

INTEGRATING GLOBAL ENTIRETY BY INTEGRATING DIVERSITY

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Preliminary Remarks

The Academy owes Professor Allott great thanks for the power and the aesthetics of his report – especially for presenting essential assets of intellectual history and their present-day relevance.

There are two merits the paper should above all be praised for. The one is the distinctness with which Professor Allott shows what is radically new in this situation: ‘the beginning of the self-socialising of all-humanity’.¹ The other is the emphasis the author places on putting ‘justice’ under the responsibility of society: not the responsibility of only the individual, not the responsibility of only the government or the courts – but the responsibility of all of society. Of all the elements constituting civil societies: private and public ones, informal interactions and groups as well as organisations producing individual benefits or collective goods, defined by ideas and aims, by personal characteristics or by spatial conditions, local, regional, national or transnational ones. At the present stage, that responsibility of society essentially means also the responsibility of global society. But this global society itself is weak, is of a tentative nature. It is above all extremely unbalanced: between power and powerlessness, between accountability and arbitrariness, between rationality and feelings, between totalitarian uniformity and liberal openness. Thus, ‘global justice’ at this time is not more than a project, but a necessary one all the same, as the report very clearly shows.

¹ From the Academy, see already *Democracy in Debate: The Contribution of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences. Final Document*. In: Hans F. Zacher (Ed.), ‘Democracy in Debate’. Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Miscellanea 5, Vatican City 2005, pp. 238 e.s. (pp. 291 ff.). See there for additional references to the Academy’s former work on globalisation.

Commentary

As always, if a report does justice to its task, there is nothing to be criticised or even contradicted. So the only way to avoid simply delivering a blank sheet is to offer some additional observations. Which is what I will seek to do by sketching out five aspects:

- the primacy of equality, and the paradox of human equality and human diversity;
- the connection between the paradox and the concerns addressed by the term ‘social’;
- the classic maxims of social life and their importance for understanding the aforementioned paradox;
- the essential relevance of particulate entities; and
- human equality and how it contrasts with the inequality of particulate entities.

1. THE PRIMACY OF EQUALITY, AND THE PARADOX OF HUMAN EQUALITY AND HUMAN DIVERSITY

Global society’s self-detection as such occurred when humans understood themselves to be essentially equal. That was when they perceived the reality of humankind as a whole – and when they came to accept the norm of their equality. At the same time, the paradox of all human societies became universal: the fact that humans are just as equal as they are different. They have different characteristics. They live under different conditions. They behave differently. Under these circumstances, equality means to treat human beings differently in accordance with their differences.² That is the paradox of human equality and human diversity.

This paradox was always a central challenge for all human societies. Throughout history, false responses to that challenge were widespread – from slavery to serfdom, from castes to apartheid. Global society, however, is based on the idea of undivided human equality. In fact many types of violation are still on their way. But there is already a *volonté general* condemn-

² The Academy started its work with exactly this subject: Edmond Malinvaud/Margaret Archer (Eds.), *The Study of the Tension Between Human Equality and Social Inequalities from the Perspective of the Various Social Sciences*, Pontificiae Academiae Scientiarum Socialium Acta, Vol. 1, Vatican City 1996.

ing those violations – even if it doesn't have the power to hinder them. Without the primacy of the idea of undivided human equality, globalisation would not be what it is.

In social reality, the paradox of human equality and human diversity cannot be resolved. In individual thought, a perfect solution ought to be possible by drawing from all diversities the consequences adequate for integrating equality. In social practice, such an endeavour is impossible. Only approximations may be achieved. There are too many possibilities for discerning diversities, evaluating their relation to the premise of equality and for drawing the adequate consequences. The preconditions for arriving at solutions and achieving their acceptance are extremely complex. All that cannot be discussed here. The same is valid for the preconditions governing peaceful and stable outcomes. To be sure: conflict and dissent and the seeds of instability will always exist and accompany human actions. The success of any society, however, depends on how tensions between the primacy of equality and the endless multiplicity of diversities are turned into integration.

2. THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE PARADOX AND THE TERM 'SOCIAL'

This statement holds true for all three meanings of the term 'social' as it is used here:

- first, in the very general sense considering only whether a multiplicity of individuals may be regarded as a society;
- second, in the narrower sense considering the degree of cohesion;
- third, in the specific political sense we know from terms like social rights, Social Charter, social insurance, social security or Social Democratic, and which has the same origins as the term socialism. This meaning is characterised by the intention to integrate what is essentially equal by means of interventions providing compensation, protection and help in favour of individuals who are weaker, disadvantaged, endangered, suppressed, exploited or simply poor. This sense is – not only, but with a certain emphasis – oriented to the distribution of material goods (from access to mere subsistence, to participation in prosperity).

These three dimensions of meaning are worthy of distinction, but the integration of equality must always regard the whole. The linchpin for the success of society is geared to the whole.

To understand the task of approaching equality by integrating diversities in this way shows how closely the challenge, the concept of welfare

state is associated with the general challenge to approach equality by integrating diversities. Hidden, admitted or offensively proclaimed, the welfare state is an attempt to approach equality of men. History started with binding this attempt to the national level. Even so, the idea of equality of men spread out universally. And history produced a remarkable coincidence. It is during the same period of time that humankind became aware of its entirety and that the project of the welfare state, and thus also the impetus towards equality driving it, was more widespread than any time before.

That which makes humanity essentially equal is not rendered simply by the term of 'equality'. It also involves individuality and freedom. Human individuality a priori denotes diversity. It refers to differences in talent and differences of fate. It also pertains to differences as a consequence of freedom and, vice versa, as freedom that allows for differences. By the same token, 'social' does not simply connote 'equality', but tends rather to be a relative concept in the sense of 'more equality' – which is not easier to implement than 'equality'. Yet it seems more human to strive for 'more equality'. It is this the program for a human global society.

The experience of the welfare state reveals the same. Welfare state does not only mean 'equality'. Welfare state does not only mean minimum living conditions for everyone. Minimum subsistence is one dimension of the welfare state. But not the whole. Welfare state includes also wellbeing, civilisation and culture – prosperity. The possibility of wellbeing. Embedded in the sphere of the individual by a fair chance of participation. All that is in a complex way connected with the essentially human importance of individuality and freedom. To neglect individuality and freedom was the central mistake of 'socialism'. Just as it was another central failure to overestimate and to exaggerate the political rule. Prosperity can only be produced by stimulating individuality and freedom and by opening up the space of deployment, which is described as society: private structures like families, neighbourhoods and mutual assistance or public structures like enterprises and markets, media and pressure groups, voluntary bodies and churches. And it was likewise a failure when the democratic welfare state itself concentrated too much on governmentally controlled social benefits and services. Or, put another way: It was likewise a failure, when the democratic welfare state itself concentrated too much on the compensation for disadvantages. To produce prosperity is not less essential than to compensate for disadvantages. Altogether a double dialectic is necessary: the dialectic between the production of prosperity and the prevention and control of, or compensation for disadvantages; and the dialectic between (private and civil) society and government.

That is the lesson we can draw from the experience of the welfare state. But who could play the role of the government within the global world? What institutions could integrate a global society if there is no global government to function as a catalyst? How could the dialectic between society and government work at a global level?

3. THE CLASSIC MAXIMS OF SOCIAL LIFE AND THEIR IMPORTANCE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE PARADOX OF HUMAN EQUALITY AND HUMAN DIVERSITY

The human equality/diversity paradox gave decisive impetus towards the development of human societies. And, in particular, it has become the driving power behind the emergence of global society. This momentum also poses a new challenge to the classic maxims of social life. These maxims like justice, solidarity, subsidiarity, participation and inclusion have always meant to help to observe, discern, understand, evaluate and arrange the variety of diversity. Now this service has to be rendered under new conditions of totality: the self-detection of humankind, and the acknowledgement of the undivided equality of men. That means that the maxims are addressees of questions they haven't answered before. But on the other hand that must not mean that no answers can be found within the new dimensions of thinking. It only means that the endeavour to find them is new.

Let us start with *justice* – the most dignified of all the principles to speak about. 'Justice' is of an elementary nature in a way that no one may doubt its validity whereas the responsibility for the concrete consequences will always be assumed by the individuals applying it. That is not less true today than it was true in the centuries before. There is for instance, on the one hand, the precept of *unicuique suum tribuere*. It demonstrates the radical individuality of dissolving the paradox and the endlessness of any attempt at fulfilling its promise of justice. On the other hand, we find the no less classic principles of *iustitia distributive*, *iustitia commutativa* and *iustitia legalis*. They show ways of placing differences in the service of essential equality.³ That is a mandate for the global society.

³ A very specific outline of such principles can be found in the German literature on the Catholic social teaching. For the application of 'social' in the 'social-political' meaning of the term, the following principles are recommended: justice of needs (*Bedarfsgerechtigkeit*), justice of achievement (*Leistungsgerechtigkeit*), justice of acquired standing

Solidarity has a similar basic structure. On the one hand, it refers to the elementary human solidarity of everyone with everyone. And again, we see the radical individuality of its fulfilment and the endlessness of coping with the task. On the other hand, there are structural options for understanding solidarity: solidarity between dissimilar beings and solidarity between similar ones; solidarity as the *raison d'être* of an entity; solidarity as the consequence of an entity, etc. And again, one must find ways to achieve compromises.

Subsidiarity contributes the categorical differences between entities as a means of reconciling equality and diversity. Traditionally – especially in the development of the Catholic social teaching – subsidiarity means the priority of the smaller units over the larger ones, of the narrower units over the wider ones; with the reservation that the capacity to take on the responsibility which is at stake, is equal.⁴ It is thereby easy to succumb to the temptation of giving national rules, organisations, etc., priority over international and transnational ones. Yet it is obvious that national institutions no longer suffice when seeking to establish the right order for a global world. That is *the* predicament of the global world. What, however, are the criteria used to detect the priority of international and transnational phenomena, especially those of a universal nature? But the problems are even more complex. The ‘smaller-or-bigger-rule’ proved to be deceptive. There are so many relations where the units compared may in some ways be regarded as ‘smaller’ and ‘bigger’ whereas in some other ways the ‘smaller’ ones are the ‘bigger’ ones. But the more this deception became clear the better the truth behind the subsidiary principle could be detected: i.e. the relevance of the relation between the structural features of social units, their competences and their tasks. Thus, more recently, ‘subsidiarity’ has finally also served as a signpost for finding the right relation between civil society and government or even the individual and a collective within the private sphere. ‘Subsidiarity’ means to assume the responsibility to optimize these relations. Thus ‘subsidiarity’ describes the

(*Besitzstandsgerechtigkeit*), justice of opportunities (*Chancengerechtigkeit*). Walter Kerber/Claus Westermann/Bernhard Spörlein, *Gerechtigkeit*. In: *Christlicher Glaube in moderner Gesellschaft*, Teilband 17, 1981, pp. 5 ff (pp. 44 ff).

⁴ The most spectacular development may be found in the European Law, when the principle of subsidiarity was acknowledged as a rule to protect the individuality of the member states against the superiority of the European Community (Art. 5 par. 2 European Community Treaty) or the European Union (preamble European Union Treaty).

responsibility to organize humankind in its global entirety. But it doesn't offer finished solutions.

A last and very significant example is the principle of *participation*. 'Participation' refers to the action of having or forming part of something that already exists and is (more or less) open to participation: organisations, procedures, goods. What, however, does 'participation' mean in the endless terms of the whole earth and all of humankind? The problem becomes even clearer if we shift our view from 'participation' to *'inclusion'*. Can a boundless earth or a boundless community of humanity constitute a place granting 'inclusion'? 'Global participation' presupposes structures to justify the corresponding relations.

4. THE ESSENTIAL RELEVANCE OF PARTICULATE ENTITIES

As we can see, turning the tensions between the primacy of equality and the endless array of diversities into integration is not directly a universal business. A satisfactory integration of essential human equality by drawing the appropriate consequences from human differences has occurred mostly within a particulate context,⁵ especially within a network of particulate entities like the family, local communities, regions, social interactions and organisations, and finally, the national state – all of which are categorically characterised by a comprehensive common ground of history, ethnicity, culture, civilisation, etc. But, in any case, every approximation to the ideal of integrating essential equality, while taking account of differences and drawing appropriate consequences there from, is dependent on a highly complex set of conditions. This set may include universal preconditions and implications, such as values, currents of opinion, policies, norms, institutions, etc. It is nevertheless impossible to completely replace particulate conditions by universal ones. On the other hand, every compromise has its own history. And every compromise achieved in (more or less) accepting a given arrangement for the integration of essential equality will trigger its own history. In this way, values are strengthened and new realities are created, thus also entailing advantages which the advantaged will want to keep. With every significant step taken in the adjustment of differences, a

⁵ The Comment presented by Bishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo contains impressive examples.

more or less new story of path-dependency begins. Consequently, the attraction of the particulate context gains new force.

There is, however, also another point of view on the essential relevance of the particulate context. The circumstances under which people are destined to live or have the chance of living vary within an extremely wide range. There is no possibility for reducing these differences in such a way as to enable all human beings to live under similar circumstances. Only particulate entities can realistically reduce differences in living conditions. It follows that global society can only take a global approach to the positive relationship between human equality and human diversity, in that primarily particulate entities reduce the differences within and among themselves, while global society seeks to reduce the differences between the particulate entities. Global society as such may contribute to that end by organising and articulating itself through international organisations and institutions, and the norms and practices they establish. In the process, non-governmental organisations can assume a role in assisting and complementing such a self-realisation of global society. Nevertheless, the particulate entities will continue to represent the irreplaceable media of reconciliation between equality and differences.

Beyond the private sphere – that is, beyond individuals and the family, beyond neighbourhood or other groups conditioned by personal or spatial proximity – the most important elements of this system are the *national states*. They constitute the most comprehensive units for realising that which is essentially equal by perceiving, evaluating and integrating the differences. They are also likely to offer the most efficient potential in finding ensembles of priorities and posteriorities that will be accepted as doing adequate service to equality and differences, without necessitating a complete reaction to all differences and also without reaching a complete consensus among all persons concerned. The history of the modern liberal welfare state and its various conceptual designs provides an impressive set of examples here.

On the other hand, the importance of national states derives from their international power. International law lies in the hands of sovereign states – that is, the community of sovereign states. Thus, every state potentially has a veto position in developing a regime of international governance. It follows that the dialectic of civil society and government, which is of great significance to the non-totalitarian national state, has no counterpart in the global realm.

Hence, globalisation bears what has been termed the ‘chaos-risk’, which is characterised, on the one hand, by the erosion of the ordering and paci-

fyng role of the national state as a result of transnational movements, actions and organisations, and, on the other hand, by the deficits of international policy and the lacuna of international law. This risk poses a danger to all those who take part in such transnational activities, as the superiority of factual power remains unchecked. This risk also poses a danger to all people and goods impacted by the transnational effects of national politics or even non-governmental national actors.

In this context, however, we must note an important background. The governmental and constitutional system of a national state is decisively determined by the stabilisation of governmental powers, not necessarily, however, by law, not to mention the rule of law. Experience shows that the international community has only very weak and unreliable means to control what values are nationally respected, and to protect internationally accepted values against violation by a certain national government. That is not only valid for national states that are blamed to leave the street of common values; it is also valid for national states ready to intervene with other national states – as a single country or together with a coalition, separately or in the framework of an international organisation. Hence, a degree of caution is – rightly – called for when seeking to intervene between states. More ‘international government’ would therefore mean that ‘bad’ governments could bring institutionalised influence to bear on other national states and the fate of their citizens.

5. HUMAN EQUALITY AND HOW IT CONTRASTS WITH THE INEQUALITY OF PARTICULATE ENTITIES

These observations call attention to the fact that essential particulate entities do not only offer an opportunity for the integration of equality, but also pose a risk. That begins with the family in which an individual is born and grows up, and is accompanied by the external circumstances under which the family lives and develops; by the size of the family and the qualities of its members, and how they develop; and by the way in which they use their chances and respond to the challenges they meet. And it ends with the national state in which one lives, with its natural reality and its standards of civilisation – and with its inhabitants: their capacities, attitudes, values and interests; the conditions of their development; their collective, especially political behaviour; their leaders in politics, public opinion, etc.; and their constitutional order. The latter may range from democracy and

the rule of law to totalitarian dictatorship. And within that range, we find the whole network of particulate entities and other particulate contexts. All these relations are accompanied by various modes of transnational or international openness or closedness. And always there is a complex dialectic between individual and collectively (or generally) given circumstances, and between developments based on free choice (or at least personal influence) and developments determined by others. But what does that mean if essential equality is to be realised by defining, evaluating and integrating differences? We are familiar with measures that are intended to discipline parents but ultimately afflict their children. And we know about international sanctions that hit also powerless people. We know about child benefits consumed by parents and about dictators that corrupt debt relief. From the standpoint of global society, the latter conflicts have priority. As a consequence of state sovereignty, however, it is especially these international or transnational problems that are much more difficult to solve.

The essential relevance of particulate entities nonetheless makes it clear that their prosperity is a fundamental requirement. 'Social' measures taken to compensate, assist and help are necessary, no doubt. But the a priori necessity is to adopt positive policies towards such vital preconditions as health, work, productivity, safety, incorruptibility, competent and law-abiding administrative practice, a well-ordered market economy, etc. – and towards the one thing that is more crucial than all the others: education. Education is the precondition for reading and hearing, for forming personal judgement, for participation. It is the central instrument needed to make use of rights and apply laws, and to control governments and other powers.

6. WHAT ABOUT THE WHOLE COMPARED TO THE PARTICULAR?

We see a big and dangerous gap developing between the global social space and the domains of particulate entities. This space is being filled by global society, which – if not challenged by a common global regime – remains weak and tentative. This space is also selectively occupied by international law and international institutions, but only in a fragmented way. All the more so, transnational movements, activities and organisations are moving into this gap – partly seeking to build up power, partly looking for refuge or offering refuge, and partly trying to cultivate the emptiness, while at the same time mostly eroding the control and responsibility of the particulate entities. After global society's self-detection,

however, no path leads back to the exclusive role of national states or other particulate entities.

Developing common norms, building international cooperation based not only on the principle of universality but also on shared values, and enhancing, intensifying and strengthening the international institutions that implement these shared norms and values – that must be the vision! And it is the responsibility of our time.

Besides normative concepts, structural solutions – institutions and organisations – will be decisive. The United Nations could be the answer to the global challenge – however in a very incomplete way. The UN is dominated by the principles of universal comprehensiveness and equality of all sovereign states. No difference is made between good and bad governance – normally not even between honest and criminal governments. No real difference is made between the values accepted and followed by the member states. As the United Nations practice on human rights shows, its culture is easily distorted by the ‘equality’ of governments abiding by the letter and the spirit of human rights together with governments scorning it. On the other hand, there are international organisations, which are defined by common values, common goods and/or common interests. The world monetary system, the World Trade Organisation or the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development are examples. Yet adequate complements would be needed to produce a global regime. It is not the task of this comment to draft a structural master plan for global justice. The above-mentioned remarks may, however, suffice to show that a more comprehensive and at the same time more differentiating and well-balanced system of institutions would be necessary.