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ON GILLIAN BROCK'S *GLOBAL JUSTICE: A COSMOPOLITAN ACCOUNT*

THE DECENT LIFE, EQUALITY, GLOBAL JUSTICE AND THE ROLE OF THE STATE: A RESPONSE TO LANDESMAN AND HOLDER

– Gillian Brock –

1. Introduction

I am very grateful to Cindy Holder and Bruce Landesman for providing such thought-provoking critical discussion on the work begun in *Global Justice*.[1] In this article I try to address just a few of the important criticisms raised by each author.

Bruce Landesman poses several interesting challenges. He has doubts about my commitment to equality, and so wonders whether my ultimate aims are "truly cosmopolitan". As it is unclear how much inequality I permit, my commitment to egalitarianism is in doubt, and as such commitment is central to the cosmopolitan outlook, whether my account is cosmopolitan is in question. Landesman therefore invites me to clarify the role of equality and equality of opportunity in my account of what it is to have a decent life. In addition, Landesman argues that I do not consider the arguments from reciprocity to members of our society seriously enough. He believes there is too little room in my account for showing preference to conationals. This lack of space for partiality, he thinks, will not give enough comfort to liberal nationalists. (Sitting rather in tension with the last point, however, is his claim that my view does not differ in sufficient detail from that of the liberal nationalist whose views I reject.) Landesman also invites me to clarify the floor for which I advocate as that which is sufficient for a decent life: whether it is quite low, very high, or something in the mid-range.

Cindy Holder also presents many important crticisms. She notes, for instance, that even though I seem to reject arguments from gratitude, I rely on something quite like an argument from gratitude when I argue that states are permitted to set conditions on the international mobility of health care workers, on the grounds that a state's investment in the training of such workers establishes responsibilities for those workers to ensure that some benefits accrue to states from

[1] Brock [2009].

that training. More generally, she thinks my position embraces some tensions which mean that I should clarify the role of the state in my account of global justice. She argues that my focus on institutional and policy prescriptions as candidates for compelling duties of global justice forces us to grapple with exactly what the relevance of sharing a state is and also how, in the absence of shared state structures, we are to see our options for ensuring that our institutions treat all human beings as having equal moral worth.

In the next section I discuss in more detail the content of what we owe one another and the scope for concern with inequality. As I indicate further below, my view is that when we understand all the components of what it is to have a decent life, including providing for all the needs endorsed, protecting the liberties, ensuring fair terms of co-operation and social and political arrangements that support these core ingredients for decent lives, this will commit us to a much richer picture of what we owe one another than is commonly assumed when talking of decent lives. There is also considerable scope for concern with inequality when that fuller picture is presented. So I agree with Landesman that justice cannot have as its target objective bringing people just beyond the threshold of poverty and misery. I think my account has in view a much more ambitious goal than poverty relief, as traditionally understood.

Then in section 3 I discuss and clarify the importance of a shared state in securing global justice and also how, in the absence of shared state structures, we are to see our options for ensuring that our institutions treat all human beings as having equal moral worth. There is scope for compatriot partiality and appropriate attention to non-compatriots. I explain how these can readily be combined.

2. The content of what we owe one another and scope for concern with inequality

Let us turn next to examine more closely my account of what we owe one another at both state and global level. There is space for concern with inequality and I need to say more so we can appreciate when equality matters. I agree that on the usual conception of what our basic needs are, simply meeting this bare minimum standard (as it is usually understood) would be inadequate. But my account endorses a much higher threshold of what is required for a decent life. Indeed, I have tested this rich account and found a high level of support for it. (See Appendix 1 for an outline of the version tested in fieldwork and some results.)

First, some background to situate both the debate and my position in relation to it. A dominant grounding for the egalitarian commitment to matters of justice is heavily influenced by a luck egalitarian intuition. Luck egalitarianism is a view according to which the purpose of distributive principles of justice should

be to mitigate the influence that luck has on individuals' life prospects. Consider how it is a matter of luck whether one is born into an affluent, developed country or a poor, developing nation. Yet where one happens to have been born has such an important bearing on how one's life will go. The current distribution of global wealth and opportunities does not track persons' choices and efforts but rather is greatly influenced and distorted by luck. What is objectionable here is that existing social and political institutions have converted contingent brute facts about people's lives into significant social disadvantages for some and advantages for others. Persons as moral equals can demand that any common order that they impose on one another start from a default assumption of equality and departures from this be justified to those who stand to be adversely affected.

Though I concede luck egalitarians *start* with a powerful intuition and have some quite good arguments, I reject luck egalitarianism on now familiar grounds made famous by Elizabeth Anderson in her influential article, "What is the Point of Equality?",[2] namely that the concern with equalizing luck focuses on the wrong object in attempting to address inequality. As we see with real-world egalitarian social movements, the focus should rightly be on creating *relations of equality* which have as their focus not equalizing luck but rather eliminating sources of domination and oppression that preclude standing in the right kinds of relations with one another, namely those characterized by equal respect, recognition, and power. I endorse relational equality, as I discuss in *Global Justice*, Chapter 12. The power of relational equality is under-appreciated in my view. It sometimes gets us to some quite strong commitments, indeed ones that might even converge with those egalitarians, more traditionally conceived, would endorse.

In this section I explore important ways in which the sufficientarian ideal of ensuring people have the prospects for decent lives can rightly lead to concern with equality. Even if we focus only on obligations to ensure people have enough for a decent life, this sometimes entails appropriate concern for equality. I first outline what ensuring people have the prospects for a decent life consists in on my view. I also examine how concern for equality, especially relational equality, fits into this account. Then, I briefly argue that the gap between my account and what egalitarians should rightly be concerned with may not be all that great. By appealing to Thomas Scanlon's views about when equality matters (a theorist to which Bruce Landesman also appeals), I make a succinct case for possible convergence for an important range of cases.

[2] Anderson [1999].

My aim in *Global Justice* is to develop a cosmopolitan model of global justice that takes seriously the equal moral worth of persons, yet leaves scope for defensible forms of nationalism along with other legitimate identifications and affiliations. What can we reasonably expect of one another in the domain of justice? An alternative Rawlsian-style normative thought experiment offers a systematic and vivid way for thinking through such issues (though the arguments stand alone as well).[3] The main issue delegates to a hypothetical conference must entertain concerns what *basic* framework governing the world's inhabitants we can reasonably expect to agree on as fair.[4] After considerable argument about what that entails, I endorse the following position: global justice requires that all are adequately positioned to enjoy prospects for a decent life, which requires we attend especially to enabling need satisfaction, protecting basic freedom, ensuring fair terms of cooperation in collective endeavours, and social and political arrangements that can underwrite these important goods are in place.

All four of these components constitute the basis for grounding claims of entitlement. The detail of which claims they ground is begun by considering five domains in which our entitlements can be specified in more particular terms, concerning global poverty, taxation, liberty protections, humanitarian intervention, immigration, and the global economic order. There is no easy or straightforward way to move from the four categories that describe the contours of a decent life to obligations to secure these for others. Moving from items on the list of what is needed to secure a decent life to obligations requires some significant discussion of empirical theories dealing with causes, contributory factors, and obstacles to the realisation of goals listed. It also requires discussion of mechanisms available for protecting the goods enumerated, for enforcing obligations, and the like. Some-

[3] In arguing for what we are all owed as human beings, I argue for what our reasonable expectations of one another should be, especially in situations of ongoing cooperation. The set-up of a normative thought experiment simply aims to make this more vivid to us, but the basic idea can be argued for independently of that framework. When properly set up, such thought experiments are a good way to flesh out what we can reasonably expect of one another in a way that avoids inappropriate partiality: if people do not know what positions they might find themselves in during the lottery of life, they will pay more attention to what would constitute fair arrangements.

[4] I will not be able to cover the details of the normative thought experiment here, but I can give a brief sketch of some of the main moves. An easy way to enter the thought experiment is to imagine that a global conference has been organized. You have been randomly selected to be a decision-making delegate to this conference. You are to participate in deciding what would be a fair framework for interactions and relations among the world's inhabitants. Though you have been invited to the decision-making forum, you do not know anything about what allegiances you have (or may have after the conference concludes), but you do know that decisions made at this conference will be binding. It may turn out that you belong to a developing nation, occupy a territory with poor natural resources, and so forth. Given these sorts of possibilities, you are provided with reasons to care about what you would be prepared to tolerate in a range of different circumstances.

times appropriate mechanisms to secure elements may not be straightforward or obvious, as is the case when we consider the role freedom of the press has in securing adequate protection for basic liberties. Similarly, when we consider our taxation and accounting regimes we see much scope for reforms that would better protect and secure countries' abilities to assist their citizens in meeting basic needs.

How does equality matter in my account? In virtue of the four central components of my account of global justice, equality can matter in significant ways. Recall that global justice requires that all are adequately positioned to enjoy prospects for a decent life, which entails that we attend especially to (i) enabling need satisfaction, (ii) protecting basic freedom, (iii) ensuring fair terms of cooperation in collective endeavours, and (iv) social and political arrangements that can underwrite the important goods outlined in (i) - (iii). The basic account of global justice has these four central components, which can all have implications for equality. Consider, for instance, that one of our basic needs is for autonomy, which means we must be vigilant for ways in which autonomy can be undermined by conditions conducive to domination. When inequality gives rise to such opportunities, such situations become a matter of normative concern. It is also important to emphasize that the commitment to fair terms of cooperation in collective endeavours will often entail a concern for equality. In addition to the basic account, I endorse a number of other views that have a bearing on how demanding this account is, and also how equality matters in it. For instance, I am also committed to an ideal of democratic equality. This requires that we promote standing in relations of equality with one another, notably those that promote equal respect, recognition, and power.[5]

To illustrate how all of this works in favour of a concern for equality within states, let us start with a specific form of the worry about inequality: is it permissible to provide adequate but unequal (and inferior) healthcare or education to girls in a particular society, when boys within that society receive much better healthcare or education? If a good is being provided to boys, there is much in my account that would support the view that it should be equally provided for girls. Consider the idea that democratic equality requires standing in relations of equality with one another. Standing in relations of equality with others in the same society requires equal provision of certain goods, such as voting and education. We also have a basic need for autonomy, which requires that we are vigilant for ways in which features of our societal arrangements might promote domination. Insofar

[5] Brock [2009] Chapter 12.

as boys' superior health or education fosters such opportunities, further support can be marshaled against the idea of endorsing adequate but inferior heathcare or education for girls. Support for equal provision can also be derived from the commitment to fair terms of cooperation in collective endeavours. The fourth central criterion that seeks social and political arrangements that promote the preceding three important goods would require this as well (at least in virtue of the need for autonomy and fair terms of cooperation). Unequal provision would not be consistent with a background social and political culture that appropriately expresses our equal moral worth, a commitment to promotion of our equal basic liberties or equal promotion of needs-fulfillment, fair terms of co-operation, and the like.

Concerns with relational equality, non-domination and fair terms of cooperation that often yield a concern for more equality within states attract parallel attention in the global sphere. Indeed, there is a significant need for improved global regulation as an effective and neglected way of honoring our global justice commitments. As we see then, fostering *relational equality* is the goal and distributional issues are important to that goal, but they do not and should not exhaust our concern with equality. By looking at where unequal provision does undermine standing in relations of equality with one another and where it does not, and, importantly, where other factors not related to individual holdings undermine standing in relations of equality, we are able to assemble a more nuanced account of when and how our equality matters. The argument has to be made in domain- and good-specific terms. For certain goods, equality is part of adequacy. Education and voting would seem to be paradigm cases. But equal provision need not be important for all goods. Equal provision of housing may be one example. Moreover, in many cases, relevant concern with equality should guide us towards a focus on improved regulation rather than distribution per se, since what blocks the possibility of standing in relations of equality is the exercise of unequal power. Improved regulation in the areas of taxation and accounting, securing public goods, promoting press freedom, better protecting the architecture of international justice and promoting a culture of accountability are the sorts of reforms which would have a more profound effect on promoting the kind of equality to which we should aspire.[6]

I also maintain that aiming at relational equality better captures the moral equality to which cosmopolitans are committed than rival conceptions which are exclusively attuned to distributional issues. A central component to being a cos-

[6] I argue for all of this in much detail in Brock [2009], especially Parts 2 and 3.

mopolitan is recognition of our equal moral worth and entitlement to equal respect. What is common to various formulations of cosmopolitanism is commitment to the idea that all human beings deserve moral consideration and that in some sense we should treat their claims equally.[7] The question of what it is to treat people as equals has generated an enormous literature.[8] Clearly, what such treatment involves can vary significantly depending on contexts, especially when we focus on who is distributing what to whom. Let us then focus on the global setting and assume that we are trying to establish a just global structure or just global institutions.

What is it to treat people as equals in this context? It is hard to come up with an answer that does not rely at some level on a conception of fairness, of what fair terms of co-operation might consist in, or of what counts as a fair share of burdens and benefits. For instance, to treat A as an equal with B, where A needs B's help, is for B to recognize A's reasonable demands on her, and to treat B as an equal to A is to recognize what is a reasonable view of the kind of burden A might legitimately ask B to bear and also what burdens A can be expected to assume in helping herself appropriately. However, distributional issues do not exhaust our legitimate concern with equality. Standing in relations of equality requires attention to distributional issues, to be sure, but issues of how we show equal recognition may be just as profound. Institutions that create and protect the preconditions for showing equal recognition have an enormously valuable role to play.

It is commonly held that equality matters because of its effects on power. Inequality of wealth can translate into inequality in influence and power, which can be used to entrench further inequalities through (for instance) getting to determine the rules of global institutions. So, a common reason cited as to why we should be concerned with material inequalities is that it leads to objectionable power inequalities, which can limit abilities to participate with others on equal terms. I too am concerned with the way radical inequality in holdings can undermine equality, but I argue that quite comprehensive solutions are required in order to counteract the problem. Consider a case such as the aggressive recruiting of health care workers from developing countries to work in developed ones, which has the effect of entirely stripping a community of all its health care workers. Those health care organizations that have deep pockets will have great purchasing power. If we are concerned about vulnerability to coercion or oppression, or anything else in this vicinity, why stop at regulating the distribution of resources to

[7] Miller [2007] p. 27.

[8] See for instance, Brock [2009] Chapter 12.

individuals when organizations can be so much better endowed and diminish crucial aspects of life prospects more dramatically? And why consider only inequalities of wealth, when there are many other ways inequalities can render one vulnerable to exploitation, domination, or other unfairness? If people are to be free and equal in determining the conditions of their own existence, an array of protections must be in place. When absence of public funding for electoral processes undermines political participation, when a lack of public funding is available to secure an adequate public education or health system, or when freedom of expression is threatened by a monopoly on ownership of the media, these can greatly undermine our freedom and equality. Unequal access to various resources, such as water or nuclear technology, can have a more profound impact on our abilities to be self-determining than our holdings. Inequality of holdings is just one facet of what prevents us standing in the relevant relations of equality.

It is plausible that my views converge with recommendations egalitarians *should* endorse from their preferred accounts. There is insufficient attention paid to the issue of just *when equality matters*. Equality does not always matter, as many egalitarians, of course, admit.[9] In order to make this case quite succinctly I discuss Thomas Scanlon's position. In "When Does Equality Matter?" Scanlon identifies five kinds of reasons for objecting to inequality and for seeking to eliminate or reduce these.[10] First, "we often have reason to reduce inequalities for essentially *humanitarian* reasons, because taking from those who have more is the only, or the best, way to alleviate the hardships of those who have less".[11] A second type of reason derives from concern with status: concern for reducing inequality is often merited because of the humiliating differences in status that are created. A third reason derives from concerns about power, especially, the unacceptable exercise of power of those who have more over those who have less. Fourth, there are concerns related to fairness: sometimes eliminating inequalities is necessary "to preserve the equality of starting places that is required if our institutions are to be fair. Great inequality of wealth and income can, for example, undermine equality of

[9] Darrel Moellendorf gives at least 4 kinds of cases where equality is not required. The presumption in favor of egalitarianism is defeasible – there can be morally relevant reasons for diverging from equality such as: (i) because of what some have done to harm the interests of others, some persons can deserve to have their interests given less weight, (ii) some might voluntarily consent to lesser realization of interests or absorbing higher risks, (iii) some might have different morally relevant needs requiring more resources, or (iv) offering incentives might be more beneficial for all. See Moellendorf [2009].

[10] Scanlon [2007].

[11] Ibidem, p. 15.

opportunity and the fairness of political institutions".[12] And the fifth reason is that at least sometimes "if an agency is obligated to deliver some good to various beneficiaries, it must, absent special justification, deliver it in equal measure to all of them".[13] Scanlon conjectures that these "reasons may provide a full account of the role that substantive equality has in our thinking about social justice".[14]

Scanlon's astute views seem to have helpfully identified the occasions on which we should be concerned with equality. But if these are the occasions on which we should be concerned with equality, it seems that what egalitarians *should* be concerned with converges importantly with my own view. Recall that on my account eliminating neediness, attending to situations in which people stand in relations of inequality with one another, eliminating opportunities for domination, and fair terms of co-operation (inter alia), are what should command our normative attention. These foci correspond strikingly well with the occasions Scanlon identifies as warranting attention from a more traditionally egalitarian perspective.[15]

Landesman also asks me to clarify my views about the importance of equality of opportunity, so I try to do that very briefly next. My critical views in the book about the positive ideal of equality of opportunity entirely surround the confidence we are entitled to have in our being satisfied that we *have achieved the goal of genuinely equal opportunities*. Admittedly, this is a fairly theoretical worry given our current circumstances. The concerns expressed centre on the way in which cultures' influences make difficult the calculations about whether equal opportunities are even approximated, and this is problematic for theories that make central the goal of ensuring global equality of opportunity. Though I am a bit skeptical about an over-emphasis on equality of opportunity as a stand-alone target goal of global justice, I believe equality does matter in certain important kinds of cases, especially fostering relational equality – standing in relations of equality with one another, as I hope to have shown above.

3. The role of the state in my account of Global Justice

According to Landesman, we owe a fair distribution of benefits and burdens to fellow citizens because we exist with them in a single cooperative scheme

[12] Ibidem.

[13] Ibidem, p. 16.

[14] Ibidem.

[15] Scanlon notes "The importance of eliminating stigmatizing differences in status also depends on a kind of proximity. Where people reasonably compare their lives and conditions with each other, differences in level can lead to reasonable feelings of loss of esteem" (Scanlon [2007] p. 17). This is important and again seems to place notable constraints on which inequalities matter.

in which benefits are produced and burdens borne for the production of those benefits. He notes that though I seem to reject reciprocity arguments while arguing against the liberal nationalists, I also seem to endorse reciprocity arguments in other parts of the book, namely when discussing what we owe one another in the global context. I explain how to resolve this tension shortly, but continue for now with cataloguing some of Landesman's views and critiques.

Landesman resists the idea that we are part of global cooperative schemes and therefore owe benefits more widely than nationalists or statists assume, on the grounds that the connections to members of our own states are deeper and wider still, and so give rise to stronger obligations. I agree with him when he also notes that our lives are "lived within an infrastructure without which most of the things we do would not be possible. Thus we rely or would like to rely on a well managed economy, on educational institutions, on roads, parks, libraries, on clean air and water and more. All these are provided by the actions of our fellow citizens living life together with us, especially their willingness to pay the taxes that support these goods". (Though compatriots' co-operation is certainly relevant here, I would argue that so is the co-operation of non-compatriots in securing such goods. More about this in due course, as well.) Because of the obligations of reciprocity, it seems permissible to favor the interests of fellow citizens over the interests of non-citizens, even their more urgent interests.

Landesman asks me to clarify my way of resolving the preference for co-nationals. As he points out, my view is that where appropriate institutions have been set up which have as their target ensuring that everyone's interests are adequately protected, we may then prioritise compatriots needs. Against a backdrop of globally just institutions that we cooperate in sustaining, we may act in ways that focus on compatriot needs. Landesman does not think a liberal nationalist can accept such a view. But I do not see why not. We do not have to have *succeeded* in securing justice for all. Rather, all we have to do is cooperate in establishing and maintaining the institutions that would secure justice for all. So, for instance, we need to ensure the institutions are in place to secure liberties and accountability, such as through supporting relevant institutions that promote press freedom, the architecture of international justice, transparency in resource sales, and the like. So long as we are doing our part in sustaining these institutions we are playing our role, taking up a share of the responsibility for securing global justice. Then we may turn our attention to securing also the institutions that will secure domestic justice. In reality, however, the way I see this is that we work on both objectives all the time, playing our parts in both projects. It is not a question of choosing one at the expense of the other, or which has priority, but rather doing both in a sus-

tained and interlocking way. Indeed, each can help to secure and strengthen the other project. Domestic justice is fragile in a world in which global justice is insecure. And global justice is unattainable where domestic justice is absent.

I continue to address Landesman's and Holder's concerns about the role of the state shortly, but first some relevant background might assist. I take as a point of departure that many people value their attachments to cultural and national groups. My purpose is to show how such attachments can be consistent with a commitment to global justice. So long as people are playing their part in fulfilling their obligations of global justice, there is room for legitimate attachments, such as those to compatriots. The emphasis in my view is on showing when and how the attachments are compatible with a commitment to global justice, leaving considerable discretion for nationalists or statists to then pursue nation- or state-strengthening projects and the like. So long as nations are playing their part in the regulatory reform and construction necessary to undergird global justice – such as ensuring the necessary tax and accounting reforms are enacted in their jurisdiction or that global institutions of accountability, such as a free press and the International Criminal Court, flourish through their relevant support -- it is permissible for additional resources to be spent also on further fortifying local institutions of accountability or indeed other legitimate projects that strengthen nations.

One of the important features of my account that I want to stress is that there is much that we can do to secure global justice that in no way threatens compatriots' interests, on the contrary helps fortify these. Supporting various global institutions (such as the International Criminal Court) or regulatory reforms (such as, those that would reduce tax evasion and escape), not only works to protect non-compatriots' interests, but also those of compatriots. A world in which more accountability and tax compliance and collection are promoted, benefits everyone in important ways. Too much is made of the conflicts and I want to emphasize rather the considerable scope for harmonization.

The needs I endorse as basic are derived from the prerequisites of agency – what it is to be a human agent. Analyzing these preconditions produces the following list: Sufficient physical and psychological health, security, understanding, autonomy, and decent social relations. All of these are argued to be integral to being a human agent in a number of ways. Conceptual and empirical support is offered for these claims. Enjoying decent social relations with at least some others is integral to meeting needs: as I argue, on plausible accounts of what it is to be able to function minimally well as a human agent, we have social needs, and social relations also help us meet needs, notably psychological ones, such as for connec-

tedness, intimacy, recognition, esteem, or respect.[16] The decent social relations that I see as important can take the form of cultural or national affiliations, but they need not. Consider needs such as for recognition, intimacy, esteem and connectedness. Typically these needs are satisfied, at least initially, from small-scale interactions with a few highly involved people. For some people meeting the needs might expand to include whole cultural communities, but they need not do so, and can be well satisfied by just a handful of people both initially and throughout one's life. So, the need for decent social relations can be satisfied in many and varied forms.

Some may, for whatever reason, find their psychological health intimately bound up with their nation's fortunes. Perhaps they chose an identity as fully autonomous adults that has the implication that cultural relations or national standing matters greatly to that identity, and their psychological health is badly undermined when their culture is under physical or existential threat. In so far as such cultural attachment meets a fairly low moral acceptability threshold, there is no problem in finding room for such attachment in an account of global justice.

As Holder suggests, I seem to eschew the force of the gratitude argument when arguing against liberal nationalists and yet seem to make use of it somewhat in arguing for the permissibility of imposing conditions on would-be migrants who wish to leave a state. Is there some important tension between my concern with detrimental effects of out-migration and a failure to wholeheartedly endorse the gratitude argument, the liberal nationalist position to which it seems to lead, or the role of the state in matters of justice? Let me explain why I do not think so. In many cases the losses that I identify as associated with out-migration take the form of setbacks to fundamental identifiable interests such as setbacks to health for remaining citizens, institutional losses, or lost opportunities for development. Frequently, the loss takes the form of lost opportunities for institutions to be developed or strengthened. These are serious losses because many of the important reforms that are needed to address poverty are of an institutional nature. According to the institutional view of what promotes prosperity, a key factor in addressing poverty is improving the quality of local institutions, for instance the rule of law that operates in the country, which includes institutions that provide dependable property rights, can manage conflict, maintain law and order, enable social and political stability, and sustain its regulatory capacity.[17] Institutions that promote the rule of law make for an environment conducive to growth and innova-

[16] Brock [2009] Chapter 3, especially pp. 63-69.

[17] For discussion of the institutional view and some rival hypotheses see Brock [2009] Chapter 5.

tion (which some maintain are key drivers of prosperity),[18] but also make for an environment conducive to investment in education, health, and infrastructure, all key ingredients for lifting people out of poverty. Creating better institutions is a significant component in helping people out of poverty. As proponents of the institutional view, we can object then to those activities that undermine institutions of the relevant kind without any kind of commitment to the non-instrumental importance of states.

Furthermore, we might observe that given the way the world is now, people are deeply connected to their national communities. This can be conceded without commitment to a view that national communities must have enduring value. Alternative configurations of human societies have certainly produced other attachments (to the tribe, the band, the village, the clan, and the like). And future innovations could certainly inspire others. Though I think it important to make space for national affiliation in the world we live in, I remain open to the possibility that this is but a temporary phase and may yield to another set of attachments in some transition to more cosmopolitan possibilities. National identification is not necessarily an enduring feature of the human condition, as is obvious when we reflect on the history and variety of forms of human attachment that have existed and exist today.

Having said that, the role I see for the state in our current world and for the foreseeable future is substantial. There is no question that states can and should play an important role in underwriting and securing key ingredients for a decent life. A few important points to note about this claim and Holder's and Landesman's critiques.

First, we should find force in arguments based on gratitude and reciprocity, but the point is that the boundaries of states should not act as the defensible *limit* on the scope of those to whom we have obligations of justice. In virtue of considerations of gratitude and reciprocity we have duties to a much wider set of people than we typically presume and those arguments marshaled by liberal nationalists are intended to show. The source and objects of the obligations in virtue of gratitude and reciprocity extend widely to include all humanity, since all persons' restraint and co-operation is needed to secure the most valuable goods that our well-being presupposes, such as the peacefulness and relative security which most productive and beneficial action requires.

Second, the international community can do much to fortify state's capacity to provide decent lives for its citizens and this is an important part of the work in

[18] North [1990]; Acemoglu, Johnson, Robinson [2001].

Global Justice. There are many ways in which the international community can and should provide support to states in securing decent lives for citizens, such as fortifying the architecture of international justice and accountability, reforming tax and accounting practices that thwart state's abilities to provide public goods and basic resources for its citizens, or supporting mechanisms that strengthen freedom of the press.[19]

Third, all states have internal and external responsibilities. So long as they are discharging these appropriately, they may be permitted to show further partiality towards citizens or be permitted a robust sphere for self-determination. So there is scope for partiality to compatriots so long as sufficient attention has also been paid to the responsibilities we have to provide the necessary framework in which decent lives are achievable.[20]

All in all then, states are highly valuable agents in the pursuit of global justice. Indeed, for those whose identity is importantly tied in with the flourishing of their states, states' flourishing is an important part of contributing to individual's well-being.

Appendix 1

I have been involved in a research project that engages in some empirical testing of models of well-being and what it is to have a decent life. The first phase of the research project involved testing the cross-cultural robustness of a list of capabilities. The second phase involved learning from the results of the first and testing an alternative framework, namely the one I explore in *Global Justice*, and sketched above in section 2. Here are three of the questions we asked, along with what was provided to interview subjects.

(a) Extract from interview schedule

Question 1:

A recent model of what it is to have a decent life proposes 4 major categories that deserve attention. An outline of the model follows. For each category we would like to know (a) what you think about the importance of the items listed, especially your view of the importance of failing to achieve any of these items. We would also like to know (b) whether you think there are important omissions that should be added to this account of what it is to live a decent life.

[19] For more on the details of these claims see Brock [2009], Chapters 5-13.

[20] This is discussed in more detail in Brock [2009], Chapter 11, inter alia.

I. Enabling people to meet basic needs

There are 5 important categories of basic needs that are especially worthy of attention:[21]

1) Health (both (i) physical and (ii) psychological)

(i) To be enabled to enjoy physical health

For instance:

To be adequately nourished.

To have adequate protection from the elements, such as adequate shelter would provide.

To enjoy reproductive health.

(ii) To be enabled to enjoy psychological health

For instance:

To enjoy a healthy emotional life. This involves special care in early childhood and the nurturance of key capacities such as for empathy, also being able to express and manage emotions (such as anger).

To have self-esteem, self-respect, and confidence.

To be resilient to important external stressors (being able to learn to deal with setbacks and resistance).[22]

2) Security

To feel safe and secure (for good reason), in at least some places, particularly one's home.

(See also further categories below especially II.)

3) Understanding

To think, reflect, reason, and imagine, in ways informed by adequate education.

To engage in reflection and planning about one's life.

[21] For all needs listed under Category I, these should be understood as "enabled to…". So, for instance, "enabled to be adequately nourished" rather than "to be adequately nourished". I found the continual repetition unnecessary (and perhaps to put the emphasis in the wrong place) hence the more succinct version.

[22] Note that there is much scope for our concern with relational equality to make inroads here. Consider, for instance, how radical inequality can undermine a sense of one's own value. This does perhaps put some limits on permissible inequality in virtue of our concern with creating conditions conducive to self-esteem, self-respect and the like. But it could also point to the need for developing more psychological resilience in the face of a hostile world. It is not clear which of these paths is recommended. Almost certainly both will have a role to play. Some empirical literature is relevant to making more detailed proposals.

4) Autonomy

To participate in choices that govern one's life; to have some control over one's life. To make plans for one's life. To implement some actions in response to reflection and deliberation.

5) Decent Social Relations

To have attachments to people; to love and care for those who love and care for us.

To live in a way that shows respect and concern for other human beings.

To contribute to others' well-being.

To feel supported in at least some environments; having support systems. Having people around who you can trust and rely on; not feeling alone, isolated, and unsupported.

II. Having Protection for Basic Liberties

Some of the important freedoms that need protection include:

a. Freedom from assault: being able to be reasonably secure against physical assault (including domestic violence and sexual abuse)
b. Freedom of conscience, religion, and dissent
c. Freedom of expression and speech
d. Freedom of movement: having some ability to move freely from place to place, within one's community
e. Freedom to participate in political life

III. Enjoying fair terms of cooperation in collective endeavours

For instance, agreements, policies, or institutions should endeavour to avoid exploitation and, more generally, seek to take the interests of all affected, especially the most vulnerable parties, into account, so that these are fair to everyone affected (as much as this is possible).

Some examples might be:

Laws which prescribe a minimum wage.

Laws against abusive forms of child labour.

Having fair opportunities to seek employment.

IV. Social and Political Arrangements That Support I. - III. Above

Illustrations include these:

Not being socially stigmatized. Not being discriminated against on the basis of gender, religion, race, ethnicity, and other possible areas of vulnerability.

Having opportunities for people to feel valued, acknowledged, and accepted.

Being able to enjoy balance in one's life: that there is space for work, leisure, and other important domains of life.

Question 2: Decent life – priorities

Which of the four categories listed above do you think matters most to a decent life? Are they all equally important or are some categories more important to a decent life than others?

Question 3: Equality

Do you think the notion of equality matters to what a decent life consists in? If so, how does equality matter?

(b) Some discussion of the results of these questions

The answers to Question 1(a) show excellent confirmation that the central categories of what makes for a decent life do resonate with people's experiences. Indeed, there is unanimous support that all items mentioned are important for a decent life.[23]

The answers to question 2, concerning how to prioritise the categories I through IV confirms what was hypothesized, which was that either people would say they cannot be prioritized, as they are all important, or if pressed, they would pick out category I, being enabled to meet basic needs, as especially salient. About half went for the former strategy with almost all the rest selecting category I as most important.

We also asked the questions of whether and if so, how equality matters to a decent life. At least eighty percent of our sample believed that equality does matter to a decent life. Most people think equality matters, when it does, because of relational factors – how people stand in relation to each other. It is also notable that people often mistake a concern for equality with concern for sufficiency.

[23] It is notable that there is a much higher level of support for the importance of all items indicated than in Phase I of the project in which a list of capabilities formed the basic taxonomy to be tested. In Phase I there was some variance as to whether respondents thought items important or not (the lowest item scored a 42% agreement rating as to the importance of the value of life, and while health did get a 100% agreement rating, for thirteen of the fourteen categories, some respondents disagreed that the item was important for well-being.)

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