

Development and Globalisation: the Ethical Challenges

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Abstract:

In this paper I trace the connections between development and globalisation and the ethical issues raised, rejecting a simplistic 'globalisation as expansion of the global economy furthers development as growth' model. I consider issues under the headings of the globalisation of production, problems, governance, community & information, in the course of which a normative conception of development is developed. In the second half, I look at a couple of ethical issues in more detail; first the theoretical issue of whether the *globalisation of ethics* captures the issues better than the *ethics of globalisation*; and second the normative issue whether the key impediment for development for poor countries and for poor people within them is the international normative framework of global governance or the internal normative framework of development itself.

1. Introduction

In this paper I am going to trace the connections between development and globalisation and the ethical issues raised, rejecting a simplistic 'globalisation as expansion of the global economy furthers development as growth' model. I will consider the issues under the headings of the globalisation of production, the globalisation of problems, the globalisation of governance, the globalisation of community & the globalisation of information. In the course of this exposition a normative conception of development is developed. In the second half, I look at a couple of ethical issues in more detail; first the theoretical issue of whether the globalisation of ethics captures the issues better than the ethics of globalisation; and second the normative issue whether the key impediment for development for poor countries and for poor people within them is the international normative framework of global governance or the internal normative framework of development itself.

One simplistic model of the relationship is as follows: globalisation is an economic process involving increased international investments and trade in goods and services. Development is a process of economic growth. Globalisation is the engine of economic growth. So globalisation is the engine of development. Since development for all countries rich and poor is desirable, globalisation is desirable and therefore ought to be promoted.

Another somewhat more complex model might be: globalisation as described above (the growth of the global economy) may stimulate economic growth overall, but its benefits are not distributed equally or fairly, favouring rich countries and not poor countries, and favouring the better off in poor countries and not the very poor who are often trapped in poverty even

increasing poverty. Furthermore global economic growth is generally at the expense of the environment and so does not contribute to sustainable development. So globalisation fails to address or actually exacerbates poverty and damages the environment, and is therefore a bad thing and to be opposed. Hence much of the rationale of the anti-globalisation rallies of recent years.

Neither of these models is adequate, since both development and globalisation are rather more complex ideas than are suggested above. Their causal connections are more complex and hence the ethical issues involved are more nuanced. Certainly neither a blanket commendation of globalisation nor a simple condemnation of globalisation is in order.

2. Some ethical issues

Globalisation needs first of all to be seen as a multi-dimensional process. The global economy which is often thought of as the heart of globalisation is really only one important manifestation of global connectivity. This is more generally about an expansion of awareness, consciousness or sense of relatedness of people (Spybey 1996). I shall consider issues under the headings of the globalisation of production, problems, governance, community, information and ethics, following but expanding Scholte's classification (Scholte 2000).

(a) Production

Clearly the expansion of the global economy is an important part of globalisation.

At one level it is just a fact whether we like it or not and it has various impacts on development. But at another level, normative issues are involved. It is informed by certain normative assumptions which may be contested:

(a) Libertarian or neo-liberal values: the value of the free market both in itself and as the engine of economic growth both within countries and between countries. This usually goes with the values of privatisation and of reducing tariffs, subsidies and protections – one of the chief goals of the World Trade Organisation (WTO);

(b) Development is an economic process of growth which is good because growth enables people to have more economic liberty to make choices.

Critics will pick on the values feature of this.

First, libertarian values on their own are inadequate both for development and globalisation. There must be side-constraints of various kinds: (a) certain things ruled out as unfair; (b) taxation for welfare etc.

Second, even if libertarian values make some sense e.g. reduction of protectionism, this is unfair unless applied fairly; e.g. if rich countries insist on poor countries reducing their subsidence if they keep theirs in place! The genuine conditions of a free market do not exist in many poor countries, Inequality of power e.g. with no/few trade unions leads to massive exploitation by multinationals.

Third, if development is not merely economic growth, even fairly distributed economic growth, economic globalisation may undermine other aspects of development – e.g. importance of traditional community. There are dangers of homogenisation.

In short, economic globalisation marginalises the poor, destroys the environment and damages cultures (see e.g. Sachs 1992). I shall return to this key issue in the last part of the lecture.

(b) Problems

Many of the global problems are by-products of the expansion of the global economy, but its worth seeing this as a separate aspect of globalisation because the globalisation of problems covers a wide range of things - such things as pollution or resource shortages; global warming; expansion of global tourism; the spread of AIDS and other health hazards facilitated by global transport; Internet fraud; terrorism.

What is a problem? A problem is a gap between a current situation and a goal combined with a difficulty in achieving the goal either because we either do not know how to proceed or, if we do, we meet obstacles to proceeding; a solution is finding out either how to proceed or finding ways of overcoming obstacles to proceeding.

What makes a problem global? Something might be a global problem because of its *cause* i.e. many actors all over the world, because of its *effects* e.g. actual or threatened bad consequences for many actors all over the world, or because of its *solution* requiring actions by many actors all over the world. A paradigm might be one which involves all three elements: a problem for all is caused by actors all over the world requiring solutions in the form of actions/changed policies or behaviours from actors all over the world. Global warming is a good example: the gap between what we want (unchanged weather patterns, sea levels as they are etc.) and where we are at (Co2 emissions very likely to undermine our goals), caused by the actions of billions throughout the world, and requiring a solution in the form of billions of agents changing their customs and habits.

But other types of global problems might be allowed: a global problem in the form of widespread damage but caused by one country, one group, one organisation or even one person, requiring action by a limited number of actors e.g. a nuclear accident like Chernobyl; or a problem perceived by one country as a problem for it but caused by global activities and requiring action by the country and possibly others in the world who are persuaded to help with that country's problem, e.g. the American perception of global terrorism.

Even where a global problem is caused by actors world-wide and requires solutions by actors world-wide, the two sets of actors may not be identical. If AIDS is a global problem it is because of the effects on those who contract it, but whether or not they are the chief agent of the solution is debatable: the solution which is partly about stemming its spread to others may lie in the hands of other agents who learn – or teach – sexual responsibility re condoms etc. and of the doctors and scientists who produce the drugs that can mitigate its effects.

Most global problems require co-ordinated action. This presupposes a global ethic in two senses: the problem is defined as a global one because human suffering anywhere is regarded as bad. i.e.

we have a global ethic which says: all human beings matter and matter equally. Second, we have a duty to co-operate in measures that promote the common good.

Amongst the most morally compelling global problems is world poverty and to some extent – though a separate issue – the gap between rich and poor countries. Unlike many problems of the environment where the problem is global because it affects us all in a self-interested way, wherever we are, the problem of absolute poverty is different. What makes it global is not its being globally widespread, though of course it is in many part of the world, and there are pockets of it everywhere, but its offending our moral conception of what kind of world we want as our goal since the gap between reality and the moral goal is extremely great. We need to note here that the problems of poverty are addressed and the imbalances between nations addressed to the extent that these are seen as global moral problems for those with the power to make things change – rich people, rich organisations and rich governments. The extent to which there has been a globalisation of the problem of extreme poverty is a direct function of the extent of our global moral sensibilities and feelings of solidarity. I shall argue later that this extent is not far enough.

(c) Governance

Governance is distinct from and broader than government. It is the sum of the various ways we order our public affairs: formal governments with coercive powers is one part if a significant part of governance (see Commission on Global Governance 1995). How do we order our affairs at a global level? In one sense global governance has been in existence for a very long time. Ever since the world was sufficiently opened up to allow for extensive co-operation or conflict between different countries or nation-states, there have been attempts by states, either acting on their own if very powerful, or acting in concert, to try and shape how things go globally, to impose a certain conception of ‘order’ onto international relations. The westphalian system that evolved from the 17th century in which states were both as a matter of fact the key actors in the world and normatively had the right to do so, can be seen as a form of global governance. On the other hand, what is often now seen as global governance is a development from that and one in which globalisation as a recent phenomenon plays a significant role (see e.g. Linklater 1998). The globalisation of governance has, for instance, as manifested in the last fifty years or so, the following characteristics:

The strengthening of international institutions like the UN and the spread of international law: thus to a far higher degree than before many aspects of life within states are fenced in, if not formally constrained by, the decisions of international bodies and the laws that are passed. Even if states are still the key actors, what limits are in place are far more extensive than before.

The increasing influence of non-state actors such as transnational companies that play an increasing role in determining how the economies within countries fare, e.g. in deciding to close down operations in one city and setting them up elsewhere in the world where labour is cheaper, or outsourcing call centres and so on. Such organisations will also have a powerful lobbying role in international organisations like the WTO in helping to shape the developing trade rules, pressing for a General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS) etc. These economic actors may not engage in government, e.g. in formulating or approving laws, let alone enforcing them, but they certainly contribute to governance

in that what they do and promote influences the way things go globally and indeed is intended to so influence it.

The third area of development is the development of global civil society – once described by Mary Robinson, no doubt hyperbolically but with a serious point, as the second super power alongside the USA! Individual people, whether acting through national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or international NGOs (INGOs) or acting through more informal groups (such as those formed for political purposes on the Internet), increasingly play their part in trying to influence how things go on global issues. This may be through pressuring their own governments on internal foreign policy issues, or through trying to influence foreign governments (like an Amnesty International letter writing campaign) or at international forums (e.g. environmental pressure groups helping to formulate international environmental law).

The normative aspect of this is significant too. If the increasing activities of NGOs in global civil society is a fact, it is a fact that most welcome both because it is an expression through membership of relevant bodies, of commitment as ‘global citizens’ to play a part in making a better world, but also because there needs to be movement to correct the effect of what is called the ‘democratic deficit’ – the fact that both through the increasing influence of supra-national international institutions (like the United Nations and the European Union) and through the powerful influence of transnational companies in the global economy, neither governments nor their citizens in almost all countries feel that they are – or indeed are – any longer in democratic control of many of the factors crucial to determining their life prospects.

This is particularly so for developing countries, and one of the challenges raised here is how to empower the voice of poor countries in international forums where decisions affecting them are made. – partly a matter of global civil society making sure these voices are properly heard and partly a matter of empowering people in civil society within poor countries themselves.

It is worth noting in passing that globalisation and development are in important respects *parallel phenomena*. They are both processes; they are both processes which their defenders see as moving towards a better state of affairs for human beings, and their critics see as making things go worse; they are both seen as *processes to some extent under the control of agents* such as governments, international institutions or large companies. The idea of a process being controlled is more explicit in the case of development than in the case of globalisation, but we need to see that any interest in globalisation as a multi-faceted process which could go in various directions according to our normative priorities is premised on the idea that it is subject to human control at least to some extent. Indeed globalisation can be seen development at a global level, and this thought should remind us that the unit of development is not a fixed datum – it does not have to be the nation-state, and often our focus may be on sub-national or supra national levels.

(d) Community

The above discussion about global civil society leads to the next dimension of globalisation – the globalisation of community. This of course overlaps with governance but is much broader than this. In many ways this gets to the heart of globalisation since it is concerned with the fact that people increasingly feel globally connected. They are conscious of global relationships, in many ways, in Scholte’s phrase, there is a ‘deterritorialisation’ of social space (Scholte 2000). Scholte

also speaks of the development of *particularist solidarities* and *cosmopolitan solidarities*. Particularist solidarities link people from similar groups all over the world (such as indigenous groups, women's groups) and cosmopolitan solidarities like people who share certain global concerns such as environmental issues.

In addition to these communities, there may also be developing wider communities of people who sense that they share certain common values, such as human rights, the values of the Earth Charter (Earth Charter 2000), or the shared values of a particular church, the widespread consensus of people working in the NGO movements concerned with development, environment, peace, though they may differ on particulars and issues of effective means, the shared values of the international relations community or indeed the shared libertarian values of people who do business with each other across the world.

If we mean by community a group of people who are united in sharing certain moral values about what is good or right, then clearly there are emerging many communities of shared ethical values, some overlapping with each other, some in conflict with each other. We cannot say that there is thus a single global ethical community. On the other hand we do not need more than some 'overlapping consensus' (Rawls 1993) for there to be community or society, and it may be that we can talk of emerging global community in the singular, in the sense that we belong to a one planet with common vulnerability and common fate, and we have somehow to co-exist with each, even if our values are in many ways significantly different.

The relevance of this to development is as follows. Whether or not there is a single global community, there is certainly as part of globalisation an increasing sense amongst many people that we do share a common global ethic, that we have common but differentiated responsibility across borders as the Rio Declaration puts it (UN 1992: principle 8), or as the Earth Charter puts it, with increased power and knowledge comes increased responsibility (Earth Charter 2000: preamble).

The increasing acceptance of this global ethical perspective should in principle be good news for the prospects of development particularly for poor people in poor countries. The governments of rich countries are, it is arguable, more likely to give proper and more aid, pursue fair trade with and not free trade at the expense of poorer countries, if more of their citizens actually see themselves as part of global community and want through their own actions and through what they advocate changed priorities in foreign policy. Whatever cosmopolitan idealists like me may ideally think governments ought to do, the reality is that governments will not act much ahead of or indeed behind where their electorates are in terms of moral priorities, and probably should not, given the nature of democratic mandate.

Second, I said above that the adoption of a global perspective should *in principle* favour the poor, but this is an overstatement, because to the extent that the communities of shared values include the communities of business and international diplomacy *and* these communities are dominated by the kinds of global ethic which hitherto have dominated, then severe restrictions are in place hindering the prospects of developing countries. I shall return to this key issue later, but briefly remark here that if the values of the relatively unregulated global free market and the internationalist values in international relations theory that legitimate the promotion of national self-interest remain dominant amongst those with power, then the prospects for development for poorer countries are limited.

Third, the globalisation of community allows for the development of transnational solidarities between different groups in development, often the marginalised such as minorities, indigenous people, or other groups that are oppressed or otherwise have their traditional values undermined by modern 'progress'. Globalisation is not merely about homogenisation (though it often is of course) but also about the response to that tendency in the form of increased sense of the importance of local difference – a process which had been called glocalisation (Robertson 1992). The point is that the grass-roots defence of a traditional conception of development can be strengthened by the knowledge of and communication with others with like struggles.

(e) Information

The globalisation of information (what Scholte calls knowledge) really covers the massive spread of ideas, knowledge, images, sounds, symbols and so on across the world. This partly covers the phenomenon of MacDonaldisation or Cocacolarisation of the world, contributing to the homogenisation of the conceptions of the 'good life'. But it also has important more serious aspects as well, such as the spread of scientific knowledge, serious academic reflections as well as ethical values. Whilst the spread of images and ideas of the good life raises for many thinkers serious doubts because the wish to perceive cultural diversity in development, the other two areas are more positive in their implications. The sharing of information particularly that associated with the development of technologies is actually an important factor in development, and the nature of such transfers raises interesting ethical questions concerning the financial basis upon which they are done. On the other hand ethical values are among the ideas that get transmitted across the world, and this fact helps both with the *constitution* of global community (or the various communities which collectively make up global community) and the acceptance of a global ethic of some kind.

3. Further issues

(a) The globalisation of ethics

First I want to examine the questions 'what exactly is the globalisation of ethics?', and 'what is the relevance of the answer to development?'

This question needs to be distinguished from the question: what is the ethics of globalisation? The latter is – like the ethics of anything – the ethical examination of globalisation and its various aspects. It involves the application of ethical values – themselves not a function of globalisation – to these issues. These values may be based on person's religion, theology, philosophy and worldviews derived from various sources. This is an important area of enquiry, and some of the issues germane to it have already been raised in this lecture. A good example of this approach is Singer's recent book *One World: the Ethics of Globalization* (Singer 2000).

It does rest on an important presupposition which some thinkers might question. If globalisation is to be subject to ethical assessment (favourable or unfavourable), it must to some extent be capable of change by human intention. Ethics presupposes choice and therefore if globalisation is to be ethically assessed the assessor must believe it is not an inevitable process which we can do nothing about. The fact that globalisation has so many dimensions, as I indicated earlier, strongly

favours the view that it is something we can modify the direction of if enough of us feel it should be changed. Whether it could be stopped altogether is another matter.

The globalisation of ethics however comes from a rather different starting point. The assumption here is that ethics is itself the *subject matter* of globalisation, rather than the other way round as just discussed, and just as the globalisation of production is about changes in the global economy and the globalisation of governance is about emerging new forms of governance, so the globalisation of ethics is about the ways globalisation has affected ethics. This is a fascinating question, though it is not one that is often asked.

The globalisation of ethics might mean any one of six things (maybe more):

(i) The globalisation of ethics is the process whereby the subject-matter of ethics as a recognised area of enquiry has come to include global issues and problems. Ethics has become globalised in the sense that an important part of its domain has become global. Ethics becomes or comes to include global ethics. In addition to issues in personal morality and lifestyle and issues in social and political philosophy as applied to the state and the society within it, ethics focuses on issues like world poverty, foreign intervention, immigration, international trade rules, debt relief for poor countries, global environmental problems etc. Supporting this factual claim about an area of ethical discourse, are three further claims:

(ii) The globalisation of ethics means that many individuals who did not think about ethics as global ethics at all come to think of ethics as global ethics: their ethical horizons are expanded because of exposure to what happens in the world through the media etc.

(iii) The globalisation of ethics may be a process in which many thinkers, who may always have accepted that ethics was global *in principle*, now come to see that many of its important issues are in fact global issues. Global ethics in principle becomes global ethics in practice.

(iv) The globalisation of ethics may be, in addition to (i) to (iii) and partly as a consequence of them, the process whereby ethics as reflective enquiry comes to involve modified conceptions of ethics itself – not merely the extension of pre-existing sets of values to a wider field, but a new understanding of things like responsibility (cf. Jonas 1985), community (Thompson 1992), relationships, ‘care’, neighbourhood (Commission on Global Governance 1995). None of these ideas can mean quite the same thing at a global level as at a local level or even at national level. Is there for instance a quite new sense to ‘global ethics’ itself, not as a set of beliefs held by an individual but as a shared public social reality? This leads to further more specific theses:

(v) The globalisation of ethics may be as process whereby communities come into existence with membership spread across the world in which there is a ‘shared ethic’ as a kind of social reality. We noted earlier the development of such communities of shared values earlier. What is being proposed here is an ethic in a new sense – not the sense of a set of values held by a thinker which are for that thinker global in application, but a global ethic as a public social reality, public because it is shared in the strong sense of not

just being identical but *perceived* to be shared by its members. This I shall call the communitarian conception of a global ethic.

(vi) The globalisation of ethics may go further than (iv) and be the process whereby certain values come to be accepted by all or almost all people across the world: a global ethic in this sense is an ethic which is shared universally (or nearly so). Globalisation either makes explicit commonalities already in existence or it creates the emergence of this shared universal ethic.

What should we make of these claims, both in themselves and for their relevance to development? The first three claims clearly identify a trend, and are to be welcomed as some of the more positive features of globalisation and for their implications for development. The fourth claim about the changing character of ethical concepts given their global scope is certainly important to developing the right framework in which people accept their global responsibilities. The fifth claim that there are emerging various global ethics associated with emerging communities is at best ambiguous, at worst dangerous and bad news for development – depending on how the claims are interpreted. The sixth claim about a single global ethic universally accepted would, if true, be good news for development since presumably it would include the perspectives of the poor in it. Unfortunately it's not true so let us put this on one side first.

It is a claim about something that does not or does not yet exist – though undoubtedly enthusiasts for global ethics think that globalisation is either disclosing or producing a global ethic agreed by sufficiently large numbers to count as global in this sense. Consider the *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic* of the Parliament of the World's Religions (Küng & Kuschel 1993) and the 'global civic ethic' proposed by the Commission on Global Governance (Commission on Global Governance 1995). Whether globalisation will eventually produce such an outcome is hard to tell. But if the search for a viable global ethic depends upon universal or near universal consensus then we have a long time to wait. I shall argue that the validity of a global ethic does not however depend on such consensus.

The first three can be taken together. Since from my point of view it is right to see an ethic as global and explicitly so, the fact that globalisation is leading to more people accepting a global ethic who did not before, to more people turning their global ethic held on principle into an active exercise, and the more there is acceptance that ethics as a subject is global as well as social and personal can only be a good thing. One way of put this point is to note that the globalisation of ethics has made the ethics of globalisation an important part of ethics discourse! Having said that the extension is a good thing, I have to add that much depends on the global ethic that is adopted – not all global ethics will have same benign consequences for development.

However from the point of view of development, this is to be welcomed. This is not merely that development issues gain from an explicit ethical discourse that tries to find general ethical principles underlying proper development, but more importantly because the acceptance of a global ethic will lead to looking at the whole issue of international responsibilities of individuals, states and business companies. Indeed if the global ethics has two dimensions – an assertion of universal values and an assertion of trans-societal responsibilities (Dower 1998), then the globalisation of ethics can be seen as the increasing acceptance of the latter, at least for those

who already see ethics generally as implicitly universal. I shall return to this issue again towards the end of the lecture.

The fourth aspect of the globalisation of ethics – the development of new conceptions of community, responsibility etc. – is potentially important for development, as I noted earlier, in that it shakes limiting prejudices about what morality is about. It could however be problematic for development if it is either intended to question that at a fundamental level the core ethical values were permanent, thus opening the way to relativism, or if it leads to the dangers of the communitarian conception in the fifth sense.

What shall we make then of this sense of a global ethic as an ethic shared by global communities? Is it a good thing that such communities are forming, since ethical action is more likely to be effective if it is embedded in solidarities of various kinds? The difficulty is of course that these communities that share values may not have the same values, and may have values which from one's own point of view are to be rejected or questioned. The so-called Washington consensus in this sense involved a community of like-minded development thinkers but their vision of development was one-sided. The community of international diplomats share certain values about the rights of states in the international society of states but for a full-blown cosmopolitan, these are inadequate and in a way part of the problem we have in trying to move towards a more just world, as explained more fully later. Of course if a community has the *right* kinds of values, then the fact that these values are embedded in shared practices and mutual support is all to the good.

But the communitarian position is more worrying if a further conclusion is drawn from the fact that there are multiple global ethics associated with different communities, and that is that since the validity of an ethic depends on its being accepted by a community of actors who share the ethic, they are just that – a number of different global ethics *none of which is better than any other*. The alternative interpretation of this would be to say: given that there is no single global ethic in sense (vi), the idea of a global ethic has no application. A genuine global ethic would be one which is accepted by all – since the alternative would be a 'global ethic' not accepted by all but imposed on others or applied to others who do not accept it, and this is unacceptable. So all claimed global ethics are in fact based on error.

This claim if right that there are multiple equally valid global ethics or none at all would have dire consequences for development. It would undermine all serious attempts to set out a general account of the character of a development ethic, such as Sen's capability ethic (Sen 1999) or O'Neill's Kantian ethic (O'Neill 1989), or attempts to justify development in terms of the progressive realisation of human rights. To accept such a universal ethic is not to deny that there may be significant differences in the detailed ways development is pursued. Faithfulness to cultural tradition may well be an important consequence of one of the universal values in development – that people live in accordance with their cultural values and traditions. But the acceptance of diversity within a common framework is a very different story from one in which values are relative to particular cultures or in which a global ethic is denied altogether or relativised.

It would also undermine any serious attempt to construct a principled ethical framework for understanding global and international relations. If the validity of an ethical value depends on its being accepted by a community of actors who share that value, there would be no archimedean

point from which to critique the behaviour of states or transnational companies, *if* their behaviour was based on the 'global ethic' internally accepted by those whose community it is.

We need to get back to some set of first principles for determining a global ethic, and then accept that the globalisation of ethics in senses (i) to (iii) merely makes it more likely that this ethic will be accepted. And if communities develop e.g. in the development of NGOs with the appropriate shared values, then that fact can help with the realisation of the values in question.

This general point can be illustrated by the case of global citizenship. The idea of global citizenship, particularly that of a universal community with a universal ethic, has nothing to do with globalisation and indeed goes back to the thinking of the Stoics in the ancient world; the idea was born out of reflection of the general nature of 'man' (see e.g. Heater 2000; Dower 2003). But if we look at the modern world we can see how modern communication and the emergence of global civil society has given a particular social and political expression to global citizenship and thus made it more likely that people will take up the perspective which has always been available to human beings, once they acquired the capacity to think rationally about the general conditions of human nature.

(b) Could globalisation be a good thing for development?

This leads into my second more extended issue. Could globalisation be a good thing for development? I would rather ask this question than: is globalisation a good thing for development? As things are, the answer to the latter question would have to be on balance 'no'. For all the many aspects of globalisation other than the development of the global economy, such as evolving global communities, strengthening global civil society and what is called 'globalisation from below' (Falk 1995) and the new patterns of global governance emerging, the general effect of the global economy is not good for the world poor. As Pogge forcefully argues the general effects of the global economy are that the socio-economic rights of millions are simply not being met when they could easily be met if the rules of the system were different – which they could be (Pogge 2003). Though many may reject capitalism outright as the problem (see e.g. Nielsen 2003), it is undoubtedly the case that it could work to much greater advantage for the poor if the types of constraints, taxation regimes, welfare provisions and other distributive measures, like provision of education and health care for those without the capacity to pay for them, *which are generally taken as read in a rich country* were applied to international relations.

There are of course many determinants of how well development proceeds in a country and how well a poor person can benefit from it, and these have to do with physical conditions, levels of skill, access to clean water, road infrastructure etc., but arguably amongst the determining conditions are the *ethical assumptions and priorities* that guide what agents do. These might be aid agencies working in the field or government agencies in the country in question working with poor people, with certain assumptions about what the good is or what well-being is that development is meant to deliver. It might be governments or business companies pursuing certain general priorities in regard to development because they have a certain conception of what development ought to be. It might be key figures in the governments of other countries and in international institutions who, in addition to views about what the ends and means of development ought to be, have a normative view about the right ordering of international relations, e.g. about what countries ought to do vis a vis other countries.

(i) Spheres of development ethics

Development ethics can be divided up in a number of different ways, e.g. as Gasper does into case studies, policy formation and theorising, but for my purposes here I want to divide it into the following three sets of questions:

(a) What conception of the good should inform development? Here we have the rich and fertile ground of much discussion these days in development ethics with such theories as Sen's and Nussbaum's capability approach (see .e.g. Nussbaum 2000; Crocker 1991) and O'Neill's Kantian approach, vying with each other, but also presenting these as considerably richer than more conventional accounts of the normative basis of development in terms of increasing wealth as the provider of choice or preference satisfaction.

(b) What norms should determine the social, political and economic relations in a society which most appropriately delivers the ends of development in the form of well-being? Here we have debates about libertarianism vs. Rawlsian distribution and other theories of distributive justice, as well as issues to do with appropriate forms of democracy and participation.

(c) What norms should inform the international framework within which countries pursue their development? Here we have the debates about the ethical basis of aid, trade, investment and debt relief, the normative standing of international bodies that deliver aid or support development like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and so on.

Some may doubt that the third is really a part of development ethics since it's really an ethical examination of international relations or global relations between people, not about development itself as process going on inside a given state. But if we take on board what I said earlier about the parallels between globalisation and development, this distinction may not be so obvious. Development discourse has application where policies can affect how things go for large numbers of people. 'International development' can be taken to refer to this dimension. In any case if the general socio-economic framework in a country is seen as a means towards the end of human well-being, exactly the same can be said of the international framework. It is itself another large means to development including poverty reduction or it can be a large impediment instead.

Arguably the ethical assumptions which underlie the international framework are as crucial to poverty relief as are any other ethical determinants. The two main normative obstacles are libertarianism at the global level and nationalism. Unless these are challenged and modified as the ethical ground rules of international relations and the global economy, the conditions of poor countries and the conditions of the very poor within them will remain for a long time. There may of course be some successes through general trickle-down processes, but without a large-scale turn-round, large-scale change will not happen – and yet it is perfectly possible. Its conditions are simply an ethical metanoia.

(ii) Libertarianism at the global level

As Sen argues in *Development as Freedom*, we need to distinguish between the basic truth that the freedom to enter the market and buy and sell goods and services is an important constituent of human freedom and well-being – it is an end of development not merely a means to many

other good results, and what is often advocated by economic libertarians - namely an unrestrained and unregulated free market (Sen 1999: ch. 1). For the latter fails to recognise that the real or substantive freedom of someone is not the same as his formal freedom i.e. the fact that there is no law preventing him from entering the market. Substantive freedom however, like what Rawls had called the worth of liberty, requires many background conditions to enable people to acquire and exercise the relevant freedoms – sufficient material resources, sufficient education, access to healthcare, a non-oppressive social environment and so on.

The value of a free market is to be seen in contrast to older practices like guilds, where only some could sell certain goods or only certain people could enter certain professions, it is not to be seen as a licence to do *anything*. Restrictions for instance on what I may do with dangerous waste, or on how little I may pay a worker, on accounting practices, on how much of my money is free from taxation used to finance public goods and welfare provision, are not unwanted invasions of my economic liberty: they are the framework within which my valuable freedom is exercised but which is needed so that other people can properly enjoy *their* economic freedom, their other freedoms and other aspects of their well-being.

There is battle enough I confess to get this perception on the value of economic freedom accepted within economically advanced countries – especially I realise here in the USA – the land of liberty! – but my main point is that if anything like this is accepted as the basis of the international free market, we would have a revolution in the way this operates. Far more attention would be paid to labour standards and environmental standards. Far more attention would be paid to create a genuinely level playing field e.g. in getting the rich countries to remove their subsidies if poor countries are expected to. But moving to a level playing field in which the same trade rules are applied consistently for all countries whilst a step in the right direction, is hardly enough.

A speaker once likened the level playing field to a chess match between himself and Spasky: both played by the same rules but Spasky won, and would do even if he had several piece removed at the beginning! Now the analogy is imperfect of course, since in chess if one person wins the other *must* lose, and in free market transactions there is (as Adam Smith supposed) the theory of and often the actual practice of win-win outcomes. But as we know, the reality is often otherwise particularly in north-south economic relations and the analogy of chess game is apt: the power imbalances are often too great.

So we need to go further. For examples, the profits after tax from international trade and investment go to shareholders who are mainly in rich countries, but more to the point the tax itself generally gets collected by the countries where the companies are registered. Isn't it about time we reconceptualised this? If the profits of international investment are to be taxed, shouldn't the tax be seen as collected for the benefit of the countries involved, or seen collectively put into an international 'fund' to be used, as inland revenue money is used, to finance education, health, pension and unemployment and sickness benefit and so on? This idea is of course a variation on a theme that has been explored by others before – such as the Tobin Tax (Patomaki 2001) or Pogge's Resource Tax (Pogge 2003). If that idea is too radical, what about the less radical (though still radical enough) idea proposed many years about by Barbara Ward, that international aid be reconceptualised as 'international income tax'.

(iii) Nationalism

Thinking through the implications of this lead to my next general point about the second level of values which dominate at the moment but which need challenging. – the nationalist norms. By nationalism here I do not mean a nasty-minded negativity towards other countries and cultures, but rather an assumption, which has a long history in international relations, that the primary duty of governments is to defend the national interest; and that it should do so, so long as it respects the sovereignty of other countries (see e.g. Bull 1977; Beitz 1979; Dower 2003). The idea of a tax suggested above used to benefit people world-wide would only be acceptable if we adopted a more cosmopolitan attitude, and we asked the question: what ought governments to do to facilitate the real reduction of world poverty?

Even if we did not go so far as to support some form of international income tax, governments might come to see that not only do we need to have more generous and better aid, we also need to overhaul the whole way the international economy function – since as it stands we give in aid with one hand but in effect take rather more with the other in our more general economic relations. The same can of course be said about debt servicing of the debt-burdened poor countries: if we really mean business with our aid, we would cancel the debt whose servicing more that cancels out the debt in many cases.

The morale of this is this. Just as Tacitus said ‘if you want peace prepare for war’, so we might say – and I may add more truthfully – ‘if you want the alleviation of world poverty, prepare of a new normative basis for international relations’!

(iv) Conclusion

If I am right that a major determination of how poor countries fare and how far poor people can escape from their poverty is the international normative regime and that major changes in this by moving to a less libertarian understanding of global economic relations and a more cosmopolitan basis for foreign policy could transform the former situation, *could* globalisation help with this?

Despite the actually current trends, I believe it could, though it may well not do so. Someone once said that I was a factual pessimist and moral optimist. I am the latter because I believe that we can change things for the better – hence the point of all this moral argument in this lecture! Globalisation is not a remorseless juggernaut, and is a process which we can push in one direction or another. In many ways the processes of globalisation are already loosening the shackles of the nationalist paradigm, as more and more people are entering wider communities of concern and identity and flexing their global citizenship muscles. There is also hope that as time goes on we can humanise the libertarian paradigm of the global free market, and recognise that the real freedom of all people requires a world ordered by rather different ground rules from those prevalent today.

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