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GLOBALIZATION AND GLOBAL JUSTICE

Thom Brooks

Globalization is shrinking distances and bringing people around the world into closer contact. International rules and institutions are expanding rapidly. Does the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected change individuals' and institutions' duties to people beyond borders? Does globalization alone create any ethical obligations? How does globalization matter for global justice?

These questions raise fundamental issues overlooked by standard theories about global justice. Too often, our understanding of global justice is shaped by a non-globalized world. International politics is conceived as a sphere of states engaging each other as largely self-contained entities. This approach fails to capture the important changes that contemporary globalization has brought and the impact it has had. While some degree of globalization has existed for some time, it has never done so before on its current scale and reach. Global justice cannot be only about the relations of "us" and "them," but instead must consider the crucial role the international order can and does play that links us all together in a myriad of ways.

This symposium addresses these questions about globalization and its importance for global justice from several different, critical perspectives. Richard Child, Peter Stone, Nicole Hassoun, and Jason Sorens consider how we should think about global justice to explore the nature, and extent, of obligations to those beyond state borders, and how these obligations change in light of globalization. In particular, the contributors address questions about the scope, grounds, and character of obligations to those beyond borders in light of globalization. Questions of scope concern whether or not there are obligations of properly global justice at all. Perhaps there are no significant duties to aid those beyond borders, despite the impacts of globalization. Alternately, any such duties may be purely humanitarian, or may be better characterized in other terms (e.g., international institutions may have to be legitimate but not fully just). Questions about what grounds obligations beyond borders in light of globalization address whether such obligations arise out of a concern for human interests, autonomy, reciprocity, coercion, or something else. Questions about the character of these obligations

focus on how extensive they are: Is it just the case that everyone should meet some minimal needs or capabilities threshold? Or, in this globalizing world, must we aim for global equality of opportunity or outcome?

The authors also consider how we should theorize about global justice. Must good theories provide a complete account of what global justice requires, or can they provide conditions for global justice in our highly imperfect world? Do we need theories that are responsive to non-ideal circumstances, or does responding to these circumstances limit the scope of our vision or result in moral failure?

Several of the papers in this special issue came out of a symposium on globalization and global justice that was held at the Manchester Centre for Political Theory (MANCEPT) sessions in 2013. So, the authors would like to extend their warmest thanks to Marcus Arvan who organized this workshop and whose insightful comments greatly shaped the resulting papers. Although each article makes a positive contribution to the literature on global justice in its own right, there are several threads that help to tie this collection together.

One central thread is a critical engagement with recent work examining the relation between globalization and global justice, such as the Legitimacy Argument developed by Nicole Hassoun. This view claims:

- (1) Coercive institutions must be legitimate.
- (2) For a coercive institution to be legitimate, it must ensure that its subjects secure sufficient autonomy to autonomously consent to, or dissent from, its rules (henceforth *sufficient autonomy*).
- (3) Everyone, to secure this autonomy, must secure some food and water, and most require some shelter, education, health care, social support, and emotional goods.
- (4) There are many coercive international institutions (that may amount to a coercive international institutional system).
- (5) So, these institutions must ensure that their subjects secure food, water, and whatever else they need for sufficient autonomy.¹

Hassoun's argument provides us with a distinctive and innovative contribution to our understanding of global justice. For Hassoun, negative duties to those in severe poverty arise because they are subject to coercive institutions: these individuals must be able to secure sufficient autonomy in order for these institutions to be legitimate. The focus is on securing autonomy rather than determining some baseline for harm, such as found in other theories of global justice grounded in negative duties, like the account offered by Thomas Pogge.²

So one thread is the critical reflections on whether this new contribution is a compelling alternative to the approaches of Pogge and others. A second is considering how a more powerful account of globalization and global justice can inform our institutional practices—and what this might look like. We now turn to how these papers relate to these broader connections.

Richard Child's essay, "Two Models of the Global Order," discusses this issue by examining institutional theorizing about the global order. He distinguishes two models: an agent-focused model that prioritizes key global institutional players and a rule-focused model that emphasizes the underlying system of rules that governs the interactions of agents. Child is critical of what he calls the agent-focused model. One of his concerns is that a focus on agents may mistakenly attribute to them powers they lack in fact. He is critical of claims suggested by Hassoun and other philosophers concerning the responsibilities of these global agents to address certain problems because they may lack the resources and the means to secure sufficient autonomy. The more complete explanation for the how and why specific activities may be unjust or illegitimate depends more on the overall context beyond agents.

Peter Stone's contribution, "The Pursuit of Consensus in Global Political Theory," examines arguments attempting to build a consensus about global justice. It is common for these theorists to construct approaches and new perspectives with a wide catchment. For example, Pogge's and Hassoun's theories are aimed at winning over not just liberals, but libertarians as well. It is a common approach in the literature: if it can be shown that libertarians might accept a certain view of their obligations to the global poor, then it is likely that many other groups might follow suit. The potential problem is that what might be sufficiently satisfactory for the libertarian may render it more difficult to create the wider consensus desired. So the project of consensus-building may have its (perhaps obvious) attractions, but it can also be self-undermining.

The next piece, by Nicole Hassoun, "Globalization, Global Justice, and Global Health Impact," provides a compelling example of an empirical grounded approach to promoting global justice in the face of globalization. She lays the groundwork for implementing her proposal for helping people access essential medicines, in particular—and explains why it should be acceptable to those with a wide variety of views. More precisely, she develops a model Global Health Impact Index that will allow pharmaceutical companies to be rated on the basis of some of their key drugs' potential impacts on global health, and argues that such a rating system will open the door to many new ways of incentivizing companies to have a greater global health impact.

This special issue concludes with Jason Sorens's essay, "Legal Regimes for Secession: Applying Moral Theory and Empirical Findings," which explores how normative principles and empirical research might come together to help us understand secession. Sorens argues that normative principles may possess several theoretical differences, but nonetheless converge on a practical, institutional approach that he defends. His analysis brings together revealing insights into the latest philosophical work in the area informed by evidence-based empirical findings in an engaging example of how theory and practice can work well together, leading to new results.

Together, these papers address a wide range of issues concerning global justice and obligations to the poor that highlight the innovative work undertaken and the new frontiers for future research in this exciting field.

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NOTES

1. Hassoun, *Globalization and Global Justice*, 9–10.
2. Pogge, *World Poverty*, 38–41.

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