

CIVIC VIRTUE: THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF CITIZENSHIP*

Brendan Howe
Graduate School of International Studies
Ewha Womans University
Seoul, South Korea

Civic virtue is a bulwark against authoritarianism, but also against the worst excesses of democracy. It has been appropriated by the proponents of republicanism and communitarianism, focusing upon duties rather than rights, and the collective rather than the individual. This paper demonstrates, however, that republicanism and community values are not mutually exclusive with the concept of universal individual human rights. It considers traditional interpretations of civic virtue from both West and East, then introduces a conceptualization of the relationship between rights and responsibilities which alienates neither the liberal concept of individuals as universal human rights bearers, nor the communitarian perspectives.

INTRODUCTION

“Civic virtue” is an ambiguous concept the meaning of which fluctuates in accordance with the temporal, geographic, and epistemological parameters within which it is presented. Indeed, the essential tenets of the concept are often teased out by commentators primarily through comparison with other governance systems and policy prescriptions. Thus civic virtue is seen as an important bulwark against authoritarianism, but also against the worst excesses of democracy. It is often seen as something to be lined up against the rights-based individualistic focus of liberalism, and has been appropriated by the proponents of republicanism, conservatism, communitarianism, Confucianism (and other purported “Asian values”), and even Nazism and Fascism. The focus is usually upon duties rather than rights, and upon the collective rather than the individual. This does not, however, stop civic virtue from being perceived as a kind of rights-based conservatism, or as a solution to the collective action problem faced by all societies, whether ancient or modern, East or West.

At its most foundational, civic virtue is the cultivation of those personality traits in a population most conducive to the resolution of collective actions problems, generation of collective good, and therefore the promotion of the success of a community. The extent of the population within which civic virtue needs to be cultivated in order for a society to be successful is itself open to debate. One incarnation of civic virtue emphasizes that the

onus is upon those who govern to do so in the spirit of civic virtue—that is to say, rather than self-aggrandizement or self-interest, governing elites may develop traditions of public virtues they believe appropriate in the governing class. This form of civic virtue may be viewed as mutually beneficial to rulers and ruled. For the governing class, it raises their prestige while simultaneously justifying exclusion of those who are deemed not to meet such standards. For the regular citizenry, it is to be hoped that a focus on virtue among the governing elite will at least ensure that those who rule will do so in the interests of the ruled, and also that governance efficiency may be improved through checks on corruption. Essentially this model is one of benevolent paternalism, under which governing elites are viewed as “public servants.”

It is more common under republican or democratic conditions, however, to view civic virtue as a necessity for all those who exert power over their fellow citizens—that is to say, the entire demos. Citizens are expected to dedicate themselves to the common welfare of their community, even at the cost of their individual interests. It is only through such a prioritization can conflicting interests be resolved, and common good generated. With the spread of republican and democratic systems of government, political philosophers turned to address the collective action problems generated by an expansion of the number of individuals with direct or indirect input into decision-making and policy formation. No longer was it sufficient to focus on the supposed virtues which make a good king, prince, or elite. Instead, the focus shifted to the potential negative impact of individual freedoms generated and promoted by the expansion of the demos. There are two related problems connected with democratic governance based on liberal individual freedoms: (1) that individual liberties can be pursued to the disadvantage of one’s fellow citizens; and (2) that a newly empowered demos is insufficiently schooled in the nuances of governance to exercise this power in a responsible way.

In order to address the first of these concerns, a number of mechanisms have been introduced to regulate the behaviour of individuals in pursuit of their freedoms in order to ensure that natural selfishness is limited, and that space retained for the consideration of others. The mechanisms include written constitutions and bills of rights, which not only delineate individual rights of citizens, but also the extent these rights are constrained by duties to one’s fellow man. Constitutions often also contain guarantees against the dictatorship of the majority. A democratically elected government, with an overwhelming mandate, can nevertheless be restricted in implementing policies which infringe upon the rights of individuals and minorities by provisions in a constitution which safeguard these rights. Many societies have constitutional courts to regulate governance and interpret the constitution. These (usually) unelected bodies serve as guardians of the rights of the unempowered against majoritarianism.

The second concern over democratic governance has a lengthy pedigree. Aristotle differentiated between two forms of democracy, the perverted version being where the poor rule the state in their own interests. Polybius referred to this as “ochlocracy” or rule by the mob (Field 1956, 279). John Stuart Mill (1972 [1861], 277) was profoundly concerned that in replacing old elites with new democratic forms of government, we would merely replace one form of class rule with another; that of rule by the more numerous lower classes, perpetuating class conflict:

The constitution would therefore still be liable to the characteristic evils of class government: in a far less degree, assuredly, than the exclusive government by a class, which now usurps the name of democracy; but still, under no effective restraint, except what might be found in the good sense, moderation, and forbearance of the class itself.

Even if the masses themselves are not perceived as undesirable or even evil rulers, there still exists the danger that the masses will allow the rise of undesirable or evil individuals. In particular, there is the perception that the gullible masses will allow themselves to be hoodwinked by unscrupulous demagogues. Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini were both raised to power by essentially democratic means, and the ideals of the French Revolution were soon subsumed by the ambition and ruthlessness of totalitarians. Thus for Marquis de Condorcet (quoted in Baker 1975, 330), “[t]he equality of stupidity is not equality at all, for it does not exist between cheats and their dupes, and every society which is not enlightened by philosophers is deceived by charlatans.” Furthermore, he (quoted by Baker 1975, 334-35) seems to hold out little hope of the democratic process in itself being able to restrain such individuals through legal maneuvers:

The more [the laws] respect the rights of personal independence and natural equality, the more easy and terrible will they make the tyranny that ruse exercises over ignorance, turning it into its instrument and its victim. If the laws have destroyed all unjust powers, this tyranny will soon find a way to create more dangerous ones.

Benjamin Barber (1984, 147) is aware of these fears, but does not support reliance upon constitutional mechanisms that limit democratic decision-making, but instead emphasizes the need for a civic education in democratic responsibility, for strong democratic practices that serve as an apprenticeship for liberty, and for the opening of all political questions to extensive discussion and ultimately responsible and reflective democratic decision-making. Barber, therefore, can be seen as cast in the Jeffersonian mold. As Thomas Jefferson (quoted by Barber 1984, xvii) says:

I know of no safe depository of the ultimate power of the society but the people themselves, and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion.

This then is the dominant contemporary interpretation of civic virtue—training in the values necessary for participation in the democratic process and the exercise of power over one’s fellow citizens, as well as a commitment to the collective good. What is still debated hotly, is which values are the ones which need to be taught. Furthermore, despite these liberal, democratic, rights-based foundations, the discourse on civic virtue, in both theory and practice, has been usurped by conservative and duty-based approaches. Liberals are, on the whole, as deeply uncomfortable with the concept as they are distrustful of the state, and sceptical about nationalism. They see flags and think of militarism,

exclusion, and nationalism (Coates 2012). Thus political movements reflecting more authoritarian, collective, and communitarian perspectives have come to dominate civic virtue in theory and practice. These movements often use the formulation of “republican virtue” in the West, and “Confucian virtue” in East Asia.

This paper, however, attempts to reclaim the liberal, universalist, human rights heritage of civic virtue, while at the same time demonstrating that republicanism and community values are not mutually exclusive to the concept of universal individual human rights. In doing so, it follows the approach pioneered by Richard Dagger (1997), who has found that the proper relationship between rights and responsibilities requires us not to choose between liberalism and republicanism, but rather to unite them in a republican form of liberalism. This paper, therefore, turns first to consider the more traditional interpretations of civic virtue from both West and East. It then introduces a conceptualization of the relationship between rights and responsibilities which alienates neither the liberal concept of individuals as universal human rights bearers, nor the communitarian perspectives which emphasize community as a source of rights, cultural relativism, societal and community collective rights, and the duties owed by each individual to their fellow citizens.

REPUBLICAN VIRTUE AND COMMUNITARIANISM

Western perspectives on civic virtue have tended to evolve as a reaction against the dominant liberal individualistic rights discourse. There are four main avenues of criticism: First, that the focus on individual human rights leaves little room for the resolution of collective action problems required by modern governance—if individual human beings are bearers of rights which are seen to ‘trump’ all other considerations, and which must be jealously defended, as asserted by Ronald Dworkin (1977), this leaves little room for the necessary compromises in societal living.

Second, a related complaint is that the concept of rights is too one-sided and individualistic, encouraging us to set ourselves apart from others, and at odds with a society, state, or government that is constantly seeking to intrude upon or invade our rights, rather than recognizing the societal origins of rights, and the need to act virtuously with the good of the community in mind (Dagger 1997, 3-4).

The third criticism is that a focus on all rights as trumps, devalues those rights which are truly central to human existence, rendering a kind of normative fatigue on the one hand, and conceptual inflation on the other, where any issue must be framed in terms of inviolate human rights if the proponent wishes to be taken seriously. This is similar to the process of “securitization” in national and international policy discourse, whereby anything deemed important is identified as vital to national security, thereby devaluing the term, but also forestalling any further discussion on the issue. Thus, as Dagger (1997, 4) says:

If everyone claims to have a right to everything, then the appeal to rights will become almost as meaningless as in Thomas Hobbes’s state of nature, in which everyone’s right to everything effectively leaves no one with a right to anything.

The fourth way in which liberal universalism is challenged is through a claim that rights, rather than preexisting societal arrangements, are actually generated by them. Thus each community generates a different concept of rights based on competing historical and cultural processes. This cultural relativism means that those from outside a community cannot judge the internal normative governance arrangements generated within. Civic virtue, under such conditions, amounts to abiding by the historically and culturally generated norms of the society, even if they go against one's individual interests.

The Western tradition of civic virtue, therefore, identifies both practical and normative shortcomings in systems of governance based on liberal individualism. In practical terms, collective living, actions, and governance, require a degree of alienation of the individual autonomy championed by liberal individual human rights. As, under democratic conditions, and those of the liberal concept of a social contract, individuals cannot be forced to give up their autonomy, but can only be persuaded to do so through appeals to their altruism (and/or reciprocal altruism), the individual members of society should be educated in the ways of civic virtue, or good citizenship. Only then can society function under conditions of freedom without the need for a Hobbesian "Leviathan." Thus, according to Robert Audia (1998, 149):

A democratic society cannot flourish if its citizens merely pursue their own narrow interests. If it is to do more than survive, at least a substantial proportion of its citizens must fulfill responsibilities that go beyond simply avoiding the violation of others' rights.... The vitality and success of a democracy requires that many citizens—ideally all of them—contribute something to their communities and participate responsibly in the political process. The disposition to do these things is a large part of what constitutes civic virtue.

This concept of civic virtue as a prerequisite to the adequate functioning, or even survival of republican governance based on the collective will of the people, can be traced back at least as far as the ancient Greeks, was reborn during the enlightenment, and has perhaps reached its pinnacle in "republican" and "conservative" political movements and discourse in the Anglophone sphere of the world. For Aristotle [see Ross 2013, 1(13)], "The true student of politics, too, is thought to have studied virtue above all things; for he wishes to make his fellow citizens good and obedient to the laws." For "one nation" Tories in England, drawing on organic state and social Darwinist intellectual antecedents, all should strive towards the common good, sacrificing self-interest to it so that the nation as a whole can flourish in the face of international competition. For the American Republicans, the emphasis was on stamping out individual greed and corruption in order to maintain a better-functioning polity. Hence "republican virtue" emphasizes the importance of educating the citizens regarding the need to sacrifice a degree of self-interest in order to ensure the continuance of a political system which maximizes the collective good.

Yet given that the notions of "virtue" and "collective good" are both themselves inherently normative, it is not surprising that intellectual traditions emphasizing duties to one's fellow man and to the collective have gone beyond the strictly practical or utilitarian.

Conservative approaches have often also emphasized family values, obedience to authority figures, whether familial, social, or political, and patriotism. On the extreme political right and left, authoritarian forces such as fascists, communists, and national socialists, have placed an emphasis on the need for individuals to sacrifice themselves for the good of the fatherland or motherland. Yet even this extreme interpretation of republican virtue is not limited to ideological outliers and the enemies or usurpers of democratic governance, with the liberal democratic U.S. president, John F. Kennedy, famously extolling his fellow Americans to “ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.”

In fact, the normative ramifications of civic virtue go far beyond the simple utilitarianism or rule utilitarianism of governance efficacy, or the symbols, rituals, and jingoism of nationalism. As pointed out by Dagger (1997, 4), communities not only give meaning to our lives but also largely constitute our identities, and there is a danger that we become so preoccupied with our rights that we “lose sight of our responsibilities and the need to act virtuously, with the good of the community in mind.” Here then we enter the realm of the communitarians. Communitarians address the necessity of attending to the demands of community alongside or prior to liberty and equality. In other words, we must pay attention to the shared practices and values within each society which constitute a distinct understanding of the common good, its generation, and its distribution, but also, society or community is itself a collective good which must at the very least be weighed against other rights. There are human rights, but due to the problem of the particularism of history, culture, and membership, the political community to which individuals belong, rather than uninformed external interference, is the best agency for their defense (Walzer 1983, 5).

For Michael Walzer (1985, 218), the political community (*qua state*) is the closest we can come to a world of common meanings as it is where language, history, and culture come most closely together to produce a collective consciousness. He (1983, 65) claims that

...one of our needs is community itself: culture, religion, and politics. It is also only under the aegis of these three that all the other things we need become socially recognized needs, take on an historical and determinate form. The social contract is an agreement to reach decisions together about what goods are necessary to our common life, and then to provide those goods for one another.

Thus community itself becomes a good. Indeed, communitarians such as Walzer see the individual as embedded or situated rather than unencumbered and free to judge impartially. Walzer (1983, 62) acknowledges that in reality “countries are likely to take shape as closed territories dominated, perhaps, by particular nations (clubs of families), but always including aliens of one sort or another,” yet considers that the only right such minorities have is not to be expelled. Within an established community, Walzer (1983, 68) even advocates coercion in the pursuit of conformity.

“EAST ASIAN VALUES” AND CONFUCIANISM

Traditionally East Asia has been viewed as a region where state prerogatives, as the definitive embodiment of political community and shared values, are seen to trump individual

human rights. For example, Henry Nau (2002, 163) notes that the lack of full protection for civil liberties in Asia

...reflects the significantly different traditions regarding the relationship of the individual to society. Nowhere in Asia is there a celebration of political individualism as we know it in the West, either in political thought or in historical events such as the Reformation or Enlightenment.

Furthermore, he (2002, 164) claims that authority patterns “infuse all social relationships—in the family (Confucianism), in religion (Buddhism and Islam), and in the state (Shintoism). Although perhaps no other region on earth is as culturally and socio-economically diverse, opposition to Western liberal or universal cosmopolitan values emanating from East Asia has tended to be identified collectively as the challenge of “Asian values.” A broad resistance to encroachment upon state prerogatives does seem to be reflected in the day-to-day governance of the East Asian region (Khong 1997).

In December 1990 when the UN decided to convene a World Conference on Human rights, several Asian states questioned the applicability of universal human rights in different cultural, economic, and social settings. The Asian regional preparatory meeting which took place in Bangkok between 29 March and 2 April 1993 provided an opportunity for Asian governments to put forward their definition of human rights on the global agenda. The Bangkok Declaration (1993, article 8), signed by over forty Asian governments, did not reject universal human rights, but the declaration suggested that universality should be considered “in the context of a dynamic and evolving process of international norm-setting, bearing in mind the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds.” The Asian states also sought to link development issues with human rights questions and emphasize the importance of non-interference (Bangkok Declaration, preamble, articles 4-6 and 17-19). Indeed for Kenneth Christie and Denny Roy (2001, 5) “development has assumed cult-like status” in East Asia.

Essentially the East Asian values debate poses a communitarian epistemological challenge to liberal individualism and solidarism. Although, as noted above, there are significant variations in the philosophical traditions of states in the region, there are a number of underlying unifying factors. Broadly speaking, the Asian challenge to solidarism can be seen in cultural, economic, and political terms. Culturally, it asserts that the Western liberal or universalist approach ignores the specific cultural traditions and historical circumstances of Asian societies, whose interpretations of human rights are different from those in the West. Economically, it maintains that the priority of developing Asian societies has to be the eradication of poverty. Politically it calls into question the motives of the West accusing them of using human rights merely as an instrument for advancing Western economic or security interests—“power politics in disguise” and a shallow pretense for the use of force against regimes which stand up to Western neo-imperialism.

While the “values” debate has toned down in recent years, it remains an important subtext “especially in relation to issues that are now seen as part of the human security agenda” (Lawson 2005, 110). Hence, East Asia remains a decidedly state-centric security operating environment, resistant to Western concepts of universalism, solidarism, and

collective security. In part, as a result of experiences of colonialism, “the collective autonomy and dignity of the state from foreign domination takes precedence over autonomy and dignity of the individual which lies at the core of human security” with Asian states remaining among the most ardent champions of Westphalian sovereignty (Acharya 2003, 9).

The “collective” emphasis of many Asian value systems mean that sometimes an individual, or individual freedoms, may be sacrificed for the good of the community as a whole. Furthermore, no external body has any right to judge or intervene in the affairs of an Asian state on the contested premise of protecting individual human rights as universally imagined. Asian societies are therefore seen to operate within a value system of “society over the self.” As pointed out by Amitav Acharya (2003, 12), what is important is “not the evidence that its proponents have been able to muster in support of this argument. Rather, the Asian values perspective has lent powerful ideological justification for enhancing state power at the expense of human security.” As Sungmoon Kim (2010, 476) remarks:

The idea of civil society being the social prerequisite for liberal democracy and of civility being inherently associated with liberal moral individualism poses a great challenge to East Asians who are still soaked in Confucian mores and habits.

Samuel Huntington (1993) famously described this clash of values between East and West as part of wider “clash of civilizations.” He described the Eastern world as being the mix of the Buddhist, Chinese, Hindu, and Japonic civilizations. But of these, he does not consider the Buddhist elements to constitute a major civilization, the Hindus are primarily concentrated in South Asia, the Japanese are a hybrid of Chinese civilization and older Altaic patterns, whereas the Sinic civilization encompasses China, the Koreas, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam. This civilizational grouping also includes the Chinese diaspora, especially in relation to Southeast Asia. Likewise, Gan, Bomhoff, and Lee (2012, 4) refer to an Asian model which includes countries such as China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam “based on the distinctive cultural zone, which is influenced by the Confucianism teaching.” Thus the millennia-old Confucian roots of the Chinese civilization pose the true epistemological challenge to Western liberal values in East Asia. Confucianism emphasizes cultural virtues and traditions which all members of society are to observe, including respect for authority, but also virtuous practices by those in authority, in particular the heads of households and those who govern. It has a strong claim, therefore, to be the Eastern equivalent of the Western conservative interpretation of civic virtue.

Given the regional dominance of the Sino-Confucian heritage, it is not surprising that democratic consolidation faces particular problems in societies in East Asia which reflect the Confucian traditions of respect for authority and suspicion of the liberal individualism on which democracy is based. Democratization in East Asia is seen by some as a “grafting of democratic practices and institutions onto societies with an alternative cultural baggage, with different ways of organizing their economic life, with distinct answers to the question of who counts as ‘we the people’” (Bell, Brown, Jayasuriya, and Jones

1995, 2). Yet this is to mistake Confucian social and philosophical mores with what Kim (2014) has termed “Confucian Democracy.”

Kim (2014, 2-10) notes that while democracy may, from a traditional Confucian communitarian perspective, be seen as the root of all “Western evils,” Confucianism and democracy are not mutually exclusive terms if one focuses on the political rather than philosophical perspective. “By failing to distinguish political equality from moral equality, Confucian communitarians reduce Confucian democratic politics to Confucian role ethics” (Kim 2014, 14). Instead, Kim (2014, 5) emphasizes that a Confucian model of democracy could include “sophisticated institutional mechanisms to check the arbitrary power of the power-holders, thereby protecting the citizenry’s public freedom and each individual citizen’s constitutional rights.” Hence, a Confucian democratic civil society, supported by democratic political institutions, is not a contradiction in terms (Kim, 2014, 17).

Here then we can see the beginning of a pathway towards reconciling individual autonomy and collective civil virtue of Western liberal solidarism and Eastern communitarianism. This coming together is explored further in the next section exploring “republican liberalism” or a liberal approach to civic virtue.

LIBERAL CIVIC VIRTUE

Richard Dagger (1997, 5 and 13) finds that the proper relationship between rights and responsibilities requires us not to choose between liberalism and republicanism, but rather to unite them in a republican form of liberalism: “Autonomy and civic virtue are often taken to be at odds with each other because one has to do with individual liberty, the other with collective responsibility.” Yet a “concern for rights need not be hostile to the desire to promote civic virtue. . . republican liberalism promises to strengthen the appeal of duty, community, and the common good while preserving the appeal of rights.” Dagger (1997, 5-6) shows how a theory that takes rights seriously can lead beyond the isolated individual to a person who is embedded in significant social relations that require his or her attention and care, then attempts to draw out the connections between rights, obligations, and membership in a political society.

Dagger (1997, 6) counters the charge that republican liberalism is inherently hostile to cultural pluralism because in the name of citizenship or civic virtue, it threatens to ignore the differences between groups of people and to impose an artificial homogeneity on them, by arguing that “republican liberalism promotes autonomy and solidarity—two goods that any defensible version of cultural pluralism must also endorse—rather than homogeneity.” Yet there remain, in fact, a number of nuanced tensions in this discourse between universalism and relativism and between cultural homogeneity and internal pluralism.

On the one hand, communitarians plead for an understanding of divergent concepts of the “collective good.” For Walzer (1983, 3-5), the subjects of values are in the first instance political communities and not the individual members of those communities. For instance, justice is only based on equality if that is how a particular society has evolved a particular conception of justice with regard to a specific sphere. In this way, different forms of distribution may be just whether equal or unequal, depending on circumstances, and there is no single, legitimate distributive criterion. Likewise, for Charles Taylor (see

Kymlicka 1990, 224), the supposed liberal “neutral” state undermines the shared sense of the common good which is required for citizens to accept the sacrifices demanded by the welfare state. Citizens will only identify with the state, and accept its demands as legitimate, when there is a “common form of life,” which “is seen as a supremely important good, so that its continuance and flourishing matters to the citizens for its own sake and not just instrumentally to their several individual goods or as the sum total of these individual goods.” Thus Walzer (1997, 19) pleads for “toleration” of alternative community-generated conceptions of the good.

On the other hand, as mentioned above, communitarians do not extend this degree of toleration to citizens within a political community, and will even go as far as supporting coercion to ensure adherence to supposed community norms. Liberals, by way of contrast, emphasize much more than internal toleration, going as far as to claim that a just society empowers all individuals and supports their autonomy from society and from each other as long as they do not negatively impact on the rights of others. Furthermore, they claim that this degree of toleration and autonomy is universally applicable (despite apparent Western origins). The social contract from a liberal perspective exists to ensure the autonomous rights of individuals, and to impose limitations and obligations on state and society. For Derek Edyvane (2013, 33), what we are faced with, therefore, is tension between the “politics of the common good” (as advocated by Aristotle and Michael Sandel 2009) which equates civic virtue with conceptions of a “good society” and the duties of citizens to this society; versus “politics of the right” (Rawls 1993) which is more concerned with a fair social structure within which citizens pursue their divergent conceptions of the good—a “just society.”

In fact, Rawls (see Mulhall and Swift 1992, 199-200) acknowledges that communitarian concerns may be entirely appropriate in spheres other than the political. With regard to the political, Rawls (1993, 250) identifies his overlapping consensus as the only community shared value likely to endure without coercion—an institutionalized guarantee of tolerance of diversity within communities as opposed to mere toleration of diversity between communities advocated by Walzer. Like Walzer, he is concerned with majoritarian popular support for regimes, but unlike Walzer, he is convinced that in order to get a substantial majority of citizens to freely give their support, a political doctrine is needed “that a diversity of comprehensive religions, philosophical, and moral doctrines can endorse, each from its own point of view.”

Thus if we take a historical, epistemological look at the evolution of modern communities through Rawls’s eyes rather than those of Walzer, we see an irreversible tendency to internal pluralism (which has become a “permanent feature of the public culture of democracy”). It is the defense of this pluralism that constitutes a shared value in all democratic regimes. There thus emerges a stable or self-perpetuating conception of justice because “those who grow up in a society well-ordered by it—a society whose institutions are publicly recognized to be just, as specified by that conception itself—develop a sufficient allegiance to those institutions” (Rawls 1993, 250). No amount of coercion can ever produce the sort of consensus that Walzer requires for his theory, and thus such measures cannot be justified. Basically, communitarianism does not reflect the fact of modern communities. As a result of such analysis, Mulhall and Swift (1992, 201)

contend not only that Rawls's justice as fairness is a better communitarian theory than is Walzer's, but also that:

Rawls's political liberalism itself embodies a particular understanding of community, that what motivates the exclusion from politics of reasons appropriate to people's non-public lives is precisely a shared aim, a conception of community and a recognition of the value of goods that can only be realized communally. Rawls's conception of justice as fairness is communitarian both in terms of its source—it articulates the shared values of the community which it addresses—and in terms of its content—those shared values themselves involve a commitment to an understanding of politics that is distinctively communitarian.

Civic virtue perspectives—whether republican, communitarian, Confucian, or liberal—all place an emphasis on the role of education in propagating the values which need to be instilled in members of the polity to ensure the adequate functioning of collective society. A liberal conceptualization of civic virtue, therefore, is one under which the values promoted within a community include a shared commitment to fundamental human entitlement rights (rights possessed by individuals by virtue of being human beings), a commitment not to infringe upon the rights of others, a tolerance of diversity of values beyond these rights within a community, and an acceptance of historically and culturally generated conceptions of the good beyond the immediate realm of the political.

Thus at a bare minimum, liberal civic virtue would emphasize individual autonomy, but also the duty within the society to refrain from encroaching on the individual autonomy of another, except when there are societal needs for such encroachment to protect the basic human entitlement rights of all. Liberal perspectives on civic virtue do not have an issue with a community adding additional responsibilities upon the shoulders of the citizens, as long as these foundations are not violated. Liberals would claim that this “thin” foundation of civic virtue applies universally to all contemporary societies. Basically, there is an overlapping consensus between societies on the principles of good governance within societies needed to generate support for those who govern.

There remain two outstanding questions, however. First, what are the basic human entitlement rights which must be protected? Second, is it possible to go beyond such a thin prescription for good governance, and limited scope for civic virtue education (and is there sufficient overlapping consensus to do so)? The final analytical section introduces the concept of human security as both the foundation of human entitlement rights, and a globally accepted norm of good governance which goes beyond a “thin” sense of duties.

HUMAN SECURITY AND CIVIC VIRTUE

Human security is an emerging multidisciplinary paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities at the level of individual human beings, incorporating methodologies and analysis from a number of research fields including governance, human rights, security studies, development studies, international relations, and the study of international organizations. It exists at the point where these disciplines converge on the concept of

protection. The complexity of threats in people's daily lives now involve transnational dimensions and have moved beyond national security, which focused solely on the threat of external military aggressions. Such threats range from poverty, unemployment, drugs, terrorism, environmental degradation, and social disintegration (UNDP 1994, 11). The international community has also begun to see security threats not only *between*, but also *within* states, and focus on people in addition to states (WHO 2002, 218). Thus the virtues which must be promoted within civic society go beyond the protection of the body politic from threats, domestic and foreign, to the protection of individual human beings from threats, both domestic and foreign, and the provision of havens safe from fear, want, and indignity.

The major implications of the newly emerging human security paradigm for the concept of good governance are the need to protect individuals rather than states; to provide freedom from fear and freedom from want; that all human beings are "entitled" to these rights; that the broadest interpretations include aspects of security related to food, health, the environment, communities, politics, and human rights; and that in providing safe havens we need to take into account the complex of interrelated threats to individual human well-being associated with interstate war, civil war, genocide, ethnic cleansing, the displacement of populations, environmental degradation, natural disasters, and pandemics. As noted by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (2007, 1), good governance and human rights can be mutually reinforcing: human rights principles provide a set of values to guide the work of governments and other actors, and a set of performance standards against which these actors can be held accountable; whereas without good governance, human rights cannot be respected and protected in a sustainable manner.

Freedom from fear focuses on concrete physical threats that are experienced at the level of an individual and do not necessarily implicate entire societies. Warfare is the paradigm case, and much debate correctly focuses here. Warfare does not, however, exhaust the list, in particular when intrastate conflict outweighs interstate conflict in the contemporary operating environment. Instead, additional threats, such as the possibility of contamination through exposure to health hazards ranging from traditional diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria, through more modern infections such as HIV/AIDS, to contemporary challenges such as nuclear waste or fallout need to be addressed. Other threats to physical wellbeing or even existence, include natural or manmade environmental disasters, and the threats of unjust coercion and involuntary displacement. If people are to be free from fear, they need protection from all of these potential threats. In terms of enhancing human security, the World Bank (2000, 7) has also spelled out the need to reduce vulnerability to economic shocks, natural disasters, ill health, disability, and personal violence as an intrinsic part of enhancing well-being, requiring effective national action and effective mechanisms to reduce the risks faced by poor people. This statement further highlights the linkages between freedom from fear and freedom from want.

Freedom from want points to the basic needs debate. Len Doyal and Ian Gough (1991, 3-4) contend that "individuals have a right to the optimal satisfaction of [such] needs" and that "all human liberation should be measured by assessing the degree to which such satisfaction has occurred." This is a cardinal point, as is the contention that human need is both objective and universal. Against radical democrats, critics of cultural

imperialism and ideologues from the New Right and Marxist traditions, who insist that human need is a subjective or culturally relative concept, Doyal and Gough (1991, 1) counter that because “all humans have the same potential to be harmed or to flourish,” they must all have basic human needs. For Doyal and Gough (1991), eleven main items can be broken up into two somewhat overlapping sets. The five elements that address basic needs for physical health are: adequate nutritional food and clean water; adequate protective housing; a nonhazardous work environment; a nonhazardous physical environment; and appropriate healthcare. The six elements that address basic needs for mental health are: security in childhood; significant primary relationships; physical security; economic security; appropriate education; and safe birth control and child-bearing.

Having established that there are certain fundamental human entitlement rights, and that the central task of governance should be to protect them and to provide for all, including and perhaps especially the most vulnerable sections of global society, the key question remains upon whom does this burden of responsibility fall? In fact, the universality of entitlement rights implies a commensurate universal responsibility upon all who govern, whether IGOs, States, Cities, NGOs, or (under conditions of republican or democratic governance) even individual citizens—all owe a duty to fellow human beings regardless of nationality, citizenship, ethnicity, or religion. Thus awareness of a “thick” conceptualization of human entitlement rights reflected in the human security paradigm, and the concurrent duties on all who exert power over others, forms an essential element of education for civic virtue.

There is even clear evidence of a global overlapping consensus regarding these principles. In December 2001 the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) released a report entitled *The responsibility to protect*. In the intervening years this new paradigm has gained momentum and garnered international recognition. In response to this international normative shift, at the High-Level Plenary Meeting for the 2005 World Summit (14-16 September) the world’s leaders at the UN General Assembly agreed on a “responsibility to protect,” which included a “clear and unambiguous acceptance by all governments of the collective international responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.” Resolution 1674, adopted by the United Nations Security Council on 28 April 2006, “Reaffirm[ed] the provisions of paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document regarding the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity” and commits the Security Council to action to protect civilians in armed conflict. This resolution was adopted unanimously. On 14 September 2009, in the course of the closing plenary of its 63rd session, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution A/63/L80 Rev.1 entitled “The responsibility to protect,” which had been cosponsored by 67 member states from every region in the world. Only seven states sought to play down the importance of the document, stressing that in their opinion the resolution was strictly procedural (GCR2P 2009). Importantly, none of these seven states who expressed reservations was from the East Asian region.

There remain disagreements between East and West on the breadth of human security, and on whether the responsibility to protect (R2P) legitimizes international

intervention and the violation of state sovereignty when a political community is unable or unwilling to provide safe havens. Essentially, Asian countries support a broad interpretation of human security, but narrowly interpret the R2P to be permissive of intervention only when authorized by the Security Council. Western countries have tended to interpret human security more narrowly, focusing on freedom from fear, but have endorsed a broader permissibility of humanitarian intervention (Park 2009; Bellamy and Davies 2009, 552). At the very least, however, there is consensus that all states have a responsibility to protect their own citizens. In fact, all states in East Asia have at least engaged with the idea of a responsibility to protect, having, in some cases, shifted from previously hardline noninterventionary positions. Recent analysis has found Japan, the Philippines (2004-05) and the Republic of Korea to be advocates of the R2P; Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines (2006-08), China, and Vietnam (2008) to be “R2P-Engaged”; Vietnam (2005-07), Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, and Thailand as “Fence Sitters”; and only the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Myanmar as being opposed to the more interventionary interpretations, with even these two countries not explicitly rejecting the idea that states have a responsibility to protect their own population (Bellamy and Davies 2009, 551).

CONCLUSION

Thus not only is a rights-based approach to civic virtue and governance possible, but it is also universally accepted (including among Asian societies) at the level of an overlapping consensus on the responsibility to protect. Universal basic entitlement rights to safe havens free from fear and want, imply a universal responsibility for all those who exercise power over others not only negatively to refrain from infringing upon these rights, but also positively to do all they can to provide and protect such safe havens. Under republican or democratic conditions that include all members of the polity. If civic virtue along these lines is propagated to the citizenry through comprehensive civic education programs, good governance in terms of both norms and efficiency becomes possible.

Indeed, training in the values necessary for participation in the democratic process and the exercise of power over one’s fellow citizens, as well as a commitment to the collective good, can best be achieved through a commitment to the human security of all, but especially the most vulnerable sections of society. This amounts to a conceptualization of the relationship between rights and responsibilities which alienates neither the liberal concept of individuals as universal human rights bearers, nor the communitarian or Asian perspectives, but rather can gain widespread or even universal support.

NOTE

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