ETHICS AND EDUCATION: TAKING GLOBALIZATION SERIOUSLY[1]

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Abstract. Central ethical concepts in education should be interpreted in a global frame, beyond the conceptual confines of the nation state. My underlying claim is that globalisation's effects and significance are profound, but that while new global practices, norms and structures are increasingly evident, developing our key ethical concepts and assumptions accordingly is limited by the narrow and outdated moral universe of the nation state. The intertwined demands of justice and democracy in education now require conceptual adjustment to meet a different world. First, the features and significance of globalisation are considered, with particular reference to globalisation in education, as well as political globalisation as indicative of the now outdated model of the Westphalian state. Secondly, a revised conception of justice based on recognition of global association is sketched and illustrated by the case of the global campaign for Education for All. Thirdly, possibilities for globally democratic decision-making after the monopoly of the nation state are outlined, advancing the discussion towards some concluding observations about the implications of the argument for the education of global citizens.

1. Introduction

Although the effects of globalisation on education have received much attention in educational research, some of its far-reaching implications are yet to be established – not least with reference to ethical issues. Taking the field of ethics as a broad one that encompasses questions of justice in access to education and of democracy in making decisions about its provision, this paper argues the case for central ethical concepts in education to be interpreted in a global frame,

[1] This paper draws in parts on work co-authored with Mary Tjiattas (see Enslin and Tjiattas, 2012 and 2015).

beyond the conceptual confines of the nation state, and it considers what this might mean. My underlying claim is that globalisation's effects and significance are profound, but that while new global practices, norms and structures are increasingly evident, developing our key ethical concepts and assumptions accordingly is limited by the narrow and outdated pre-global moral universe of the nation state. The intertwined demands of justice and democracy in education require conceptual adjustment to meet a different world, but so far they remain hampered by the influential assumptions of the Westphalian system of nation states.

Rapid globalisation is under way across many spheres, including education. Adjusting to the consequences of the globalising processes in play, which sometimes seem beyond control, demands scrutiny of the very concepts we use to discuss ethical issues, in this paper those of justice and democracy. Here I take these complementary concepts to be fundamentally about who gets what education (justice) and how the allocation of educational resources is decided (democracy). Such scrutiny reveals the need for conceptual correction, a process that has to start with the concepts associated with the framework of the Westphalian system of supposedly sovereign, territorially defined nation states which globalisation has loosened from empirical reality, though these associations were never a completely accurate way of describing the system of states (here I draw on Caporaso 2000, p. 4). While the concepts we use are supposed to group elements of our experience in such a way as to make them understandable, connecting abstraction and empirical observation, prevalent and influential assumptions about the nation state fail to do so and are no longer fruitful. Relying on the influential conception of philosophical method as analysis of how we typically *use* concepts would be inherently conservative and unequal to the task of taking globalisation seriously in the ethics of educational distribution. We need to look to new uses that match new circumstances.

In pursuit of such conceptual adjustment, the paper proceeds as follows. First, the features and significance of globalisation will be considered, with particular reference to globalisation in education, as well as political globalisation as indicative of the now outdated viability of the powerful model of the Westphalian state. Secondly, a revised conception of justice based on recognition of global association will be sketched and illustrated by the case of the global campaign for Education for All. Thirdly, possibilities for globally democratic decision-making after the monopoly of the nation state will be outlined, noting scepticism about

the idea of global democracy, advancing the discussion towards some concluding observations about the implications of the argument for the education of global citizens.

2. Globalisation: meaning and significance

Accounts of globalisation vary between differing emphases. Scheuerman's entry in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (online source) emphasises a triad: 'deterritorialization, social interconnectedness, and acceleration', which have recently become more intense due to innovations in information technologies and transportation. Communication has become instantaneous, as technology minimises distance and fosters simultaneity. So possibilities for social connection and deterritorialisation are heightened. To Scheuerman's type of primary emphasis on spatial and temporal shifts, we can contrast Meyer's (2007) preferred emphasis on globalisation as cultural and institutional. With an over-emphasis on the economic as his critical target, Meyer argues that:

> Discussions of globalization tend to emphasize economic dimensions of expanded world transactions more than is justified. They see more change in economic interdependence than really exists. More important, they understate the intensely sociocultural character of change in the modern global system. (Meyer, 2007, p. 262)

Rather than heightened levels of exchange and consequent economic integration, or the political and military interdependencies that he also acknowledges, Meyer focuses on interdependence in cultural consciousness, in what he chooses to call a world or global society, while adding that this comes nothing close to any world state. People and associations now frame themselves in global terms. Societies and states adopt policies and institutional arrangements that are globally informed (ibid., p. 263). So Meyer emphasises globalisation as cultural and institutional, citing as evidence that societies and states define themselves and their people in standardised ways as committed to economic, political, social and cultural progress, pursuing to varying degrees political, social and economic rights, including education. He cites as examples of modern world culture the authority of science, collaborative peacekeeping efforts, a culture of regulation, e.g. in monitoring elections, corruption watchdogs, as well as global movements for human rights and the environment. Educational systems increasingly adopt similar models in policy, organisation, curriculum and enrolment (ibid., p. 267).

So, as examples of these globalising trends, he notes that women's enrolment has expanded, curricula emphasise maths and science, and English is a lingua franca. As mass primary school enrolments aspire towards universal access, citizens are educated to develop a country's human capital.

That many governments explicitly pursue educational policies intended to make their domestic economies more competitive is, however, evidence that globalisation nonetheless occurs across and between nation states pursuing their own interests and still politically defined as separate political and moral spheres. This definition now demands critical scrutiny. Scheuerman's analysis draws to our attention the fundamental challenge that globalisation's deterritorialisation and intensified interactions present to traditional assumptions about nation states as bounded communities. Clear distinctions between domestic and foreign are no longer consistent with actual social relations and so we 'need to rethink key questions of normative political theory' (Scheuerman: online source).

The historical framework of the Westphalian system of states dates to the signing of two treaties in 1648 (of Osnabruck and Munster) that ended the Thirty Years War in Europe. Signatories agreed to respect the territorial integrity of bounded states, within which rulers would exercise sovereign authority without outside interference. This system developed and shifted internally over centuries, with additional layers of meaning added later, as national identities were fostered, roughly more or less to match separate states, and the franchise was extended to include a widening pool of citizens. As relatively recent modern conceptions of citizenship took hold and sovereign nation states became the locus for political rights and duties, their borders came to be understood as boundaries of moral obligation. In many instances these borders replaced those of the village and the tribe, though even that process is far from universally complete. But with the growing global association across these boundaries, as the result of the forms of integration we have noted as comprising globalisation, has come the *de facto* decline of the authority of the state over a clearly delineated territorial community.

Of course, the Westphalian state is at least partly a myth. Very much European in origin, its vaunted principles were hardly respected by European colonial powers in the age of imperial expansion. Even in the postcolonial era, richer mainly western powers have effectively continued to construct and benefit from the global order that prevails between supposedly autonomous, independent states. And while Westphalian principles of national sovereignty are routinely

invoked, they are also observed in the breach, as demonstrated in the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. In the failed states and the poorest members of the international system of states, there is limited government authority at best. Elements of political and economic globalisation, including voluntary agreements on international co-operation and the fact that states have also involuntarily ceded some of their authority to largely unaccountable international corporations, add up to a dilution of the state's monopoly on power. The movement of money, people and disease across borders is difficult to control. But the hold of the consequential though largely uncontested Westphalian concept of the state remains strong and its presence makes thinking about justice and democracy beyond this immediate bounded context initially difficult because this seems implausible. Yet it is important to stress that I am not, in raising the question of the status and future of the nation state, arguing its irrelevance or calling for its dismantling. It continues to play the primary role, in states that are functional, in maintaining order, collecting taxes, and funding services including education. But it has also outlived the circumstances that produced its long-time conceptual identity. The Treaty of Westphalia was signed to meet specific conditions in a war-torn and post-medieval but pre-industrial Europe, though in a context already starting to change. While the future of the nation state in a global order is hard to predict, my critical interest is in its associated conceptions of justice as owed to fellow national citizens and democracy as largely about periodic elections of national governments and the need for their conceptual alteration, in the present discussion in relation to education. We begin with justice.

3. Justice

Global integration requires a revised conception of justice based on a principle of association beyond the physical, political and conceptual boundaries of nation states. These have long been taken to limit obligations to those outside the borders of the state. The practices, institutions, agreements, agencies and networks that now criss-cross the globe ground a new ethical framework for deliberation about who should get what and how this should be decided. In education, such questions ought now to be addressed in a wider frame than the nation state, if justice and democracy are accepted as key ethical principles in addressing the distribution of education.

The principle of association is fundamental to our assumptions about who is owed duties of justice. Increasing evidence of emerging international institutions and agencies suggests that even if it is not in place yet, we are on the way to realising a global basic structure of some form – even if it is not likely to be simply a much larger nation state. While a non-relational principle of global justice could be based on recognition of the common humanity of all, regardless of whether any human engagement is involved, many cosmopolitan theories of justice resist this alternative. For Moellendorf '...justice is a property of social and political institutions so duties of egalitarian distributive justice don't exist between persons merely in virtue of their personhood' (Moellendorf, 2009, p. 32). Duties of social justice, including duties to construct and support egalitarian institutions, do not fall immediately out of rights to inherent dignity, but depend on the kind of association that generates them (ibid., p. 75).

A revised principle of association that acknowledges the fact of globalisation rests on a much expanded set of relations based on interdependence and shared membership of institutions and schemes of co-operation (Cohen & Sabel, 2006). Cohen and Sabel identify global politics as the 'terrain of moral-political argument' (ibid., p. 148), insisting that even if historically there was an intimate connection between justice and the state, it is now mistaken to assign such a fundamental role to the state. They recast the notion of inclusion as central to the wider frame of global justice:

> Conceptions of global justice offer accounts of human rights, standards of fair governance, and norms of fair distributions (including access to such basic goods as health and education). Competing conceptions can be understood, then, as advancing alternative accounts of what inclusion demands: of the kind of respect and concern that is owed by the variety of agencies, organizations, and institutions (including states) that operate on the terrain of global politics. (ibid., p. 149)

The wide range of relations that comprise this terrain now operate in: trade, financial regimes, the environment, labour relations, human rights, collective security, peacekeeping, health, education, and the International Criminal Court. That such forms of co-operation and accompanying norms are already in play can be seen in global developments in education since the middle of the twentieth century. Even in education, though policy and provision are still largely under the control of nation states, this is no longer a matter of separate nation states developing and implementing their own norms in a way that is closed off from those

affected by the behaviour of their citizens and institutions. Those non-citizens also affected by the forms of association that connect them are implicated too and so eligible for considerations of justice.

The establishment of UNESCO after the Second World War as a specialised agency of the United Nations Organisation (UN) triggered this co-operative, organisational and normative shift in education. As the body tasked with the role, from 1948 onwards, of fostering global security and peace through education conceived as a human right, UNESCO pursued the global development of education in collaboration with other UN agencies like the UNDP and UNICEF. With an institutional design based on a principle of multilateral collaboration, UNESCO set out to support co-operation with governments and later with non governmental agencies too. Although its earlier work was vulnerable to the criticism that international co-operation in education was uncoordinated and tended to be dominated by western agencies and governments while allowing limited roles for local governments and recipients of aid to actively manage their own development (Mundy, 2006), this nonetheless constituted a shift towards a more globally organised and justice-oriented international educational regime.

The campaign for 'Education for All' marked a further shift from the 1990s towards a more co-ordinated and extensive form of global collaboration in education. Arguing that this campaign signalled a very different regime, Mundy observes:

> The idea of 'education for all' has become part of a broadly based consensus about 'what works' among bilateral and multilateral development agencies. It is also a rallying call for heads of state and international financial institutions, a focus for transnational advocacy, and an arena of expanding development practice characterized by widespread experimentation with new modes of aid delivery, new kinds of donor-recipient relationships and relatively high volumes of aid spending. (ibid., p. 24)

The goal established at the World Education Forum held in 2000 in Dakar reflects a common commitment to universal basic education for all, emphasising that education is a human right in all societies. The universal norm of providing free, compulsory primary education for all children by 2015 (UNESCO 2000) marked the adoption of a significant global principle in the provision of educational opportunities. 'Education is a fundamental human right. It is the key to sustainable development and peace and stability within and among countries, and thus an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies

of the twenty-first century, which are affected by globalisation' (UNESCO 2000, Article 6). In urging universal educational provision, the earlier Jomtien Declaration had similarly described the basic need for learning as a universal responsibility.

On the campaign's universal norm of justice in education rests its consequent call for redress of economic disparities between countries. The campaign for Education for All identified the unequal distribution of resources as key to the global disparities in education, calling on the global community to make increased resources for education in poorer countries a priority. Although the campaign focused attention on the provision of primary education, and even though the goals of the campaign look unlikely to be fully met in all countries, the significance of these developments for the purpose of the present argument is clear: that a global basic norm had been agreed, alongside the principle that the availability of resources for education is an issue of global justice. In this respect the principle is a more expansively conceived one, more widely cast than a basic principle of association might be expressed, as it suggests obligations of educational justice among all states.

The shared norms and priorities of the EFA campaign have led in turn to the setting of monitored, measurable targets, crucially that of universal primary education by 2015. Mechanisms to coordinate donor activity suggest that 'UPE is steadily being recognised by rich governments as a global public good in need of collective rather than unilateral action' (Mundy 2006, p. 38). A further significant shift, confirming the growth of global collaboration is the involvement of new actors in educational development: beside national governments and organisations like UNESCO, these now include the private sector, advocacy networks, unions and international NGOs. A wider range of players now participates in policy development and monitoring, in a reshaped 'global architecture of education' (Jones, 2007) whose global scope transcends the previous authority structures tied exclusively to nation states. This transnational configuration of organisations, agencies and communities 'culminated in the turn of the century summits that produced the Millennium Development Goals reflecting commitments by broad international communities, not just collaborating states' (ibid., p. 330). The ongoing problem of a lack of resources in poorer countries is emphasised in annual EFA Monitoring Reports (e.g. UNESCO 2008) prompting calls for increased international support for the campaign. This emphasis on justice in redistribution of resources from the richest to the poorest countries is further evidence that

a global principle of educational justice is well established, even if far from achieved. Its limited success so far, far from proving that the principle of educational justice across states is incoherent, mirrors arguments against domestic inequalities in educational opportunity and achievement within nation states.

To my claim that these developments imply a required conceptual correction, from a state-bound conception of justice to an emergent global conception, it might be objected that the example of EFA does demonstrate increased international co-operation but that ultimately the notion of justice is tied to the motivations of individuals, and that the boundaries of the nation state inevitably define the limits of solidarity and hence restrict citizens' moral horizons that still tie the meaning of justice to a domestic frame. But there is evidence that these ties are loosening. Gould (2007) proposes a revised conception of solidarity as social empathy that goes beyond the historical meaning that presupposed a relationship within single group, to include the forms of transnational solidarity now evident. Shared commitments to justice in cross-border relations (p.156) show an affective recognition of the plight and needs of distant others and a willingness to support them, as in the response to the 2004 Tsunami.

A specifically educational example of such solidarity is public donation in support of Oxfam's various educational initiatives (http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education). The assumption that national identity delimits the bounds of obligations to one another is increasingly questionable on empirical grounds. Relatedly, national membership does not persuade citizens of a common nation state to voluntarily share the burdens of providing resources for services like education. As Weinstock (2009) argues when discussing possibilities for global justice and democracy, the coercive power of the state has to be used in all modern states to require citizens to pay their taxes. 'We simply do not have enough evidence to support the ambitious claim that co-nationals are naturally disposed to share with one another in ways that people from different countries are not' (2009, p. 94). Furthermore, domestic disagreements about moral values and so about distributive justice are rife in liberal democracies and are no more amenable to resolution than they are in the international context (Miklos, 2009, p. 109). A more prudential acknowledgement that the domestic-foreign divide is disintegrating concedes that inequalities in resources and political instability in the poorest and most troubled countries are a threat to peace and prosperity of rich countries. So self-interest may drive willingness to act for global justice.

The richest countries are aware that they are threatened by global poverty, which increases health, security and environmental risks to their citizens (Weinstock, 2009, p. 100). 'There are, in other words, "global public goods" – that is, goods that the world's richest countries cannot obtain unless the needs of the global poor are catered to as well' (ibid., 2009, p. 98).

Shifts in political motivation towards global justice also have implications for the possibility and importance of transnational democracy. Exclusion from decision making about matters that directly affect them is an injustice to individuals, groups and societies that enjoy fewer resources and less influence over their distribution; such injustice reproduces other injustices. An obvious means to address injustice is through more democratic ways of allocating resources, hearing the demands for justice of those who get less.

4. Democracy

Having addressed potential statist objections to the argument for global justice, we now need to consider a similar objection to the parallel proposal that democracy too ought to be freed of the state-centred logic of Westphalia, while looking to possibilities for post-Westphalian democracy.

Adopting the term 'democratic justice', Marchetti argues that: '...true political justice is fundamentally entrenched in a procedural and multilayered democracy, within which all individuals can advance their claims and complaints in order to defend their freedom of choice' (2008, pp. 1-2). Democracy is either global, he insists, 'or it is not democracy' (ibid., p. 1). Since interpretations of both justice and democracy are likely to continue to operate in both largely domestic but increasingly global arenas, for now this may be an overstatement, but Marchetti has an important point to make about the urgency of conceptual alteration in loosening democracy from its historical development as a modern layer of the states system. In truth, the development of transnational theories of democracy is not as far advanced as is the literature on global justice, but there is no shortage of proposals for preferred models and their predicted development. What is clear is that our thinking about democracy remains in thrall to national elections: 'Wherever we look, the electorally oriented, vote-centric model really does seem to dominate practical political discourse on democracy' (Goodin, 2010, p. 176).

Those ready to dismiss the very idea of global democracy as preposterous have often taken it as axiomatic that it must mean world government, or at least an assembly elected by all citizens of all countries. Neither is necessary to a theory of global democracy, though it is worth noting that Held's (1995) theory of cosmopolitan democracy has proposed an elected assembly as an additional UN structure. Various possibilities for world government are still taken seriously by some and less easily dismissed by their critics. But taking a long view of global democratisation as a process in its early stages, we would do well to follow Goodin's advice (2010) and to look for first rather than final steps in this process, bearing in mind that historically democratisation of the nation state took five or six centuries. To pay too much a-historical attention to the extension of the franchise, and so to democracy understood as popular elections to a national assembly, with citizens requiring accountability of their national government in their own domestic sphere of authority, is to risk ignoring the historical processes that led to the curbing of arbitrary power and gradually rendered the holders of power accountable for their conduct. These are crucial steps towards domestic democracy, as they are transnationally. The powers that affect citizens cross borders, be they the influence wielded by stronger governments than their own or the unaccountable actions of multinational corporations acting beyond governmental or popular accountability. Nor are citizens dependent on national elections to express their will; global networks and organisations offer other means to do so.

But what alternatives to state-centred structures or practices are possible? Several options have been put forward so far and they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Some theorists turn to the European Union (EU) as suggesting what a transnational democratic order might be like. Cohen and Sabel (2004, p. 158) see the EU as such a 'nascent political order', with democratic potential in its web of problem-solving procedures. Similarly, though acknowledging that there is room for further development, Bohman describes the EU as 'an ongoing experiment in political integration' (Bohman, 2007, p. 172) that has produced innovations in deliberation and a transnational institutional design with further potential for democratisation towards a transnational order. Its progress in fostering human rights is held up as particularly praiseworthy. 'With the recognition of the full range of human rights of all persons within a complex and differentiated institutional structure, the EU shifts from a regional to a cosmopolitan polity' (ibid., p. 150). Habermas has given much attention to European integration

within a model of global governance (2009). Globalisation, especially global markets, necessitates a form of political regulation above the national level. Habermas calls not for a world government that supersedes nation states but for a form of supranational transnational regime to complement nation states that could regulate matters of collective concern like global economic crises. Asking how public communication could operate above the national level, in a Europe-wide public sphere, he envisages a deliberative model of transnational democracy and an associated Europe-wide public sphere. In spite of the crisis of the Euro, it can still plausibly be argued that the current crisis of financial regulation will accelerate the growth of institutions that will ultimately deepen European political integration. The EU remains an institutional example that stretches traditional conceptions about the meaning of democracy. This view has its critics and it is important to note, for example, Scheuerman's position that '...the realization of a global federal republic, or even a federal Europe, seems politically unrealistic today' (2009, p. 59), and his caution that democratisation beyond the nation state poses many difficulties and is a long term project. Arguing from a rather different critical angle, Goodin cautions that 'When it comes to the global polity, we are still very much in the *early* days – both of developing a global polity, and still more of democratizing it' (2010, p. 179).

Goodin's more cautious assessment points to various international 'accountability mechanisms' as evidence of the growth of 'networked governance', which he describes as comparable with those present in the early phases of domestic democracy. He cites as examples professional associations and policy networks, which comprise communities now able to assert norms transnationally in monitoring the conduct of governments, NGOs, INGOs and private bodies. Instead of supporting the more visionary predictions about future transnational political structures, Goodin prefers to advance the idea of a 'slippery slope' towards global democratic inclusion, attributing to the 'stickiness' of democracy potential for further widening mechanisms of accountability.

Other possibilities on offer in the debate about possible and preferred future directions for global democracy focus on the potential of deliberative democracy. Bohman's recent work (2009) turns to the potential formation of publics, drawing on public sphere theory, which is an influential presence in current theories of global democracy. Bohman's sustained explorations look to a conception of 'distributed deliberation', rather than civil society, as offering the best potential

for democratisation as the kind of 'communicative freedom across borders' (ibid., p. 149) that could successfully challenge political domination. Enabling NGOs to monitor institutions' performance and to rally cross-border public opinion, the public sphere thus understood is exemplified in the work of, say, Amnesty International and anti-whaling groups. Technologically mediated public communication can advance what Bohman calls multiple *demoi* that enable citizens to deliberate. Pointing to the obvious example of the internet, Bohman also cites emergent practices in the EU, such as the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), that enable citizens to simultaneously debate EU policies with citizens elsewhere in Europe.

It seems likely that global democracy will develop across multiple sites and practices, but that controversy about the extent to which the conceptual dominance of the nation state has been loosened and what might replace it does not reduce the salience of the case against the monopoly of the Westphalian conception of political authority, justice and democracy. Although none of the emergent possibilities has clinched the argument, there is no shortage of possibilities. As a central democratised authority is unlikely to emerge, it is likely that democratisation of global governance will be piecemeal and partial, with a continuing role for the nation state even as its dominance recedes. Wherever efforts to promote transnational democracy are ultimately concentrated, it is evident that the ways we conceive of democracy in the ethics of education need to shift beyond the conceptual straightjacket of the nation state.

5. Education

Taking globalisation seriously, I have argued, requires conceptual correction, altering our understanding of both justice and democracy to accommodate the expanding global frame in which ethical assumptions and decisions now operate. Although, as the EFA campaign demonstrates, conceptual alteration is now evident in the transnational norms, structures and initiatives in pursuit of universal primary education, actual progress towards global justice in education to date is modest. Global access to education falls a very long way short of equal opportunities in early years, secondary, further, and higher education – and improved access to primary education still varies widely in quality and outcomes.

The fact of vast global inequalities in educational opportunities, dictated by the accident of where people are born, is both a consequence and on ongoing

cause of economic inequalities between nation states. These in turn are at least partly a result of a global history that includes northern enrichment at the expense of southern poverty. Some countries thus have the advantage in developing their citizens as human resources that support competitive national economies in global markets. Their populations will also enjoy growing advantages in acquiring the skills needed to access and use the global mechanisms and publics that comprise emergent transnational democratic structures and practices. If economic prosperity and higher levels of education are more conducive to democracy, educational inequalities between nation states are of huge significance to global justice and to the relative capacities of citizens in different nation states to assert demands for resources and redress through democratic structures, whether by using domestic institutions or in access to global mechanisms and publics. So great are the disparities at stake that even anti globalisation activity, ironically of a kind organised on global scale (see Meyer, 2007, p. 270) and using the technologies at the heart of globalisation, is the preserve of those schooled in the discourse of human rights, ICT skills and democracy. Beyond these elites, the 'utterly peripheral people who are outside the sweep of globalisation, in the current world, are almost invisible' (ibid., p. 270). A state-centred logic in the ethics of education is inadequate to thinking seriously about such injustice.

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