GLOBALIZATION AND JUSTICE

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ABSTRACT

In a globalised world, essential institutional frameworks that affect our daily interactions transcend national borders. According to John Rawls' institutional approach to social justice, we have a specific need to guarantee that the fundamental parameters of these relationships are just. A global resource dividend and a Tobin tax are two recent concepts that might assist achieve this. Both of these suggestions are market-based. Others have expressed concern that globalisation would result in the homogeneity of formerly different civilizations. Yet, while globalisation accelerates cultural and social change, the trajectory of these changes is uncertain.

SINCE JOHN RAWLS' A THEORY OF JUSTICE was published in 1971, political philosophers have enthusiastically embraced normative inquiry into justice. Nonetheless, until the 1990s, most political philosophers, with a few noteworthy exceptions, limited their research to domestic justice concerns. Rawls develops standards for evaluating the institutions of "the core structure of society," and so does not consider "save in passing the justice of the law of nations and of relations between states" in A Theory of Justice (7-8). ‘In particular, Rawls makes the idealizing assumption that the society for which he is developing justice principles is "more or less self-sufficient". That has just been in the last decade or so. Political philosophers have just recently been increasingly concerned with issues of nationalism and international justice.

For some critics, bringing up the subject of international relations assumes too much, especially the continuous existence of nation-states in their current form. They contend that morality demands us to strive for a unified world polity (see Nielsen 1988). Most cosmopolitans, however, have sought to formulate a theory of justice that is consistent with the presence of a plurality of states since Kant (Kant 1983). For example, Martha Nussbaum recently claimed that cosmopolitanism best serves "the great moral principles of fairness and equality," in which we "give our first loyalty to no simple form of governance, no temporal authority, but to the

moral community made up by the humanity of all human beings" (Nussbaum 1996a, 7). Nonetheless, it is critical to her argument that this ideal does not compel us to "give up our particular attachments and identifications". Moreover, she asserts that "none of the key philosophers in the cosmopolitan tradition disputed that we may and should devote special attention to our own families, religious relationships, and national identity" (Nussbaum 1996b, 135). But how can a cosmopolitan who believes in some type of moral universality still feel that any specific care for oneself, one's family, or one's nation is permissible?

One solution is proposed by liberal conceptions of justice, such as Rawls' (see Mandle 2000). These theories begin with the notion that there are several plausible conceptions of the good life—a variety of religions, civilizations, and worldviews. Individuals who have opposing but realistic conceptions of the good are likely to disagree on which objectives are worthwhile to seek and how they should be achieved. The principles of justice are benchmarks for assessing the institutional processes that will properly settle these issues. Just people will be driven to uphold and obey fair adjudication systems, even if abandoning them would allow them to pursue more specific aims. As a result, liberal theories of justice accept a certain complexity in the structure of our ultimate goal. This is not to say that they dismiss the value of the good. Liberal views of justice, rather than accepting the multiplicity of plausible conceptions of the good, strive to empower individuals to endorse the way of life they find most appealing. To be sure, any understanding of justice will reject some conceptions of the good as unjust. Nonetheless, it is critical to the liberal approach that these ideas should not too restrict notions of the good. The selection of an institutional system frequently has foreseeable moral effects at the macro level, even if precise specifics cannot be predicted. But, no single person is usually capable of bringing about the execution of a comprehensive institutional structure. It could appear, therefore, that a focus on institutional justice would absolve people of responsibility for the anticipated outcomes of choosing one institutional scheme over another. On the contrary, this method demonstrates how people might be collectively accountable for an unfair system even if they do not behave in unpleasant ways inside such organisations. Indeed, most of our decisions and actions take occur against a rather solid institutional backdrop. These obligations apply to us regardless of our institutional affiliations and are not contingent on our having acted to impose these obligations on ourselves, such as by entering into a contract or making a commitment. Consider the deprivation linked with poverty in developing nations as an example. According to the United Nations, "approximately 1.3 billion people [in developing

nations] live on less than $1 per day" in 1998. The consequences of severe poverty are foreseeable.

Others have claimed that, on the other hand, the pursuit of specific goals within such institutions. They presuppose, that is, a distinction between the right and the good, and they seek to account solely for what is just as defined by justice principles. This is not to say that they dismiss the value of the good. Rather than acknowledging the multiplicity of plausible conceptions of the good, liberal theories of justice seek to enable individuals to affirm the way of life that they find most appealing. To be sure, any understanding of justice will reject some conceptions of the good as unjust. Nonetheless, it is critical to the liberal approach that these ideas should not too restrict notions of the good. The selection of an institutional system frequently has foreseeable moral effects at the macro level, even if precise specifics cannot be predicted. But, no single person is usually capable of bringing about the adoption of a whole institutional framework. It could appear, therefore, that a focus on institutional justice would absolve people of responsibility for the anticipated outcomes of choosing one institutional scheme over another. On the contrary, this method demonstrates how people might be collectively accountable for an unfair system even if they do not behave in unpleasant ways inside such organisations.

The land is split up more or less comprehensively among countries in our existing global institutional framework. Each country has more or less exclusive sovereignty over the land and resources inside its borders. Each creates its own laws and chooses what resources will be shared, the type and quantity of taxes, which environmental standards will be enforced, if squatters' rights will be respected, and a plethora of other issues. This entire structure of territorial sovereignty is a social arrangement that depends on our acceptance of each country's authoritative judgements over its area. We might envisage a variety of alternative arrangements, such as one in which all of the world's land and resources are held in common. When someone asserts an exclusive property right, we might quote Rousseau: "You are lost if you forget that the fruits are everyone's and the Earth no one's." Thus, it was a normal undertaking for Enlightenment philosophers to assume that collective control of the earth was the normative baseline, so to speak, and to try to establish how exclusive property claims could possibly be justified on that basis (see Locke 1980, chap. 5; Kant 1996, chap. 2, sec. 1). Property rights are asserted against other people, not things. Among the numerous repercussions of our existing structure is that it inhibits starving individuals (or their

representatives) from obtaining resources that would save their lives. The critical issue is that our existing system of international property rights is one for which we are all collectively responsible. That is, we are not merely allowing millions of people to hunger; rather, our implementation of this specific institutional structure predictably leads to their deaths. If we have a strong obligation not to force people to starve, we also have a strong duty to modify the institutional systems that lead to this consequence.

Of course, this approach is contingent on the availability of an institutional structure that does not produce similar outcomes. Consider two well-known arguments in support of some sort of private property and market processes in opposition to a system that fully removes private property. First, there are compelling reasons to assume that relying on markets is frequently more efficient than viable alternatives. Second, markets enable economic power to be decentralised. Participants in markets need only agree on the transaction processes, allowing them to pursue a variety of purposes without requiring others to share their aims. Instead of making a single, binding governmental choice, markets allow for various decisions based on what individuals are willing and able to pay. Markets relieve people and groups of the responsibility of establishing broad agreement on values and the purposes for which resources should be allocated.

There are several reasons why market relations should not characterise all of our relationships. According to Rawls (1971), "since the market is not adapted to answering claims of need, they should be satisfied by a distinct arrangement." Additionally, it is necessary for most individuals to communicate with certain others on the basis of sincerely held, shared beliefs. But, in an age of globalisation, individuals will increasingly engage with folks who do not share their sense of what is good. Markets promote such interactions while preserving the range of goals that people and groups might pursue. To be clear, the aims of efficiency and economic decentralisation do not exhaust the demands of justice. All things being equal, if one system is more efficient and permits a broader range of objectives to be achieved by decentralising ecological choices, these are compelling reasons in its favour. These arguments in favour of markets are frequently strong, but the benefits they highlight are not automatic or unavoidable. Monopolies must be regulated to keep markets competitive, and property must be widely distributed if individuals are to be able to exert power.

These factors are relevant in both domestic and international settings. Most economists believe

that international markets for goods and services increase efficiency more than different types of protectionism. International commerce forces governments to focus on areas where they have a competitive advantage over others. This leads to increased manufacturing efficiency. Trade is thus a non-zero-sum game that aims to raise aggregate wealth. Notwithstanding the awful poverty mentioned before, there is little question that economic progress, aided by the globalisation movement, has succeeded in alleviating poverty to an unparalleled level in human history. The same United Nations study from 1998 that was previously mentioned has further information.

A youngster born today in a developing country has a 16-year advantage over a child born 35 years ago. Developing countries have made as much progress in human development in the last 30 years as the industrialised world has in more than a century.... Since 1960, their newborn mortality rate has been more than halved.... Enrollment in basic and secondary schools has more than doubled.

Because it increases aggregate wealth, free trade is frequently defended in purely utilitarian terms. Yet, a gain in a society's wealth is not necessarily shared by all of its members. When there is an aggregate rise in wealth as a result of specialisation and modernisation in production, there are generally both winners and losers. To be just, society must take efforts to guarantee that individuals who are disadvantaged in the near term by these changes may participate fully in the new economic conditions. This necessitates a substantial societal investment in training and education, as well as a social safety net. If a society is hesitant to make such a commitment, justice suffers since advantages for some come at the expense of others.

SUGGESTIONS:

Now, I'd want to talk briefly about two suggestions that aim to make the international order more just by stabilising the global economy in the long run and offering a mechanism to alleviate extreme poverty more quickly. The first is referred to by Thomas Pogge (1998b) as a "global resource dividend" (GRD). Rather than providing countries practically unfettered libertarian property rights over their resources or prohibiting communal ownership, Pogge proposes something more like to preferred stock. This would represent our common vested interest in the planet's resources. Numerous variations are conceivable, but the core idea is that each country would continue to decide whether or not to exploit natural resources present on its territory, but if it did, it would be penalised.

Saudi Arabia, for example, would retain complete sovereignty of its crude oil reserves under my idea. They would not be compelled to pump oil or let others to do so. But, if they do so, they will be forced to pay a linear dividend on any crude oil extracted, whether for their own use or for export. A GRD would be a significant source of funding to assist people in greatest need. Pogge (1998b) believes that a 1% GRD would now raise around $300 billion per year. This is nearly $250 per individual in the poorest quintile, which is far more than their present average yearly income.

Such a sum, if carefully targeted and spent wisely, would make a huge difference in their lives even within a few years. (512) Natural resource-extraction countries are unlikely to absorb the whole expense of a GRD. Rather, they would pass on a significant portion of their costs to resource users in the form of increased pricing. Pogge believes that a $2.00 per barrel GRD on crude oil extraction alone (roughly $0.0475 per gallon) would earn $50 billion each year (512). 4 Depending on the elasticity of demand for petroleum, consumption might fall. (This is why producers would still have to cover a portion of the GRD's cost.) We may have independent grounds to support such an outcome since it would "promote conservation and environmental protection for the benefit of our own and future generations" (Pogge 1998b, 513).

The entire economic repercussions of a GRD are impossible to predict. On the one hand, it would increase production costs and hence contribute to inflation. Moreover, rising manufacturing costs might restrict earnings and lead to economic stagnation, if not a recession. These outcomes would be especially harmful to the poor, as unemployment would rise in tandem with inflation. According to Pogge (1998b), "the monies collected through the GRD programme do not, after all, disappear: they are spent by, and for the benefit of, the global poor, and so produce effective market demand that promotes economic activity" (533, n. 30). They are spent by and for the benefit of the world's poor, generating effective market demand that stimulates economic activity" (533, n. 30). Furthermore, one may argue that the GRD would stimulate economic activity by transferring wealth from the affluent to the poor, who have a larger proclivity to consume. This is especially true for the really poor, who would spend almost all of their extra money on essential needs like food and medication. As a result, such a wealth transfer would almost certainly result in a net rise in demand, possibly offsetting the change in the aggregate supply function. The cumulative effects of these changes are exceedingly difficult to predict. As a result, there is certain to be some ambiguity.

The assumption is that central banks will be better equipped to adapt to local economic and social realities. Lastly, a Tobin tax, like the GRD, would generate significant revenue that might be utilised to alleviate severe poverty and promote development. Even if it was only marginally successful in curbing short-term currency speculation, it would still yield huge sums equivalent to those generated by a GRD.

Figures vary widely, but one somewhat cautious estimate forecasts that a 0.1 percent Tobin tax would raise $54 billion per year, assuming significant exclusions, evasions, and a 40% decline in currency transactions.

CULTURE:

Tobin and Pogge both firmly accept global economic integration and work to find methods to make it more equitable. Both of their solutions would use institutions that rely on market dynamics to enhance levels of well-being for the least advantaged. Yet for some detractors, the issue is exactly globalisation and its dependence on markets. Some detractors contend that a homogenised, superficial, and inauthentic culture is the fundamental danger posed by globalisation. According Benjamin Barber (1995), homogeneity brought about by globalisation is more dangerous in the long term since it "is likely to generate a macro peace that supports the victory of capitalism and its markets" than "little stories of local tragedy and regional genocide" (19-20). Barber thinks that "regional genocide" is less of a concern than homogeneity.

Certain cultural shifts that detractors claim would lead to an increase in homogeneity frequently have the exact opposite effect. In many areas of the world, notably the United States, where salsa sales now outpace ketchup sales, the diffusion of knowledge and the decline in transportation costs have caused changes in cuisine (see Hannon 1997). Curry has reportedly lately become a staple in areas of Britain outside of the Indian population. Opponents bemoan the loss of geographically and culturally distinct cuisine, arguing that all cities now have the same appearance and flavour.

Of course, people will occasionally do this poorly and occasionally successfully when they create their own history—when they modify their culture to fit new conditions and include components from other cultures. I haven't defended or denounced any specific globalization-related cultural phenomena here. Little can be stated about when such modifications are

generally incorrect and when they are progressive at this level of abstraction. Instead, such assessments can only be reached after carefully reviewing the specifics of a certain instance. In addition, even when cultures evolve for the better, there will unavoidably be loss when earlier forms are discarded or altered.

The majority of cultural change will be contentious. While some individuals may cling to the old, others will welcome the new. Some people find that a more cosmopolitan lifestyle, where conventional behaviours are progressively abandoned in favour of new hybrid ones, is a fulfilling, real, and creative existence that frees them from historically constricting responsibilities.

We shall engage with people from many cultures who are accustomed to diverse customs as a result of globalisation more frequently. There won't be a single uniform worldwide way of life as a result of this greater connection, even while cultural practises will alter and become less geographically specific. It will be even more crucial to make sure that we have structures in place that permit fair interactions between individuals who adhere to various and competing ways of life precisely because of this.

Many millions of people are compelled to live in extreme poverty, which prevents them from participating in any cultural practises in a meaningful way. This is true even though economic development, aided by globalisation, has reduced poverty more rapidly in the past century than at any other time in human history. We have a great commitment to strive to make these institutional changes since there are workable institutional configurations in which these numbers would be significantly decreased. Because of this, Pogge and Tobin's ideas ought to be given careful thought. As globalisation brings people closer together, we must make sure that the institutions that support our relationships aren't only superficial, insincere, and unfulfilling.

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