment (considered in terms of "virtue ethics," p. 235) that negotiates the dilemmas of these policy areas. The volume does therefore an excellent job in tying ethics, history, law, and politics together in its practice-based and critical norms–based approach to the concept of responsibility; but it does not rehearse systematically how these areas are tied together within the three policy domains.

This is an important shortcoming of the volume. Part 1 does not make clear why R2P has failed as a policy norm since the intervention in Libya (at least); and while, as said, part 2 supports the pluralization of political responsibility and part 3 focuses on the political need for unified corporate governance to effect change, it does not account for the difference between these two accounts of political responsibility. Two important questions arise as a result from these unrehearsed cross-sector differences: What is the relationship between the political and the ethical in ethically based practices? What is required to make responsibility *qua* a policy norm successful in world politics?

It is now commonplace in IR to suggest that the practice of R2P was underpinned by a particular world order (American hegemony; political and economic liberalism); that, with ongoing transitions in this order, interventions in Syria, Yemen, and Myanmar became less and less probable. These failures in R2P point to the fact that the moral agency of actors in world politics is necessarily underpinned by particular political configurations, by particular balances of power among states. To emphasize this relation between the ethical and the political in world politics is not to belittle the importance of pluralizing—beyond state-centrism—moral and political agency in responsibility practices (as argued effectively by the parts on R2P and CBDR). It is to suggest, however, that responsibility will remain a second order concept in IR *until* the historical reality of the state system changes. If the introduction and conclusion to the volume were to assume this dilemma in a cross-sector analysis of the three policy

norms, it could begin to explore its second ambition more: namely, to show how the concept of responsibility is as central to IR as those of sovereignty and the balance of power. Failing to do this, however, *The Rise of Responsibility in World Politics* remains an excellent volume on the political promotion and contention of ethical practices of responsibility in world politics; even if it falls short of offering the discipline an initial account of a first-order concept.

Contesting Revisionism: China, the United States, and the Transformation of International Order. By Steve Chan, Huiyun Feng, Kai He, and Weixing Hu. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. 224p. $83.53 cloth, $26.09 paper.

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In today's academic and policy debates, so-called rising powers are largely considered with suspicion. We tend to assume that their rise will bring instability, if not outright conflict in the form of war to the international order as we know it. Realist international relations (IR) theories, in particular power transition theory (PTT), tell us that "the danger of a systemic war increases when a revisionist rising power overtakes or reaches parity with the incumbent hegemon. It claims that such a war is caused by this upstart's revisionist agenda to challenge the hegemon's global dominance and to overturn the international order that this hegemon allegedly supports and defends" (p. 9). The most prominently discussed question in this context is what these assumptions mean for the United States, a rising China, and the so-called liberal international order. Are the United States and China bound to fight a war, and thus unable to avoid what is commonly dubbed "Thucydides's trap"?

Steve Chan, Huiyun Feng, Kai He, and Weixing Hu—the authors of *Contesting Revisionism*—caution us to think twice before relying on the conventional IR wisdoms mentioned previously for answering that question. Chan et al. show that there are several problems with our theories and conceptualizations, both when it comes to the notions of revisionism and order (chaps. 1 and 3), as well as their application (chapt. 2). The authors do not stop there, but also exemplify their own understanding and approach by presenting the results of empirical case studies focusing on the United States and China (chapt. 4). They conclude (chapt. 5) with policy recommendations that they believe would enhance international stability and diminish tension in Sino-American relations.

Based on their assessment of existing scholarship, which covers older and established as well as more recent work, Chan et al. identify the main problems as how we think about the origins of revisionism, how we define the term, and whom we ascribe it to, for what