

THE STATIST IMPLICATIONS OF COSMOPOLITAN COMMITMENTS

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Questions of global institutional design have become prominent of late. Much of this work has been initiated by cosmopolitans seeking to work out the practical implications of their claim that duties of justice have global scope. Many cosmopolitans argue that global institutional arrangements should include at least some suprastate institutions that can legitimately constrain the activity of states in pursuing cosmopolitan moral objectives. Contrary to this, I argue that cosmopolitan moral commitments require a system of sovereign states in important cases. In general, this is a familiar refrain. Principled statisticians such as Blake and Sangiovanni argue that cosmopolitan moral commitments entail limiting the scope of distributive justice to states, while Goodin and Ypi argue that certain pragmatic considerations imply that cosmopolitan moral objectives are most effectively realized by a system of states.¹ I present a stronger version of this pragmatic argument, emphasizing the ways in which cosmopolitan institutional arrangements can undermine our capacity to achieve cosmopolitan goals in certain respects. Put differently, I argue that cosmopolitan institutional arrangements can be *self-defeating* in important cases.

My argument depends on a widely held explanation of successful economic and political development. According to this theory, successful development occurs when a state's institutions restrain rulers from predatory behavior and compel them to provide public goods, such as rule of law, public infrastructure, and investment in human capital. Specifically, successful development occurs wherever two conditions are met: first, state rulers depend on the cooperation of some citizens to pursue the former's objectives (e.g., to retain power); second, the citizens on whose cooperation the ruler depends have credible "exit options," that is, they can withhold their cooperation without making themselves worse off than they would be were they to cooperate with the ruler.² Given this

1. Michael Blake, "Distributive Justice, State Coercion, and Autonomy," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 30, no. 3 (2001): 257–296; Robert E. Goodin, "What is So Special about Our Fellow Countrymen?" *Ethics* 98, no. 4 (1988): 663–686; Andrea Sangiovanni, "Global Justice, Reciprocity, and the State," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 35, no. 1 (2007): 3–39; Lea Ypi, "Statist Cosmopolitanism," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 16, no. 1 (2008): 48–71.

2. Citations to the relevant literature appear below in sec. 3.

theory, I argue that certain cosmopolitan arrangements undermine rulers' dependence on citizens — thus stifling successful development — whereas preserving a system of sovereign states maintains these conditions. Two prominent examples are international redistributive schemes and practices or institutions that weaken state sovereignty norms, such as humanitarian intervention or conditioning sovereign recognition on moral criteria. In the first case, cosmopolitan institutions undermine the recipient ruler's reliance on citizens for revenue; in the latter, they turn rulers' attention to satisfying outsiders' demands, potentially at the expense of citizens' demands. This is significant because successful development is the most effective means for actually realizing cosmopolitan moral objectives, viz., to protect people's rights and increase their well-being.

1. FROM MORAL TO INSTITUTIONAL COSMOPOLITAN

Cosmopolitans share a basic commitment to the following moral claim:

The Cosmopolitan Commitment: All human beings enjoy equal status as the fundamental units of moral concern and the interests of each should thus be extended equal concern and respect by all other human beings.³

Following Pogge, I highlight some important features of this commitment.⁴ First, it confers *ultimate* moral status on *individual human beings*; cosmopolitan political morality is at bottom concerned with the quality and trajectory of *individuals'* lives. Second, the claim has *global scope*, in two senses. Ultimate moral status is shared *equally* by *all*, regardless of differences in race, gender, nationality, religion, or citizenship. In addition, the responsibilities it generates are perfectly *general*; the obligation to extend equal concern and respect to each person's interests falls equally to all.

The generality of the cosmopolitan commitment leaves much room for differences to emerge among cosmopolitans. For example, cosmopolitans differ with respect to the moral theory they take to generate cosmopolitan duties, from utilitarianism,⁵ to contract

3. Cf. Simon Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders: A Global Political Theory*, *Justice Beyond Borders: A Global Political Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Thomas W. Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, *World Poverty and Human Rights* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2002); Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 1, no. 3 (1972): 229–243.

4. The following draws from Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, 169.

5. Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality."

theories,⁶ to various rights-based theories.⁷ Cosmopolitans also differ with respect to the objectives they take as fundamental: to promote and protect individual autonomy,⁸ to promote welfare,⁹ to promote capabilities,¹⁰ to fulfill human rights,¹¹ or to satisfy basic needs.¹²

Suppose we accept the cosmopolitan commitment. What implications does this have for international institutions? Specifically, how should we design international institutions to fulfill this commitment? Not surprisingly, cosmopolitans disagree on this question too. Regarding the depth and breadth of institutional change required to fulfill cosmopolitan principles, we can place cosmopolitans along a continuum. At one end, are those who reject the need for global institutional change or propose only modest *ad hoc* changes to address specific issues.¹³ At the other end of the spectrum are those who advocate a centralized global political authority modeled on the modern federal state.¹⁴ In between these extremes, we find advocates for institutional restructuring at varying levels of depth and breadth. Closer to the middle, we find limited proposals such as Brock's suggestion of global taxation schemes to more effectively realize cosmopolitan distributive principles, Moellendorf's proposal to democratize the World Trade Organization, or Buchanan's plan to institutionalize the preventive use of interstate military force.¹⁵ Between this "limited institutional cosmopolitanism" and the world state, we find cosmopolitan democrats,

6. Charles R. Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations*, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Thomas W. Pogge, *Realizing Rawls*, *Realizing Rawls* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989); Darrel Moellendorf, *Cosmopolitan Justice* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002).

7. Luis Cabrera, *Political Theory of Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Case for the World State* (New York: Routledge, 2004); David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995); Henry Shue, *Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).

8. Held, *Democracy and the Global Order*.

9. Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality."

10. Martha C. Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

11. Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*; Shue, *Basic Rights*.

12. Onora O'Neill, *Bounds of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

13. Singer's or Shue's calls for greater foreign aid are examples of the latter; see Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"; Shue, *Basic Rights*.

14. Cabrera, *Political Theory of Global Justice*.

15. Gillian Brock, *Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Account* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Darrel Moellendorf, "The World Trade Organization and Egalitarian Justice," *Metaphilosophy* 36, nos. 1/2 (2005): 145–162; Allen Buchanan and Robert O. Keohane, "The Preventive Use of Force: A Cosmopolitan Institutional Proposal," *Ethics & International Affairs* 18, no. 1 (2004): 1–22; Allen Buchanan, "Institutionalizing the Just War," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 34, no. 1 (2006): 2–38.

who propose creation of a network of interconnected and overlapping agencies, with authority being dispersed both vertically (from local bodies through to global bodies) and horizontally (dispersing issue-specific policy-making authority among a plurality of distinct organizations).¹⁶

Fortunately, these differences need not detain us. Excepting the few cosmopolitans who reject the need for institutional reform at the global level, we can discern an argument with the following common structure.

- (1) The cosmopolitan commitment generates an obligation to realize *the cosmopolitan objective*.
- (2) *Cosmopolitan institutional arrangements* are required to realize *the cosmopolitan objective*.

Therefore,

- (3) The cosmopolitan commitment generates an obligation to establish *cosmopolitan institutional arrangements*.

The italicized phrases are meant to operate as variables in the argument. *Cosmopolitan objective* ranges over the values enumerated above—i.e., welfare, rights, needs, etc. *Cosmopolitan institutional arrangements* are a function of the chosen objective and our causal judgments; we arrive at particular institutional prescriptions by asking what sort of arrangements are causally necessary to realize the chosen objective. The salient feature of the specified argument structure is that it employs *instrumental reasoning*; some particular institutional form is required by the cosmopolitan commitment because the former is required to fulfill the latter.

To see this instrumental reasoning in action, it might help to present some examples of the argument schema filled out. Consider Cabrera's argument:

- (1) The cosmopolitan commitment generates an obligation to fulfill individuals' right to self-development, which requires sufficient resources and opportunities.¹⁷
- (2) A democratic world state is required to fulfill individuals' right to self-development.¹⁸

Therefore,

16. Held, *Democracy and the Global Order*; cf. Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders* and Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, ch. 7. The term "limited institutional cosmopolitanism" comes from Cabrera, *Political Theory of Global Justice*, 2.

17. For more on Cabrera's rights-based moral theory, see *ibid.*, ch. 3.

18. Cf. *ibid.*, 2.

- (3) The cosmopolitan commitment generates an obligation to establish a democratic world state.

Or consider Pogge's argument:

- (1) The cosmopolitan commitment generates an obligation to fulfill individuals' human rights.¹⁹
- (2) A tax on global resource extraction (or eliminating the international borrowing and resource privileges) is required to fulfill individuals' human rights.²⁰

Therefore,

- (3) The cosmopolitan commitment generates an obligation to implement a global resources tax (or to eliminate the international borrowing and resource privileges).

To reiterate: for my purposes here, the key feature of the reasoning just presented is that it is thoroughly instrumental in nature—the cosmopolitan commitment morally requires the specified institutional arrangements because those arrangements are causally required to fulfill the implications of the cosmopolitan commitment.

(One might object that some institutional cosmopolitan arguments do not fit the specified schema so neatly; Held's cosmopolitan democracy comes to mind. With Held, the reason for concern is that he does not start with the cosmopolitan commitment stated above. Instead, he starts with a commitment to *individual autonomy*, which does not necessarily generate duties with global scope. In effect, persons should enjoy equal rights to participate in the political processes that shape their lives; to whom it falls to fulfill this commitment is left open.²¹ From this starting point, Held arrives at cosmopolitan democracy via the following line of reasoning: (1) democratic institutions are required to fulfill individuals' equal interest in autonomy; (2) in our interconnected world, cosmopolitan democratic institutional arrangements are required to sustain democracy;²² (3) “[a] commitment to the principle of autonomy entails a duty to work towards the establishment of an international community of democratic states and societies committed to upholding democratic public law within and across their own boundaries.”²³ The objective to be

19. Pogge discusses his view of human rights in more detail in Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, ch. 2.

20. On a global resource tax, see Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, ch. 8; cf. Thomas W. Pogge, “An Egalitarian Law of Peoples,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 23, no. 3 (1994): 195–224. On reforms to the borrowing and resource privileges, see Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, chs. 4, 6.

21. For further discussion of this principle, see Held, *Democracy and the Global Order*, 147.

22. Cf. *ibid.*, 226, 232, 267.

23. *Ibid.*, 229.

realized by cosmopolitan institutions is a local rather than cosmopolitan objective — the flourishing of democratic forms of government. But we can still group Held together with other institutional cosmopolitans, as his reasoning regarding the need for cosmopolitan democracy is clearly instrumental.)

Before moving on, we must get clear on what is meant by *cosmopolitan* institutional arrangements. Caney starts us off well: a “cosmopolitan political programme [is] one in which there are democratic suprastate institutions charged with protecting people’s civil, political, and economic rights.”²⁴ Set aside the emphasis on individual rights (we could just as easily replace “rights” with capabilities, interests, or needs, *mutatis mutandis*). The salient point here is that cosmopolitan institutional arrangements involve at least some suprastate institutions. Let’s define suprastate institutions as those institutions that have global jurisdiction with respect to some issues and are granted authority (1) to undertake initiatives in service of cosmopolitan objectives and (2) to legitimately constrain the activity of states in pursuing those objectives. It’s important to note just how weak this definition is; to count as a cosmopolitan institutional proposal, there must only be *some* suprastate institutions who have authority over *some* issues and that only *constrain* state activity, but do not necessarily coerce compliance. Importantly, this weakness opens space for cosmopolitan arrangements to involve global institutions whose authority is less supreme or comprehensive than that of a world state. An entity has *supreme* authority over an issue when its word is the final word on the issue; an entity has *comprehensive* authority when its authority extends to all issues within the relevant jurisdiction (e.g., state, province, region).²⁵ To count as a cosmopolitan institutional proposal, the proposed global institutions need neither be supremely authoritative nor possess comprehensive authority. They need only possess authority over the issues relevant for fulfilling the chosen cosmopolitan objective; and the force of their authority need only be sufficient to make it costly for the relevant agents (e.g., states, corporations) to fail to discharge their duties to fulfill the chosen cosmopolitan objective.

Reducing a large class of institutional cosmopolitan arguments to the foregoing schema permits us to evaluate those arguments as a class. The institutional design question focuses on the second premise: *are cosmopolitan institutional forms required to realize cosmopolitan objectives?* Conceived in the preceding way, it’s natural to think that cosmopolitan institutional arrangements are indeed required to realize any worthwhile cosmopolitan objective. Consider the reasons surveyed by Caney.²⁶

24. Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders*, 149; cf. Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, 169.

25. Cf. Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders*, 149ff.

26. See *ibid.*, 159–160.

- *Compliance.* Global political authorities are required to ensure that the relevant agents will comply with the demands of global principles of justice.
- *Collective action.* Authoritative global institutions are required to help the relevant agents overcome collective action problems and therefore ensure adequate provision of global public goods.
- *Checks.* Authoritative global institutions can reliably “check the power of states and are more protective of liberty than a purely statist framework.”²⁷

On their face, these seem like strong reasons to accept the claim in the second premise above.

Below, I present reasons to reject the claim that cosmopolitan institutional forms are required to realize cosmopolitan objectives. But I won't do this by simply rejecting the arguments given in its favor. In fact, I want to change the terms of the debate. As posed above, the institutional design question presupposes that cosmopolitan institutional forms can effectively realize cosmopolitan objectives and proceeds to ask whether they are necessary to do so. I challenge this presupposition. We should instead ask: *Would cosmopolitan institutional arrangements effectively realize cosmopolitan objectives?* Below, I show that there are reasons to answer this in the negative.

2. ON COSMOPOLITAN OBJECTIVES

One might reject my project before I can get it off the ground. The reason is simple. Whether any cosmopolitan institutional form can realize any cosmopolitan objective surely depends on the particular institutional form and the particular objective. But my argument suggests we need not attend to these particulars, that we can take cosmopolitan institutional forms as a class and cosmopolitan objectives as a class and make a general claim about the causal relationship of the members of the former class to the members of the latter class.

This is indeed the sort of claim I aim to defend. But this need not be worrisome. I'll say more below about why we can treat cosmopolitan institutional forms as a class when evaluating their efficacy. Here, I want to briefly say why we can treat cosmopolitan objectives together as a class when evaluating the efficacy of institutional forms.

Recall that cosmopolitans propose different fundamental objectives; among these are welfare, capabilities, rights, and needs. These differences need not distract us here

27. Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders*, p. 160.

because, at bottom, cosmopolitans aim to secure something much more comprehensive than welfare or rights. In broad terms, what cosmopolitans ultimately care about is *human flourishing*; the fundamental cosmopolitan objective is to see individuals everywhere live decent and worthwhile lives.²⁸ The cited differences arise more as a technical matter when thinking rigorously about the details of global political theory. That is, these differences arise when we aim to speak strictly about what each of us owes to our fellow human beings.

We can now transpose the preceding question: *Would cosmopolitan institutional arrangements effectively realize the conditions under which people lead flourishing lives?*

To some, my question is still absurdly general; how could I possibly consider the efficacy of cosmopolitan institutional forms as a class given their differences? I do not examine the efficacy of cosmopolitan institutional forms directly. Instead, in the next section, I present a theory that outlines conditions under which individuals' lives go well. I then show that cosmopolitan institutional arrangements share certain general features that make them liable to violate one or more of these conditions. If this argument is successful, it follows that cosmopolitan institutional arrangements do not effectively realize the conditions under which people lead flourishing lives.

To preview my conclusion, the claim that follows is in fact a stronger one: cosmopolitan institutional arrangements are liable to *undermine* the conditions under which people lead flourishing lives. My argument below is not that cosmopolitan institutions *fail to promote* conducive conditions for individual flourishing. Instead, I will argue that cosmopolitan institutions are *liable to violate* conducive conditions for individual flourishing. This should be a distressing result for institutional cosmopolitans, for it shows that cosmopolitan institutional arrangements can be *self-defeating* in important respects.

3. EXPLAINING GOOD POLICY PROVISION

Under what conditions do people lead flourishing lives? More specifically, under what conditions does people's welfare increase? Under what conditions are their rights respected? Under what conditions are their needs met? Simply, the answer to this must be: when those who are responsible to make (economic, social, cultural) policy within the relevant jurisdiction *actually make good policy*, i.e., policies that improve individuals' welfare or respect their rights or meet their needs. Of course, this answer is too general to be informative. So we need a theory outlining the conditions under which those responsible to make policy provide good policy.

28. Cf. Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, ch. 1.

For convenience, let “ruler” denote the individual or group who retains the ultimate power to implement or block the implementation of policy, as well as the loyal bureaucrats to whom particular tasks are delegated.²⁹ The question in this section is this: *Under what conditions do rulers provide good policy?*

We start with the truism that policy outcomes are the result of bargaining between different groups in society, identified by their policy goals on a given issue. We gain insight into the conditions under which rulers implement good policies by examining the general strategic logic that regulates these bargaining interactions. The literature on political development yields two basic insights on this. The first states that a ruler’s dependence on a reliable source of revenue to consolidate and sustain his rule over a territory leads him to exchange goods for private citizens’ provision of revenue. Specifically, rulers provide things like domestic and international security, secure property rights, favorable macroeconomic policies, and political representation in exchange for citizens’ tax payments and help with securing loans.³⁰ Consolidating one’s rule could be motivated by any number of considerations — among others, the need to secure personal political survival; the need to protect one’s assets; the need to secure trade routes; and the need to reliably enforce the law. The ruler’s motivation is immaterial; he seeks citizens’ resources insofar as he is unable to pay the cost of consolidating his monopoly on the use of force from the revenue generated by his personal assets. As Charles Tilly puts it in a study of the origins of the modern European state,

[T]he people who controlled European states and states in the making warred in order to check or overcome their competitors and thus enjoy the advantages of power within a secure or expanding territory. To make more effective war, they attempted to locate more capital. [...] In the long run, the quest inevitably involved them in establishing regular access to capitalists who could supply and arrange credit and in imposing one form

29. Where convenience dictates, I refer to rulers using male pronouns.

30. There’s a large literature on this. See, e.g., Robert H. Bates and Da-Hsiang Donald Lien, “A Note on Taxation, Development, and Representative Government,” *Politics & Society* 14, no. 1 (1985): 53–70; Robert H. Bates, *Prosperity and Violence: The Political Economy of Development*, 2nd ed. (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 2009); Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988); Douglass C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1981); Douglass C. North and Barry Weingast, “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England,” *Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 4 (1989): 803–832; Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1992*, Revised ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1992). Many of these sources present case studies — early modern European cases in North and Tilly; contemporary African cases in Bates — to illustrate the operative strategic logic.

of regular taxation or another on the people and activities within their sphere of control. [...] Variations in the difficulty of collecting taxes, in the expense of the particular kind of armed force adopted, in the amount of war making required to hold off competitors, and so on resulted in the principal variations in the forms of European states. *It all began with the effort to monopolize the means of violence within a delimited territory adjacent to a power holder's base.*³¹

Using “[v]ariations in the difficulty of collecting taxes,” etc. to explain the “principal variations in the forms” of states points to the bargaining dynamic underlying public goods provision. Wherever citizens could make tax collection difficult (e.g., by hiding liquid assets from tax collectors) or wherever internal rivals made consolidating one’s rule expensive (e.g., by presenting a credible threat to rebel), the ruler was compelled to make concessions — to provide protection, or to enforce stable property rights, or subject himself to the oversight of citizens’ representatives — in exchange for cooperation. Where this was not the case, the ruler could extract from citizens with impunity.

We can state the point more generally. Rulers are compelled to limit themselves and provide public goods wherever two conditions are met: first, they depend on the cooperation of some group of citizens to pursue their objectives, whatever those are; second, the citizens on whose cooperation the ruler depends have credible “exit options,” i.e., they can withhold their cooperation without making themselves worse off than they would be were they to cooperate and provide the ruler with revenue.³²

The first insight obscures the fact that a leader’s need to respond to the demands of a group of citizen supporters need not produce public goods. Policy outcomes depend not only on the bargaining strength of citizens relative to the ruler, but also on the composition of the ruler’s support coalition. This leads to the second basic insight, which elaborates the preceding point about credible exit options: all else equal, the ruler is more likely to provide *public* goods as (1) the number of people on whom the ruler depends for support increases, and (2) the credibility of the supporters’ options for backing a leadership rival increases.³³

31. Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” in *Bringing the State Back In*, ed. Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 172.

32. See William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sona Golder, “The Balance of Power Between Citizens and the State: Democratization and the Resource Curse” (University of Michigan, 2008).

33. See Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003); for an accessible overview, see Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., “Political Competition and Economic Growth,”

The logic here is not complicated. Rulers want to retain power. Typically, they require the support of some subset of the population (the “winning coalition”) to stay in power; without the loyal cooperation of their supporters, rulers are vulnerable to challenges from rivals. Members of the winning coalition are drawn from a larger subset of the population, the “selectorate.” The selectorate is composed of all members of a polity that could potentially become members of the ruler’s winning coalition. In a democracy, the selectorate comprises all those who are eligible to vote; in a military junta, powerful military officers; in a monarchy, the nobles. Supporters pledge their allegiance to the leadership candidate who can credibly offer them the best package of benefits. To retain the loyalty of his supporters, a ruler provides the latter with a package of benefits that is better than the package they could expect to receive from a leadership rival.

When a ruler depends on a small winning coalition, it is most efficient for him to provide his supporters with private goods — for example, monopoly grants, control over tracts of natural resources, public sector jobs, or opportunities for corruption. Since the ruler must retain the support of a relatively small group of people, and since the benefits of private goods can be *targeted* (i.e., they accrue only to the holder of the good), private goods provision is a relatively cheap way to provide a high value package of goods to supporters. However, as the size of the winning coalition grows, the ruler’s spending must be spread over more supporters and the average value of supporters’ private goods package diminishes. At some point, the winning coalition becomes large enough that it is more efficient for the ruler to provide *public* goods rather than private goods. Public goods include, among other things, security, law enforcement, individual liberties, infrastructure, or investment in human capital (education, public health). Although the benefits of public goods are *nonexcludable* (i.e., they accrue to everyone in the polity if they accrue to anyone), there are economies of scale in providing public goods. This enables a ruler to provide his supporters with a higher value package of public goods than the package of private goods that could be provided to each supporter for the same amount of total spending. Thus, a ruler becomes more inclined to provide public goods as the size of his support coalition grows, all else equal.

Similarly, in the absence of reliable sources of non-tax income (natural resources, foreign aid), a ruler becomes more likely to provide public goods as the credibility of

Journal of Democracy 12, no. 1 (2001): 58–72. On the importance of (2), see William Roberts Clark et al., “Why Do Autocrats Overachieve? Political Competition and Material Well-Being in Comparative Perspective” (University of Michigan, 2010). The last point is qualified in an important way below. See Robert H. Bates, *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008) for cases illustrating the operation of this logic in post-colonial Africa.

his supporters' threats to back a rival increase, even if the absolute size of the winning coalition is small.³⁴ More credible threats translate into greater bargaining leverage for supporters, which enables them to demand a greater package of private goods in exchange for their support. To meet the increasing demands of his supporters, a ruler must raise revenue to finance private goods provision. Without reliable sources of non-tax income, the ruler must turn his attention to increasing tax revenue. This means increasing the number of taxpayers or increasing the income of his tax base. A ruler can do both by fostering broad-based economic growth, which is most effectively and efficiently done by providing public goods rather than private goods. Consequently, absent reliable sources of non-tax revenue, a ruler becomes more inclined to provide growth-enhancing public goods — albeit as a means to finance private goods provision — as the credibility of his supporters' threats to back a rival increases, all else equal.

We can summarize the overall picture we get from these two basic insights as follows. Wherever a ruler requires the (political, financial, military) support of a subset of the population to retain power and those supporters gain bargaining leverage from credible exit threats, the supporters will be able to extract favorable concessions from the leader. Whether the benefits of those concessions accrue only to individual supporters or to citizens more widely depends on the composition of the ruler's support coalition — whether he only requires the support of a small group of élites or of a broad coalition of citizens — and the extent to which the leader must stimulate economic growth to finance his provision of goods.

We can state the theory more plainly. Rulers provide public goods (i.e., good policy) when their core constituents have sufficient bargaining leverage to compel their provision in exchange for cooperation. This holds when two conditions are met. First, the ruler must depend on the support of a coalition of citizens to achieve his objectives. Second, the citizens whose support is required must have credible exit options. When these conditions are satisfied, rulers are induced to provide good policy.

4. WHYCOSMOPOLITAN INSTITUTIONS CAN BE SELF-DEFEATING

People lead flourishing lives when rulers provide good policy. Specifically, cosmopolitan objectives are fulfilled when rulers provide, *inter alia*, rule of law, security, public infrastructure, and investment in human capital. The question now is this: would cosmopolitan institutional arrangements induce rulers to provide good policy? Specifically, *would cos-*

34. On this point, see Clark et al., "Why Do Autocrats Overachieve?"

mopolitan institutional arrangements make rulers dependent on their own citizens for support and provide those citizens with credible exit options?

It's true that cosmopolitan institutions can provide citizens with credible exit options; for example, they can facilitate free movement of persons or capital across borders. But only in the case where institutions facilitate free human movement across borders could cosmopolitan institutions be *sufficient* to improve people's lives. Even then, it is only the lives of those who are capable of moving to developed countries that are likely to improve, and then only if the influx of immigrants does not disrupt the provision of good policy in the destination country.

The two conditions stated above are *necessary* conditions for inducing rulers to provide good policy. They are only jointly sufficient (except in the limited circumstances specified above). Hence, even if cosmopolitan institutions can provide citizens with credible exit options, there is still the matter of rulers' dependence on their citizens for support. It's here where cosmopolitan institutions are liable to fare poorly. Simply, cosmopolitan institutions undermine citizens' bargaining leverage vis-à-vis their rulers by inducing the latter to seek support from third parties (other states, or regional and global agencies) at the expense of their dependence on citizens for support.

To illustrate my point, consider two issues that are much discussed in the global justice literature: global distributive justice and limits on state sovereignty (which includes the issues of humanitarian intervention and the practice of state recognition).

Proposals for global redistributive institutions — e.g., Brock's global taxation schemes, Pogge's Global Resources Dividend, or the numerous calls to increase foreign aid³⁵ — share a common feature: each of them proposes to transfer “unearned” resources to developing countries. In Mick Moore's words, “state income is *earned* [my emphasis] to the extent that the state has to put in *effort* in working with citizens in order to get its money.”³⁶ Moore highlights two key types of effort:

- *Organizational effort*: The state expends organizational effort when, to collect taxes, it builds an efficient bureaucratic apparatus that penetrates broadly and deeply into the population.
- *Political effort*: The state expends political effort when it invests money and human capital in “protecting and increasing the taxpaying capacity of its citizens”;

35. Brock, *Global Justice*, ch. 5; Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*, ch. 8; see Shue, *Basic Rights* for an example of an argument to increase official aid transfers.

36. Mick Moore, “Political Underdevelopment: What Causes ‘Bad Governance’,” *Public Management Review* 3, no. 3 (2001): 401.

that is, in increasing citizens' capacity for economic productivity.³⁷

State income is *unearned* when it requires little organizational and political effort to elicit cooperation from citizens. The transfers received by developing states via global redistributive schemes would be unearned windfall income; rulers need not expend effort vis-à-vis their citizens to receive it. Rulers who need not earn their income have little incentive to interact with citizens, nevermind negotiate with citizens over policy. In short, global redistributive institutions diminish rulers' dependence on citizens' financial support. In light of the theory presented above, this implies that global redistributive institutions undermine a necessary condition for inducing rulers to provide good policy, hence, for realizing cosmopolitan objectives.

It's true that those who advocate global redistributive schemes do not propose to give away free money. Typically, these proposals require developing countries to make progress on improving people's lives to receive their share. Fine. But this ignores the fact that those who hold the purse strings (donor countries, international financial organizations) have their own agendas and that they use their control over resources to pursue those agendas.³⁸ This means that recipient rulers must negotiate over policy with outside authorities rather than their own citizens. Sure enough, cosmopolitans have in mind that these outside authorities would use this influence to provoke rulers to fulfill cosmopolitan objectives. But this requires that these outside authorities reliably promote the interests of another country's citizens, sometimes to the detriment of their own private interests. This becomes especially worrisome once we recognize that those who fill the offices of these outside agencies (be they other states or global agencies) are constrained by the interests of their own political supporters. I find it implausible to expect that *these latter* interests would be reliably aligned with the interests of citizens in another country.

Suppose we can rely on global agencies to consistently use their authority to prod developing country rulers to fulfill cosmopolitan objectives. Even still, this remains fragile

37. *Ibid.*, 402.

38. For example, Alesina and Dollar present evidence that colonial ties and United Nations voting patterns explain much of current aid flows (Alberto Alesina and David Dollar, "Who Gives Foreign Aid to Whom and Why?" *Journal of Economic Growth* 5 [2000]: 33–63). Bueno de Mesquita and Smith present evidence that developed countries typically give aid to developing countries whose rulers are unaccountable to citizens; this enables the donor country to extract policy concessions from the recipient country at a lower cost (Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith, "A Political Economy of Aid," *International Organization* 63, no. 2 [2009]: 309–340). Stone shows that powerful states intervene to prevent rigorous enforcement of IMF conditions against African allies (Randall W. Stone, "The Political Economy of IMF Lending in Africa," *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 4 [2004]: 577–591).

assurance that developing country rulers will be induced to provide good policy. Mill highlights two problems with relying on others to promote an individual's interests: insufficient motivation and lack of relevant knowledge.

[The individual] is the person most interested in his own well-being; the interests which any other person, except in cases of strong personal attachment, can have in it, is trifling, compared with that which he himself has; the interest which society has in him individually... is fractional, and altogether indirect; while with respect to his own feelings and circumstances, the most ordinary man or woman has means of knowledge immeasurably surpassing those that can be possessed by any one else.³⁹

The point is that the citizens themselves will be most motivated to press their interests with their ruler, and they will know best which interests or needs are most urgent. Hence, even if we can to rely on global agencies to promote individuals' interests (though I'm dubious), we obtain a stronger guarantee for realizing cosmopolitan objectives if we pursue courses of action that *enlarge* the number of citizens on whose support rulers depend and *intensify* the degree to which rulers rely on that support.

We can (briefly) tell a similar story regarding proposed limits on state sovereignty. Consider cosmopolitan arguments in favor of military intervention to prevent gross and systematic human rights violations,⁴⁰ or prescriptions to reform international institutions to reduce the need for intervention.⁴¹ The key shared feature here is that a ruler's retention of power ultimately depends on the decisions and actions of outsiders rather than citizens. If third parties can credibly threaten to forcibly remove a ruler, he will be inclined to seek outside support rather than internal support. The more a ruler depends on outside political support, the less he depends on citizens.⁴² Since policy is shaped in negotiations

39. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, in *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill*, ed. Dale E. Miller (New York: Random House, 2002), 79.

40. E.g., Brock, *Global Justice*, ch. 7; Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders*, ch. 7; Fernando R. Tesón, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 3rd ed. (Ardsley, NY: Transnational, 2005).

41. E.g., Allen Buchanan, *Justice, Legitimacy, and Self-Determination: Moral Foundations for International Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Thomas W. Pogge, "Pre-empting Humanitarian Interventions," in *Freedom, Power, and Morality: Essays for Felix Oppenheim*, ed. Ian Carter and Mario Ricciardi (London: Palgrave, 2001), 153–170; Thomas W. Pogge, "Moralizing Humanitarian Intervention: Why Jurying Fails and How Law Can Work," in *Humanitarian Intervention, Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Terry Nardin and Melissa S. Williams, NOMOS XLVII (New York and London: New York University Press, 2006).

42. Consider how third party states or outside organizations intervene to prop up allied dictators despite their domestic unpopularity; e.g., Saddam Hussein (before the late-80s), Mobutu, Pahlavi, the Saudi royal

with political supporters, conditioning a ruler's authority on outside support induces rulers to bargain over policy with noncitizens rather than citizens. Ultimately, when authority is conferred from outside, rulers are accountable to noncitizens.

Again, cosmopolitan institutional forms ideally condition respect for sovereignty on effective human rights protection. But this still ignores the fact that intervention and recognition decisions are motivated primarily by strategic considerations. That is, intervention and sovereign recognition are used as bargaining chips by powerful actors to secure policy concessions that serve their interests.⁴³ Institutionalizing threats to breach state sovereignty or withdraw sovereign recognition reduces rather than increases rulers' dependence on citizens for political support.

The preceding examples provide some reasons to think that, in cases where rulers come to rely more on outside agencies for support than on their own citizens, cosmopolitan institutional arrangements are liable to undermine the fulfillment of cosmopolitan objectives. In these cases, institutional cosmopolitanism is self-defeating.

5. A PRAGMATIC STATISM

The central lesson of the foregoing discussion is this. *In a world where politics is strategic, cosmopolitan institutional arrangements are liable to undermine rulers' need to rely on their citizens for political support, thereby compromising citizens' bargaining leverage vis-à-vis their rulers.* When citizens' bargaining leverage vis-à-vis their rulers is compromised, cosmopolitan objectives are liable to go unfulfilled.

My argument crucially assumes that the relevant political agents act strategically. By this, I don't mean that political agents are ultra-rational, self-interested agents without any concern for others. All I mean is that political agents undertake actions in service of their agendas, which are largely shaped by the agendas of their core supporters. Should we endorse this assumption when asking questions about global institutional design?

It depends on the normative question we seek to answer. If we seek to identify

family, Suharto. When dictators fall, it is often because third parties intervene to forcibly remove them—e.g., Hussein—or step aside to let domestic politics take over when intervention would be too costly—e.g., Mubarak, Pahlavi.

43. On the strategic use of military intervention, see Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George W. Downs, "Intervention and Democracy," *International Organization* 60 (2006): 627–649. Among others, China's, India's, and Russia's refusal to recognize Kosovo is an example of how recognition decisions are motivated by strategic considerations. Note that each of these countries host national groups that actively seek political independence; their recognition of Kosovo would set a precedent at odds with their own refusal to grant independence to these groups.

a normative standard by which we can assess current institutions and outcomes, we need not. One way to arrive at an evaluative standard is to specify the institutional arrangements that would be realized in a fully just world. It seems appropriate to assume that political agents in a fully just world are motivated largely by moral reasons.

But the general structure of the institutional cosmopolitan's argument suggests that she is more interested in prescribing institutional arrangements that advance cosmopolitan objectives in our decidedly unjust world. The second premise concerns the institutions that are likely to *realize* cosmopolitan objectives; presumably, this means "realized in our world." That political agents act strategically seems to be a deep and enduring feature of our world. No, not all political agents act strategically; and those who do don't do so all the time. But a sufficient number of political agents are motivated by strategic considerations often enough to ensure that outcomes are reliably shaped by strategic, rather than normative, considerations.

This fact is surely lamentable from a moral perspective; but it's likely a fact that we can't escape, at least not any time soon. The upshot is that our reasoning about institutional design should account for the fact that the particular who will occupy positions of authority in any institutional scheme will typically be moved by strategic considerations. Thankfully, this does not imply that we should give up proposing institutional reforms meant to advance cosmopolitan objectives. Instead, we must seek institutional arrangements that shape political agents' incentives in a way that aligns their interests with the fulfillment of cosmopolitan objectives.⁴⁴

This is a difficult task, to be sure. But the argument in this paper suggests a general direction in which to look. In general, institutional cosmopolitans should attend to the likely effects of an institutional prescription on the citizens' bargaining relationship vis-à-vis their rulers. More specifically, they should seek institutional arrangements that (1) increase (rather than reduce) rulers' dependence on a broad coalition of citizens for support, and (2) provide citizens with credible exit options. Simply put, cosmopolitan institutional arrangements are likely to realize cosmopolitan objectives when the former improve citizens' capacity to press their demands with their rulers.

Contrary to typical cosmopolitan offerings, I suggest that these conditions are more likely to be satisfied in a system of sovereign states than in a system of vertically dispersed authority with global organizations residing at the top. This is decidedly not a recom-

44. For elaboration of this point, see Geoffrey Brennan and James Buchanan, "The Normative Purpose of Economic 'Science': Rediscovery of an Eighteenth-Century Method," *International Review of Law and Economics* 1 (1981): 155–166; Geoffrey Brennan and Philip Pettit, "The Feasibility Issue," in *Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Philosophy*, ed. Frank Jackson and Michael Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

mentation to maintain the status quo; in the current system, rulers' need to depend on citizens is too often undermined, as powerful states use threat of force or withdrawal of cooperation to keep rulers in the developing world in line. Instead of a system in which the boundaries of political communities are created and maintained by a few global powers, what's needed is a system in which sovereign political entities are confined within boundaries that are contested by members of political communities, and emerge from a process of negotiation between prospective rulers and those they intend to rule.⁴⁵ This requires institutions that effectively prevent global powers from interfering in the domestic political processes of political communities so that the outcome will arise from *a process of internal contestation among members of the community*. Such a process of internal contestation requires prospective rulers to secure the support of domestic citizen groups, which, in turn, gives those domestic groups influence over the policy making process. In short, realizing cosmopolitan objectives requires institutions that will *enforce* rather than dilute strong sovereignty norms.

To be clear, I do not assert that states or nations have moral value *per se*.⁴⁶ My support for a system of states is purely pragmatic; a system of sovereign states is most likely to satisfy the conditions under which cosmopolitan objectives would be realized. Since institutional cosmopolitans are centrally concerned with establishing the conditions needed to fulfill the requirements of their moral commitments, my argument suggests that they would be wise to adopt a pragmatic statism.

6. A FINAL DISCLAIMER

My argument is surely too hasty; too many details have been left unexplored, too many objections left untouched. But I think the general direction in which the paper points is correct: cosmopolitans should seek institutions that *limit* rather than promote outside interference in a political community's affairs. More generally, my argument indicates the importance of attending to the bargaining relationship between citizens and their rulers. If, when working out the details with greater care than I've exhibited here, attending to this bargaining dynamic leads us to adopt institutional forms that weaken state sovereignty norms, fine; I'm not ideologically committed to a system of sovereign states. For the moment, though, I remain skeptical about the efficacy of institutional cosmopolitans' prescriptions.

45. Cf. Bates, *Prosperity and Violence*; Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*.

46. Cf. David Miller, *On Nationality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Michael Walzer, "The Moral Standing of States: A Response to Four Critics," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 9, no. 3 (1980): 209–229.