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Statecraft, Globalization, and Ethics[1]

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Abstract
This article explores the impact of cosmopolitan morality on international statecraft in an era of globalization. The historical roots of the main schools of thought on morality and international relations are discussed, and three alternative views developed. Globalization, as a process of world economic, political, and social change is introduced, and its implications for statecraft outlined. In this regard, globalism is put forth as a positive, and potentially corrective, dimension of globalization, and the Bahá'í teachings drawn upon as a source of globalist ethical vision for the future.

Résumé
Cet article explore /'impact de la morale cosmopolite sur la diplomatie internationale dans une ère de globalisation. Il discute des racines historiques des principales écoles de pensée sur la morale et les relations internationales et développe trois points de vue alternatives. Il introduit la globalisation en tant que processus mondial de changement économique, politique, et social et décrit ses implications pour la diplomatie. Dans cette perspective, le globalisme est présente comme une dimension positive et potentiellement corrective de la globalisation et les enseignements bahá'ís comme une source de vision éthique globaliste pour l'avenir.

Resumen
Este artículo sondea el impacto de la moralidad cosmopolita sobre el arte de gobernar en una era de globalización. Se discuten las raíces históricas de las principales doctrinas referentes a la moralidad y las relaciones internacionales, y los tres puntos de vista disyuntivos desarrollados. Se presenta la globalización como proceso de cambios sociales, políticos, y económicos, y se perfilan sus insinuaciones para el arte de gobernar. En cuanto a lo referido, se adelanta el globalismo como una dimensión positiva, y potencialmente correctiva, de la globalización, valiéndose de las enseñanzas bahá'ís como fuente de una visión ética globalista para el futuro.

> We have also heard that thou has entrusted the reins of counsel into the hands of the representatives of the people. Thou, indeed, hast done well, for thereby the foundations of the edifice of thine affairs will be strengthened, and the hearts of all that are beneath thy shadow, whether high or low, will be tranquillized. It behoveth them, however, to be trustworthy among His servants, and *to regard themselves as the representatives of all that dwell on earth*. This is what counselleth them, in this Tablet, He Who is the Ruler, the All-Wise. . . . (Emphasis added)
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> —Bahá'u'lláh, Tablet to Queen Victoria, *Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*

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Debate over the ethics of statecraft has gone on for centuries, and the contours of the "big questions" are well defined in the literature of political philosophy and international relations. In both the theory and practice of international politics, tension has always existed between the demands of the nation-state as a provider of security and focus of loyalty and identity, and the injunctions of cosmopolitan morality. Even the great revealed religions, arguably the real sources of categorical morality, have over time become identified with particular cultures and been used to rationalize the pursuit of particularistic national ambitions.

The vexing question of finding criteria to determine the responsibilities and judge the actions of sovereign states is still very much with us, as exemplified by the debates over who is responsible for what in the post-Cold-War international system; and many of the same issues of power and justice raised in classical philosophy centuries ago remain relevant today. Nonetheless, as we approach the millennium, something is changing. More and more, one hears talk of globalization and its implications for economic life, for the state, and for identity. At the very least, the context in which the state's representatives make their choices has been altered in significant ways, as constructive and destructive social forces transcend borders and span (albeit unevenly) the entire planet; and it seems likely that the choices themselves are being redefined by the impact of these developments.

In what follows, certain aspects of the debate about ethics in international politics are briefly summarized, and the implications of globalization for this debate explored. A case is made that to fulfill its responsibility to increasingly demanding citizens, statecraft requires not only a renewed moral integrity but also a new conception of its mission and purpose in an interdependent and shrinking world. In this regard, globalism is put forth as a positive, and potentially corrective, dimension of globalization, and the Bahá'í teachings drawn upon as one important source of globalist ethical vision for the future.

Power and Justice

As any beginning student of international relations learns, the field was for many decades characterized by a highly exaggerated division between "realists" and "idealists." The realist outlook, arguing that nothing fundamental ever changes in the struggle for dominance among states, traces its roots back to, among others, Thomas Hobbes, who stated in *Leviathan* that the interaction of Sovereigns was like a state of nature. He suggested further that:

> To this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent; *that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have there no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law: where no law, no injustice.* (188; emphasis added)

Though the state of nature is a myth, Hobbes's point was that sovereign equals co-exist in a state of anarchy,[2] and in an anarchy, morality has, at best, a questionable status. Thus, the most common argument of the modern period has been that morality and ethics were only possible within coherent political communities, i.e., sovereign states. In international relations, either no moral

[2] It can be argued that scholars of international relations have placed too much emphasis on Hobbes's discussion of international anarchy, since most of *Leviathan* deals with how to create order by empowering a sovereign to rule a group.

principles applied, or the pursuit of the national interest itself took on the character of a moral principle.

Another view, historically associated with the work of Immanuel Kant, is called *cosmopolitan*, and argues that all people have moral obligations to all other people in the macrosociety of human beings. It denies that there are any relevant moral distinctions between "us" and "them":

> The cosmopolitan position asserts that international political and economic processes are not all that different from, and may even be considered an extension of, those conducted within the boundaries of a given state. From this standpoint, slates are not self-contained, closed societies. Instead, they are increasingly finding their domestic affairs to be influenced and, in some aspects. directly controlled by outside forces. Given this interdependence '. . . the world is not, and hardly will be again, one in which a standard of global justice is unnecessary or undemanding'. (McCleary, *Seeking Justice* 16)

Fiona Robinson has described the ethical foundations of cosmopolitanism in this way:

> From a cosmopolitan perspective, the moral agent exists as an individual and a human being, prior to territorial or ancestral communities, and unencumbered by social roles. Morality from this perspective is neither relative nor contingent; it is not limited by nationhood or statehood, time or place. Rather, it is timeless, universal and global. Cosmopolitanism is the moral universalism of international relations: it accepts the possibility of something which might be called a "world community", and aspires to a global order in which individuals regard themselves and all others as "world citizens", and where the boundaries of rights, obligations and justice are unrestricted across the globe. (4)

Furthermore, "what is crucial to a cosmopolitan attitude is the refusal to regard existing political structures as the source of ultimate value" (Brown 24, qtd. in Robinson 4). This attitude can be contrasted with a more statist ethic, quite close to some variants of realism, which accepts existing divisions of humanity as real and of moral significance. Robinson calls this tradition *communitarian* and explains that:

> According to the communitarian argument, the individual cannot and does not exist prior to her social existence. As persons, and as moral agents, we have identities which are created through our social situations. . . . While communitarians may recognize the multiple nature of these identities, in political philosophy, and in International Relations theory, communitarian philosophers have tended to privilege the community of citizenship. Thus, in emphasizing particularism over the universalism of cosmopolitanism, communitarianism regards the foundation for morality as existing within the particular political community—specifically, the nation-state—rather than in the "global community of humankind". (4)

In practice, of course, rulers have always recognized common norms that ordered to some extent their interaction. Many of these—particularly those defining sovereignty and its

privileges—initially achieved the status of customary international law and were subsequently codified. Others remained less formal but were generally accepted as common practices or even "institutions" of what Hedley Bull[3] (and others) called an international society. Bull, writing in 1977, argued further that all three of these views—which he called the Hobbesian, the Kantian, and the Grotian (after Hugo Grotius)—were in fact always present in international relations to some extent, but that one or the other was dominant at any given time.

In a similar vein, Stanley Hoffman, in a series of lectures on "duties beyond borders," debunked the "pessimistic inevitability" school of realism, which views conflict as perpetual and inescapable, and then argued that political leaders have a moral responsibility to promote and practice an orderly and civilized style of statecraft:

> Indeed, the ethics of the statesman ought to be guided by the imperative of moving the international arena from the state of a jungle to that of a society, because the moral opportunities available lo all of us—not only to the statesman—depend on the stale of the international system. Moral opportunities, in every milieu, depend on the social framework. . . . The closer the international system is to a jungle, the closer we are to the floor of survival, the less opportunity for choice we have, the more values we have lo sacrifice, the more plausible the statesman's claim of necessity becomes, the more we will be tempted to accept the "morality of struggle"—and either resign ourselves to endless competition, or put a moral dressing on it, in either case restricting our duties to our own community and, al most, to its supporters and clients. On the contrary, the more moderate the system is, the greater the range of moral choice for all of us, the greater the possibility for the statesman to look at the world in terms other than us vs. them—to try to move from what I call a Machiavellian morality of public safety to a more universal morality that accepts the rightful claims of others; so that the question: right or good for whom? is no longer answered: exclusively for the statesman's community. (35–36)

These passages suggest three different points of departure for statecraft in an anarchic state system. National decision-makers can act either to:

- Promote the interests of their state, defined in narrow and aggrandizing terms—even to the point of violent subjugation and exploitation of other peoples (Hobbesian);
- Promote the interests of their slate, taking into account the need to maintain good relations with other stales, and to preserve, except under exceptional conditions, order and peace (Grotian); or,
- Promote the interest of their state defined in light of and in harmony with a broader conception of the "global interest" (Kantian).

This scheme indicates that while statecraft in pursuit of categorical values is possible to some extent, it is difficult to imagine ethical statecraft ever becoming an *acquis* of an anarchic state system. Rather, interstate politics can always deteriorate in the direction of a "state of nature" because statespersons' obligations to their constituents seem necessarily to take priority over obligations to the rest of humanity. Furthermore, as Bull explains, in a world organized politically

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[3] Bull, *The Anarchical Society*. Bull refers specifically to the balance of power, international law, diplomacy, war, and the role of the Great Powers as institutions of international society.

into sovereign states, there really is no authoritative spokesperson for the "global interest" (85–86). Despite the numerous people, groups, and organizations who invoke this concept, there is no legitimate political institution that embodies and promotes it. Even the United Nations is fundamentally an *international* organization, which, despite much of its rhetoric, is at its best more Grotian than Kantian in both conception and practice. Thus, there are structural, as well as ideological and philosophical, underpinnings to a narrowly self-regarding statecraft. However, there are indications that this very structure is undergoing significant change.

Globalization[4]

Definitions

There are a variety of definitions and descriptions of globalization, which, though overlapping in many respects, do emphasize different dimensions of the process. Roland Robertson, one of the first scholars to specialize in this area, provides the following general definition of globalization from a macrosociological viewpoint:

> Globalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole . . . both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole in the twentieth century. (8, qtd. in Waters 41)

Writing in a similar vein, Malcolm Waters highlights changes in the influence of space on society:

> We can therefore define globalization as: *A social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding.* (3)

Finally, Anthony Giddens's approach focuses on globalization as an interactive or dialectical process:

> Globalization can thus be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. This is a dialectical process because such local happenings may move in an obverse direction from the very distanciated relations that shape them. Local transformation is as much a part of globalization as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space. (64, qtd. in Waters 50)

Though the sociological studies are more comprehensive in scope, it is really in regard to business and economics that the term "globalization" is most frequently invoked. What is referred to here is "a qualitative shift toward a global economic system that is no longer based on autonomous national economies but on a consolidated global marketplace for production, distribution, and consumption" (Holm and Sørensen 5) and in which "distinct national economies are subsumed and rearticulated into the system by essentially international processes and transactions" (Hirst and Thompson, qtd. in Holm and Sørensen, "What Has Changed?" 5). The primary vehicles for this

[4] This section draws on the author's "The Conflicts of Globalization."

process have been the increasing transnationalization of production, the resulting rise in influence of multinational enterprises, and even more importantly, the explosion in the volume and scope of transactions on international financial markets. In this regard, consider the following commentary on contemporary change in the banking industry:

> Banking is rapidly becoming indifferent to the constraints of time, place and currency . . . an English buyer can get a Japanese mortgage, an American can tap his New York bank account through a cash machine in Hong Kong and a Japanese investor can buy shares in a London-based Scandinavian bank whose stock is denominated in sterling, dollars, Deutsche Marks, and Swiss francs. (*Financial Times* 8/5/78, qtd. in Waters 89)

One of its most often noted effects is the homogenization of consumer markets around the world, at least in certain areas—the so-called McDonaldization of global consumption.

Though often touted as representing the height of economic rationality, globalisation has also been portrayed as having a very dark side. Critics repeatedly point out that the contemporary form of globalization,[5] driven by economic power, clearly promotes the hegemony of Western culture and corporations; puts jobs and communities at risk in the rich countries and exploits cheap labor in the poorer countries; increases threats to the environment; and undermines the foundations of democracy and social stability by subjecting national political institutions to forces of economic change beyond their control. Furthermore, as a recent volume of essays (Holm and Sørensen, *Whose World Order*) has highlighted, globalization is *uneven* both in its processes and in its effects. It produces concentrations and deprivations which, in the aggregate, constitute an increasingly well-defined global power structure.

Consequences for the State

Though the implications of these trends extend far beyond the scope of this article, certain ramifications of globalization for the state and statecraft can be highlighted. First, though the system of individually sovereign states is still the prevalent pattern in world order and nationalism the dominant form of political consciousness, the fact remains that the borders of the state do not define the limits of either political or economic life today. Rather, states themselves have become just one set of actors in a world system that transcends them; and governments find themselves increasingly obliged to follow policies largely dictated by global trends, rather than formulated independently in response to domestic priorities. This is what is intended when scholars of international relations characterize the international system as "system-dominant," or analysts of political economy speak of the "internationalizing" of the state.

Second, globalization undermines citizens' habit of obedience to public institutions, as people become more *reflexive* through exposure to the higher volume of information generated by economic and technological globalization. Waters argues, for instance, that modern society is

> specifically reflexive in character. Social activity is constantly informed by flows of information and analysis which subject it to continuous revision and thereby constitute and reproduce it. . . . *The particular difficulty faced by moderns is that this knowledge*

[5] Several writers have argued that globalization has been underway for a long time. Robertson, for instance, charts its evolution from the fifteenth century. See Robertson, *Globalization*.

> *itself is constantly changing so that living in a modem society appears to be uncontrolled, like being aboard a careening juggernaut* . . . . (51; emphasis added)[6]

Anthony Giddens argued that the industrial nation-state was the embodiment of "modern" society, and that it has been characterized by what he called "expert systems"—repositories of technical knowledge that can be deployed across a wide range of social contexts. These expert systems have, for instance, given rise to a technocratic style of civil administration. However, this dimension of modernity rests on the trust which, in the face of multiple risks and uncertainty, individual people—citizens, consumers, clients, passengers, or patients, depending on the context—place in these rather abstract and socially distant expert systems. Growing reflexivity is, however, undermining trust in expert systems around the globe. In regard to more and more issues there is a feeling that experts have either failed, or do not have the public interest at heart. Spybey, for instance, describes how in "late modern society" there is a "growing refusal of people to accept expert assurances about its dangers" (153). He goes on to state:

> If, in the nineteenth century, those people who understood it and had access to its benefits rejoiced in the bounty of modernity and its scientific-technological wonders, the people of late modernity are cultured to expect mass consumption but are increasingly sufficiently well informed to develop doubts about its benefits. This *is* self-reflexivity and it is stimulated by negative experiences shared on a global scale, like for instance the Chernobyl disaster. It is individualism, enabled by mass education and encouraged by post-1960s permissiveness and self-awareness. (153)

In a similar vein, James Rosenau has written at length about what he calls the "global authority crisis," and his analysis provides insight into the nature and scope of political conflict in a world of globalized "postinternational politics." He explains that, as a result of greatly increased access to information and a general impression of the diminished competence or declining effectiveness of public institutions, citizens have lost their habit of obeying. If leaders are not able to find more effective means to gather support, people "begin to consider redirecting their loyalties and legitimacy sentiments" (389). He goes on to illustrate how crises of this kind interact and "cascade" around the planet:

> The world is now so interdependent that "crisis networks" evolve, as information about a crisis in one collectivity flows to others, and as its consequences ramify. By virtue of the information flows and of the interaction engendered by refugees, traders, terrorists, and other boundary-spanning individuals and groups, authority crises overlap and cascade across collectivities, forming linkages among them on an issue or regional basis. (390)

Giddens and Rosenau describe a world in which people are more aware, more empowered, and more critical through their access to information. However, populations have become less compliant and more demanding at precisely the time when national political institutions, as described below, are in most cases reducing their budgets and programs.

A third effect is that in the post-Cold-War world subnational and transnational groups (whose identities and solidarities are based on race, ethnicity, religion, or language) have become

[6] The juggernaut image is from Giddens.

increasingly vocal and have used the global media to make their discontent known. The Cold War was a conflict among states and served to perpetuate the primacy of national identity in world society; but in the 1990s the state, weakened by globalization, is less effective in either coercing compliance or integrating national society, and minorities are able to reassert their identity more effectively in reaction to hegemonic cultural forces. These minorities often see the state as no longer a promoter and protector of domestic interests, but rather a collaborator with outside forces (Scholte, "Constructions"). Thus, in the 1990s it can be argued that the primary locus of conflict may no longer be found between and among states, but between the state and subnational groups.[7]

Lastly, economic globalization, and particularly the incredible volume and mobility of global capital, have completely discredited the notion that a stale can have truly independent economic policies. Rather, "the markets" set constraints on government action which politicians ignore at their own peril, suggesting that financial markets have become in some respects institutions of global governance whose "power" is greater than the stale. Claude Ake, a leading African critical thinker, has written in this connection that

> [e]conomic forces are constituting the world into one economy and, to a lesser extent, one political society. Nations participate in global governance according to their economic power, which is coextensive with their rights. The global order is ruled by an informal cabinet of the world's economically most powerful countries; its law is the logic of the market, and status in this new order is a function of economic performance. (26)

One major effect of these changes is that efforts to maintain an attractive fiscal environment have obliged governments in industrialized nations to reduce the unemployment and welfare benefits which, to some degree, protected workers in the industrial countries from the creative destruction of capitalism during the decades immediately after World War II. Globalization has, in fact, radically shifted the balance of economic power in favor of capital (which is highly mobile and thus able to move where profits are to be gained) and against labor (which is much less mobile even in an economic community like the European Union, and whose basis of organization is still more national than international). As Ethan Kapstein has argued:

The forces acting on today's workers inhere in the structure of today's global economy, with its open and increasingly fierce competition on the one hand and fiscally conservative units—states—on the other. . . . Growing income inequality, job insecurity, and unemployment are seen as the flip side of globalization. (17)

This perception poses its own problems for governance:

> It is hardly sensationalist to claim that in the absence of broad-based policies and programs designed to help working people, the political debate in the United States and many other countries will soon turn sour. Populists and demagogues of various stripes will find "solutions" to contemporary economic problems in protectionism and xenophobia. Indeed, in every industrialized nation, such figures are on the campaign trail. (Kapstein 17)

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[7] T. R. Gurr has presented data lo show that the vast majority of wars in the mid-1990s involved ethnic conflicts. See Gurr, "Peoples against States" 347–77.

These points highlight a fundamental problem of contemporary world order: a process of globalization is fully underway, but institutions with sufficient scope, power, and authority to regulate and direct this process toward beneficial ends are not in place. The state, as an institution embedded in broadening and accelerating global cultural and economic flows, finds its means of both action and control greatly reduced and its credibility undermined. Even the much debated question of "giving up sovereignty" to international institutions seems more and more to be a "red herring," since much of what sovereignty connotes in the popular imagination has already begun to erode.

Globalism

The previous section indicates a need for new thinking about old questions, and in that sense, globalization issues are world order issues. As the existing institutions of international politics and society have confronted these issues, basic questions of political philosophy having to do with power, authority, and distributive justice—resolved, to some extent, for the nation-state in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—are increasingly being raised again, but this time in regard to the planet as a single political, social, and economic system. Again, somewhat paradoxically, globalization lays a foundation for such new thinking by creating a growing awareness or the planet as "one place," a perspective which some have called *globalism*. Mark Ritchie, for instance, defines globalism as

> the belief that we share one fragile planet whose survival requires mutual respect and careful treatment of all its people and its environment. Globalism is also a set of values and ethical beliefs requiring active practice in our day-to-day lives. Active communications to foster understanding, the sharing of resources on the basis of equity and sustainability, and mutual aid in times of need are three central activities that undergird globalism. (1–2)

Globalist thinking grows out of a perception of the world as steadily becoming more interdependent and integrated, a trend which the Bahá'í International Community (BIC) argues is reflected in

> wide-ranging phenomena, from the fusion of world financial markets, which in turn reflect humanity's reliance on diverse and interdependent sources of energy, food, raw materials, technology and knowledge, to the construction of globe-girdling systems of communications and transportation. It is reflected in the scientific understanding of the earth's interconnected biosphere, which has in turn given a new urgency to the need for global coordination. It is manifest, albeit in a destructive way, in the capacities of modern weapons systems, which have gradually increased in power to the point where it is now possible for a handful of men to bring an end to human civilization itself. It is the universal consciousness of this trend—in both its constructive and destructive expressions—that lends such poignancy to the familiar photograph of the earth as a swirling sphere of blue and white against the infinite blackness of space, an image crystallizing the realization that we are a single people, rich in diversity, living in a common homeland. (*Turning Point* 1–2)

Globalism, through a vision of the Global Commons and a respect for human diversity, can counter what critics see as globalization' s unbridled exploitation of resources and "standardization or homogenization of almost everything and everybody" (Ritchie 2). Ritchie argues further that:

> In the case of inter-tribal, ethnic and religious wars a sense of globalism can reduce the xenophobia and chauvinism that bring on these wars. Globalism is also needed in order to encourage others far away from these conflicts to get involved and to share their resources to help resolve them. (2)

Finally, in a very concise statement of the contemporary dilemma, Ritchie argues that the longer a creative response to the negative trends of globalization is delayed, the more difficult it becomes:

> As globalization causes greater poverty and hunger, it fuels involuntary emigration, which in turn may result in racism and fear of immigrants. In this way, globalization destroys the feelings of globalism, love and concern with neighbors around the planet, while creating the economic and ecological conditions that cry out for more, not less, globalism.
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> My fear is that if we do not challenge globalization it will not only destroy the ecology and the society but it will also engender so much resentment, greed, and violence that we will no longer have the ability as a people to work together to tackle global problems. (2)

What then should be our priorities, defined from a globalist perspective? Over the last several decades, there have been numerous efforts to define such a "global agenda," and, particularly since the end of the Cold War, a consensus has begun to emerge on a number of major questions, which are summarized in the following list.[8]

A Draft Global Agenda

• *Strengthening Global Governance.* Global issues require global solutions, and global solutions can only be formulated through processes of global decision making. This being said, only truly global issues should be decided at the world level. Centralization and bureaucratization should be avoided; other tiers of decision-making and administration should be maintained and, in the case of local administration, strengthened. Finally, democracy, in the sense of a true empowerment of the masses and the institutions of civil society to participate in decisions affecting them, needs to be strengthened at all levels of governance.
• *Sustainable Development.* Continuing to think of economic growth and ecological balance as incompatible alternatives is dangerously shortsighted. The principle of sustainability is already acknowledged (albeit grudgingly) by governments and economic elites, but it needs to find a much wider application in public and corporate policy at all levels. Governments and international

[8] The discussion that follows draws primarily on the work of Ervin Laszlo, the Commission on Global Governance, the World Order Models Project, the Bahá'í International Community, and various scholars in the field of Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies, such as John Burton and my colleague Abdul-Aziz Said.

development agencies can provide positive incentives for firms to adopt "green" technologies, and markets should be regulated to ensure that polluters pay for the social costs of their actions.

• *Collective Security.* Though governments have hesitated to commit themselves to this principle, it is now clear that a world without effective collective security is a world in which major political crises are either met with intervention[9] by self-interested powers (individually or in coalition) or with indifference. In either case, the result is resentment and suffering. Most economies could also benefit greatly from a reduction in the costs of national defense. Hence, a functioning collective security system would be both a more equitable and a more cost-effective foundation for world order.

• *Human Rights/Basic Needs.* The idea that all human beings have inherent rights of some kind is widespread—though views differ over which rights are contained within this description. Furthermore, there are basic human needs (physical, emotional, and spiritual) which cannot be erased through socialization or denied indefinitely through coercion. No long-term social stability or progress is possible in a world or a society characterized by largescale abuse of human rights or denial of basic needs.

• *Fostering Planetary Citizenship.* The average person is increasingly aware that global forces influence her or his life, but this is frequently perceived as an intrusive threat lo economic security or cultural identity. Educational institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and the media can all assist in creating and strengthening a positive popular perception of world citizenship, without which a constituency supportive of creative global change will be lacking.

However, while this list, or one like it, represents a positive value framework for political action as we approach the millennium, it must be acknowledged that leadership adequate to these tasks has not yet emerged. What seems to be needed, as argued in the following passage from the Commission on Global Governance, is a radically different kind of statecraft:

> As the world faces the need for enlightened responses to the challenges that arise on the eve of the new century, we are concerned al the lack or leadership over a wide spectrum of human affairs. At national, regional, and international levels, within communities and in non-governmental bodies, the world needs credible and sustained leadership.
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> It needs leadership that is proactive, not simply reactive, that is inspired, not simply functional, that looks to the longer term and future generations for whom the present is held in trust. It needs leaders made strong by vision, sustained by ethics, and revealed by political courage that looks beyond the next election.
>
> This cannot be leadership confined within domestic walls. It must reach beyond country, race, religion, culture, language, life-style. It must embrace a wider human constituency, be infused with a sense of caring for others, a sense or responsibility to the global neighborhood. (353)

It should be appreciated that the prescriptions of the Commission on Global Governance run counter to the priorities and style of political leadership that has characterized most nation-states during the modern period. The Commission argues, in effect, that a Kantian world politics is not just desirable, but essential if current challenges are to be successfully met. What is also striking is the extent to which the tasks and values mentioned here parallel those outlined more than a

[9] Intervention takes many forms, and I am not limiting it here to military force.

hundred years ago by Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, as promoting the best interests of the human race. This parallel suggests, in fact, that the Bahá'í teachings can serve as an important source of inspiration and insight for the further development of globalist ethical thinking, a premise that is explored in more depth in the next section.

"Let your vision be world-embracing. . ."

More than a century ago, Bahá'u'lláh declared that the human race had come of age and was embarking on a new, divinely ordained stage in its collective evolution that would witness the gradual emergence and fruition of a fully integrated, truly planetary civilization. He also stated unequivocally that the "prevailing order" was "lamentably defective" (*Tablets* 171), that it would "[s]oon . . . be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead (*Gleanings* 7). Thus, to Bahá'ís there is no "going back": the past can no longer be a guide to the future, and, rather than being at the "end of history," far-reaching vistas of challenge and opportunity stretch out before the inhabitants of this planet.[10] This vision inspires the world Bahá'í community with optimism about the future and is combined with a profound conviction that the current era, despite its crises and tragedies, is pregnant with creative potential for positive change:

> The turmoil now convulsing human affairs is unprecedented, and many of its consequences enormously destructive. Dangers unimagined in all history gather around a distracted humanity. The greatest error that the world's leadership could make at this juncture, however, would be to allow the crisis to cast doubt on the ultimate outcome of the process that is occurring. *A world is passing away and a new one is struggling to be born.* The habits, attitudes, and institutions that have accumulated over the centuries are being subjected to tests that are as necessary to human development as they are inescapable. What is required of the peoples of the world is a measure of faith and resolve to match the enormous energies with which the Creator of all things has endowed this spiritual springtime of the race. (Emphasis added)[11]

Furthermore, the Bahá'í teachings reflect an unequivocally globalist perspective. These two brief quotations from Baha'u'llah are indicative of this theme:

> The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established. (*Gleanings* 286)

> Of old it hath been revealed: "Love of one's country is an element or the Faith of God." The Tongue of Grandeur hath, however, in the day of His manifestation proclaimed: "It is not his to boast who loveth his country, but it is his who loveth the world." Through the power released by these exalted words He hath lent a fresh impulse and set a new direction lo the birds of men's hearts. . . . (*Tablets* 87–88)

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[10] In fact, it could be argued that the Bahá'í writings present a perspective in which humanity should be seen as currently nearer to the "beginning" than to the "end" of its collective history.

[11] Bahá'í International Community, *The Prosperity of Humankind*, attachment to a letter of 23 January 1995 from the Universal House of Justice "To the National Spiritual Assemblies of the Bahá'ís throughout the World," page 19. In this document the Bahá'í International Community (BIC) draws on relevant Bahá'í principles to analyze major contemporary economic problems and to propose solutions.

Consider also the following distinctly cosmopolitan passage in which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá critiques the origins and excesses of nationalism:

> Why, then, all these fallacious national and racial distinctions? These boundary lines and artificial barriers have been created by despots and conquerors who sought to attain dominion over mankind, thereby engendering patriotic feeling and rousing selfish devotion to merely local standards of government. . . .
>
> God created one earth and one mankind to people it. Man has no other habitation, but man himself has come forth and proclaimed imaginary boundary lines and territorial restrictions, naming them Germany, France, Russia, etc. And torrents of precious blood are spilled in defense of these imaginary divisions of our one human habitation, under the delusion of a fancied and limited patriotism. (354–55)

In numerous letters and messages during his ministry, Shoghi Effendi further explicated the implications of the Bahá’í principle of unity for contemporary and future world affairs. For instance, he wrote in 1936 that,

> Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city-stale, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignly is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness or human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life. (202)

However, the Bahá’í Teachings also address the concerns of communitarians, arguing that the integrity of both the universal and the particular can and must be accommodated in the pattern of world order. Shoghi Effendi, for instance, stated openly that a “sane and intelligent patriotism” had its place in world society and that it was impossible and undesirable to “ignore” or “suppress, the diversity of ethnical origins, of climate, of history, of language and tradition, of thought and habit, that differentiate the peoples and nations of the world” (Shoghi Effendi, *World Order* 41). However, he went on to explain that the Bahá’í Faith

> insists upon the subordination of national impulses and interests to the imperative claims of a unified world. It repudiates excessive centralization on one hand, and disclaims all attempts at uniformity on the other. Its watchword is unity in diversity. . . . (42)

The Bahá’í International Community draws on this principle of unity to derive a major globalist ethical principle, *collective trusteeship*, which, if fully integrated into social and economic policy, would contribute significantly to reducing the current extremes of wealth and poverty and the tension and resentment to which they give rise:

> Since the body of humankind is one and indivisible, each member of the race is born into the world as a trust of the whole. This trusteeship constitutes the moral foundation of most of the other rights—principally economic and social—which the instruments of the United Nations are attempting similarly to define. (*Prosperity* 7)

Trusteeship involves a number of obligations of society toward its members, among which are "employment, mental and physical health care, social security, fair wages, rest and recreation" (Bahá'í International Community, *Prosperity* 8). This principle also has clear implications for the cultural and identity issues discussed earlier:

> The principle of collective trusteeship creates also the right of every person to expect that those cultural conditions essential to his or her identity enjoy the protection of national and international law. Much like the role played by the gene pool in the biological life of humankind and its environment, the immense wealth of cultural diversity achieved over thousands of years is vital to the social and economic development of a human race experiencing its collective coming-of-age. It represents a heritage that must be permitted to bear its fruit in a global civilization. On the one hand, cultural expressions need to be protected from suffocation by the materialistic influences currently holding sway. On the other, cultures must be enabled to interact with one another in ever-changing patterns of civilization, free of manipulation for partisan political ends. (Bahá'í International Community, *Prosperity* 8)

Furthermore, if taken seriously as a basis for new policies, collective trusteeship requires "a fundamental rethinking of economic issues" because

> [t]he classical economic models of impersonal markets in which human beings act as autonomous makers of self-regarding choices will not serve the needs of a world motivated by ideals of unity and justice. Society will find itself increasingly challenged to develop new economic models shaped by insights that arise from a sympathetic understanding of shared experience, from viewing human beings in relation to others, and from a recognition of the centrality to social well-being of the role of the family and the community. (Bahá'í International Community, *Prosperity* 16)

These points in turn raise obvious questions about how such principles are to be put into effect and what institutional changes would be necessary for their realization. Such issues are addressed in a subsequent statement, *Turning Point for all Nations*, prepared on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations organization. As an introduction to their proposals for reforming and strengthening the United Nations, the Bahá'í International Community describes the great steps forward in knowledge and consciousness and the terrible upheavals and disasters of the twentieth century as representing "twin processes-the collapse of old institutions on the one hand and the blossoming of new ways of thinking on the other" which constitute "evidence of a single trend which has been gaining momentum during the last hundred years: the trend toward ever-increasing interdependence and integration of humanity."[12]

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[12] Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point for all Nations* l. Predictions of the arrival and intensification or these twin processes occur frequently in the major writings of Bahá'u'lláh, Abdu'l-Bahá, and Shoghi Effendi.

Our earlier discussion showed globalization to have both creative and destructive aspects, and it would seem logical that new institutional arrangements are necessary to address the problems without stifling the positive energies released. This is the approach adopted in *Turning Point for all Nations*. While promoting the eventual creation of a fully developed and authoritative planetary government as the best long-term goal for world order,[13] it is suggested that for the immediate future:

> in accordance with the principles of decentralization . . . international institutions should be given the authority to act only on issues of international concern where states cannot act on their own or to intervene for the preservation of the rights of peoples and member states. All other matters should be relegated to national and local institutions. (Bahá'í International Community, *Turning Point* 5)

Federalism is advocated as a useful model for global governance because it "has proved effective in decentralizing authority and decision-making in large, complex, and heterogeneous states, while maintaining a degree of overall unity and stability."[14]

Finally on this note, it is argued that the masses of people who will be most directly affected by the process must be actively involved in setting new goals and formulating strategies of change. Acknowledging that "international bodies have historically remained distant from the minds and hearts of the world's people" and that "the vast majority of people have not yet developed an affinity for institutions like the United Nations"; the Bahá'í International Community goes on to argue that:

> Paradoxically, international institutions cannot develop into an effective and mature level of government and fulfill their primary objective to advance human civilization, if they do not recognize and nurture their relationship of mutual dependency with the people of the world. Such recognition would set in motion a virtuous cycle of trust and support that would accelerate the transition to a new world order. (*Turning Point* 13–14)

This admittedly brief overview highlights the degree to which in the Bahá'í teachings spiritual and social values fit coherently into a model of world order. There is, for instance, no ambiguity about the fact that a world civilization requires authoritative world institutions, or that the distribution of wealth should not be solely determined by the unfettered operation of markets-issues in regard to which other globalists have equivocated.

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[13] In this regard they cite one of Shoghi Effendi's several statements on this theme:

> Some form of a world super-state must needs be evolved, in whose favor all the nations of the world will have willingly ceded every claim to make war, certain rights to impose taxation and all rights to maintain armaments, except for purposes of maintaining internal order within their respective dominions. Such a state will have to include within its orbit an international executive adequate to enforce supreme and unchallengeable authority on every recalcitrant member of the commonwealth; a world parliament whose members shall be elected by the people in their respective countries and whose election shall be confirmed by their respective governments; and a supreme tribunal whose judgment will have a binding effect even in such cases where the parties concerned did not voluntarily agree to submit their case to its consideration. (*World Order* 40–41)

[14] *Turning Point* 6. They also suggest that the commonwealth is another interesting model of governance "which at the global level would place the interest of the whole ahead of the interest of any individual nation" (6).

Conclusion

The previous discussion was primarily intended to explore some of the limitations in prevalent conceptions of international politics and obligation that are increasingly apparent in a rapidly globalizing era. Though most populations and governments are still somewhere between Hobbesian and Grotian in outlook, the Global Agenda demands commitment to Kantian values. This gap, or contradiction, is real and threatening, as confirmed by the frequency with which large-scale human tragedy is paraded before our eyes by an increasingly panoptical global media. Thus, the present moment calls for a statecraft that breaks with the past and takes unprecedented steps toward planetary integration. In this context, Bahá'u'lláh's injunction to parliamentarians to "regard themselves as the representatives of all that dwell on earth," acquires great significance, since only policies which take the. interests of all the inhabitants of the planet into consideration can contribute to long-term stability in an increasingly interdependent world. After all, if the world is indeed one system, world order must ultimately be a "positive sum" game: in the long run, we all either "win" or "lose" together.

To be effective, however, a commitment to globalism should be *felt* as well as rationally argued-it must reach both the mind and the heart. Though many groups in civil society are promoting such a value change,[15] the Bahá'í community stands out among the world's religious communities for the integration of its theological and ethical teachings with a globalist worldview, and for that reason deserves serious attention from those seeking to find a "ground" for moral decision in contemporary public affairs.

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[15] Feminists and deep ecologists are two examples.

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