

Global Studies and the New Zealand Centre: meaning and potential

Introduction

Things change with the passage of time. In the late decades of the 20th century, international relations were naturally founded on 20th-century thought – the nation state as dominant actor; sovereign equality as central principle; international organisation as neutral arena; political-military strategy as guarantor of peace and security; self-determination, economic and social development and human rights as emerging norms. The United Nations Charter was the lodestar, despite the paralysis of the Cold War. The challenge was to make the charter work politically.

In the early 21st century the world is different. The nation state is surrounded by other actors on the world stage, equally potent: corporations with global reach, civil society with a global conscience, mega-cities with global ties. Sovereign equality of the nation state remains defiant, yet is increasingly under siege. International peace has mutated into global security. Self-determination is evolving into ‘multi-layered jurisdiction’. Rights are twinned with responsibility, and individual criminal liability has entered the hallowed precinct of international law. Economic growth wrestles with the imperative of sustainability within a ‘safe operating space for humanity’. Inter-regional migration further complicates the phenomenon of global change. In 1993 the UN secretary general observed that ‘the first truly global era’ had begun.¹ Economic globalisation, the threat of a ‘nuclear winter’ affecting the planet after major conflict, ozone depletion and climate change, and ‘limits to growth’ had formed a new mosaic on the human canvas.

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Not only is the world different today, but the means of interpreting and understanding it have changed. The information age has morphed into the digital age of instantaneous knowledge and 'post-truth' uncertainty. The statist political-legal nature of international affairs is ceding to a new global dynamic, driven by technology and social media. The UN Charter is scrutinised critically as to whether it is 'fit for purpose'; indeed, so is the entire UN-Bretton Woods system, and even the place and role of international organisation itself.

separate sub-disciplines. To some extent, global studies might be seen as having been born from international relations. To some extent it claims its own provenance from across many disciplines.

Universities describe international relations courses but often stop short of defining the concept. The international relations course, says Victoria, seeks 'to understand the political, economic and social interactions between states'.² As such, it addresses late 20th-century doctrine and actors. International relations courses cover theory,

Westphalian approach to world politics (Graham, 1999, pp.21-8).

Finally, it needs to be recognised that global studies does not embrace 'universalism' as necessarily an intrinsic good; it is not a universalist belief system as such. In that respect it differs from the universalism of classical ancient civilisations or the dogmatic and aggressive universalism of radical modern movements. Rather, it perceives the global concept in more evolutionary, legal-political terms, based on rational analysis.

As will be shown later, not all think-tanks claiming to be global in approach adopt these criteria with any rigour. It is a new field. But in the extent to which they do not, they fall short of a strict interpretation of global studies.

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The current decade is witness to two global revolutions, driven by the same dynamic but whose nature and future outcome are fundamentally different. One is the notion of a world uniting. The other is of a world dividing into fragmented units that belie such unity. Yet in both cases the same global dynamic remains, paradoxically, the underlying driver. It is therefore no surprise that 'global studies' has emerged in recent decades as an academic and policy field of enquiry. In this country in 2012, a group of colleagues from academia, government and media established the New Zealand Centre for Global Studies. The centre is a charitable educational trust, and operates as a research institute and think-tank. Its short experience to date persuades us, and I think others, that the field of global studies is a valid one, and that the centre has something useful to offer.

Global studies

Global studies and international relations are different, best seen as related but

international security, development, human rights, the major powers, and New Zealand in world politics. Students must grasp relevant information, critically scrutinise the issues and develop policy positions. The method is analytical, reflecting a late-Westphalian approach to world politics, concentrating on the nation state.

Global studies differs in two critical ways: scale and perspective. First, the scale is global: international relations covering bilateral or regional politics are not within its focus; only issues that affect the planet and humanity as one group are considered. Secondly, the perspective is also global, analysing a global issue from the interests of humanity as a group, not any one country. In international relations there is a distinction between 'them' and 'us', between one's country and the rest of the world. In global studies there is always, and only, 'us'. To the extent that the role of a country is considered, it is in terms of how its 'legitimate national interest' derives from, and remains consistent with, the global interest, reflecting a post-

A survey of global think-tanks

The first exploration into global studies appears to be the University of Georgia's Centre for Global Policy Studies, established in the late 1970s – a truly pioneering work (Bertsch, 1982). The centre sought to develop a conceptual framework for 'global thinking'. There is a difference, however, between global studies as taught in a university for students and degree-awarding purposes, and as researched in a think-tank for policy advice to governments and international organisations.

Many universities offer an academic focus on global affairs in one form or another. Some offer student courses: Seton Hall (Centre for UN and Global Governance), Columbia (Centre on Global Economic Governance), Boston (Pardee School of Global Governance), Purdue (Global Policy Research Institute), Harvard (Institute for Global Law and Policy), Yale (Centre for the Study of Globalisation), California (Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation), Griffith (International Political Economy and Global Governance Studies), Toronto (Munck School of Global Affairs), and the European University Institute (Global Governance Programme) in Florence. India hosts the Jindal Global University in New Delhi. Others maintain research centres for established scholars within a field of focus: Stockholm's Environment

Institute (SEI) and Resilience Centre (SRC), Cambridge's Global Security Programme (now ceased), Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute, with a focus on existential risk management, and CUNY's Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect.

Some think-tanks operate independently of universities. One of the best known was the Earth Policy Institute in Washington, which operated with distinction for four decades before folding with the retirement of its founder. The World Resources Institute, also in Washington, is perhaps the most recognised research body on global sustainability. Canada's International Institute for Sustainable Development, in Winnipeg, is an independent, non-profit organisation that 'provides practical solutions to the challenges of integrating environmental and social priorities with economic development'. It has offices in Canada, the US and Switzerland and receives operational support from the governments of Canada and Manitoba, and project support from other governments and UN agencies. The Stockholm-based Global Challenges Foundation publishes a series of articles on the subject of 'global catastrophic risks'.

Some think-tanks are global not only in focus but in engagement. Perhaps the best known, the Club of Rome (whose secretariat is currently in Switzerland), describes itself as a 'group of world citizens, sharing a common concern for the future of humanity'. It consists of former political leaders, UN and government officials, scientists, economists and business leaders. Its mission is 'to act as a global catalyst for change through the identification and analysis of the crucial problems facing humanity and the communication of such problems to the most important public and private decision-makers as well as to the general public'.

Equally prestigious is the German Advisory Council on Global Change, an independent scientific advisory body set up by the German government in advance of the 1992 Rio Summit. Among its goals, the WGBU analyses the global environment, evaluates

research on global change, provides early warning and assesses policies for sustainable development. Similarly, Austria's International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis has, since 1972, conducted 'policy-oriented research into problems of a global nature that are too large or too complex to be solved by a single country or academic discipline'.

Others operate as a media centre for the promotion of global research, such as the Centre for Research on Globalization in Quebec. Melbourne's RMIT operates a Centre for Global Research, studying globalisation and social change with a

European Commission and various governments; its mission is to 'improve global governance through research, policy advice and debate';

- World Policy Institute (New York), a 'non-partisan' body that 'develops and champions innovative policies that require a progressive and global point of view': it seeks solutions to achieve an inclusive and sustainable global market economy, engaged global civic participation and effective governance, and collaborative approaches to national and global security.

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thematic focus on conflict, development and governance, including down to the local level. Still others focus on specific thematic areas: the Centre on Religion and Global Affairs (in London, Beirut and Accra), the Hague Institute for Global Justice, and the Institute of Global Finance, located within the Business School of the University of New South Wales.

A number focus specifically on global governance, however:

- Global Governance Institute (Brussels), an independent, non-profit think-tank;
- Global Policy Forum (New York, Berlin), an independent, non-profit think-tank monitoring the work of the United Nations and scrutinising global policy-making;
- Security Council Report (New York), supported by foundations and governments and monitoring the work of the UN Security Council;
- Global Public Policy Institute (Berlin), an independent, non-profit think-tank funded by foundations, UN agencies, the

Probably the most established body in the field is the Academic Council on the United Nations. ACUNS is a 'global professional association of educational and research institutions, individual scholars, and practitioners active in the work and study of the United Nations'. It promotes teaching on these topics and dialogue among academics, practitioners, civil society and students. It produces the well-regarded journal *Global Governance*.

Then there are the informal networks focusing on global change and global problems. Examples are the Global Governance Futures programme, which is jointly supported by foundations in Germany, the US, Japan and India, bringing selected young students together to map out future directions for humanity, in specific areas, several decades ahead; and the Global Solutions Network, an online learning programme open to anyone, supported by various foundations, business and government entities in North America.

This array of entities offers a rich source of research and policy analysis/advocacy. To quote Bertsch:

What do these challenges and opportunities facing global think-tanks and structurally independent public policy networks mean for the creation of truly global public policy? ... The policy problems that must absolutely be addressed in this global way include global warming and carbon emissions concerns, natural disasters recovery, health crisis responses, responses to global terrorist units and threats, and now the organization of financial policy and regulatory architecture. (ibid., p.116)

Some governments have moved to reflect the global scale in their thinking. Global Affairs Canada is a triple 'super-department' comprising ministerial warrants for foreign affairs, international

varied organisational form. Over 6,000 academically-oriented research institutions (similar in nature to universities, but without students), contract research organisations, policy advocates and political party-affiliated think-tanks can now be found in 169 countries (ibid., p.4). This is generally welcomed by the policy-making community:

For policy-makers, the expansion of think-tanks across the globe has been a boon to the need for precise, time-sensitive information and multidisciplinary problem-solving approaches. Global policy has been and continues to be revolutionised by the budding ability of global think-tanks and policy networks to establish locations in politically-

around the world, in the US, Austria, Germany, the UK and Australia. The centre is located on Waiheke Island. It has a small secretariat comprising a part-time director, treasurer and secretary, and project advisers.

Mission

The centre's stated purposes are:

- to encourage and facilitate informed interdisciplinary research into global affairs in the 21st century, and the challenges for New Zealand in playing an insightful and constructive role proportionate to size; and
- to publish and circulate such research for the purpose of education and the benefit of the international and domestic community within the areas of focus.³

In pursuit of these purposes, the centre undertakes research into world civilisations and cultures, the history of human ideas and the rule of international law, with a view to gaining insight into reform of the United Nations and Bretton Woods systems in the context of global constitutionalism and governance.

The goal of these activities is to inform analysis of international institutions in the context of global governance, with special attention to the UN and Bretton Woods systems; amendment of the UN Charter in the context of the concept of global constitutionalism; and analysis of contemporary global challenges and problems, in the context of global governance and inter-generational justice and employing the concepts of planetary interest, legitimate national interest and legitimate global power.

Special attention is given to the following areas:

- sustainability, including the relationship between environmental and economic goals in the context of an optimal global population reflecting Earth's carrying capacity and bio-spherical planetary boundaries, having regard to jurisdictional responsibilities over national territories and the global commons;
- use of armed force and possession of weaponry optimal for global stability through the maintenance

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trade and international development'. The US State Department maintains offices in various global areas: global partnerships (for business), global criminal justice, global health diplomacy and global youth issues. The European Commission maintains an inter-agency 'global approach to migration and mobility'. No other country appears to do anything similar. In New Zealand, one political party has, since 2012, changed its 'foreign affairs' portfolio to 'global affairs'. These initiatives, of course, are far removed from the essence of global think-tanks, but they do reflect a quantum shift in policy scale within some national governments and political parties.

But the phenomenon of global think-tanks has taken off. As one study has noted, think-tanks now operate in a variety of political systems, engage in a range of policy-related activities, and comprise a diverse set of institutions that have

closed areas, to connect grassroots civil society forces, and field researchers with policy-makers, and to take on global policy tasks such as the environment, international finance, and international security that cannot be effectively addressed by domestically-oriented government or policy research institutions.

(McGann and Sabatini, 2011, p.2; see also McGann, 2007, 2009)

The New Zealand Centre

The New Zealand Centre for Global Studies was established in 2012 as an educational, charitable, non-profit trust, registered with Charities Services. It operates as an independent research institute and think-tank. The centre is governed by a board of trustees: 11 individuals resident in New Zealand. The board is supported by an international advisory panel of eight eminent persons

- of international peace and security, envisaging a trend from collective security to a global security system;
- universal human rights, with equal attention to civil, political, economic, environmental, social and cultural rights, reflecting common human values;
- the peaceful and responsible use of outer space and other celestial bodies.

The centre also extends its research to the role of New Zealand in global affairs. This involves analysis of New Zealand policy in the areas of focus, in the context of comparative studies of other countries and New Zealand's aspiration to act as a 'responsible global citizen'; and study of the changing relationship between New Zealand's foreign policy and domestic policy in the areas of focus.

Work programme

The centre maintains the following work programme:

- lectures: it has held three annual Waikeke global affairs lectures, and also visiting lectures by eminent scholars;⁴
- conferences: it has collaborated with various New Zealand bodies, including Victoria University, the Royal Society of New Zealand, the New Zealand Commission for UNESCO and the International Law Association, in holding conferences on global public goods, global citizenship and global constitutionalism;⁵
- seminars and retreats for secondary school students on 'global citizenship';⁶
- research reports by board members, international advisers and students;⁷
- internships, to date at Auckland University and Heidelberg University.⁸

Board members and researchers in the centre explore questions such as the following:

- What are the global challenges faced by humanity in the early 21st century, and how do they differ from traditional challenges in international relations?
- Is there a different method of political-diplomatic problem-solving

with respect to global problems; if so, what is that method, and how is it to be prosecuted by nation states?

- Is the current international institutional architecture fit for purpose in addressing global problems; if not, is evolutionary reform feasible within institutions' implied powers, or is a more fundamental restructuring necessary?

Questions addressed in this issue of *Policy Quarterly*

In this collection of articles, board members of the centre explore the above questions in relation to a selection of specific issues. The overarching question

community has been based since the mid-20th century. Underpinning any response to the global challenge is the relationship of the three branches of government – legislative, judicial and executive – at the global level. The Westphalian system of international relations reflects an undeveloped system of global governance, with the nation states dominant and their executive branch of government pre-eminent in the conduct of relations among them. Hassall explores this ultimate challenge, in particular the relationship between the IPU (Inter-Parliamentary Union) and UN systems – the world's legislatures and the world's executives. Oram

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linking the articles is this: can a form of 21st-century global governance be developed that is politically innovative enough for radical diplomatic change to solve global problems while remaining anchored to the traditional principles of the 20th century for the pursuit of legitimate national interests? In addressing this question, we have sought to develop a conceptual framework and a logical thread through our articles.

First, we explore the methodology that might underpin the particular sub-discipline of global studies that is relevant to the 21st century. Graham reviews the theoretical approaches for international relations (realism; liberal realism; political idealism). He proposes that 'rational idealism' is the appropriate approach for global studies, based not on normative considerations (what 'ought to be' for a better life) but on a political concept of the 'imperative' (what 'needs to be' for survival).

Second, we explore the institutional structures on which the international

assesses the capacity of contemporary global economic institutions to address the challenge of global sustainability by reshaping traditional 20th-century economic orthodoxy (both neoclassical and neo-liberal) towards new thinking in 'ecological economics'. In light of the history of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization, and their evolution since the 1970s in particular, a variety of pertinent questions are raised for further enquiry, not least the vexed relationship between international finance and trade, and economic growth and carrying capacity.

Third, we delve into the specific global challenges, and how the world is responding, and might yet respond, with innovative political thinking. We address the challenges posed to the global commons, particularly the atmosphere and the oceans, by modern technology and traditional national rivalry. With regard to climate change, Macey describes the 2015 Paris Agreement as a new model

of governance through an 'enhanced transparency framework' that is neither 'top-down' nor 'bottom-up'. With respect to the oceans, Currie foresees a binding instrument that protects marine biological diversity, moving from the 'freedom of exploitation' model to a 'benefit-sharing' model of governance. Bosselmann and Taylor extend this thinking. Bosselmann envisions a system of governance that respects the 'planetary boundaries', contending that the key to governing the commons is a shift from competitive nation state behaviour to a system of 'Earth governance'. Pursuant to that, Taylor develops a legal-ethical framework that would facilitate such a shift. Hassall and van den Belt then relate that approach to the new Sustainable Development Agenda adopted by the UN

culture, based on a moral concern for the welfare of the global community, nurtured through a concept of 'global citizenship' that has an ethical, even spiritual, dimension.

Universal peace of this kind, however, will not be realised without the strengthening of enforceable international law and the capacity of global judicial institutions to investigate and prosecute, and convict or acquit. Gallavin and Graham scrutinise the International Criminal Court, exploring the distinction between state responsibility (a political obligation for non-violation of the UN Charter) and individual criminal liability (a legal obligation for non-violation of the Rome Statute). The modern concept of individual criminal liability is further

The articles that follow avoid the surface politics of UN member states, whether the US, China or Russia, an EU country or any other. The focus of global studies is not on internal electoral phenomena but rather on the underlying global trends and themes that affect the nascent global community. That is not to deny the link between them, but rather to recognise that national and regional politics are, to a considerable extent, a function of global trends, and that the primary focus of the sub-discipline is the imperative of survival. Political fragmentation is its own form of globalisation.

Conclusion

The New Zealand Centre for Global Studies is new. The philosophical and conceptual basis that underpins it rests on pioneering effort over the past quarter-century by leading thinkers around the world in many disciplines, developing a new paradigm for addressing the problems of the global era and seeking innovative and time-relevant ways of solving them. For its part, the centre is reaching out to similar institutions around the world, while seeking collaborative activities with institutions in New Zealand.

Global studies is qualitatively different from international relations. It addresses the future more than the past, asking where to from here for the global community. It adopts heroic assumptions that are open to traditional positivist and realist critique. It embraces an idealist view of current institutional and legal reform on the premise that current principles, institutions and methods are not fit for purpose in the 21st century. The academic field is new; it raises questions, developing hypothesis and vision by way of response, rather than answering them for immediate policy. The solutions are for the future.

[The New Zealand Centre for Global studies will ... address] the future more than the past, asking where to from here for the global community.

General Assembly in 2015, with its 17 Social Development Goals. Global public policy networks, they note, are providing the framework for advancing the goals through coordinated action among public and private sectors and civil society.

Finally, we address the more traditional problem confronting the international community, the face-off between war and peace, and between law and order, a problem rendered more complicated through globalisation. The distinction in the UN Charter between the 'operational' concept of international peace and security, for which the Security Council has primary responsibility, and the 'aspirational' concept of universal peace which the General Assembly must nurture, has been largely overlooked in practical politics. Clements explores this in the context of a quantitative measurement of peace, and a moral critique of the challenges to peace in today's fragmenting world. He sees the need for a universal cosmopolitan

explored by Boister, who considers 'good' and 'bad' global citizens, and how the fabric of global law might be strengthened to deal with this distinction in future.

Together these articles seek to commence the intellectual journey within New Zealand towards global thinking in the 21st century, in the context of developing values, refining principles and reforming institutions towards a system of legitimate and effective global governance for the global age. The aim has been to locate personal visions of long-term possibility within political judgements of short-term feasibility.

The articles were drafted during the period of the US election campaign and have been finalised since. The outcome of the US election and those elsewhere, along with the UK's Brexit decision, reinforce the earlier observation of two global revolutions being under way: one of unification; one of fragmentation.

1 UN Chronicle, 39 (1), March 1993, front cover. Three years later the secretary general spoke of the trend in 'criminal globalization', such as the traffic in illegal drugs, terrorism and money-laundering. Breaking these trends, he said, would require 'global awareness, global commitment and global action' ('United Nations daily highlights', 31 May 1996).

2 '[A]n introduction to the principal concepts, issues and theoretical debates within the field of International Relations. Topics covered include: power, diplomacy, the United Nations, arms control, terrorism, developmental politics, civil society and international political economy', 'Introduction to international relations', <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/hppi/study/courses/political-science-and-international-relations/intp-113>; 'Politics and international relations', <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/>

study/programmes-courses/subjects/political-science-and-international-relations.

- 3 New Zealand Centre for Global Studies trust deed, article 4, <https://www.register.charities.govt.nz/CharitiesRegister/ViewCharity?accountId=b4805f42-7579-e211-84ab-00155d0d1916&searchId=31a4c54f-c358-4cfa-947b-bb9c927a2758>.
- 4 Waiheke Lecture 1, 'Planetary boundaries: concept and implications for global governance', Professor Klaus Bosselman, May 2014; Waiheke Lecture 2, 'Global governance and the UN Security Council: fit for purpose?', Professor Ramesh Thakur, March 2015; Waiheke Lecture 3, 'Global society and the challenges of governance',

Professor Geoffrey Palmer, May 2016: <http://nzcg.org.nz/waiheke-global-studies-lecture-series/>; Professor Roger Clark, 'Making aggression a leadership crime in 2017: the Rome Statute and the Kampala Amendment', and response by the attorney-general, Chris Finlayson, July 2016, <http://nzcg.org.nz/news-and-events>.

- 5 'Global governance, the global commons and public goods: state of play', May 2014; 'We the peoples: global citizenship and constitutionalism', August 2016, <http://nzcg.org.nz/conferences/>.
- 6 Internship seminar on the 'Securitisation of global health', 2015, <http://nzcg.org.nz/internships/>; secondary school student conferences and retreat on 'global citizenship',

November 2013, August 2016, <http://nzcg.org.nz/global-citizenship-education/>.

- 7 Dr Kennedy Graham, 'Global governance and the UN Security Council', May 2015; Professor Neil Boister, 'Building criminal accountability at the global level: the historical experience of a small island state', April 2016, <http://nzcg.org.nz/research-papers/>.
- 8 Internship reports: <http://nzcg.org.nz/internships/>.

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Professor Claudia Scott is Professor of Public Policy at VUW and has taught at Auckland University, the Australia and New Zealand School of Government and Victoria University. She has teaching and research interests in policy analysis and advising, strategic management, local government policy and planning and regulatory policy. She has delivered policy courses for academic credit and professional development in New Zealand and Australia



Dr Mike Reid, Principal Policy Adviser at Local Government New Zealand, will contribute to the course, as will other experienced practitioners drawn from the public and private sectors. Mike holds an MPP and a PhD from Victoria University, contributes to seminars, workshops and conferences and has published research on various governance and policy issues.

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