EIA 31.3 Abstracts

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Responsibility is a key theme of recent debates over the ethics of international society. In particular, rising powers such as Brazil, China, and India regularly reject the idea that coercion should be a feature of world politics, and they portray military intervention as irresponsible. But this raises the problem of how a society’s norms can be upheld without coercive measures. Critics have accused them of “free riding” on existing great powers and failing to address the dilemma of how to deal with actors undermining societal values. This article examines writing on responsibility and international society, with particular reference to the English School, to identify why the willingness and capacity to use force—as well as creative thinking in this regard—are seen as important aspects of responsibility internationally. It then explores statements made by Brazil, China, and India in UN Security Council meetings between 2011 and 2016 to identify which actors they see as responsible and how they define responsible action. In doing so, it pinpoints areas of concurrence as well as disagreements in their understandings of the concept of responsibility, and concludes that Brazil and India have a more coherent and practical understanding of the concept than China, which risks incurring the label “great irresponsible.”

**Key words:** rising powers, responsibility, English School, Brazil, China, India, UN Security Council