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The Future of Liberal Internationalism: Global Governance in a Post–American Hegemonic Era

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INTRODUCTION

On May 4 and 5, 2012, international relations experts gathered at Princeton University for a workshop on “The Future of Liberal Internationalism: Global Governance in a Post–American Hegemonic Era.” The workshop followed on similar meetings in January 2010 and 2011, which addressed “Rivalry and Partnership: The Struggle for a New Global Governance Leadership” and “New Foundations for Global Governance,” respectively. The workshop was cosponsored by Princeton’s Project on the Future of Multilateralism, the Council on Foreign Relations’ International Institutions and Global Governance program, The Stanley Foundation, and the Global Summitry Project at the University of Toronto’s Munk School of Global Affairs.

This year’s workshop assessed the future of the liberal international order at a moment of transition. Over the course of five panels, participants raised many important questions: Those which were central to the event included:

- What is the nature of the liberal international order?
- Can liberal internationalism persist without United States continued leadership?
- What are the features of the geopolitical transition currently underway, and how will it affect the liberal order?
- Will rising powers take up the mantle of liberal internationalism absent U.S. leadership?
- How will civilizations and transnational networks help shape the future of liberal internationalism?
- How does global governance interact with domestic liberties?

These and other questions guided the workshop discussion and set the agenda for future policy and scholarship addressing the global political order in a post–American hegemonic era.

THE NATURE OF THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL ORDER

At its core, openness and rules define the liberal international order. Participants debated, however, the extent to which these “procedural” features of liberal internationalism necessarily lend themselves to its “substantive” attributes—such as democracy, free markets, and human rights.

Most participants agreed that liberal internationalism consisted of, at least, an open system of rules designed to protect interests and secure equities. The question was could liberal internationalism expand enough to accommodate plural rules and norms—including those differing significantly from the current order. The liberal order today lacks much substance but carries nearly universal appeal. One speaker expressed a view shared by several others: the liberal order is “easy to join and hard to overturn” as a “platform for states that can accommodate a variety of social purposes that are not necessarily Western values but wider sets of values that are protected, advanced, legitimated” under its aegis. Another participant characterized the capacity of the liberal tradition as “enormous”—inclusive while also mandating debate over its “opaque and hollow” center. Others at the workshop were less comfortable divorcing the process of liberal internationalism from its current characteristics—a U.S.-led order. According to one participant, the liberal order is what makes the world safe for democracy by accommodating the improvement of local and national self-government and the purposes that emerge from that process, leading incrementally yet inexorably toward a larger conception of democracy. Another speaker expressed skepticism that the developing world could see liberal internationalism as divorced from its character under U.S. hegemony: “the majority, including intellectual elites outside the West, think fundamentally this order is self serving for an exclusive club.”

Many participants saw the historical context and contingency of liberal internationalism’s emergence and evolution as critical to understanding its nature. While some characterized it as the culmination of a long historical arc, other participants emphasized the political and economic interests undergirding the order. One speaker in the former camp described the liberal order as part of two “longer-term, order-building, world-historical projects”: the Westphalian project of state building, which has provided rules, institutions, and norms that have advanced and deepened over centuries; and the liberal order-building project, which entailed the rise of democracies from peripheral status to their current dominance. While there are contradictions at the heart of these overlapping projects—tensions for instance between sovereignty and post-sovereignty norms—the political order has resolved its internal inconsistencies successfully.

Other speakers presented a more circumspect view. Several participants pointed to a strong connection between liberal internationalism and Western imperialism. These observations prompted another participant to question why American liberal internationalists elect to associate their project with British imperialist liberalism. American liberal internationalism, which grew out of the United States’ interwar social compromise and spread to Europe through the Marshall plan, furthered U.S. geopolitical interests while also allowing rivals to grow and prosper.

Despite these clarifications of the nature of the liberal international order, a question remained without definitive resolution: “How do you know when you are no longer in a liberal internationalist world?”

GEOPOLITICAL TRANSITION AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Although the workshop's topic assumed the coming of a post-American hegemonic era, participants held differing views of the ongoing transition and, by extension, its implications for liberal internationalism. Whereas some described a crisis in the liberal international order, others only saw the international-systemic dynamism that comprises geopolitical business as usual. Differing judgments about the future of U.S. power and influence were ever present throughout the workshop discussions.

In the eyes of many participants, the U.S.-led international order is in the midst of a systemic power transition. Non-Western developing states are rising and confronting the liberal American order. New issues, complexities, and interdependencies put additional pressure on the fraying order, which must find ways to accommodate these interdependencies alongside pointed geopolitical rivalry. According to one interlocutor, the three fundamental pillars of the current order—the United States, Europe, and pockets of Asia—are eroding as political support for liberal internationalism diminishes in the United States, Europe turns inward to deal with its financial woes, and Japan weakens. Another participant characterized the present as an “axial age” in which the intensity of movement in demographics, wealth, and communications technology is accelerating, with global governance failing to keep up. Yet others questioned the notion that the present moment of transformation constitutes a crisis. One participant queried, “We are always in crisis, fearing U.S. power and order will collapse; why is this the make-or-break point?”

Most participants' appraisals of the future of the liberal international order intertwined with their views on the future of American power. While some speakers were decidedly pessimistic, others expressed confidence in the continuation of U.S. dominance. The “transnational structure that evolved around the English-speaking West” or the “culturally attractive side of the United States” may be declining, some argued, but U.S. military power is not. Furthermore, one participant contended, the United States occupies a position that allows it to strategically pivot between the four dimensions of world politics—global, regional, bilateral, and transnational—making it uniquely suited to solve important collective action problems. It would be hard for a rising power to rival the United States in terms of this central positioning and its benefits. Drawing a comparison with China, the United States' presumptive challenger, one participant noted that the United States, with allies around the world, looks really powerful when compared with the Chinese “rogue's gallery” of allies. And as the United States grows stronger in areas like information technology and intellectual property, the same technological progress is making it “harder and harder to be an authoritarian state.”

At the outset of the workshop, speakers laid out two broad arguments about the implications of these transitions for liberal internationalism. The first position was essentially optimistic about the future of liberal internationalism; it sees a struggle *within* the liberal order for authority, rather than contestation of over the order itself. Whereas the hegemonic order of liberal internationalism is in crisis, the wider logic of open, rule-based order is not; indeed, there is a growing array of constituencies for openness and rules. These principles are not Western, but rather universal, even as their early champions were in the West. As rising states gain equities and interests in need of protection, they look to the liberal order for this purpose and seek a greater stake within it.

Nevertheless, forces endemic to liberal internationalism have produced the transformation with which we are now grappling. Others presented a stronger version of this claim: not only are the procedural features of liberal internationalism universal, but some of its substantive features are as well. Embedded within the liberal order are “human dignity values,” similar to those articulated by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, which enjoy widespread currency—universal perhaps—and extending outside of the West.

Nevertheless, proponents of this sanguine view of the future of liberal internationalism also emphasized the contradictions endemic to the liberal order: for example, liberty versus equality, democracy versus hierarchy, balance of power versus rule of law, and sovereignty versus interventionism. To overcome the challenges posed by these contradictions, one speaker contended, liberal internationalism requires three factors for its maintenance: powerful states to support the order, legitimacy, and the functional ability to solve problems. With

regard to the first factor, American commitment to the liberal order will be as important as its material capacity to defend it. At present, American elites are not engaging in a partisan argument over liberal internationalism—according to one participant, “no one is arguing for getting rid of collective security or free trade.”

Others expressed substantially greater skepticism about the ability of liberal internationalism to persist in the face of geopolitical transformation. While liberal principles have some intrinsic appeal, their triumph results more from their linkage to “English battleships and American aircraft carriers and the pound and dollar for the past two hundred years” rather than inherent, universal legitimacy. When these principles are no longer attached to a dominant military and economic power, or to a Western collectivity willing and able to provide public goods, they too will lose their dominance. The liberal international order was not designed behind a Rawlsian veil of ignorance and it does not advantage everyone equally; rather, it furthers the interests of the Western powers that constructed and enforced it. Indeed, order bubbles up from below and rising powers will push for rules that reflect their particular cultural, civilizational, and socioeconomic experiences. Instead of the American democratic, secular, and free-market model, rising powers are pursuing distinctive approaches to governance and capitalism, as exemplified by state-run capitalism in China, Russia, and the Persian Gulf; Islamist political parties throughout the Middle East; and leftist populism in states like India and Brazil. As global power shifts away from the United States, the result will be what one speaker called “multiple modernities” and another termed “polymorphic globalism,” where no single order dominates international politics. On the question of U.S. domestic support for liberal internationalism, skeptics attacked the idea of a consensus on this issue. According to one participant, “the liberal internationalism project in the United States is under assault and weakening.” Others expressed the more moderate view that U.S. political support for the liberal order could soon erode given continued failure by elites to articulate the social purpose it furthers.

RISING POWERS AND LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM

Do rising states pose a challenge to liberal internationalism? Cognizant of the geopolitical transition underway, the United States has sought to integrate rising powers as “responsible stakeholders” in the liberal international order. Participants debated the extent to which emerging powers can and will pursue liberal internationalism given greater influence over global outcomes.

One speaker framed the debate over rising powers in terms of assumptions about development. On one hand, some see global development as containing a structural contradiction that makes the unraveling of American economic dominance and dollar supremacy inevitable. On the other hand, others see a more gradualist story wherein a series of cross-cutting opportunities and conjunctures emerge without decisive moments of structural contradiction. In either case, the question is whether material interdependencies will be sufficient to motivate cooperation between emerging and developed powers to maintain the liberal system—particularly if it enters a more acute stage of crisis.

Among those who see liberal internationalism as universally appealing, it follows that rising powers will not challenge the liberal order. Emerging powers owe their rise to the existing order and are thus invested in the status quo. But for elites in developing countries to build constituencies to support the liberal order, it must be divorced from its historical legacy. First, elites in the West cannot brand liberalism as distinctly “Western,” or else it will lose appeal and become politically problematic for progressives in non-Western states. Second, liberal internationalism must achieve distance from its colonial legacy, allowing developing states to subscribe to it without seeming like American “lackeys.” Third, liberal internationalism must be untangled from economic neoliberalism, which many in the developing countries see as a failed experiment. While the United States has failed to articulate a new development model to replace neoliberalism, the emerging powers are apparently not ready to offer their own alternative.

Even if emerging powers have benefited from the liberal order, many workshop participants expressed less confidence in their commitment to liberal internationalism. On trade, sovereignty and responsibility, democracy, and secularism, developing states tend to hold very different views than the United States and its Western partners. Indeed, as one participant noted, “shared enthusiasm for liberal internationalism has not been consolidated—liberal internationalism wouldn’t run itself on the preferences that exist today.” While this

doesn't necessarily imply that rising powers will overturn the liberal international order, they may move into a different normative space, trading global governance for "multiple orbits interacting with each other." Several speakers argued that rising powers express preferences commensurate with their level of development; Indian and Chinese ideas about international order look much like the United States' for its first 150 years.

The domestic variables influencing rising powers' foreign policies emerged repeatedly as a highly contingent yet crucial factor. Several speakers agreed that the way regimes negotiate domestic legitimacy—internally but also in relation to liberal internationalism—will determine the shape and character of nationalism in developing countries. Nationalism, in turn, will exert powerful force on emerging powers' ability and willingness to continue engaging with the liberal international order. As one participant pointed out, U.S. actions contribute to an international environment that will shape the new politics of nationalism in rising states. Another speaker noted that human rights claims may be more powerful than democracy in establishing domestic legitimacy in authoritarian rising states, allowing autocracies to consolidate power without moving in a more democratic direction.

Emerging powers' preferences are not monolithic. As they follow different development trajectories, rising states struggle to act collectively, whether on climate change or within the BRICS Summit. Speakers addressed three BRICS specifically—China, India, and Brazil—and highlighted trends most likely to determine their attitudes toward liberal internationalism.

China

China—the state most often considered a challenger and rival to the United States—received the most attention. Participants agreed that Beijing is not currently equipped to lead the liberal order, nor has it presented an alternative vision of global governance. Although China has benefited hugely from the liberal economic order, its political system still regards the order as an existential threat; so long as this view remains, China's relationship with the Western order will be ambiguous if not hostile. According to one speaker, China is pursuing two parallel strategies with regard to liberal internationalism. First, the Chinese play along with their Western interlocutors by showing a minimum level of cooperation with the international order. Beijing restricts its cooperation to low-cost measures, however, which have minimal impact on China's sovereignty and regime survival. It has been socialized to accept certain traditional liberal norms—as in trade—even as it resists newer norms—like intellectual property rights and internet freedom. The second strategy is experimentation with a parallel order on a less ambitious scale. Through mechanisms like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the proposed "BRICS development bank", and participation in African development, China is testing a distinct approach to global governance and foreign aid. At the same time, a participant noted, the Chinese need for allies among developing countries circumscribes its ability to build an anti-U.S. coalition on certain issues, such as application of the responsibility to protect (R2P) in Libya.

Ultimately, Chinese liberal internationalist leadership will be impossible without changes in the developmental gap between China and the West, changes in the Chinese political system, and development of a domestic elite constituency to advocate for a more activist role for China in contributing to the liberal international order.

India

Most participants concluded that India is likely to be a supporter of the liberal international order, in large part because of the example of its own success. Despite a vigorous debate in India, one speaker expected the liberal internationalists to prevail for three reasons. First, India has a commitment to interdependence and greater integration into the world economy. Second, India straddles "all important global fault lines": it is an enlightenment power per its constitution and it is also (partly) Islamic; China is simultaneously a neighbor and regional competitor; and it is at once a developed and developing country. These dynamics, and others, join to shape a national identity that can tolerate complexity so long as global polarization does not force it to preemptively define itself on one side of any major fault line. "India does not have the luxury of distance from

any issue.” Third, “India is a joiner”—it wants to be included in any club and has recently pushed hard for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. More broadly, India is eager for the United States to see it not as an “ally,” which implies subordination, but as a “strategic partner.”

Brazil

Although Brazil is invested in the liberal international order, it does not entirely share American views about norms, institutions, and interests. According to one speaker, unlike in China, powerful and growing Brazilian domestic constituencies favor liberal internationalism. Brazil recognizes that its fate is tied to the future of global capitalism, and it wants a seat at the table. Furthermore, Brasilia sees the liberal order as the primary locus of its own authority in international relations—allowing it to flex its diplomatic muscle by selectively challenging American policies that it perceives as irresponsible, like lack of financial regulation, military intervention, and failure of nuclear disarmament. Due to its dependence on multilateral institutions for status, Brazil is frightened by a perceived retreat from the Group of Twenty (G-20)—in which it is a member—to the Group of Eight (G-8).

Contrary to common characterizations, Brazil is neither a spoiler nor an irresponsible stakeholder. On issues like Iran and R2P, Brazil’s stance reflected its particular policy preferences, derived from national experience, not anti-American obstructionism for its own sake. Brazil seeks a weakened United States only insofar as a more flexible Washington furthers Brazilian objectives; it has little interest in bearing the cost of collective action or articulating a vision of global order. Indeed, Brazil sees value in remaining on the “fringes” of the current order. Brazil credits industrialization and domestic stabilization efforts, not liberal internationalism, for its economic transformation over the past thirty-five years.

STATES, NETWORKS, AND CIVILIZATIONS: WHO WILL DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF LIBERAL INTERNATIONALISM?

Often the debate over the future of liberal internationalism centers on the actions of states. Several workshop participants took a different view, arguing for networks or civilizations as more appropriate lenses of analysis. Although most participants saw networks as actors in their own right and civilizations as analytical maps, both perspectives nevertheless challenge the statism that tends to dominate discussions of the future of the liberal order.

Networks

Embodying the bottom-up vision of a global order articulated earlier, networks of actors may prove influential in shaping the future of liberal internationalism. The transnational network infrastructure, one speaker argued, is stronger now than ever before, as evidenced by the Arab Spring. While the liberal order bestows greater power to the people, rapidly advancing technology has also thrust unprecedented amounts of influence into the hands of individuals. Consequently, “we need to think about global governance in a networked world” in which the metaphor for inter-state interaction changes from billiard balls to Legos.

Advances in technology have allowed self-organization on a scale previously prohibited by high transaction costs. Information traditionally monopolized by the state is now available to individuals, enabling synchronization of shared awareness and community action. Crisis mapping is a demonstrative example of what networks can and cannot accomplish. Crowd-sourced maps are capable of filling critical information gaps in a crisis, documenting government abuses, and visualizing patterns of violence. At the same time, crisis maps still rely on traditional actors to capitalize on the information they provide, as when Ushahidi worked with the UN to identify emergencies after the Haiti earthquake. There also remain functions that crisis mapping is ill suited to address due to capacity, expertise, and authority deficits, like election monitoring.

Networks can also manifest themselves intergovernmentally through interactions among working level officials. Specialists work together to establish regulatory guidelines and implementation. Increasingly, “hard”

international law through treaties and other formal mechanisms is being complemented by “soft law,” which is not legally binding but nevertheless creates a blueprint that can become institutionalized over time. According to one participant, this process transpires within the context of global summits, as well as the ever-growing number of transgovernmental regulatory networks. Even if efficient, several interlocutors questioned the legitimacy of mid-level government officials and transnational networks of jurists—“epistemic communities of unaccountable and self-legitimizing actors”—superseding the power of sovereign states’ elected officials (a subject addressed in greater detail below).

Despite much attention recently paid to networks, their impacts remain undefined in two key ways. First, the existence of networks does not necessarily imply their influence. Given the many different types of networks in existence, their impact on global governance remains quite uneven. Although social media-driven networks received the most credit for propelling the Arab Spring, one speaker suggested, traditional networks like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt were far more influential. Second, as networks grow, it remains unclear whether they will be liberal or not. One speaker suggested that networks are open and require rules; they often create their own semi-liberal orders through *sui generis* processes. Aside from their procedural character, networks may be a force for liberalism: as people become empowered by technology, they will necessarily seek more empowerment and liberties. Individuals will also have more power to demand accountability from their governments. Other participants pointed out that networks have “Orwellian potential.” If Moore’s Law continues for another thirty years, there is a question of “whether individualism of any sort can survive” as governments acquire unprecedented ability to track citizens and map their virtual ties.

Civilizations

Civilizations, unlike states and individuals in networks, are not actors—rather, they are contexts that manifest in processes, practices, and discourses. Although most participants agreed that civilizations are an important factor shaping identities, norms, and political justifications, views diverged on the analytical purchase provided by using a civilizational lens to understand the future of liberal internationalism.

Advocates of civilizational analysis offered it as an alternative framework to the Westphalian sovereigntist account described above. According to one speaker, the global context for defining actors’ identities, interests, and norms is not the Westphalian system, which emphasizes compulsory and institutional power, but rather the structural and productive power of “polymorphic globalism,” a context that creates difference and sameness in domestic, global, and transnational environments. Within each civilization, political orders emerge and seek legitimation with reference to human rights and wellbeing; although the West knows these ideals as democracy and rule of law, globally they are more generic. While there are inter- and intra-civilizational disagreements on implementation, the substantive rights are significant because they “provide us with a common language of disagreement for the first time in history.” Civilizational analysis is thus a better frame than globalization for understanding world politics because it maintains social content while still engaging at a general level.

Several participants were skeptical of the promise of civilizational analysis. One speaker outlined three reasons why civilizations do not provide unique analytical leverage in understanding the future of liberal internationalism. First, civilizations are open and interpenetrating, so they are more likely to produce conflict and war internally than to coalesce and pose a challenge to the liberal order. Second, civilizations pose no foreseeable challenges, even in inchoate form, to the liberal order (an argument echoed by several participants). Third, standard conceptual tools of social science are adequate to the task of understanding world politics. Others questioned the connection between cultural identities and political values, suggesting that particularistic identities can coexist with universal political values so long as those values truly do not reflect a single dominant perspective. Another speaker put it more starkly: “civilizational analysis is fundamentally the last resort of the intellectually lazy.” Mutual constitution of civilizations through interactions across history makes civilizations unsatisfactory conceptual categories. Several interlocutors suggested materialist analysis as a better basis for discussion and expressed dissatisfaction with civilizational analysis’ inattention to the geography of power.

The plausibility of a transcivilizational consensus on core values surfaced repeatedly in discussions. Most participants agreed that there are some ideals of human dignity upon which all people can agree. Some traced

these values to the Axial Age, when they emerged nearly concurrently within multiple, disconnected civilizations. According to one speaker, “Aristotle and Confucius and others came up with parallel ideas at roughly the same time because they were responding to a common new human living situation created by the agricultural revolution, which created the same fundamental, axiological, normative problem” everywhere. Despite historical convergences, this speaker argued, the civilization that has triumphed and achieved universality is the Enlightenment “sense of transforming the humanist state by dominating nature.” The anti-essentialism of civilizational analysis, however, cannot capture this dynamic. One interlocutor allowed some degree of convergence about the need for dignity and respect for humanity, but averred that the basis for consensus is “different than the package of ideas that the United States peddles consistent with liberal internationalism.” Picking up on this point, another speaker suggested that the United States should actively promote a set of values for which there can be transcivilizational consensus.

Anglophone linguistic dominance may also comprise an important piece of this picture. Several participants emphasized the profound constitutive effect of language on individuals. What effect does English’s status as the common linguistic denominator have on the future of liberal internationalism? One participant suggested that English’s embedded notions of cause and effect, and control of the environment, tend to produce modes of thinking that are sympathetic to the liberal order. Another speaker argued that English provides “a common conceptual language in which to disagree” on global core values. From a purely functionalist perspective, the fact that 25 percent of the global population has English competency implies greater cosmopolitanism and more trade due to decreased transaction costs. Others, however, were less convinced; one participant pointed to reduced English competency resulting from improved translation technology as evidence that “linguistic imperialism is unlikely to be the final frontier for liberalism.”

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND DOMESTIC LIBERTIES

Participants expressed widely varying views of the interaction between global governance and domestic liberties. Discussion converged around two central questions: does global governance encroach on domestic sovereignty and, if so, is such encroachment justified on principled or pragmatic grounds?

Critics on the right and left claim that international organizations degrade democracy by circumventing legitimate domestic governments. Several workshop participants expressed this view, questioning the validity of supranational authority as well as the legitimacy of “soft law” created by technocrats in international institutions or transnational networks. They also pointed to the example of the European Union as evidence of the accountability and efficacy deficits that can result from greater integration. Democratic sovereignty is especially important, one participant argued, because it provides space for different states to pursue their distinct brands of liberal (and non-liberal) governance.

One speaker strongly challenged this view, contending instead that international organizations can and often do maintain and strengthen domestic democracy. The logic of this argument refutes three common fallacies. First, unfettered sovereignty is not a prerequisite for democracy; rather, “the ability to enter into legally binding agreements granting states reciprocal control over each other’s actions is among the most important prerogatives in the modern world.” Second, existing democratic institutions are not ideally democratic; consequently, outside intervention can actually improve democratic function. Third, many attributes define a democracy; even if international organizations minimize direct popular participation in governmental decision-making, they further other normative democratic objectives like suppression of factions, offsetting the power of special interest groups, protecting minorities, and improving deliberation. Insofar as the liberal order emerges from the ground up, and states remain the primary political actors, questions of democratic participation are vitally important to determining the future of the international system. Whereas some issues involve truly global commons and are resolved through processes self-contained within the transnational liberal order, interaction between national polities—which directly reflect their internal characters and the type of cooperative bargains they find attractive—drives liberal internationalism.

According to one speaker, the heuristic for evaluating governance—global or domestic—is its ability to solve problems. On issues of the greatest importance, like nuclear arms control and climate change, global governance

has an advantage over atomized domestic solutions. Global governance represents the only hope for integration to catch up with accelerating challenges associated with interdependence. Nevertheless, fear of commitment creep impedes the effectiveness of global governance by frightening states away from binding assurances; rather than looking for ways to move toward a world constitutional order, liberals should treat existing mechanisms as the ceiling and seek ways to make them work better.

Others diverged sharply on the relative problem-solving capacity of domestic versus global governance. As one participant argued, international organizations have failed to eliminate evil in the world, as evidenced by corruption of the Human Rights Council at the UN and poor progress on addressing nuclear proliferation. Nation-states remain the most important and effective rallying point for addressing global issues that threaten Western values: while “you can exhort people to make sacrifices for their country, it is harder to get people to do things for humanity.” Moreover, another interlocutor argued, substituting transnational participation for domestic participation “is not a very reassuring formulation”—particularly when it includes non-democratic states as participants.

CONCLUSION

Lively and wide-ranging discussions at this year’s workshop ultimately provided more questions and disagreements than answers and consensus. In refining the puzzles and argumentative fault lines, however, participants outlined an important agenda for scholars and policymakers concerned with the ways in which the geopolitical world is transforming and the impact of this transformation on liberal internationalism.