

Interpretation

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Why a World State Is Unnecessary: The Continuing Debate on World Government

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Abstract: The discussion of the possibility of world government has been revived since the end of the Cold War and particularly after the turn of the millennium. It has engaged many authors. In this article, I provide a survey of the continuing debate on world government. I explore the leading question of the debate, whether the conditions of insecurity in which states are placed and other global problems that face contemporary humanity require the creation of a global authority, and consequently, the establishment of a world state. After a careful analysis I suggest that a world state is neither necessary nor inevitable nor desirable. I argue that the plurality of nation-states that form an international society has a great advantage over a world state. It supports the diversity of character and culture, and sustains the continuous progress of humankind.

Where there are more states, there are more able men.

—Niccolò Machiavelli

The plurality of sovereign states is a disturbing puzzle for a political philosopher. As individual human beings, we are members of different political communities and enjoy the security they can provide. Yet, since these communities are organized as sovereign states that lack a common authority above them, at the same time we live in a sort of Hobbesian “state of nature”—a condition that puts all states in a constant disposition to war.

This reflection about the conflicting character of our international environment can lead us to the conclusion that the solution of many world problems and, above all, of insecurity, can be provided only by bringing international anarchy to an end. We start to believe that “the predicament of vulnerability of nation-states calls for a global authority with sufficient power to redress or prevent attacks on themselves.”¹ We come to think that “like the United Nations itself, global governance is a bridge between the old and the as yet unborn...a world federal government, an idea that is both necessary and possible.”² We become convinced that a world state is “inevitable”³ and “democratically necessary.”⁴ Thus, we come to the conclusion that “whether by a social contract among the nations or by conquest, whether gradually or at once, whether by a frontal assault on national sovereignty or a silent undermining of its foundations,”⁵ the anarchic system of sovereign states is to be finally replaced by a universal world state.

In this article, I provide a survey of the continuing debate on world government.⁶ I explore the leading question of the debate: whether the conditions of insecurity in which states are placed, and other global problems that face contemporary humanity, require the creation of a global authority and consequently, the establishment of a world state. Discussing the views of such authors as Campbell Creig, Daniel Deudney, Luis Cabrera, Thomas Magnell, and Alexander Wendt, I come to the conclusion that a world state is neither necessary nor inevitable, nor even desirable, at least at this stage of human development. I argue that the plurality of nation-states that form an international society has a considerable advantage over a world state. It supports the diversity of character and culture and sustains the continuous progress of humankind.

¹ Thomas Magnell, “Vulnerability, Global Authority, and Moving Away from a Local Maximum of Value,” *Journal of Value Inquiry* 36, no. 1 (2002): 5.

² Thomas G. Weiss, “What Happened to the Idea of World Government,” *International Studies Quarterly* 53, no. 2 (2009): 265–66.

³ Alexander Wendt, “Why a World State Is Inevitable,” *European Journal of International Relations* 9, no. 4 (2003): 491–542.

⁴ Alexander Wendt, “Why a World State Is Democratically Necessary” (paper presented at Hiram College, February 28, 2014), available at <http://wgresearch.org/why-a-world-state-is-democratically-necessary/>.

⁵ Hedley Bull, “Society and Anarchy in International Relations,” in *International Theory: Critical Investigations*, ed. James Der Derian (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), 76.

⁶ Research reported in this article was supported by the Research Incentive Fund of Zayed University under award number R15088.

A WORLD STATE AND THE DOMESTIC ANALOGY

The argument that to save the world from war and provide peace and security, it is necessary to employ a kind of social contract transferring sovereignty of individual states to a global authority rests on an analogy with domestic societies.⁷ Relations among states in the anarchic international system are compared to those among individuals in a Hobbesian state of nature. The conditions of an orderly social life are believed to be the same among states as among individuals; thus they require that domestic institutions be reproduced on a global scale. It was indeed Thomas Hobbes who identified the absence of a ruler, literally *an-archy*, with the state of conflict and argued that without a central authority with sufficient power to keep humans in awe, the war “of every man against every man” would be the universal condition of humankind.⁸ If we accept his assumptions, particularly the conflictual and power-driven character of human beings, then, on the basis of the analogy between individual persons and individual states, it would be logical to conclude that peace among nations could be secured only by ending the “anarchy” and establishing a universal world state comprising all nations of the earth.

Although a world state would find support in writings of many intellectuals, especially those of the early post–World War II period, who thought that it would spare humanity from a nuclear threat, this is not a position taken by Hobbes himself. He does not propose that a social contract between nations be implemented to bring international anarchy to an end. This is because, as Hedley Bull notes, the condition of insecurity in which states are placed does not necessarily lead to insecurity for individuals.⁹ As long as an armed conflict between countries, whether involving nuclear or conventional weapons, does not actually break out, individuals living within them can feel relatively secure. After comparing sovereign states to gladiators prepared for combat, Hobbes goes on to say that “because they uphold thereby the industry of their subjects, there does not follow from it that misery which accompanies the misery of individual men.”¹⁰ In other words, although states may regard each other with suspicion and be ready for war, the lives of the people who live in them are not necessarily “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”¹¹

⁷ See Bull, “Society and Anarchy,” 80.

⁸ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. E. Curley (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1994), chap. 13 [9].

⁹ Bull, “Society and Anarchy,” 87.

¹⁰ Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chap. 12 [8].

¹¹ *Ibid.*, chap. 13 [12].

THREE PARADIGMS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Political philosophy offers two standard paradigms of international relations. On one hand, in the tradition of realism associated with Machiavelli and Hobbes, sovereign states are in the anarchic state of nature, unrestrained by legal or moral rules in their relations with one another.¹² Viewed from this perspective, the international environment is characterized by lawlessness and ongoing active or passive conflict.¹³ Placed in a situation of anarchy, with no ruler above them, states are caught in a continuous struggle for power and survival. On the other hand, in counterpoint to this tradition, a reflection on the conflictual character of interstate relations can also lead us to the conclusion that peace among nations should be secured by bringing international anarchy to an end. Thus, in a second paradigm, whose elements can be traced to ancient Chinese and Indian as well as Greco-Roman thought,¹⁴ and which was clearly expressed as early as the mid-thirteenth century by Dante Alighieri in his *De Monarchia*, states can escape the conditions of anarchy by being subject to the despotism or overarching authority of a universal empire.¹⁵ Advocates of this solution to the problem of interstate insecurity attempt a radical transformation of the existing international system. They believe that what is needed to ensure lasting peace is the transfer of the sovereignty of individual nation-states to a central authority, one that would be sovereign over individual nations in the same way that such nations are sovereign over their respective territories. Under the ensuing world government, all humankind would then be united.

¹² My discussion of three paradigms is indebted to Hedley Bull's "Society and Anarchy in International Relations" and his three doctrines of international relations: the first describing them in terms of a Hobbesian state of nature; the second, of which Kant is a representative, which brings international anarchy to an end; and the third based on the conception of international society (78–79). Bull follows the distinction drawn by Martin Wight between realism (or Machiavellism), rationalism (or Grotianism), and revolutionism (or Kantianism) (Robert Jackson, "The Political Theory of International Society," in *International Relations Theory Today*, ed. Ken Booth and Steve Smith [Cambridge: Polity, 1995], 114). However, in my view, at least in *Perpetual Peace*, Kant is clearly a supporter of international society rather than of world society, and thus he belongs to rationalism and to my third paradigm together with Grotius.

¹³ In realism, the conflict-oriented paradigm of international relations, the key actors are states, power and security are the main issues, and there is little place for morality (W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, "Political Realism in International Relations," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Summer 2017 ed., ed. E. N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2017/entries/realism-intl-relations/>).

¹⁴ Derek Heater, *World Citizenship and World Government: Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Political Thought* (New York: St. Martin's, 1996).

¹⁵ "By the temporal government of the world or universal empire, we mean a single government over all peoples in time" (Dante Alighieri, *On World-Government or De Monarchia*, trans. H. W. Schneider [Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1949], 4).

There is, however, another paradigm that is often overlooked or even misunderstood by many of today's writers who discuss the question of world government.¹⁶ It is an alternative to both lawlessness and despotism, and is offered in the writings of Hugo Grotius and Immanuel Kant, both of whom can in my view be associated with international society.

To begin with the former, in his great treatise *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* (*On the Law of War and Peace*), first published in 1625, Grotius neither approves of lawlessness in interstate relations nor is attracted by the idea of replacing individual sovereign states with a universal empire, about which he says that its "advantages are counterbalanced by still greater disadvantages."¹⁷ Instead, he proposes the third paradigm: international society, according to which states in their dealings with one another are linked by mutual obligations, and thus form a society with one another, "a society without a government."¹⁸ Grotius's assumption, like that of Hedley Bull and other theorists of the English school,¹⁹ is that sovereign states, like individuals, can be subject to legal rules and, by sharing some common norms and values, they can recognize the common bonds of their society. This does not mean that they lose their sovereignty, which can still be preserved even when they voluntarily choose to become members of international organizations.²⁰ Also, this does not mean that they free themselves from the demands of power politics and

¹⁶ Because of this misunderstanding, Hugo Grotius is sometimes associated with the idea of world government rather than with that of international society (see Campbell Craig, "The Resurgent Idea of World Government," *Ethics and International Affairs* 22, no. 2 [2008]: 133–42), whereas Immanuel Kant is associated with a cosmopolitan world society and the belief in human progress (Bull, "Society and Anarchy," 79).

¹⁷ Hugo Grotius, *De Juri Belli ac Pacis* (*On the Law of War and Peace*), trans. F. W. Kelsey (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1925), II.22.xiii.

¹⁸ Bull, "Society and Anarchy," 89–90. In addition, a fourth paradigm of international relations can be mentioned. It is idealism, a theoretical perspective that has many similarities with the international-society approach and emphasizes international norms, interdependence among states, and international cooperation.

¹⁹ The English school (international-society approach), founded in the mid-twentieth century by Martin Wight and Hedley Bull, emphasizes both systemic and normative constraints on the behavior of states. Referring to the classical view of the human being as an individual that is basically social and rational, capable of cooperating and learning from past experiences, these theorists emphasize that states, like individuals, have legitimate interests that others can recognize and respect, and that they can recognize the general advantages of observing a principle of reciprocity in their mutual relations (Robert Jackson and Georg Sørensen, eds., *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003], 167).

²⁰ Robert Jackson emphasizes that international society involves mutual obligations between states, and "the degree of society can be conceived as a continuum, from mere awareness and very limited contact, at one extreme, to extensive and continuous interaction through a highly developed institutional framework" (Jackson, "Political Theory of International Society," 111).

great-powers rule. As Bull notes, the society that they form can be understood in terms of its unique institutions: “international law, diplomacy and the system of balance of power.”²¹ Moreover, in subjecting international relations to the rule of law, Grotius does not maintain that this is true only with respect to a certain class of states, such as the Western or “civilized” states. He regards the formal equality of all states as a fundamental principle of international law. In his *Mare Liberum*, he regards Asian rulers as sovereigns capable of entering into diplomatic and treaty relations with European powers.²² Arguing against the dominant imperialist theories of his time, he denies that some peoples can be subjected to conquest because of their religion or their alleged cultural and intellectual inferiority. Since he grounds international rules in natural law, his international society is global and all-inclusive in its scope. It is applicable to all nations. The practical expression of the Grotian global order, which is based on the rule of law in international relations, is the United Nations Organization, whose member states are equal before the law and preserve their sovereignty; it is not a world state.

An argument against a world state is also offered by Immanuel Kant. While arguing against the views of those of his contemporaries who wanted to eradicate nations and promote internationalism, Kant, in his 1795 essay *Perpetual Peace*, says that the existence of many separate states is “rationally preferable to their being overrun by a superior power that melts them into a universal monarchy.”²³ As “laws invariably lose their impact with the extension of the domain of governance,”²⁴ Kant apparently fears that upon the transformation of the existing international system based on individual states into a world state, the latter would be unable to keep dissenting groups within the bounds of law. Since nature has prevented people from intermingling with each other by differences in language and religion, he suggests, they cannot be artificially united by a supranational structure imposed from above. Hence, unable to attract common loyalties and turning into a “soulless despotism,” which maintains peace solely by force, a world state would lead to endemic secessionist conflict, and would finally collapse and disintegrate into anarchy. It is not then a world state, but a league of nations, which is a “federation of nations, but it must be a state consisting of nations,” as well

²¹ Bull, “Society and Anarchy,” 90.

²² W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, *On the History of Political Philosophy: Great Political Thinkers from Thucydides to Locke* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 156.

²³ Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, trans. T. Humphrey (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1983), 125.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

as “the growth of culture and men’s gradual progress toward greater agreement regarding their principles,” that can lead human beings to mutual understanding and peace.²⁵ As the father of democratic-peace theory, Kant convincingly argues that a peaceful world order is guaranteed by liberal republics, which, when established and brought together to form a league of peace (*foedus pacificum*), will progressively lead to cooperative relations among themselves “to end all wars forever.”²⁶ Another element in building peace is cosmopolitan right—the right of an alien not to be treated as an enemy—which is reinforced by the spirit of trade. Hence, in Kant’s view, the negative effects of international anarchy can be tamed not by the installation of a world government, but by the development of a global cosmopolitan culture and by the relations among states of a similarly liberal character that are joined into a federation of free states, which is the league of peace. As he asserts in his earlier work *Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmopolitan Plan* (1784), the development of a global culture may eventually lead humankind to the perfect civic union.²⁷ However, such a union, even if we assume that it is no longer a federal league of nations or a global cultural association, but a world state, is the result of long-term natural growth, of progressive human moral and intellectual evolution, rather than of any artificial imposition here and now.

POSTWAR SUPPORT FOR AND OPPOSITION TO WORLD GOVERNMENT

The idea of a global authority was strongly advocated during the late 1940s, from roughly 1944 to 1950. Under the impact of the Second World War, prospects for a third, and continuing international tensions stimulated by ideological differences between the United States and the USSR, the propaganda for a world state reached large audiences and imparted to them a sense of urgency.²⁸ Many intellectuals called for the establishment of an

²⁵ Ibid., 115, 125.

²⁶ Ibid., 117.

²⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim, in Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace and History*, trans. D. L. Colclasure (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 14. Kant’s ideas about cosmopolitanism have led some scholars to believe that whatever reservations Kant had about world government, his ideas related to human progress and the cosmopolitan world society lead him in the direction of an eventual world state in the form of the perfect civil union. This could be the reason why both Wight and Bull have attributed to Kant a different theoretical perspective from that of Grotius. However, as Howard Williams rightly points out, for Kant the idea of a world government is not to be implemented here and now, but “only after a long process of political and legal integration through federation” (Williams, *Kant and the End of War: A Critique of Just War Theory* [London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012], xi).

²⁸ H. C. Osborne, *Towards World Government: The Role of Britain*, Peace Aims Pamphlet 39 (London:

overarching global authority capable of sparing humanity from a nuclear war. These included Nobel-laureate novelist Thomas Mann, Albert Camus, and Jean-Paul Sartre, who were supported by thousands of street demonstrators.²⁹ Most notably, Albert Einstein and his colleagues from the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists lobbied for world government and global control of nuclear weapons.³⁰ Numerous resolutions were also introduced into the US Congress that would support the creation of a world federation or the transformation of the United Nations along world government lines. However, these initiatives faded quickly with the intensification of the Cold War. The outbreak of war in Korea in 1950 replaced the dream for a universal republic with suspicion and fear. Although the world government was still advocated by some scholars, for example by Bertrand Russell, who supported it in his 1959 book *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare*, it would lose its importance in IR theory. It is often observed that two prominent political realists of that era, Reinhold Niebuhr and Hans Morgenthau, entertained the idea of a world state; however, it is less commonly noted that they were both aware of and critical of its weaknesses.

In “The Illusion of World Government,” published in 1949 in *Foreign Affairs*, Niebuhr summarized what he deemed to be the fallacy of world government. His argument refers to the domestic analogy and resembles the Kantian critique. The advocates of world government, Niebuhr claims, labor under a misconception about the nature of governmental authority. The notion of the social contract led them to believe that authority rests on the government’s monopoly of law and lawful force. They base their advocacy of world government on the analogy of the social contract, by which individuals living in a Hobbesian state of nature, where there is no ruler and no one is secure, surrender their individual sovereignty to an authority in exchange for security and protection. However, as Niebuhr suggests, Hobbes’s ideas are fundamentally mistaken. The “authority of government is not primarily the authority of law nor the authority of force [as Hobbes believes], but the authority of community itself. Laws are obeyed because the community

National Peace Council, 1946); Crane Brinton, *From Many One: The Process of Political Integration and the Problem of World Government* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948); Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 2nd ed. (New York: Knopf, 1956).

²⁹ Luis Cabrera, “World Government: Renewed Debate, Persistent Challenges,” *European Journal of International Relations* 16, no. 3 (2010): 512.

³⁰ Albert Einstein, “The Way Out” (1946), in *One World or None: A Report to the Public on the Full Meaning of the Atomic Bomb*, ed. D. Masters and K. Way (New York: New Press, 2007), 209–14.

accepts them as corresponding, on the whole, to its conception of justice.”³¹ Thus, Hobbes’s belief in the desire for power as a motivating force of human action has led him and his realist followers to an unqualified endorsement of coercive state power. But this is because, Niebuhr thinks, they were not realistic enough. In the world of pure realism, in which, as the realist E. H. Carr asserts, even values are made relative to interests, “life turns into nothing more than a power game and is unbearable.”³² What Hobbes did not understand when formulating a realist worldview based on the idea of power and coercion was that although the government is indispensable for maintenance of domestic peace, it cannot rely on power alone. To inspire obedience by the fear of sanctions is not enough; the government also needs the citizens’ willing identification with its policies. This is, according to Niebuhr, the greatest omission in Hobbesian political philosophy. Analogously, without commanding the willing obedience of individuals, a world state, created by social contract, whereby individual nations transfer their powers and relinquish significant elements of their sovereignty to a central authority, cannot perform its task of maintaining global peace.

A similar objection is made by Hans Morgenthau, best known for his book *Politics among Nations*, first published in 1948, when the Cold War had just started. The argument for world government, he claims, which rests on the domestic analogy, involves two premises. First, world government will provide security. Second, security is the primary need of individuals and states, so their liberty should, if necessary, be sacrificed to it. However, Morgenthau believes that neither the first nor the second premise is true. In the chapter of his book devoted to a world state, he writes: “The peace of society whose intergroup conflicts are no longer limited, restrained, and neutralized by overriding loyalties, [and] whose processes of social change no longer sustain expectations of justice in all the major groups...cannot be saved by the state, however strong.”³³ Hence, to begin with the first premise, for any state, including a world state, Morgenthau argues, keeping individuals in awe by overwhelming force is an essential, but not sufficient condition for peace and an orderly social life. To remain in peace, individuals must be able to expect from society at least an approximation of their conception of what is just and proper. They must also feel loyalties to society as a whole, as

³¹ H. W. Brands, *What America Owes the World: The Struggle for the Soul of Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 191.

³² Korab-Karpowicz, “Political Realism in International Relations.”

³³ Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 476.

a political and cultural group, that would surpass their loyalties to any one part of it. Without these loyalties and identities related to them, the power of an authority, “as great as it would be,” is alone not sufficient to keep peace and this is proved by the experience of civil wars.³⁴ In the research of Quincy Wright, to which Morgenthau refers, it is shown that between 1480 and 1941, 28 percent of the total 278 wars were civil wars.³⁵ They were costlier in both losses of lives and economic losses than contemporary international wars. The frequency and destructiveness of such civil wars demonstrate that, as long as humanity does not share fundamental common values and is culturally divided, the establishment of a world state does not give any assurance of security and peace.

Both Niebuhr and Morgenthau try to demonstrate that the state is not merely an artificial creation of a constitutional convention, or a mere result of its controlling power on the legitimate means of violence, but a diverse product of a community from which it springs. As Morgenthau convincingly argues, what is missing from the theory of world state formation is thus an account of people’s loyalties and identities. It assumes that individuals are merely rational, self-interested utility maximizers. It does not take into consideration that their cultural (particularly religious and ethnic) identities, when suppressed, can lead to conflicts. The forces of destruction in the form of class, racial, religious, regional, or purely political struggles erupt in revolutions and civil wars.³⁶ This shows that the second premise is also not true. Motivated by vital issues, individuals and nations can enter into conflict and forsake their security. Hence, as the cases of the partition of India in 1947, the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, and the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East show, the existence of a plurality of sovereign states may often be less dangerous than an attempt to hold potentially hostile religious and ethnic groups within the framework of a single state. If we believe that a world state should be implemented in order to save us from nuclear and terrorist threats³⁷ and to solve some urgent transnational problems, such as climate

³⁴ Morgenthau links loyalties to identities. According to him a citizen can identify with a plurality of different social groupings (political, economic, religious, ethnic) within society, and is therefore not fully identified with any of them and does not give any of them his undivided loyalty. The overlapping of identities of different members of society tend to neutralize their conflicts. Thus, to maintain social peace citizens, in spite of their differences, must have something in common. They must be united by some common values and interests, or as Morgenthau says, by moral standards and political action (ibid., 470–71, 489).

³⁵ Ibid., 476.

³⁶ Ibid., 476–77.

³⁷ Amitai Etzioni, *From Empire to Community: A New Approach to International Relations* (New

change, migration, financial instability, and pandemics, which require action at a global level,³⁸ to obtain success we need first to create a supportive world community sharing common values and guided by the same vision. Morgenthau himself feared that without the moral support of a world community, a world state would be “a totalitarian monster resting on feet of clay” and torn apart by revolutions and civil wars.³⁹

For Morgenthau, the value of UNESCO and other agencies of the United Nations lay not in themselves, but in what he believed to be their final cause, a world state. He saw in them a means to create a world community, which he defined as “a community of moral standards and political action,”⁴⁰ which he realistically thought was necessary to sustain a world state. Like Niebuhr, he did not question the analogy with domestic societies on which the argument for a world state rested but denied that any state that was expected to endure could be created artificially by way of a social contract. He believed that just as the community of the American people antedated the American state, so also a world community of the people sharing the same moral and political values must antedate a world state.

However, if it is the case, as Morgenthau believed, that through the work of international organizations, common global values can be introduced and the interests of all nations gradually integrated, then the domestic analogy on which he bases his argument no longer holds. Anarchy, which is the central fact of international relations, cannot then be identified with the imaginary Hobbesian state of nature,⁴¹ which is the state of war. It can then be peaceful

York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Louis Pojman, *Terrorism, Human Rights, and the Case for World Government* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006); Daniel H. Deudney, *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); Craig, “Resurgent Idea of World Government”; William E. Scheuerman, *The Realist Case for Global Reform* (Oxford: Polity, 2011).

³⁸ Furio Cerutti, *Global Challenges for Leviathan: A Political Philosophy of Nuclear Weapons and Global Warming* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007); Weiss, “Idea of World Government”; Gary Stix, “Effective World Government Will Be Needed to Stave Off Climate Catastrophe,” *Scientific American*, March 17, 2012, <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/2012/03/17/effective-world-government-will-still-be-needed-to-stave-off-climate-catastrophe/>.

³⁹ Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 482.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 489.

⁴¹ The Hobbesian state of nature can be described as imaginary because it is a theoretical concept used to justify Hobbes’s political theory. The real question is whether it has *never* existed. Violence exists in plenty in pre-state, primitive societies, but it is largely intergroup rather than intragroup, and thus a precursor to war between states rather than a war of all against all. Modeling international relations on a dystopia that only ever existed in the imaginations of thinkers seems the exact opposite of a true political realism. When we observe actual stateless societies, their problem is not incessant

and tolerable to a degree to which anarchy among individual human beings is not. This is the fundamental claim of the thinkers representing the English school: there can exist in anarchy a society of sovereign states, “a society without a government.”⁴² Consequently, as there is no simple similarity between nation-states and individuals concerning their security, there may be no need to bring international anarchy to an end by establishing a world government. The real alternative to Hobbesian anarchy, where no one is secure, is thus not a potentially unstable and despotic world state, but a strong international society, based on the UN.

It was indeed the accomplishment of Hedley Bull and of other members of the English school to show that international anarchy was unique and could not be compared with Hobbesian anarchy.⁴³ As an alternative to both sovereign states, unrestrained by any rules in their relations with others, and a world state, in the third paradigm of international relations, which is international society, states could be linked to one another by mutual obligations. They can thus form a great society of nations, the fullest practical expression of which is today the United Nations, which is an organization of free, sovereign states and not a world state. Further, the UN need not be seen merely as a step toward a world government, as Morgenthau envisioned, but instead as the final and proper organizational body of the international system. It can be looked at as the Kantian league of peace, a voluntary federation of states, designed to progressively put an end to all wars. Since we are now living within a more sophisticated global environment than that which obtained at the time of the UN’s founding, the activities of the UN can be supported by the work of other intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, and by formal and informal agreements among states and various public-private partnerships. They all can contribute to building global governance, which, however, needs to be clearly distinguished from world government. “‘Global governance’ refers to collective efforts to identify, understand, or address worldwide problems that go beyond the capacities of individual states to solve.”⁴⁴ World government eradicates state sovereignty, whereas different models of global governance can preserve this sovereignty and engage

conflict but excessive conformity; in the absence of an external authority, the tyranny of the majority (and of tradition) goes unchecked (Korab-Karpowicz, *History of Political Philosophy*, 158–83).

⁴² See Bull, “Society and Anarchy,” 89–90.

⁴³ Recent years have brought a revival of interest in Hedley Bull and the English School. For an extensive biography of the English school provided by Bary Buzan, see <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/polis/englishschool/>.

⁴⁴ Weiss, “Idea of World Government,” 257.

states and nonstate entities in cooperation to maintain international peace and security, and to solve global problems.

NEW TRENDS TOWARDS WORLD GOVERNMENT

The discussion of the possibility of world government has been revived since the end of the Cold War and particularly after the turn of the millennium. It is distinct in character from the debate of the 1940s. The prominent advocates of global authority were then scientists and authors whose core field often lay outside the realm of international relations, but who were driven by a sense of urgency to argue that the nuclear threat must be controlled, and who were supported by large numbers of ordinary citizens. Today's discussion is more dispassionate and is a product primarily of social scientists. It is also more systematic in its approach and more sophisticated in its argument.⁴⁵ The issues discussed range from the traditional issues of security to global poverty, economic integration, environmental issues, and core social, political, and economic rights. Some authors express optimistic beliefs about world government.⁴⁶ They tend to think that technological advances will further shrink the globe to the extent that within one hundred years or so, all states should recognize a single global authority. They believe that the political center of gravity will move upwards. National governments will not disappear altogether, but "their powers would be severely circumscribed by supranational legislative, executive and judicial authorities."⁴⁷ The model for this transition to a comprehensive global authority is for many writers the European Union, which advances intergovernmental economic agreements, including a single currency, and continues to expand its global political role.⁴⁸ As their critics have observed, such writers frequently regard the European Union "as if it were an utterly unproblematic model for the world."⁴⁹ The recent decision of the UK to leave the EU may serve, however,

⁴⁵ Cabrera, "World Government," 525.

⁴⁶ Dani Rodrik, "How Far Will Economic Integration Go?," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 14, no. 1 (2000): 177–86; Magnell, "Vulnerability, Global Authority"; Craig, "Resurgent Idea of World Government"; Wendt, "Why a World State Is Inevitable"; Simon Caney, *Justice beyond Borders: A Global Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Deudney, *Bounding Power*; Cabrera, "World Government"; Scheurman, *Realist Case for Global Reform*; Robert E. Goodin, "World Government Is Here!," in *Varieties of Sovereignty and Citizenship*, ed. Sigal R. Ben-Porath and Rogers M. Smith (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 149–65; Wendt, "Why a World State Is Democratically Necessary."

⁴⁷ Rodrik, "How Far Will Economic Integration Go?," 182.

⁴⁸ Kenneth Rogoff, "Why Not a Global Currency?," *American Economic Review* 91, no. 2 (2001): 243–47.

⁴⁹ Timothy Burns, "What's Wrong with a World State," in *Sojourns in the Western Twilight: Essays in*

as a warning that there are limits to integration imposed by bureaucratic regulations. Another model is the United States. Some commentators suggest that a new world order is already emerging under the US hegemony.⁵⁰ I shall now critically examine arguments for world government offered by a few contemporary authors.

During the Cold War the potential for mutual assured destruction by the nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Soviet Union placed the world under a much graver threat than today's risks of terrorist attacks. The logic of that threat, however, shaped by the worldview of modernity,⁵¹ was rational and predictable. Both superpowers played the nuclear game in strict adherence to diplomatic conduct and the rules of deterrence. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, have changed this security environment. They provided a model for security threats for the twenty-first century. As the terrorists were prepared to die for their cause and did not express any concerns about the death of civilians, who were in fact their main target, the age of predictability, deterrence, and diplomacy was over. Hence, the current age of globalization and postmodernity has witnessed the emergence of nonstate actors who are deterrent-proof.⁵² The terrorist groups no longer follow the modernist, rationalist logic, and their irrational behavior affects the behavior of states. This has led some writers, in particular Thomas Magnell and Daniel Deudney, to conclude that in this unpredictable environment we are now subject to "equality or near equality of vulnerability" and that "new technologies of violence have rendered all persons potentially vulnerable to destruction."⁵³ To overcome this dangerous environment, Magnell argues that the United States, the relatively successful melting pot of nations, could serve as the paradigm for a world state, which can be created "here and now"

Honor of Tom Darby, ed. Robert Sibley and Janice Freamo (Ottawa: Fermentation, 2016), 179–92.

⁵⁰ Etzioni, *From Empire to Community*; Joseph P. Baratta, "The Inaugural Conference of the Post-Cold-War Movement for World Government," *The Federalist Debate* 29, no. 3 (2016): 24–26.

⁵¹ Modernity is typically defined as a historical period beginning around the seventeenth century. It is also a period during which the West, through scientific and technological advances, has achieved an unprecedented domination over the rest of the world. More importantly, however, modernity signifies a set of ideas and attitudes towards the world. It is an ideological formation that can be characterized by several concepts. Its defining ideas include rationality, national unity, and state sovereignty. Today we live already in the postmodern environment, in which rationality, national unity, and state sovereignty have all been eroded and whose key characteristics are cultural relativism and globalization.

⁵² Mustafa Kibaroglu, "Contemporary Security Challenges: Is Classical Deterrence an Adequate Response?," in *International Security Today: Understanding Change and Debating Strategy*, ed. Mustafa Aydin and Kostas Ifantis, SAM Papers no. 1 (Ankara: Center for Strategic Research, 2006), 205–24.

⁵³ Magnell, "Vulnerability, Global Authority," 4–5; Deudney, *Bounding Power*, 28.

in the form of a global federation.⁵⁴ Deudney suggests, then, that world government would not represent a radical change of the international system but would rather be a long-expected result of the steady movement toward the continual abridgement of anarchy. Unified by a common interest in avoiding nuclear annihilation and other threats, states can come together in much the same way tribes have in the past.⁵⁵

However, the positions outlined above are difficult to defend. The history of state formation is not the history of warring groups with different cultures coming together under a larger entity, but rather the history of cultural imposition.⁵⁶ One of the warring groups would acquire domination over the rest by war and impose its culture or civilization on them. Historically, empires were thus the result of political, economic, and cultural domination, not merely of military conquests. Another possibility of state formation is that culturally similar people would come together to form a state because of some common interest, for example in security and defense. As Morgenthau argues in *Politics among Nations*, giving the United States as an example, any state that is expected to endure must be founded on common values and common interests.⁵⁷ The individual states that united in the federation that became the United States of America were sovereign in name rather than in actuality. By declaring their independence from Britain in 1776 and then establishing the United States, they merely exchanged one sovereign power for another. More importantly, however, they were bound by the same language, the same religion, the same national heritage, and the same moral convictions that were tested during the American War of Independence.⁵⁸ Reflection on these historical facts reveals that “there can be no world state without a world community willing and able to support it”⁵⁹ and at the global level

⁵⁴ Magnell, “Vulnerability, Global Authority,” 6.

⁵⁵ Craig, “Resurgent Idea of World Government,” 138.

⁵⁶ John M. Headley, *The Europeanization of the World: On the Origins of Human Rights and Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

⁵⁷ “The United States proves only the dependence upon a pre-existing moral and political community of any state that can be expected to endure. . . . The community of the American people antedated the American state, as a world community must antedate a world state” (*Politics among Nations*, 484–85).

⁵⁸ As John Jay wrote in the *Federalist*, No. 2, Providence gave the United States “to one united people; a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs, and who by their joint counsels, arms, and efforts, fighting side by side throughout a long and bloody war, have nobly established their general liberty and independence” (*The Federalist Papers*, ed. Clinton Rossiter [New York: Penguin Random House, 2003], 32).

⁵⁹ Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 481.

such a community of similar cultural values currently does not exist. Even if united by popular culture and linked by processes of globalization, humanity is divided as ever by immense religious, moral, and economic differences. Therefore, it is impossible to peacefully transform the present anarchic international system into a world state under the social and political conditions now prevailing in the world. As if in anticipation of this impossibility, Deudney concludes his investigation with an admission that the “actual launch of a world state could require a cataclysmic war of the kind that led to the formation of the League of Nations after World War I, and the formation of the United Nations after World War II.”⁶⁰ But if another world war with unimaginable catastrophic consequences would impose a world state on an otherwise unwilling humanity, it would not be a long-lasting enterprise. It would not protect us from further violent conflicts.

While David Deudney and Thomas Magnell argue that establishing world government is a result of prudential choice and is necessary because the world has become too unpredictable and too dangerous, Alexander Wendt adopts a different argumentative strategy. Employing the teleological model of explanation and the Hegelian concept of the struggle for recognition which takes place among individuals and groups, and referring to advancements in technology, he argues that “with these material [or technological] changes the struggle for recognition among states undermines their self-sufficiency and makes a world state inevitable.”⁶¹ He compares the international system to a plant, which grows to its end-state, and he associates this end-state with a world state. He argues that in times of globalization weaker states will face a choice between subjugation to powerful states and globalized economic forces, on one hand, and participation in a world government, on the other. The logic of globalization, Wendt believes, would drive them to a world state, which should permit their local cultures and traditions to flourish.⁶² However, since he admits that a world state contains within itself sources of instability and does not need to survive forever, he opens his own argument to doubt. He suggests that the struggle for recognition, an open-ended struggle involving individuals, groups, and communities, would not cease within the structure of a world state. Such a state would then be unable to solve the fundamental problem of human conflict and violence. It can indeed employ social engineering and powerful means of coercion, but, as Wendt

⁶⁰ Cabrera, “World Government,” 519.

⁶¹ Wendt, “Why a World State Is Inevitable,” 494.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 507–10.

himself observes, such means have not prevented earlier empires, such as the Soviet Union, from breaking down.

Another argument in favor of world government is that it can ensure popular control over decision making, and thus promote global democracy. The processes of globalization that weaken the nation-state lead to a democracy deficit. Individuals are affected by decisions of global institutions, such as WTO and IMF, over which they have no control. To solve the problem, and to provide citizen participation at a global level, some writers propose to institute a world parliament, while others go further, arguing for a federalist world state.⁶³ The question is whether a democratic global majority rule could enhance the autonomy of minorities and whether this global democracy project would not in the end turn self-defeating.

As a solution Luis Cabrera proposes “an alternative, rights-based approach” to global democracy.⁶⁴ He identifies the idea of democracy with democratic inclusion and stresses the importance of global equal opportunities, including much freer movement of persons in an integrated world system. In the postmodernist fashion, he puts less emphasis on national loyalties and identities and more to individual rights understood in a novel way as the rights of the “other.” The postmodernists seek the revenge of the marginalized “other” against the Lockean rational individual and regard human rights as the expression of neither universal truth nor objective reality but only as arbitrary social constructs and “moves in a game the subject enters when formulating his/her relationship to power in the language of fundamental rights.”⁶⁵ But should we agree to understand individual rights that way and include among them the right to freely cross state borders? What we can currently observe is the turbulence that uncontrolled flow of migrants representing different religious and moral values has already caused in Europe. Should we then not learn from this, and rather than considering

⁶³ World parliament: Richard Falk and Andrew Strauss, “Toward Global Parliament,” *Foreign Affairs* 80, no. 1 (2001): 212–20; Rasmus Tenbergen, “Towards a World Parliament: A Summary of the Debate and a Proposal for an Electronic World Parliament,” July 2006, http://www.alliance21.org/2003/IMG/pdf_worldparliament_1_.pdf. World state: Raffaele Marchetti, *Global Democracy: For and Against* (London: Routledge, 2008); Ronald Tinnevelt, “Federal World Government: The Road to Peace and Justice?,” *Cooperation and Conflict* 47, no. 2 (2012): 220–38; Wendt, “Why a World State Is Democratically Necessary.”

⁶⁴ Luis Cabrera, “On World Government: Security, Democracy, Justice,” *World Government Research Network*, June 12, 2016, <http://wgresearch.org/on-world-government-security-democracy-justice/>.

⁶⁵ Rolando Gaete, “Postmodernism and Human Rights: Some Insidious Questions,” *Law and Critique* 2, no. 2 (1991): 168.

global mobility rights,⁶⁶ return to the nation-state as the primary provider of its citizens' security? The Kantian cosmopolitan right is the right of an alien who comes to our country not to be treated as an enemy, so long as he behaves peacefully. Yet, it is not the right to become a permanent visitor. For this "a special charitable agreement to make him a fellow inhabitant for a certain period" would be required.⁶⁷ Hence Kant, while advocating cosmopolitan right as an important component of peace among people, would not approve the right to freely cross borders and uncontrolled migration.

IS WORLD GOVERNMENT NECESSARY?

One can argue that we are entering now into a new era, one in which nation-states cannot offer the protection from aggression that they once seemed to provide. Under new technological conditions, even large states, facing state-sponsored or individual terrorist activities, are no longer able to guarantee security to their citizens and have become as vulnerable to violence as individuals in the state of nature. Hence, one can argue that just as in the logic of Hobbesian social contract, the fear of violent death made it necessary for individuals to submit to a common power, so also the changes in the forces of destruction make it necessary for states to enter into such a contract. The fact that nuclear weapons are possessed by relatively few states limits the force of this argument today, but it would become more powerful if nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction were to spread. Do we need a global authority in today's postmodern world, in which irrationality has largely replaced reason and weapons of mass destruction have become cheaper and more readily available?

Because of the changes in military technology, it seems indeed useful for security to be organized on a global scale. However, this does not mean that it has to take the form of a world government. The collective security of nations is a security system in which security becomes a concern of all member states, and therefore each state commits to a collective response to a threat posed by any state, including a member state, to peace and security. It has often been regarded as a principle of the United Nations and before that of the League of Nations. In the UN the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security is conferred on the Security Council (Art. 24, UN Charter). The Security Council is entitled to undertake

⁶⁶ Peter Nyers and Kim Rygiel, eds., *Citizenship, Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

⁶⁷ Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, 118.

certain measures that vary from economic sanctions to military interventions, in the event that it has established a threat to peace, a breach of peace, or an act of aggression (Art. 39, UN Charter). In accordance with special agreements, it can ask member states of the UN to provide armed forces, assistance, and facilities, including rights of passage (Art. 43, UN Charter). The logic of collective security is flawless, provided that all nations subordinate whatever conflicting interests they may have to the common good defined in terms of the maintenance of international peace and security, and the collective defense of all member states.⁶⁸ In practice, however, the security system of the UN can function only when it is supported by the major world powers and where there is a consensus among these major powers in the Security Council. As a matter of fact, for most of the history of the UN, the principal member states of the Security Council did not share a consensus. Nevertheless, what this proves is not a failure of the United Nations Organization but rather the existence of ideological and cultural differences between nations. There is thus much room for improvement, which can come from prudent diplomacy based on common interests, of which the most basic is global peace as opposed to total destruction. The evidence for the possibility of such improvement is the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the ideological division between East and West that in the end led to a closer cooperation among the permanent members of the Security Council.⁶⁹ But this trend is unfortunately now over, and the primary reason for this is, as I will show, the adoption by the United States, as well by other countries, of unilateral actions that are contrary to the spirit of the UN.

Article 2 of the UN Charter says: “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other state,” but “this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.” Thus, the members of the UN system of collective security must refrain from taking any unilateral action without the authorization of the UN Security Council, unless the action is related to the basic right of self-defense, and as Article 24 clearly says, should “confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.” In spite of this, the challenge to the UN collective security system came from powerful states, particularly from the United States after the September

⁶⁸ Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 389.

⁶⁹ Eugenia López-Jacoiste, “The UN Collective Security System and Its Relationship with Economic Sanctions and Human Rights,” *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law*, no. 14 (2010): 281.

11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The school of Republican intellectuals—including former deputy secretary of state Paul Wolfowitz and former chairman of the Defense Policy Board Richard Perle—believed that the events of 9/11 proved the need for the United States to assume the duties of an international Leviathan without much respect for the United Nations.⁷⁰ They called for the US government to take on an imperial role and act decisively to counter terrorism and reinforce Western values all over the world.⁷¹ Prepared in September 2002, the National Security Strategy, known as the “Bush Doctrine,” called for pre-emptive action against hostile states and terror groups, and it declared that the United States would not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise its right of self-defense. The consequence of this line of thinking was American interventions in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), the legality of both of which has been questioned.⁷² They were justified by the United States as acts of self-defense, but there were no immediate and explicit threats posed against it by these countries and the military actions were not authorized by the UN Security Council. Moreover, they resulted in the devastation of both countries and in a large number of civilian deaths.

As Lorenzo the Magnificent once said, “What the lord does, the many do after him.” The US example has led other countries to join operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and in 2011 some NATO members intervened in Libya, with the aim of regime change, which is illegal and contrary to the spirit of the UN charter.⁷³ The military action in the form of bombing Libyan cities by France, the United States, and the UK was not authorized by any Security Council resolution. While Russia has referred to several legal arguments to

⁷⁰ Richard Perle, “Thank God for the Death of the UN,” *Guardian*, March 20, 2003, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2003/mar/21/foreignpolicy.iraq1>. For a response to this criticism of the UN, see W. Julian Korab-Karpowicz, “Thank God for the UN!,” *Concerned Philosophers for Peace Newsletter* 24, no. 1 (2004), <http://peacephilosophy.org/16/thank-god-for-the-un-by-julian-korab-karpowicz>.

⁷¹ As Rasmussen convincingly argues, following the end of the Cold War, the West has come to define itself in terms of globalization, the civilizing process, by which the values of democracy, market economy, and civil society are promoted. “The perception of the threat of terrorism fed on the West’s construction of its own future in terms of a powerful process of globalization. As the dark side of globalization, terrorism had a power equal to the bright side of globalization” (Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, “A Parallel Globalization of Terror: 9-11, Security and Globalization,” *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic Studies Association* 37, no. 3 [2002]: 333).

⁷² Michael Mandel, *How America Gets Away with Murder: Illegal Wars, Collateral Damage and Other Crimes against Humanity* (London: Pluto, 2004); Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America’s Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (New York: Times Books, 2006); Rodney P. Carlisle, *Afghanistan War* (New York: Chelsea House, 2010).

⁷³ Fiseha Haftetsion Gebresilassie, “Collective Security at Stake? Challenges of the Current Collective Security System” (working paper, Feb. 2012), 9, <http://aigaforum.com/articles/collective-scecurity-at-stake.pdf>.

justify its 2014 military intervention in and annexation of Crimea, its action was not authorized by the Security Council and it violated norms of international law.⁷⁴ Similarly unauthorized are the military actions (bombing, arming opposition groups) undertaken currently by the United States, Turkey, France, and Israel in civil-war-torn Syria. However, the fact that, because of the 2002 National Security Strategy and subsequent doctrines,⁷⁵ all nations have now become subject to military incursion by the United States, proves neither any abridgment of the concept of national sovereignty nor a need for a world government. On the contrary, by developing strategies that violate the accepted norms of international society based on the UN, the United States has affirmed its sovereignty over and against other states. It has brought international relations back to what is described by Kant as “savage lawlessness” rather than promoting lawful constraint of civilized people based on commonly accepted rules and norms.

Hence, rather than dream about a world state as an instrument to build international peace and security, one should reverse the current trend to unilateralism, which is in a sense a trend toward unlawful human relations based on might alone, and reaffirm the spirit of lawfulness that was introduced by the UN. The precondition for this is to understand that the United Nations Organization is potentially the best international institution for maintaining peace and security and for solving global problems, but its work depends on its members’ acceptance of its principles and of legal constraints that it imposes on their behavior. Perhaps the greatest problem with the idea of a world state and the corresponding idea of a global democracy is that the UN represents something imperfect and yet real, something that can be improved by prudent diplomacy, while the former represent wishful thinking that tends to diminish real solutions to today’s world problems. Supporters of global governance, an important component of which is the UN, argue that the problems of globalization do not necessitate the creation of world government but can be solved by strengthening existing international institutions and organizations.⁷⁶ They can be effectively dealt by the UN and the WTO,

⁷⁴ See Christian Marxsen, “The Crimea Crisis—An International Law Perspective,” *Zeitschrift für ausländisches öffentliches Recht und Völkerrecht* 74, no. 2 (2014): 367–91, http://www.mpil.de/files/pdf4/Marxsen_2014_-_the_crimea_crisis_-_an_international_law_perspective.pdf.

⁷⁵ See “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense,” Department of Defense, January 2012, http://archive.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf; and “The National Military Strategy of the United States of America,” Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2015, http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/2015_National_Military_Strategy.pdf.

⁷⁶ David Held and Anthony McGrew, eds., *Governing Globalization* (London: Polity, 2002); Andrew Hurrell, *On Global Order: Power, Values and the Constitution of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford

whose work can be supported by nongovernmental organizations, such as Greenpeace or Doctors Without Borders. Therefore, nations should not, as Wendt urges, force history along toward a world state, so as to “‘get the best deal’ they can in the emerging global constitution,” nor should they “spearhead the foundation of the new international order” that would lead us to world government.⁷⁷ Such government will not solve the current problems of humankind. That a world state is really needed to solve global problems—political, economic, environmental, and demographic—and to contribute to human welfare and the protection of individual rights is highly questionable. One can argue that this work can be done within the framework of the existing organizations, particularly by means of the global institution, which is the UN. It should be supported by prudent and far-sighted diplomacy, as well as by vigorous, prudent, and courageous states that to the best of their ability oppose illegal and unjust acts, and may even be willing to employ force in defense of the rights and the well-being of their citizens, as well as of international order. To provide the United Nations with sympathetic and robust support, to understand its idea as a federation of free states, whose basic goal is to maintain the security of each individual state and of other states in league with it, to appreciate its civilizational role in promoting lawful constraint against savage lawlessness, and hence to strengthen it as an organization rather than undermine its authority, and thus to make its work more effective, could help to maintain international peace and to solve many of our current global problems.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONS

Since the UN is a league of nations, an organization of distinct sovereign states, and not their amalgamation in a world state, it is worth stressing, in conclusion, the importance of nations. While there are now many advocates of globalization and of postnational governance, it is important to understand that the nation-state is in fact the oldest political organization of humankind, since its tradition goes back to the Sumerian and Greek city-states, and even earlier to independent tribes. As John Stuart Mill convincingly argued in his essay *On Liberty*, as diverse cultural communities, European nation-states have been the greatest source of progress for humanity. “What has made the European family of nations an improving, instead of a stationary portion of

University Press, 2007); Anne-Marie Slaughter, *A New World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

⁷⁷ Wendt, “Why a World State Is Inevitable,” 530.

mankind? Not any superior excellence in them, which, when it exists, exists as the effect, not as the cause; but their remarkable diversity of character and culture.⁷⁸ Mill rightly noted that in addition to the lust for power and wealth, which is so evident in European history, we can also find in the West the transforming intellectual and moral dynamics that have contributed to a progressive social and technological change in the world. The foundation of the progressive development of humankind is the *remarkable diversity of character and culture*, the condition for which is freedom.

Continuous human progress, that is, our further moral and intellectual evolution, and particularly the power of intellect that, as our wonderful scientific and technological achievements show, has increased in humanity as a whole, and which Dante thought requires peace, is worth defending. Yet its two basic conditions, freedom and diversity, are likely to be missing under a world state. Indeed, we need political and cultural diversity of nation-states for human creativity and progress. They cannot be turned to cosmopolitan entities, such as today's European Union, in which there is confusion about values and consequently a loss of European heritage, or be replaced by a world state. Hence, the point is not to lose national diversity and freedom, but to peacefully build on it. One can build on fairness and lawful civility. These can lead us to a sense of oneness as an international community, and in the end produce common cultural and particularly moral values, on which any good political order must be founded. Therefore, the UN, particularly the UN Security Council, must represent universal interests of all peoples, namely, prosperity and freedom, not merely narrow interests of selected great powers, and should not be challenged by unilateral actions of its members. And there is a chance that such a vision of the UN will succeed because it is based on the correct recognition of what human beings really desire: peace and security, insofar as these, along with prosperity and freedom, are basic conditions of their development and happiness.

CONCLUSION

A world state is neither necessary nor inevitable nor even desirable. As we have shown by considering the immense cultural differences and various interests that divide humankind, it will not solve the problem of violence and conflict. Because of its centralization and its size, and the resultant potential ineffectiveness, it is questionable whether it could solve global problems.

⁷⁸ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 79–80.

A real alternative to it is provided by an international society based on the UN and other intergovernmental organizations. A sophisticated international society, with its diverse institutions adjusted to the emerging needs of humanity, creates a world order, but it is not a legal order alone. It embraces vigorous, wise, prudent, and courageous states that use far-sighted and prudent diplomacy, and sometimes even force, to oppose illegal and unjust acts, and support the existing world order rather than destroy it. It receives support from a network of nongovernmental organizations. It builds a strong international community and contributes to a sense of oneness of the whole of humanity. With adequate support, it can thus meet current global challenges, save us from war, and contribute to the moral and intellectual evolution of humankind.

A world state is another one of humanity's false dreams. The dream is that one can dispense entirely with the past and establish a society based on reason alone in which all human conflict and suffering will disappear once and for all. However, if it is artificially imposed on humankind, and not a result of its long development—particularly of moral improvement—egoism and the struggle for power would continue within it, perhaps with even greater intensity, since a world state, like today's EU, would try to impose a despotic, bureaucratic uniformity on humanity, and against this uniformity people would certainly revolt. It would be likely to become a despotism that brings human beings to a standstill. Even if a world state were not centralized but built on principles of subsidiarity, as a collective identity, it would tend to make everyone alike and subject to the same regulations. Even if it were endowed with democratic institutions, a world state, by dint of its sheer size, would replace freedom to participate in political life with passive obedience. It would lead humanity to uniformity rather than diversity, and thus it would prove to be an obstacle to the development of the human race.