

NOTES • DISCUSSION • BOOK REVIEWS

Global Citizenship? Political Rights under Imperial Conditions*

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I.

On 9 November 1989, I was travelling back to Italy from the gracious Austrian city of Salzburg. To take a train connection I had to stop in a small out-of-the-way railway station in the Alps, the name of which I do not now remember. While I was waiting for my train, I suddenly heard the breaking news. It was not just “breaking,” but breathtaking news. In fact, they announced a kind of revolt in East Berlin (not everything at that time was clear). What was clear, however, was that East Germans were allowed to freely enter into West Berlin. To everyone listening to the news, it was also clear that this meant the end of an era. It aroused great fears but also great hopes. Europe and perhaps the entire world might be about to experience a new age of peace, freedom, and prosperity.

Subsequent events fortunately dispersed the fear and encouraged the hope. Optimism and an expectation of peace were to mark the years that followed. The liberal revolution in Eastern Europe, along with the end of the Cold War, were connected to the idea of a new world order in which there was no longer room for war and armed conflict. There were even prophecies of “the end of history” (Fukuyama 1992).

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The end of the Cold War was interpreted, beyond the concept of “liberal revolution” discussed among others by Bruce Ackerman (1992), as the strategic situation which made it possible to think of a viable peaceful global order. Traditional international law, a fragile law of States, might be replaced by something more stable: a transnational, cosmopolitan law to be centered around the United Nations.

Though the 1990s were marked by a number of wars (the Gulf War in 1991 and immediately after the tribalist conflicts in the former Yugoslavia), though we witnessed once again the unthinkable horror of genocidal massacres, the key note in international affairs, as well as in political comment and philosophy, was optimistic. In the 1990s we were overwhelmed by a vast amount of studies reviving Kant’s notion of “eternal peace” in international affairs and by a mass of essays proposing global justice, global democracy and a world rule of law. *Machtstaat* and *raison d’état* were seen as doomed to withering away. They were to be replaced by global and multi-layered governance, by the “law of peoples” and transnational “nets,” by *lex mercatoria*, internet networking, “demarchy” and cosmopolitan citizenship.

Since September 11, 2001, and the two wars that followed, one in Afghanistan and the other in Iraq, this optimistic picture and mood have quickly faded away and we are again, more than before, perhaps even more than ever, at least as far as my generation is concerned, confronted with *Machtspolitik* and, somewhat surprisingly, imperial desires and designs that are no longer repressed. Ideas that had once been “beyond the pale” are now being openly supported (Baker 2003).

Many of us believed that the United Nations could provide the cornerstone on which a more structured world political order could be founded but we are now informed by influential opinion- and policy-makers, like Richard Perle, former chairman of the US National Security Council, that the UN is a corrupt institution. In addition, the UN is said to be more often than not a hindrance to an effective international order. In the *Left-Behind* books, the extremely successful series of American Christian fundamentalist novels by Tim F. LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, that began publication in 1995, the Antichrist shows up as the UN Secretary General, an advocate of general disarmament (LaHaye and Jenkins 2003; Didion 2003).

The United Nations’ assent and involvement should no longer be considered a fundamental precondition for peacekeeping. Collective security is rather to be founded on two new pillars of international relations: preventive war and “coalitions of the willing” without general jurisdiction but only for *ad hoc* purposes. International law itself is seen—for instance by John Bolton, US Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security—as having only a prudential, *not a legal* binding force (Bolton 2000; Remiro Brotóns 2003). On the one hand it is merely an ideological veil without real significance in the shaping of international affairs and on the

other hand—as also suggested by Robert Kagan, a fellow of the American Enterprise Institute—a device used by the weak to bind the strong. If “the Lord is a man of war” (*Exodus*, 15, 3), Lieutenant General William G. Boykin, US Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, might be right: His God is bigger than others.¹

As a matter of fact, we are now confronted with pundits, opinion- and policy-makers, based mainly in Washington D.C., who preach the futility of international law. In particular, some of its basic principles are scorned. States are no longer to be considered equal, even if only from a legal point of view. Instead there are good and bad, decent and “rogue” States. Some are weak, some other strong, or less weak, and this should make a difference in a legal perspective as well. Territorial integrity and sovereignty are no longer considered as criteria of universal application, whenever we have to deal with “rogue” States. The difference between a defensive and an aggressive war is also said to be obsolete, since—as President George W. Bush says in his National Security Strategy document of September 2002—the best defense is attack, that is, “pre-emptive intervention.” “If there is a rattlesnake in the yard, you don’t wait for it to strike before you take action in self-defense”—repeats Condoleeza Rice, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, in her Wriston lecture delivered to the Manhattan Institute in October 2002.

Together with the equal legal status of States (Vagts 2001, 843–4) another fundamental principle of public international law is disparaged. This is the right to international recognition based on effectiveness. States are legitimate and recognized subjects of international law, according to the new doctrine, if and only if they fulfill some ideological requirement: In particular they should not be “Anti-American.” *Aut aut*: “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists,” warns President George W. Bush (Albright 2003). The national interest of individual States should be equated with America’s interests.²

What we see before us is therefore the emergence of a new world order, very different from the hopes we had in the 1990s. Not only is there no sign of an improvement in traditional international law towards the transformation of United Nations into a solid political institution able to deal with international problems and crises and to project itself as a forum for international justice; not only do we not see the United Nations given new strength and additional powers, but now we have to consider with dismay the possibility of a general retreat of international law to nineteenth-century conditions. “In some ways, twenty-first century geopolitics represents a reversion to the *Realpolitik* of the late nineteenth century”—writes John Gray (2002, xviii).

¹ James Carroll, The Cult of Exclusion is the Enemy of Peace, *International Herald Tribune*, 23 October 2003.

² Cf. Woodward 2003, 327: “When it came to fighting terrorism, the President also wanted world leaders to equate their national interests with American interest.”

The very idea of a general permanent organization of States associated on a footing of equality is more or less explicitly rejected or dismissed, when not also despised. International affairs are to be ruled and governed through the power relations of States and especially through the strong and benevolent intervention of the strongest and most benevolent State. This thesis reflects a nineteenth-century view, since the twenty-first century is no arena for multilateralism. It is rather the "New American Century," "the cause of American leadership," announced, among others, by Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and Jeb Bush, Dan Quayle and Francis Fukuyama.³ The USA—writes Paul Johnson (2003), a fellow of the Hoover Institution—will not allow the United Nations or any other organization to infringe on its natural right to defend itself as it sees fit. At the end of the day, what this cluster of positions suggests, not always implicitly, sometimes on the contrary with rude clarity, is the rise of an unprecedented phenomenon, a world hegemon, *Empire*.

This new geopolitical strategy, openly defended by officials working for the present Bush administration, radically modifies all our previous assumptions about the possibility and viability of a world political order. We hoped in global democracy and we are given Empire. We trusted in peace and international law and we get preventive war. We asked for full nuclear disarmament and they are planning mini-nukes. We believed in human rights and we are now shown Guantanamo Bay and the possible merits of torture (Dworkin 2003).

Our hopes in addition are exposed to ridicule as weaklings' dreams of "paradise" (Kagan 2002) in a world which indeed is a hard place to live in and thus only appropriate—in Robert Kaplan's words (2002)—for the powerful and the "warriors." We liberals, we Kantians, we Europeans are like Lilliput's dwarves vainly trying through international law and morality to keep Gulliver, the American giant, tied down by "several slender ligatures."

II.

Now, it seems to me that in the new conditions of international affairs and under the pressure of imperialistic temptations, the sense of what global citizenship can be has changed dramatically. One first possible reaction is to let it drop as an impracticable and cowardly dream of the weak. In a world order ruled by war, along friend-or-foe discriminatory lines, and by the coalitions of those who are accepted as friends in order to perpetually and enduringly defeat the foes, in such a world, it would only be an irony to speak of global citizenship. If what is global is total war "against terror," the

³ See the "statement of principles" of the Project for the New American Century of 3 June 1997 and the 25 signatures appended to it, to be found at <http://www.newamericancentury.org>.

only possible sensible global status might be enrolling under the banner of the great power whose mission it is to redeem humanity.

However, before being obliged to accept such a conclusion, another sense of global citizenship deserves to be discussed, that of *cosmopolitan* political subjectivity. Cosmopolitan citizens, in fact, think of themselves not as members of a particular, local group, but rather as ideally belonging to a larger community, the only really global one: *human kind*. In the recent past there has been no more powerful case for cosmopolitan citizenship than the one presented by Martha Nussbaum. In the following, therefore, I will follow her arguments and then I will point out some objections to them. This section will conclude with a general assessment of cosmopolitan citizenship.

According to Nussbaum the burden of cosmopolitan citizenship is first and foremost the requirement of a universal perspective whenever one is called to deal with moral and ethical issues. In facing a moral issue we should try to first understand and then solve it from the point of view of the generality of the entire human species. Such universal perspective amounts also to developing a sense of allegiance fundamentally addressed towards humanity, "allegiance [. . .] to the world-wide community of human beings" (Nussbaum 1996, 4).

Martha Nussbaum moves from a criticism of nationalism and particularism. As a matter of fact, she rejects the alternative posed by Richard Rorty between a homogeneous sense of national identity and a politics of difference, or multiculturalism, that is, a more particular identity narrowly based on ethnicity and group membership. Rorty recommends nationalism as a patriotic cure against the splitting of society into an uncoordinated myriad of cultural subgroups lacking in solidarity. Nussbaum contests the cure, viewing nationalism as much as ethnical particularism as a danger for the cement of society: a sense of justice and right supported by the possibility of including the "other," the different. Once I say that I am first an Italian and only afterwards a human being, I am indeed treading a slippery slope: There is then no strong argument for a further, more particularist move focussing on a narrower identity. There is no impediment to saying: I am first a Sicilian, or a white, or a male, and only *in subordine*, if ever, a human being. It is that true community "in which—in Seneca's words—we look neither to this corner nor to that, but measure the boundaries of our nation by the sun" (Nussbaum 1996, 7) that is the basic source both for our fundamental rights and our most basic moral obligations.

The case for world citizenship is based on four arguments. Rational deliberation in politics would be improved by a universalist stance overcoming the assumption that one's preferences are something given or natural. This approach would be possible only if we were able to go beyond local and national borders and take a more general view. In order to avoid assuming as "natural" whatever is a mere product of history and social context, we should try to exercise generosity and allow room for other cultures and in

general for the plurality of forms which the human condition takes on to speak to us.

The second point made by Nussbaum is that “the air does not obey national boundaries” (ibid., 12). Many fundamental resources and problems are common to humanity in general, so one nation alone cannot presume to deal with them separately in an effective way. Air pollution does not allow for measures taken in a nationalistic mood. Given the fact of globalization and the increasing interconnection of economic production, trade, technical processes and information, it is really wishful thinking to see the Pyrenees, or for that matter the Atlantic Ocean, as a border which could discriminate between that which is good, right and lawful on the one hand, and that which is evil, wrong and unlawful on the other. Pascal’s pessimistic phrase is indeed meaningless in a globalized world. Moreover, the Western countries that are only a small portion of the world global population enjoy and consume a far greater part of world resources than the rest of the world. Western standards of living are unequalled in the rest of the world in a way that cannot but offend our sense of justice and decency. Every evening, watching the news, we dine more often than not on fine foods unavailable to the majority of human beings living on the planet together with us. In front of TV sets, and in a comfortable and more or less elegant environment, we look at people who, though sharing our basic human condition, are underfed, exploited, exposed to war and famine, and at times practically starving. In the best case they are subject to underdeveloped conditions of life. This immense and visible, patent, daily displayed gap between us and the “others,” between our more or less secure welfare and the degrading treatment of “others,” makes us progressively insensitive to other human beings’ suffering and misery. In this way, it is our sense of justice that is diminished, and our feelings of sympathy towards other humans are corrupted. But without a sense of justice and sympathy for our fellow creatures, it is the foundation for living together, the communality with our neighbours, that is, *society*, that is put in danger. For in order to live in society we have to exercise some capacity for mutual help and solidarity: Only self-interest and a mere prudential calculation will not do. In particular—says Martha Nussbaum—if we do not want to become moral hypocrites, we should live up to our proclaimed moral standards that include a good deal of universal values.

If we do really believe that all human beings are created equal and endowed with certain inalienable rights, we are morally required to think about what that conception requires us to do with and for the rest of the world. (Nussbaum 1996, 13)

Finally, collective identity, especially a collective identity of more general scope such as national identity, will not do without a sense of justice and a feeling of sympathy, that is, without some openness to others and a universal perspective. This is because an identity referring to an abstract body such

as a nation or a State is viable only through recognition of others' merits and by avoiding a local or regional attachment that is too strong. To be an Italian, I must be able as a Sicilian to recognize and accept as equals, as fellow-members of a community of shared interests, people born and living in Lombardy or Piedmont. But to do that I need to be capable to overcome the local point of view; I need to think according to a universalist perspective. Given the fact of migration and cultural plurality in our countries and national communities, the universalist perspective required for affirming our national identity refers to some sort of multiculturalism or pluralism. A national identity is the sum of plural, local modes of social existence. The question then arises: If we are capable of such a universalist approach, why should we stop at national borders? Why should a Muslim be considered a fellow-member, if he or she is born in our country or holds the country's passport, but then be excluded from any relevant moral (and political) deliberation of ours if he or she is living or was born outside the national borders?

Why should these values, which instruct us to join hands across boundaries of ethnicity, class gender, and race, lose steam when they get to the border of the nation? By conceding that a morally arbitrary boundary such as the boundary of the nation has a deep and formative role in our deliberation, we seem to deprive ourselves of any principled way of persuading citizens they should in fact join hands across these other barriers. (Nussbaum 1996, 15)

The claim for cosmopolitan citizenship has raised a number of objections and much criticism. I do not intend here to follow the many arguments deployed in order to defeat the cosmopolitan case. However, they can usually be grouped under three general theses. (i) There are no universal substantive values with existential relevance for human beings: in particular, it is argued, justice, the rule of law, and human rights are but "Western values." (ii) A second point made is that cosmopolitan, international or global, citizenship almost by definition presupposes a national membership. "International cooperation has 'national' as its necessary and primary ingredient"—says Gertrude Himmelfarb (1996, 76). (iii) A third thesis is the vindication—so to say—of "givenness." We cannot structure identity according to our desires and principles, to our design. Identity is not principled, but existential. "Identity is neither an accident nor a matter of choice. It is given, not willed"—says Himmelfarb (1996, 77). Now these three theses are all expressions of a robust nationalistic communitarianism. I shall not comment on them; the arguments advanced by Nussbaum are strong enough to stand up against them.

There is, however, a point raised in the discussion which I believe Nussbaum would have some difficulty in refuting. The weak point of her argument is that a cosmopolitan citizenship at the end of the day is indeed citizenship only in a somewhat metaphorical way. Citizenship is a political status, expressing membership of an institutional political order and guar-

anteeing legal and political protection. Citizenship in its paradigmatic sense is just one side of a coin, the other side of which is sovereignty or legislative competence. To argue for a cosmopolitan citizenship is therefore to assert the existence of, or the need for, a world political order, or rather a global sovereignty. However, Martha Nussbaum does not deal with this issue at all. Her main point is that political deliberation should move from a universal perspective. Cosmopolitan citizenship for her is rather the obligation to take the general, universal point of view. Her argument in short is a moral not a political one. But morality, as we know, is a highly fragile matter. It suffers both from cognitive and normative indeterminacy. We do not have normative moral codes, since the moral point of view is somewhat counterfactual and cannot rest on a positive, factual regulation. This obviously renders the cognition of moral ought a particularly difficult and demanding enterprise.

Moreover, morality is exposed to the well-known phenomenon of the weakness of will. We are not angels; we are human beings. Angels, once they know what is the right thing to do, will abide by it. They may, however, have problems with knowing what the right thing to do is, as they are not gods and operate, like human beings, within a contingent world. But they will not have problems in following the normative law, once they have identified it. They are not subject, we are told by theology, to the weakness of will. This unfortunately is not the case for humans. Humans, even if they believe that something is the right thing to do, may not have enough strength and determination to act accordingly. This is one of the reasons why in the end we need positive law, an objective (because factual) body of rules that will overcome morality ambiguity. This is also the reason why we build up institutions capable of enforcing such rules as they are enshrined in a factual "body" of laws, thus overcoming morality motivational indeterminacy. Positive law, however, is the product of a concrete political order, where political deliberation takes place. Citizenship, since the Greek origin of the notion, has been exactly this: Participation in political deliberation, or the status granting and protecting such participation. In this sense citizenship is irremediably contextual, not universal, since it refers to a concrete, institutional order.⁴ So global citizenship either points at, or implies, a globally institutionalized political order, or else it is a meaningless exercise. The universal republic referred to by Seneca in his cosmopolitan claim is a fully apolitical domain. He is very positive on this point: A world republic can only be a space for *contemplation*, not for *action*. Cosmopolitan citizenship,

⁴ Cf. Castoriadis 2004, 37: "Quoi qu'on fasse, on ne fait jamais que ce que faisait une cité démocratique; une certaine collectivité décide: nous sommes égaux, et il y a toujours quelqu'un qui est ainsi exclu de cette collectivité d'égaux. Quoi que vous fassiez, il en sera toujours ainsi." Whatever we might do, we shall never do what a democratic city did; a given community decides: we are equal, and there is always somebody who is excluded from this community of equals. Whatever you do, it will always be so.

we might conclude, is all too often nothing but a pompous and misleading term for recommending the adoption of the moral point of view.

III.

It could be argued that cosmopolitan citizenship is little more than an oxymoron, a kind of internal contradiction. Citizenship, being contextual, referring to a particular community and a given institutional setting, cannot take on a universal meaning. Nonetheless, underlying the citizenship notion there is a universal point that is its justification. Citizenship is claimed and granted to have control over our lives: To be free, in short. I am free only if I can somehow determine the conditions of my social life. These are to be found in political and social power relations. If someone exercises political and social power over the conditions of my life, and I have no control or influence over such power, I shall not be free, exposed as I am to decisions that I have not taken, or that I cannot oppose, or concerning which consent or dissent on my part does not make any difference. To be free, therefore, I need to be a citizen, that is, someone who is entitled to control the power exercised over him and who is accordingly entitled and able to produce the social conditions to which his life is subordinated and the rules by which he is asked to abide.

Citizenship is developed through two steps. One has first to submit political and social power under the rule of law, and then, in a second move, one should be able to produce these rules oneself. Only in such a situation can I be said to be free in a society and can I be required to abide by the law, since then the law can be considered my own, the law which I myself have produced, and thus a collective, institutional extension, so to say, or "simulation" of my basic moral autonomy. But before these two steps there is a preliminary move, the identification of the context of political and social power. The "identity" singled out by Michael Zürn (1998), together with "congruency," as the two basic conditions of citizenship, can be reinterpreted as not so much a question concerning the identity of the self, as a question about the identification of those powers impacting on individuals' social lives. "Congruency," equivalence between ruling and being ruled, is granted through the two steps mentioned. But "congruency" presupposes "identity" in the sense of an assessment of the social forces at stake.

It is a fact that we now live under conditions of globalization. This is a fashionable term, though at the same time controversial. It is not always clear what is meant by this term. I assume that globalization expresses a situation of interrelation of technological resources, production of goods, commerce and information, such that we could really consider the entire world as one huge market and one common context of shared interest. The shirt I am wearing was woven in India, but it has a Spanish trademark. My computer was made in Taiwan and my shoe leather comes from China. The car

I drive is from South Korea and the nurse helping my elderly father flew in from Sri Lanka. Not to mention the fact that I am daily shown on the TV news reports of famine, war and tragedy in the world. It is now certainly true, more than ever, that an injustice in the remotest region of Africa can be almost immediately perceived as such in any other part of the world.

But the global world is the traditional arena and subject of international relations. By this term I mean both a subject of study and a scholarly approach. As a subject of study or an object of observation, international relations has usually been seen as what States do to each other through their foreign policies. As a scholarly discipline this is quite a recent development.

In many respects "international relations" as a research programme was born as an alternative to international law. International affairs until the First World War was a field reserved either for lawyers or historians. Diplomacy and international relations was a domain covered mainly by historians. Ranke and Treitschke, for instance, were the leading figures in nineteenth-century German international studies. This was perhaps due to the hegemonic status enjoyed by history in the nineteenth century and the "best theory" that prevailed at that time: historicism, that often conceived of historical development as a dramatic struggle between national powers and thus ascribed to foreign policy and war a leading role in the political process. Law and morality were not significant actors in such a perspective.

This paradigm underwent a profound change once history lost its centrality within social studies and a new more empirical approach gained the upper hand. However, it is not by chance that the founding father of the new discipline called "international relations" was a historian, Edward H. Carr, a great scholar of Russian contemporary history, who provides us with a foretaste of this new approach, in which one of the main points is a skeptical attitude towards morality and law.

Although an "inherent utopianism of human nature" is acknowledged, opinions and beliefs are said to be conditioned by status and interests (Carr 2001, 129). To act—says Carr—we need "utopia"; but once the action is performed, utopia reveals itself as a delusion and its deeper nature as self-interest is unmasked. "This constant interaction of irreconcilable forces is the stuff of politics. Every political situation contains mutually incompatible elements of utopia and reality, of morality and power" (Carr 2001, 88). Utopia's fate is to become "the tool of vested interests" (*ibid.*, 136). Morality's independence from law accordingly is only relative and provisional. Actually, morality cannot be binding where there is no effective authority. In short, "morality is the product of power" (*ibid.*, 63). Power is therefore the fundamental source of social relations.

This is even more evident with regard to international relations. In fact, morality as "the principle that the good of the whole takes precedence over the good of the part" (Carr 2001, 180), is only a postulate of a fully integrated society. However, we can have such a fully integrated body solely within

the precinct of the State. There is no integrated international society; we have on the contrary national communities within which morality can indeed offer reasons for action. Such a configuration somehow rules out that morality might effectively govern international relations. Here, more than in any other domain, *power* is the determining factor. Morality is a matter of integration, politics on the contrary relates to conflict (ibid., 97), to disintegration. Morality can thus intervene and be operative precisely in those contexts in which there is no compelling reason for having recourse to politics.

I would like to stress that according to E.H. Carr there is a fundamental asymmetry between national communities (States) and international relations: In the former we have the principle that the good of the whole prevails over the good of its parts, whereas in the latter it is the opposite principle that holds. Now, this peculiar conjunction of stark communitarianism at the national level and radical individualism at the international level has as a consequence that within the international arena we are confronted with only one kind of subject or actor: States. Moreover, from the point of view of international relations, the internal structure or dynamics of States is irrelevant. What is relevant is that they could play a role as effective actors, that is, as power holders. Since the game is one of sheer power, this is the only capacity that is expected of the players. Any other consideration about their respective virtues is pointless.

Such a conclusion is somehow confirmed by the relationship between law and power, as assessed by Carr. Law is functional to political order. "Law is a function of a given political order whose existence alone can make it binding" (Carr 2001, 165). The special virtue of law is not "justice" (as Utopian thinkers proclaim) but stability. "Law gives to society that element of fixity and regularity and continuity without which no coherent life is possible" (ibid., 166). However, behind stability and regularity lurks a state of exception, in a sense a unique situation. This is *decision*. "Every system of law presupposes an initial political decision, whether explicit or implicit" (ibid.). This justifies the view that power prevails, not only over morality, but also over law.

The main virtue of law, however, according to Carr is *stability*. This makes it impossible to think of international law in terms of proper law. International community is unstable almost by definition and it therefore does not allow for regulations of the normative and institutional density required by (domestic) law. Moreover, law refers to a measure of equality: Before the law subjects should be considered equals. Now, such a requirement cannot be fulfilled in the international arena where States are of such extremely unequal strength. International issues are fundamentally power issues, and cannot as such be disciplined by law.

When a dispute is submitted to a court, the presupposition is that any difference in power between the parties is irrelevant. The law recognizes no inequality other than

inequality of legal right. In politics, the converse presupposition holds. Here power is an essential factor in every dispute. (Carr 2001, 187)

Political issues “are settled by a procedure which allows for the intrusion of power” (ibid; italics added). This is why legislation is better defined as “legal revolution” (ibid., 193; italics added), and not as a sort of communicative and rational deliberation.

Such a picture of international relations as a political domain in its purest state leaves room only for conflict, fighting, and in the end *war*. A global society can in this scenario only be ruled by a global power. And a global power can only mean the rule of the State that has been able through force and military pressure to internationalize, to globalize its own prerogatives (ibid., 100 and 124). But a global power in such a sense is an *empire*, or rather a global empire.

In such a picture even sovereignty seems to be too formalistic a notion. Carr predicts the decline of formal legalistic sovereignty and the emergence of international domination (or “governance” if you like) no longer related to the traditional form of the nation-State. This development will not, however, alter the essential features of international relations, that will continue to be governed by power in its realistic expression, *Macht*. If States decay, new kinds of international actors will emerge without changing the anarchical dynamics of international relations. These new actors will not be individuals, and their internal normative structures will not count as a decisive factor or property.

This is the realist picture of international relations presented by E. H. Carr in his influential book *The Twenty Years' Crisis* published on the eve of the Second World War. The subsequent literature on international relations, especially Hans Morgenthau's classic work, does not depart very much from the path trodden by Carr. In particular, one point is repeatedly confirmed: the opacity of internal political regimes for the “international relations” approach; an opacity which has an immediate fall-out for our subject. Citizenship as democratic participation does not fit into the picture of international relations. I would even dare to say that citizenship is despised within a world-view according to which not discussion or deliberation but power and force are the ontological pillars of the political sphere. The “national interest” which should—according to realism—preside over international relations is not the articulated and publicly expressed interest of citizens, but a sort of intrinsic, objective interest embedded in the “nature of things” of international affairs and equivalent in the end to the old notion of “*ratio status*,” *raison d'Etat*.

In the realist configuration of international relations, citizenship indeed has no place. In such a view, individuals are not actors in the political arena. Only leaders or holistic entities, States, or nations, Westphalian political units, play the game of foreign policy. And since according to such a view

there is an imperfect predominance of foreign over domestic affairs, that view amounts to the idea that even in the internal political arena individuals are redundant or superfluous. Nationality, however, as a form of citizenship based not on participation but on membership, can be assumed as relevant. Nationalism, for the realist, is an important legitimating factor for the State. Actually for the realist States are eminently nation-States. So mechanisms producing and keeping together and mobilizing the masses for the nation-State cannot be neglected. Nationality can thus be one such mechanism or device.

Nevertheless, in such a view, nationality does not express a claim of individual involvement in political deliberations. Democracy, like citizenship, has no room in political affairs other than as an ideological justification or rationalization for decisions taken on a basis which is and cannot but be undemocratic.

Carr's view of international relations is a radical one, though it offers a paradigm on which the entire discipline of "international relations" has been founded and developed. Morgenthau, the other big name in this field, confirms one by one all the basic assumptions laid down by Carr. In particular, Morgenthau's theory of "national interest" (Morgenthau 1951) does not allow for the reflective and liberal moment of citizenship.

Carr and Morgenthau's "simple," so to speak, realism is sometimes contrasted with some kind of "reformed" realism or "neo-realism." This is usually based on some sort of structural assumption. While "simple" realism moves from the individual power unit and considers the game of international relations solely from the perspective of this power, neo-realism assumes a more or less pre-determined "structure" of international relations, within which the single unit's moves are to be considered. The difference between "simple" realism and "neo-realism"—as exemplified by Kenneth Waltz's studies (1979)—is a question of perspective. For the former the main perspective is the State's own point of view and "national interest"; for the latter there are categorical constraints to State action that cannot be really overcome and have to be taken seriously. For the "neo-realist" there is a *system* of force relations, an equilibrium or a system of anarchy (though this is a further oxymoron), which States tend to follow and optimize. But such structuralism is no more generous towards citizenship. Here again citizenship is such a distant phenomenon from the system's centre of gravity that its existence is hardly perceived. For the "structuralist" as well as for the "simple" realist, the game played by States and Nations in their foreign policies is the quintessence of "the political." Accordingly, the political game of foreign policy is seen as ruled by intrinsic rules which give it its specific form and balance from which any individual agency is precluded. Individual or civic rights in this scenario are like humans for an astronomic observation of the Earth undertaken from a distant planet: they do not enter into the picture, they are simply not visible.

IV.

Realism and functionalism are the two main paradigms in "international relations" doctrines, and are based on two different models of the ideal international situation, which they also respectively recommend to aim at. While for functionalism an integrated world system is both the bedrock and the ultimate aim of international affairs, for realism the optimal situation is a version of economic equilibrium, a *balance of powers*. Accordingly, while for the functionalist multilateralism can only be a transitional stage or can be reduced through a series of supplementary steps to the functioning of *one world system*, the realist believes in the intrinsic necessity of a permanent game of multiple power centers.

David Mitrany, the founding father of functionalism, prefaced a collection of his essays, *A Working Peace System*, by pointing out that "life, the inexorable product of our scientific cunning, has by now made us all into one indivisible community, with inescapably one and the same fate" (Mitrany 1966, 13). Realists would resist such a conclusion: E. H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau, the two great names of the realist approach in international relations studies, were both staunch believers in the multiplicity of world political centers and in the fragmentary nature of this dimension, though Morgenthau saw a recurring contrast "between pretended aspiration for balance and actual aim of predominance" (Morgenthau 1949, 159), so that for them a balance of powers was in the end the only viable and civilized strategy.

However, in a perhaps less orthodox reading, there is a realism which centers around and aims at hegemony. This is a situation where a previous balance of power has been disrupted by the emergence of a power unit able to impose by force (even if not necessarily by violence) on the other competing units and to make them more or less satellites. Hegemony can, however, be exercised on a smaller scale than the entire world. Hegemonic powers can form along geopolitical lines that do not coincide with national borders, but they can nonetheless be plural and thus reproduce a balance of powers dynamics (Dehio 1996).

Hegemony in short does not necessarily imply imperial conditions. Hegemonic powers are not always equivalent to empires, and projects of hegemony do not in every case develop on the basis of imperial ambitions. We are thus confronted, whenever we have to consider realism in international affairs, with two models, an orthodox one, based on the idea of a balance of powers and a less traditional one, centering on the notion of hegemony. To mention just one famous name, Henry Kissinger is a scholar in international studies and diplomatic history and himself a leading actor in diplomacy and foreign affairs; his views should rather be ascribed to the orthodox reading of realism, according to which the ideal situation in international relations is given by some form of the balance of powers. In any case Kissinger's

ideal does not seem to be imperialism (Kissinger 1994). Metternich is his hero rather than Napoleon or William II, the last emperor of the German *Reich*.

The innovative feature of international relations studies and analyses is that they now focus neither on the traditional idea of the balance of powers nor on the more controversial notion of hegemony. For a big power—says Irving Kristol (1983, xiii)—the “national interest” (the pivotal reference of “realism”) is no longer a geographical notion; it is rather to be interpreted as “ideological”.⁵ A balance of powers—says José María Aznar—“*es un principio no valido*,”⁶ especially within alliances. To put it bluntly, what we are suddenly facing is a revival of *imperialistic views* (Bocca 2003).

“Empire” is not so much considered by critical authors such as Antonio Negri, Michael Hardt,⁷ or Samir Amin,⁸ as it is vindicated by a number of intellectuals, journalists, pamphleteers, policy-reviewers and think-tank members gathered around the White House in Washington. In any case Negri’s “empire” is a diffuse phenomenon, based fundamentally on economic influence and exploitation, not on military and political unilateralism. The same perspective is more or less adopted by Sami Naïr, who depicts an “imperial” situation defined mainly through the control of markets and capitalist monopolies (Naïr 2003). Quite different, and more political, is the idea of empire now projected by several Washington pundits. Such different personalities as Max Boot, Robert Kagan, Robert Kaplan, Niall Ferguson, Stanley Kurtz, Andrew J. Bacevich, and Michael Ignatieff, all more or less overtly and approvingly speak of a new emerging Empire, the USA, endowed with a specific mission to urge, or even to “impose”—to use Michael Ledeen’s clear words (2003, 220–1)—on recalcitrant countries and the rest of the world. The British Empire is again fashionable, because it is seen as a “blueprint”—to use Stanley Kurtz’s (2003) suggestive expression—for the global power. Richard N. Haass, Director of the Policy Planning Staff at the US State Department, states (in a speech before September 11) that “the US role would resemble nineteenth-century Great Britain.” It is also interesting to note that an American social democrat like Michael Walzer upholds the formula of “virtual empire” proposed by Martin Walker (Walzer 2003; Walker 2002).

Such views, on the one hand, reflect recent developments in the diplomatic and strategic policies of the White House, whose most telling

⁵ Matthias Rüb, *Starker Kaffee, scharfer Blick*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 26 October 2003.

⁶ It is a non-valid principle.

⁷ In Hardt and Negri 2000, the central thesis is that “empire” is not equivalent to any centralized military, political and economic overwhelming rule. “Empire” accordingly is not overlapping with the present U.S.A. strong hold over the world. Hardt and Negri rather point out a “diffuse” empire, not identifiable with any specific State power; a thesis that is also defended by Galli 2002, 52.

⁸ Samir, Amin, *La ideología estadounidense*, *La Jornada* (Mexico, D.F.), 14 June 2003.

document is the paper on national strategy issued in September 2002. On the other hand, several of those authors act as opinion-makers or even diplomats and policy-makers whose views then filter through—so to say—to the policies of the American administration. This was the case especially with the recent war against Iraq. I believe the Iraq war is a turning point in the building of that new doctrine of international relations. Indeed, as noted by Arthur Schlesinger Jr.:

[T]he war against Iraq was not pre-emptive. It was not a war “initiated on the basis of incontrovertible evidence” that an enemy attack is imminent. It was a preventive war; to use an euphemism, an exercise in “anticipatory self-defence.” (Schlesinger Jr. 2003, 24)

Although President George W. Bush declared that “America has no empire to extend or utopia to establish” and that the USA has “no territorial ambitions,” it is a fact that the same president in the Document on National Strategy affirms that the US will not permit any other State to challenge its political, economic and military primacy. Bush’s words seem to echo Paul Wolfowitz’s 1992 statement on America’s mission in the post-Cold War era. In a document called “Defense Planning Guidance 1992–1994” circulated at senior level within the Pentagon Wolfowitz, then Under-Secretary of Defense for Policy, stated *inter alia* that “our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival”.⁹

America’s mission—says Bush—is to export democracy and market economy and to wage pre-emptive war against “rogue” States. In particular, after September 11 2001, and the terrorist attacks against American objectives in various parts of the world, a “war against terror,” actually a “crusade”—to use one of President George W. Bush’s favourite words—has been launched. This no longer distinguishes between imminent and only possible dangers against national security, so that a response, a war in the narrower sense, is legitimate, whenever it is believed appropriate for national security. No further specification is needed. In the exceptional situation of uncertainty, insecurity and chaos produced by international terrorism “legality” could and should be trumped by “legitimacy.”¹⁰ One ought to act not only against an offence that is being committed, but also against one that may be committed. In short, military action is now recommended on the basis of fear, not of danger. It should be, proclaims José María Aznar, “anticipatory.”¹¹ This new kind of action, in the view of the then Spanish

⁹ Patrick Tyler, Pentagon Drops Goal of Blocking New Super-Powers, *New York Times*, 23 May 1992.

¹⁰ For interesting remarks along lines which acknowledge the priority of “legitimacy” over “legality,” echoing a well-known suggestion by Carl Schmitt, see Preuß 2003, 99ff.

¹¹ J. M. Aznar, “La política española de defensa en nuestro mundo,” speech given at the Escuela Superior de las Fuerzas Armadas (ESFAS), Madrid, 20 October 2003, the full text of which can be found in *El País*, 22 October 2003, 23–6. For a brilliant account of Aznar’s background

Prime Minister, loyally upholding the position worked out in Washington, should lower the discriminatory threshold between internal and external, domestic and foreign affairs, and be engaged in “*sin límites geográficos definidos*,” without clear geographical limits.

It is therefore more than understandable that Michael Ignatieff should write the following, somewhat moving statement:

Yet what word but “empire” describes the awesome thing that America is becoming? It is the only nation that polices the world through five global military commands; maintains more than a million men and women at arms on four continents; deploys barrier battle groups on watch in every ocean; guarantees the survival of countries from Israel to South Korea; drives the wheels of global trade and commerce; and fills the hearts and minds of an entire planet with its dreams and desires. (Ignatieff, Michael, *The American Empire; The Burden*, *New York Time Magazine*, 5 January 2003.)

What is a little surprising is that Ignatieff, a liberal, in line with less liberal compatriots like Max Boot, Robert Kaplan, or Robert Kagan, does not believe that such a new geopolitical figure is something to be afraid of, or to try to avoid, or to fight against. On the contrary, Ignatieff tries hard to offer arguments in defense of the new emerging Empire.

Until September 11 the USA was an empire “in denial,” to use Niall Ferguson’s expression, or a “reluctant empire” according to Dimitri Simes (2003); it is now high time, as recommended also by Stanley Kurtz, to recognize, to accept, and somehow co-operate with, the “burden” that history has given to the unique, awesome and powerful entity that America has become. Like Britain in the past, the USA has acquired this capacity, says Ignatieff, in “a fit of absence of mind” which however should now be reversed into awareness and pride. Americans, in Richard Haass’ words, therefore have to “reconceive their role from one of a traditional nation-state into an imperial power.” There is no need to run away from label, concludes Max Boot.¹²

Ignatieff does not attempt the exercise tried by Robert Kaplan to lay down a set of “rules of thumb” for the new Empire and its officials, among which we shall find—you will excuse me, if I mention only five of the ten prescribed by Kaplan—the following: “Emulate Second-Century Rome”; “Use the Military to Promote Democracy”; “Be Light and Lethal”; “Fight on Every Front”; “Speak Victorian, Think Pagan” (Kaplan 2003). Ignatieff is not so crude and openly anti-liberal. While Kaplan seems to intend to give reality

imperialist ideology and ambitions, see Vásquez Montalbán 2003. One might recall that the distinctive feature of an Empire has been singled out by more than one scholar as the assumed prerogative of preventive war. “It was this willingness to attack any potential danger which made Rome see itself as destined to be mistress of the entire *orbis terrarum*” (Tuck 2001, 20).

¹² Max Boot, *American Imperialism? No Need to Run Away From Label*, *USA Today*, 6 May 2003.

to Jack London's nightmare of a capitalist "Iron Heel," and makes of Graham Green's "quiet American" his model of a good life, Ignatieff attempts an intelligent scrutiny of the possible merits of the new Empire.

The first reason to accept the new Empire—according to Ignatieff—is that "virtuous disentanglement" is no longer an option. September 11 has shown that the American republic cannot survive "without imperial policing abroad." Terrorism is too impending and world-wide a menace to allow for US isolationism and self-denial. "Terror has collapsed distance." Weapons of mass destruction make of terrorism a global menace that can only be counteracted through a likewise global strategy. For such a global strategy the US, the only actor in the international arena capable of it, should take the entire responsibility, the "burden." Globalization, being also a globalization of terrorism, demands a globalized policy, which is—we cannot hide behind words—what an empire essentially amounts to.

Terrorism under the new technological conditions cannot be a matter for containment or deterrence. War, not containment, is the appropriate response. Global terrorism thus requires as a defense against it global (and permanent, we might perhaps add) war (Chiesa 2003; Galli 2002). And global war can only be launched by a *global power*, that is, by an Empire. A State suspected of developing weapons of mass destruction should accordingly be subject to regime change, before its armaments become so highly developed that such change becomes no longer viable. But, as Ignatieff rightly stresses, "regime change is an imperial task *par excellence*." In particular, such a task undermines one of the pillars of international law, which is the principle of non-interference in other States' domestic affairs. In Ignatieff's words—"it assumes that the empire's interest has a right to trump the sovereignty of a State."

There is also a further justification for the new Empire. A republic whose fundamental ideal is freedom cannot be blind to the infringements upon such pre-eminent values carried on outside its own borders. After all either freedom is for all, or it will shrink into a dubious condition. Tyrants should therefore be fought everywhere. Likewise human rights have to be implemented worldwide. Walzer dares to suggest "the moral necessity of 'imperial' intervention." Empire, inverted commas notwithstanding, is hence a matter of freedom and morality as well as of order. Order in national as in international affairs is the burden of that power that is given a monopoly of violence by history. Such a monopoly is not a bad thing, either within or beyond national borders. On the contrary it is good, because, should it be lacking, we could not implement universal human rights, law and order.

However, the USA cannot yet realistically claim to hold an effective "monopoly" of violence worldwide. "The United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength"—says George W. Bush proudly in his National Security Strategy document of September 2002. This however is an overwhelming superiority in the planning and use of military force, not

really a *Weltherrschaft* but rather *Weltvorherrschaft*, not world “dominance” but world “predominance” (Junker 2003). Now, such *Weltvorherrschaft* in the domain of international relations, albeit not a world-State or a world-republic, is indeed something close to what we would call an *empire*.

V.

I do not intend here to discuss the merits of the arguments presented for justifying empire which I have quickly outlined in the preceding section. I will take such arguments for good. But then, it may be asked, what have such arguments and all the stuff about empire to do with world citizenship? Does an empire not almost by definition render any talk of citizenship meaningless?

Indeed, international relations are a hard case for political rights. Realism is hostile to global citizenship, while functionalism may more easily conceive of an international status for individuals perhaps based on economic roles or functions. Imperialism however is quite a different sort of realism: It is a realism with a more acute perception of power and with a special mission. America, says Harry Jaffa, a follower of Leo Strauss’s political elitism, is “Zion that will light up all the world.” Imperialism can thus present itself as strongly idealistic or revolutionary. It is not in any case ordinary realism. I believe this difference should also have consequences for the respective assumptions on citizenship of the two distinct attitudes and on a possible connection between empire and global citizenship.

My argument in short runs as follows: The point of citizenship is that whoever is asked to obey a rule should at the same time be given a capacity or competence for contributing to that rule. Of the two conditions of democracy singled out by Michael Zürn, “the condition of identity” and “the condition of congruency,” it is the latter that gives citizenship its point and that shapes the contour of the former. Stated in different terms, “congruency” between subjection to rules and contribution to their production is a justification criterion for citizenship, while “identity” is both a pragmatic outcome and a condition of application for citizenship normative provisions.

Citizenship in short is an outcome and a “simulation” of autonomy at the communitarian level. However, the formulation of citizenship’s point which I have now pointed out may be a trifle too formalistic and rule-oriented. Citizenship’s point might then be better expressed if we stated that all forms of political dependence on the part of an individual should allow for approval and deliberation by the individual concerned. Rules intervene at a second stage, once the context of dependence has been identified and thematized. Given such identification and thematization, the context of dependence will first be subject to rules or norms and then at the third stage these rules or norms will be imputed to individuals’ deliberation through citizenship. Citizenship can thus be seen as a normative device to counter-

act dependence. Now, the problem with orthodox realism is that it assumes political power and law as strictly related to dependence and accordingly that it does not believe that such a condition could be counteracted. Imperialism, however, being qualified by a strand of idealism and universalism, might be open to a different conclusion. "Empire has never exclusively meant direct rule over foreign territories without any political representation of their inhabitants"—says Niall Ferguson (2003).

Under imperial conditions a relevant form of political dependence derives from the domination of that special awesome power acting as empire in the international arena. In particular, under such conditions individuals will be dependent worldwide on the legislation and administration of the big, strong Republic holding imperial prerogatives. Global citizenship in such a situation could either mean a joke or being given the political right to play some part in the imperial legislation and in the selection of its leaders. The latter alternative would then imply some sort of voice, or "say," or rather *vote*, in the appointment of the leading figure of the Empire, the new Emperor, the President of the US.

It is my contention that in the configuration outlined above, global citizenship can only be guaranteed by granting the nationality of the Republic. In more direct terms, global citizenship under the current imperial conditions can only be American nationality granted to all those peoples and individuals that are subject to the American imperial programme. My conclusion is the following, and, since I know that it will sound somewhat paradoxical, I would ask that it be taken *cum grano salis* and with a pinch of irony. If the US aspires to be an Empire and act as such, and nonetheless does not want to lose its "soul," but rather to maintain its original republican, civic inspiration, it should not avoid taking a further imperial measure.

Please, take the Ancient Romans' great example and grant American nationality to all members of the globalized world community. You will thus buy our global, everlasting gratitude.

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