Liberalism and the Foundations of Global Environmental Governance: A Republican Critique

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Contemporary global governance is pervasively coloured by liberalism and the social forces that liberalism allows to flourish. Liberalism has decisively shaped the “moral purpose” of many states, the way sovereignty has been interpreted and how global governance is enacted.\(^1\) In addition liberalism’s close association with the social forces of capitalism has lead to the development and extension of neo-liberalism and the promotion of globalised capitalism. In this context environmental degradation, trans-border pollution and future environmental harm have become mundane everyday processes that resist moderation because of the ways the mundane nature of these practices and the largely unquestioned nature of the liberal values underpin the global political economy. By contrast, while the neo-roman approach of republicanism has its own limitations in addressing global environmental governance, considering its overt humanism and emphasis on delimited self rule, it does provide the possibility of global governance that works towards ends that open up rather than foreclose opportunities for addressing environmental degradation. Republicanism contrasts with liberalism in that it takes the role of the state and the role of politics to be one of promoting non-domination – to “live in the presence of people but at the mercy of none”.\(^2\)

In the following paper I am going to argue that republican inspired states provides sounder grounds for global environmental governance than liberalism. The state could maintain a position of being shaped by liberalism and global capital or it could become an institution that embeds a concern for its citizens’ common interests that surely include the manner in which environmental issues transcend time and space. There are three parts to the argument that republicanism can offer solid grounds for environmental governance. The first part outlines the particular neo-roman strand of republicanism and the ways the republican state could create a new political space where people take responsibility for their state. The second part examines how contemporary global governance is interlaced with the normative foundations of liberal states and neo-liberal policymaking that narrow the ability to reach just environmental governance. The last part turns to the extent and type of concern that the metavalues of republican governance would have for global environmental governance.

**Republicanism**

At its heart republicanism asserts that liberty is only possible via politics, particularly institutions that individuals have control over and responsibility for. The interpretation of the neo-roman republican tradition differs markedly from the contemporary communitarian – republican position heralded by Hannah Arendt and continued by neo-aristotelian authors such as Michael Sandel and David Miller.\(^3\) Contemporary neo-roman republicans such as Philip Pettit, Quentin Skinner and Richard Bellamy draw a sharp line between communitarian republicanism evident within the tradition of Aristotle and the neo-roman view of republicanism that stems from Machiavelli.\(^4\) These authors hold that there is a distinction between the belief that participation in a political community is the constitution

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of positive liberty and the neo-roman republican conception that political participation is the only means to establish a condition where society is free from domination. That is “rather than trading on a moralistic conception of positive liberty, therefore, Machiavelli urged civic involvement to avoid the domination of tyrants or elites”.\(^5\) Political activity on the part of citizens in this sense is a crucial step in the construction of liberty.

Contemporary neo-roman republican thought emphasises three key themes. The first is the constitutive relationship between the idea of non-domination and the state. According to republican thought the pursuit of liberty is not a natural attribute but rather a civic achievement that requires a context where citizens are the masters of their own destiny.\(^6\) The republican conception of “freedom consists not in the presence of self-mastery, and not in the absence in interference by others, but in the absence of mastery by others: in absence … of domination”.\(^7\) Pettit claims domination is defined by a relationship where

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\text{One person is dominated by another, so I shall assume, to the extent that the other person has the capacity to interfere in their affairs, in particular the capacity to interfere in their affairs on an arbitrary basis… In the most salient case it is the capacity to interfere as the interferer's wish or judgement – their \textit{arbitrium} – inclines them… If freedom means non-domination, then such freedom is compromised whenever a person is exposed to the arbitrary power of another, even if that power is not used against them.} \(^8\)
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Therefore republican liberty, understood as non-domination, is a condition that is defined by the diminution or elimination of the capacity to arbitrarily interfere in a person’s life.\(^9\) Non-domination is understood as the avoidance of subordination or vulnerability (rather than the liberal fear of restraint) dependent not upon the level of non-interference but the “extent that there exist institutional protections against interference”.\(^10\) Thus law is enabling non-domination in contrast to the liberal view that law entails restraint only justifiable by lesser overall restraint by the presence of law.\(^11\) Republican non-domination “comes about only by design”; it is the “freedom of the city, not the freedom of the heath”.\(^12\)

Enacting non-domination in practice requires a republic. A republic (also known as a commonwealth or a \textit{res publica}) is an independent and free state (\textit{vivere libero}).\(^13\) This type of state is both defined and constrained by the principle of sovereign self-government and is publicly controlled and focused on a common or public good. Thus those within the state must be free from both \textit{imperium}, that is domination by the state, and from \textit{dominium}, meaning domination by sectional interests from society.\(^14\) Thus the state and the publicly controlled and thus non-arbitrary interference it imparts does not cause liberty but

\(^{5}\)Bellamy, Richard, \textit{Rethinking Liberalism}, p. xii.
\(^{6}\)Bellamy, Richard, \textit{Liberalism and Pluralism}, p. 120.
\(^{8}\)Pettit, Philip, “Republican Freedom and Contestatory Democratization”, p. 165.
\(^{9}\)Pettit, Philip, \textit{Republicanism}, chp 2.
\(^{11}\)Brugger, Bill, \textit{Republican Theory in Political Thought, Virtuous or Virtual?}, p. 6.
\(^{12}\)Pettit, Philip, \textit{Republicanism}, p.122.
\(^{13}\)Skinner, Quentin, “On Justice, the Common Good and the Priority of Liberty”, p. 217.
“constitutes” it. Essentially the republican argument is “that a state would not itself dominate its citizens - and could provide a unique protection against domination based on the private power or internal or external enemies - provided that it was able to seek only ends, and employ only means, that derived from the public good, the common weal, the res publica”. Indeed as Bill Brugger claims “at the centre of republican thought is a strong constitutional state based on the rule of law and opposition to arbitrariness and with a clear notion of the common good or the public interest which is not simply the result of group pressure”.

The protective function of the state to those who live within and control the state is central to the underlying values of republicanism. Thus central to the republican tradition is the existence of a state that is publicly controlled and limited in the aims it is able to pursue but also focused on the common aims it must fulfill.

The second republican theme is the public or common good, understood not as a pre-political conception of the good life, nor an aggregation of individual interests, but rather as the constructed and common interest in goods that are not able to be obtained individually – particularly a shared liberty. Non-domination is a shared and constitutive condition that is typified by the security of individuals and peace but understood as a common good.

This observation is underlined by Pettit’s claim that non-domination is an “egalitarian good” and a “communitarian good” in that it is only realisable if the non-domination is enjoyed more or less equally and has a “common and social” character – it “is not the atomistic good associated with non-interference”. Indeed the republican conception of the common or public good is where

one cannot create such an environment except through active collaboration with others, nor control the beneficial externalities it generates so as to channel them only to certain others, though one could cut oneself off from them through one’s own anti-social and intolerant actions. Put another way, the condition of living as equals has to be desired in and for itself – as an intrinsic aspect of a certain kind of society – rather than instrumentally, since it would allow selective domination to acquire personal advantage

Thus the common good of liberty is only possible if constituted collectively and institutionalised by a state that is principally designed to “track” all the common interests held by the citizenry.

The third theme central to republicanism is that of political participation. Rather than being an end to political life, republicanism understands political participation as a crucial part in the promotion of the common good and the avoidance of domination. Rather than direct participation in the operation of all government decisions, republican thought has emphasised the importance of various avenues of the contestation of decisions that are made by public representatives to ensure that public decisions reflect a society’s common good and do not promote particular interests. Thus citizenship is a virtuous concern in the

15 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 108.
16 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 287.
17 Brugger, Bill, Republican Theory in Political Thought, Virtuous or Virtual?, p. 20.
19 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 284.
20 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 125.
21 Bellamy, Richard, Liberalism and Pluralism, p. 139.
22 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 290.
common good evident by an active interest in public affairs that sees “the people as trustor both individually and collectively: and sees the state as trustee: in particular it sees the people as trusting the state to ensure a dispensation of non-arbitrary rule”. This trust is backed up by a structure of the state that ensures the dispersal of power over a range of institutional bodies and a virtuous practice of citizenship that involves vigilance and a concern over the common good that transcends individuals own pecuniary or particular interests. Thus rather than a necessary evil, the state is a crucial artifice of and for the people whom are its citizens.

Republicanism provides a powerful statement of the potential of an appropriately designed state to achieve a liberty that while similar to liberalism in some respects, is of a different type. Both liberalism and republicanism agree that the state should aim at liberty but whereas liberalism claims this is possible by ensuring the non-interference in citizens chosen decisions, republicanism maintains that this can never be sufficient, since it will always be necessary for the state to ensure at the same time that its citizens do not fall into a condition of avoidable dependence on the goodwill of others. The state has the duty not merely liberate its citizens from such personal exploitation and dependence, but to prevent its own agents, dressed in a little brief authority, from behaving arbitrarily in the course of imposing the rules that govern our common life.

The scope of concern extends, as Skinner explains, not just to wariness of the state but to private sources of domination as well. Non-domination is a more demanding standard of freedom than non-interference both in the sense of the resources and laws needed to obtain non-domination but a wariness not just of the exercise of domination but the possibility or existence of domination. It is the case that the liberal account of non-interference allows well organised or wealthy groups in society dominate the political process in a way that republicanism could not accept.

Contemporary republicanism also distances itself from direct democracy as forwarded by more comunitarian accounts such that Brugger argues that Pettit’s interpretation of republicanism is best termed “weak republicanism”. This is in direct contrast to the “strong republicanism” of Benjamin Barber who defends a stronger account of participatory democracy that still falls short of a communitarian position according to Brugger. Pettit forwards what he terms a “gas-and-water-works republicanism” that departs from romantic accounts of republicanism or democracy where

Certainly the goal is a dispensation under which the high ideal of freedom as non-domination flourishes. And certainly that dispensation requires a regime under which constitutionalism and democracy rule. But constitutionalism and democracy come to be stabilized only via arrangements that are no more intellectually beguiling than the infrastructure of gas and water supply.

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23 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 8.
25 Skinner, Quentin, Liberty Before Liberalism, p. 119.
26 Brugger, Bill, Republican Theory in Political Thought, Virtuous or Virtual?, p. 13.
27 Brugger, Bill, Republican Theory in Political Thought, Virtuous or Virtual?, p. 13-5.
28 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 239.
This practical vision is what shapes the contemporary articulation of republicanism. While it still demands virtue and public concern on the part of citizens it does not require a step back to the agora or the ‘liberty of the ancients’. But can republicanism move forward to act upon global concerns such as the environment?

The Production and Reproduction of Ecological Harm

In order to examine how republican values could influence global governance it is necessary to examine the values that shape global governance and the condition of the global ecosystem. Global environmental governance has risen to prominence in world politics due to the immense and relentless pressure that human populations have placed on the global ecosystem. Far from existing within nature, humans in the modern period have via processes of science, industrialism and capitalism pushed at and broken fundamental ecological limitations. As a result ecological problems have occurred in various parts of the world, been transferred across state boundaries and transferred across generations thereby ushering in a process of global environmental change. The course of global environmental change creates ongoing ecological harm in the shadow of an impending danger of ecological collapse. Together these processes entail an environmental crisis that has occurred because of “the normal and mundane practices of modernity”. However in latter decades of the twentieth century we are faced with the simultaneous development of neo-liberalism that accentuates and deepens this crisis and the broadening concern regarding this environmental crisis evident in the proliferation of green movements and a concern for environmental global governance.

Definitions of the practice of global governance emphasise the way different actors engage in problem solving. In particular global governance is taken by many analysts to encompass the process of solving issues that states cannot effectively address in isolation from other states or other actors in global civil society. Within the context of global environmental governance questions arise as how best to manage the global commons and transborder pollution in order to ‘manage’ ecological harm and collapse. However global governance can be better understood as not just a process of problem resolution but a process of political constitution. Yet it is a constitution that actually produces problems. The way ecological harm has been constructed has enormous implications for the practice of global governance because this deeper view of global governance leads to the observation that “these power structures systematically produce environmental change in the first place, rather than simply preventing successful responses to that change”.

The form of global governance that prevents the formulation of successful responses to environmental change and actually reproduces the circumstances that allow environmental crisis and change is politically constructed by two key influences. The first is the normative structure of liberalism as embedded within the liberal state that conditions the way the state acts to manage domestic and international issues. The second is the conditioning influence

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of economic globalisation – a structural condition shaped by transnational capital and neo-liberalism which creates conditions of competition and market discipline on both market actors and many states.

The norms of liberalism have clearly been deeply constitutive of contemporary world politics.\(^{32}\) Even with the post Second World War proliferation of non-western states the norms of legitimate state agency have centered around liberalism. Christian Reus-Smit’s examination of the metavalues that shape the mutual constitution of fundamental international institutions and the state asserts that in modern period “the moral purpose of the modern state lies in the augmentation of individuals’ purposes and potentialities, in the cultivation of a social, economic and political order that enables individuals to engage in the self-directed pursuit of their ‘interests’”.\(^ {33}\) This reflects the close historical and normative linkage of liberalism with free enterprise and capitalism.\(^ {34}\) This purpose is also reflected in the liberal norm of non-interference – the ideal that the state ought not restrain individuals except when such restraint would prevent greater restrictions on individual choice and action. This norm can also be understood in the terms of “negative liberty” and paves the way for individuals to act on their individual interests with law placing as minimal restraint as possible on these individuals in order for them to maximise their interests.\(^ {35}\) Non-interference is also clearly linked to the development of capitalism even if the state is required to intervene in society to construct the circumstances and institutions required for capitalism to operate.

The constitution of global governance by economic globalisation is considerably more complex. Processes of globalisation have been interconnecting individuals and polities since the onset of modernity. These processes of increasing interdependence and “time-space distanciation” have operated on a global scale and cut across borders in various forms of economic, cultural and political activity.\(^ {36}\) However, more recently another phase of activity has quantifiably increased and qualitatively deepened these interactions. During the late 1960s a crisis in profitable capitalist reproduction throughout the western world presented a strong motivation for firms to take a “global option” that involved both undertaking production tasks in cheaper regions of the world and increasingly investing in and utilising information technology.\(^ {37}\) This phase of global restructuring is commonly regarded as economic globalisation or global capitalism because it suggests that economic activity is increasingly being organised across nation-states in that markets “function as if they were all


\(^{34}\) Pettit points out that liberal idea of non-interference developed in the early period of industrial capitalism where the new middle and upper classes saw non-interference as a largely unquestioned good – “they could ignore the fact that freedom as non-interference is consistent with insecurity, with lack of status, and with a need to tread a careful path in the neighborhood of the strong”. Pettit, Philip, *Republicanism*, p. 132.


in the same place, in real time and around the clock”. Economic globalisation is a contingent social formation that weaves material, normative and institutional elements of social life in a way that points to a world economy that operates as a single deregulated place. It is a “new model of socio-economic organisation” which is developing with national variations in order to achieve the basic aims of capitalism; a higher rate of profit for the owners of capital around the world.

However, the institutional aspect of economic globalisation does not have an easy task. This is because the process of economic globalisation is held together despite the fact that integration occurs across sovereign states in addition to significant inequality and social fragmentation occurring within states. The way this integration is held together is via an ethos of governance that operates at a global level that simultaneously holds nation-states apart – in a competitive stance with one another as well as together within a form of ideological consensus and coherence. Neo-liberalism is essentially a philosophy that entrusts the direction of social life to the “libertarian spirit of capitalism”. Neo-liberal governance is the normative framework of thought and action, of political interventionism at a local and global level, that is required to make the realisation of this spirit possible by the construction of free markets at a global level.

There are three main components of neo-liberal governance. First there are neo-liberal international organisations. These organisations include regional groupings such as APEC and NAFTA. At a global level there is the WTO which increased in profile due to its involvement in the development of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment and subsequent civil protests in Seattle. Other lesser profile but just as important groupings like the IMF, the World Bank, the OECD, as well as the G8 form an important network of neo-liberal organisations. This political infrastructure locks the reproduction of states that are part of neo-liberal governance into economic globalisation just as much as the influences of the global financial system, credit rating agencies and transnational corporations. These organisations enable complex interdependency to be managed in a way that links states and institutions into the mutually interlocking set of practices and ideologies of neo-liberal governance.

Second, and closely related to the first component, there is the reconfiguration of law indicated in Stephen Gill’s examination of “new constitutionalism”. New constitutionalism is the “polito-legal dimension” of neo-liberalism that is an international framework that “seeks to separate economic policies from broad political accountability in order to make governments more responsive to the discipline of market forces and correspondingly less

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39 Castells, Manuel, The Informational City, p. 23.
40 Castells, Manuel, The Informational City, p. 32.
responsive to popular-democratic forces and processes". New constitutionalism bestows special rights on capital with the aim of maintaining and ‘locking in’ government credibility in terms of satisfying financial market actors and frameworks as well as taking “important areas of economic policy” out of the “control of (elected) governments”. Examples of this process include frameworks such as NAFTA, GATT, the European Union’s Maastricht accords, as well as other initiatives such as the introduction of constitutional amendments requiring balanced budgets and autonomous central banks. The Multilateral Agreement on Investment is also an, as yet, incomplete example of new constitutionalism.

Thirdly, there is the policy direction of the nation-state indicated in Phillip Cerny’s analysis of the competition state. The competition state is an influence over governments that stems in varying degrees from the ideology of neo-liberalism or the awareness of the need to attract mobile capital to locate within the territory of a given state. In any case a state can be understood to be a competition state when “the main task or function of the contemporary state” is taken to be “the promotion of economic activities, whether at home or abroad, which make firms and sectors located within the territory of the state competitive in international markets”. While the post war ideas of nation building and embedded liberalism sought to balance expanded international trade between states with prosperity throughout society, the competition state makes no such effort. The competition state represents a practice that seeks to push deregulating markets with the aim of making the most of an economy that cuts across the state in an uneven manner. As such the ability to attract capital becomes the critical focus for government to the extent that it extends beyond being a strategy chosen by governments towards being a mentality that shapes the structure of the state and the discretion of government. While governments of western states during the 1980s such as those of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher utilised and extended this mentality, it is also present in governments that are not as overtly neo-liberal.

Two important consequences arise from this new pattern of political interventionism for the aspiration of environmental governance. The first is that this changing form of state action is not the end of the state. In fact it leads to a technocratic system of rule that may “necessitate the actual expansion of de facto state intervention and regulation in the name of competitiveness and marketization”. In addition the competition state is more tightly wound into global financial markets and neo-liberal international institutions than the electorate and thus any substantive notion of local control. This is evident in the way states are “giving up” authority through the “unbundling of sovereignty” to international organisations, especially those closely aligned with neo-liberal practices. Secondly the liberal

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43 Gill, Stephen, “European Governance and New Constitutionalism: Economic and Monetary Union and Alternatives to Democracy”, p.5.
44 Gill, Stephen, “European Governance and New Constitutionalism: Economic and Monetary Union and Alternatives to Democracy”. p. 5.
range of concern and regulation is extremely narrow. Economic concerns are prioritised over social or ecological concerns because the norm of non-interventionism facilitates a pervading reluctance to regulate social life while the norms and social forces of neo-liberalism seek to open up the context for profit, property and consumption to prevail over other forms of human activity and endeavor.

At first blush the norms of the liberal state, particularly non-intervention, seem at odds with the political interventionism needed for economic globalisation to operate. However this political interventionism is actualised in order to not interfere in the day to day life decisions of atom like individuals – to able market like interactions to become the norm.50 This has the effect of squeezing out democratic and public forms of deliberation and produces a state that is not disposed to acting on common problems in the political arena and does not have political devices able to interfere in society to consistently regulate areas of common concern. In sum the liberal norm of non-interference is the core problem of liberal governance because of the institutionalised reluctance to interfere in processes within or beyond the state that effect the conditions in which people live. In the absence of such rules those with power, mobility and choice reign without regularised restraint.

This problem of non-intervention folds into the fabric of global governance. The limits of liberal governance were perhaps most telling in the recent UN initiative to forge a “global compact” between transnational business and nine ethical principles already embedded in international agreements. On 31 January 1999, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the World Economic Forum in Davos challenged world business leaders to “embrace and enact”, both by their “individual corporate practices and by supporting appropriate public policies”, the following international principles:

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Secretary-General asked world business to:
   a) support and respect the protection of international human rights within their sphere of influence; and
   b) make sure their own corporations are not complicit in human right abuses.

2. The International Labour Organization's Declaration on fundamental principles and rights at work. The Secretary-General asked world business to uphold:
   a) freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
   b) the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
   c) the effective abolition of child labour;
   d) the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

3. The Rio Declaration of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (1992). The Secretary-General asked world business to:
   a) support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
   b) undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;

50 The originator of the idea that the free market was in fact organised was Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1957)
c) encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.\textsuperscript{51}

These principles have been clearly articulated in contemporary global governance but rarely furnished with devices to enact compliance. Does the idea of a global compact alter this compliance gap? No because, of course, the global compact is not binding in any way. Georg Kell and John Ruggie explain that rather “it is meant to serve as a framework of reference and dialogue to stimulate best practices and to bring about convergence in corporate practices around universally shared values”.\textsuperscript{52} If the social consequences that the social compact is directly addressing were not so severe that this type of measure is being contemplated the “framework” would be highly commendable, but it falls short of governance that will moderate the social and ecological consequences of globally unregulated capitalism. Ultimately the global compact provides no reason that business should address their stance in relation to the compact other than the protection of their “brand names” and image.\textsuperscript{53} Far from being a “Faustian bargain” that Kell and Ruggie suggest that some may see the global compact to be,\textsuperscript{54} it is bargain without the capacity to be enforced. The liberal reluctance to interfere in the operation of capitalism, or individuals more generally weakens any grounds on which the global compact could socially regulate global capitalism.

The consequence of liberal states and global governance is a context defined by reluctant and minimal regulation. The consequences of these foundations for the environment have been observed by many scholars and are significant; a gap between discourse and actual regulation with many environmental regimes not being adequately enforced, sovereignty is reified, the prevalence of economic regimes and organisations that generally promote transnational capitalism and systematically effect the environment.\textsuperscript{55} In sum this form of global governance creates the framework on which a global environmental crisis is formed – where agents are allowed to create various forms of environmental harm.

The idea of regulation as a necessity to liberty and justice is beyond the liberal approach to governance but not than of republicanism. While there have been ecologically based arguments for decentralised or cosmopolitan governance, these alternatives leave the (neo) liberal state intact.\textsuperscript{56} An alternative to this path is to reframe the state, to posit a “positive

role” for the state, as Hedly Bull suggested decades ago or to argue for a ‘green state’. The idea of the republican inspired state goes beyond Bull’s support for the state but falls short of a green state. Republicanism governance is only concerned with domination not green values of ecological justice. However republicanism does however offer good reasons that it is superior in promoting environmental governance than liberalism in that it provides clear grounds for the state to interfere in society to promote commonly held goals and to protect people from the conditions and consequences of ecological domination.

Republican Global Governance and the Environment

The republican idea however is clearly focused on the liberty of humans as secured by the republican state. The emphasis on humans and the state may strike difficulties addressing ecological concerns that are inherently global and trans-species. However the express humanism of republican thought does not exhaust the possibility of environmental regulation and protection. It is possible to see the effects of ecological crisis and harm as consisting of a particular form of domination that persists across time and space. As Paul Wapner has noted “environmental degradation is not simply about how people treat nature but includes, in almost every instance, how they treat each other”. Living in the ‘presence of people but at the mercy of none’ takes on a whole new complexion in a context of globalising ecological harm where presence extends across time in space. Ecological harm therefore can be understood as a process that produces vulnerability and subordination where some people can arbitrarily affect the liberty and security of others – that is domination of people by other people whose presence has been extended and sustained by their impact of the ecosystem. If we can safely claim that ecological harms wrought by environmental change are a form of domination the ground is cleared for republican states to interfere in society to rectify, restrain such a condition and to protect dominated parties. While this form of state activism is outside the ambit of liberalism’s core concern of non-interference, it is clearly the case that republican states cannot enact such interference in isolation. Cooperative forms of global governance will be required to enact non-domination from ecological and other global forms of ‘presence’.

What would a world of states infused with the meta-values of republican governance look like? While the ‘gas and waterworks’ vision of republicanism would fall considerably short of a global state the interactions between republican states would have a different quality than the contemporary society of states. The common desire of the citizens within republican states is to achieve the condition of non-domination requires global governance to promote forms of peaceful cooperation and comity. However as liberty is a civic achievement obtained by the public control over public power, global governance cannot in itself legislate for liberty but it must develop the constitutive conditions that enables states to achieve the civic liberty particular to each society’s political articulation of their common good. To enable states to prioritise the pursuit of their common good the infrastructure of global governance must address those goods that are beyond the jurisdiction of the state. Just as the values of the republican state license intervention in an individuals affairs if that individual is involved in relations of domination, the goal of non-domination and the pursuit of the

global common good licenses established rules of intervention in the affairs of a state involved with domination within or beyond the territory of their state. As Nicholas Onuf observes “in a purely liberal world, sovereignty entails non-intervention; the republican legacy of concern for the common good affirms the propriety of intervention inspired by larger motivations than the intervenor’s immediate advantage”. The goal of non-domination necessitates systematic intervention and regulation of those human activities that enact or potentially enact conditions of domination – including the actual or potential danger of ecological harm.

Republican global governance can be clarified by four practical tangents of its operation. Firstly, sovereignty has a different quality. If sovereignty were to be shaped by the values of non-domination rather non-interference it would have profound consequences for environmental regulation and institutionalisation. Sovereignty is not “sacred” according to Pettit’s view of republicanism (and that of Onuf), thus opening up the possibility that the enactment of non-domination could be handled with more efficacy in a body that is more distantly connected to the state. Therefore the realisation of the republican goal of non-domination requires the “multinational cooperation and institutionalization” that Pettit points to;

While the republican state represents an indispensable means of furthering people’s non-domination… there are some domestic issues on which it may be better from the point of view of promoting freedom as non-domination to give over control to those bodies and thereby to restrict the local state.

This form of institutionalisation applies to issues where the ability of public control of the state fades in relation to the scale of the issue or the potential of other states to create circumstances of domination. Interstate cooperation stems from the goal of promoting non-domination and a maximal autonomy for each state rather than absolute autonomy. As such interstate institutions would be shaped by republican states and by the norms of non-domination explicitly designed to interfere with agents who engage in various forms of domination.

The second point of clarification suggests that the form of cooperation between republican states contains both a common moral purpose and a commitment to maximal state autonomy. Again, in a similar image to the domestic context of the republican states – in order to enjoy liberty/autonomy common laws have to be enacted and there are distinct limits to state autonomy. In order to maximise effective state autonomy states have to forgo types of action that actually or potentially dominate other states or individuals. States that dominate their citizens or threaten other states are a clear example where intervention in a republican context would be duty rather than a right – so long as such intervention is transparent, rule governed and tracks the interests of those intervened with – in short non-arbitrary. At the very least this type of association entails a commitment to common rules

60 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 152. See also Onuf, Nicholas Greenwood, The Republican Legacy in International Thought, p. 137-8 and 140.
61 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, p. 152.
and may entail a confederation of states as suggested in the writings of Montesquieu. It could be claimed that this is a move towards the “civitas maximus” that Christian Wolff outlined over two hundred years ago, as colourfully detailed by Onuf. However the confederation would be more like Onuf’s characterisation of Emmerich de Vattel’s confederation of states: less natural than Wolf’s and more consciously constructed.

Thirdly, republicanism does not share liberalism’s emphasis on developing the conditions for a capitalistic market society. Republicanism also falls short of a socialist agenda by protecting private property, promoting economic prosperity and promoting the socio-economic independence of people. Onuf makes the point that “conspicuously missing from republican thought throughout its long and complex history is any conception of economic activity, of the economy as a sphere of activity that can (if given a chance) operate according to its own logic”. Republicanism’s overarching aim is a society aimed at a common liberty and inclusive political negotiation not a society where all an individual’s material desires are satisfied. Therefore republican inspired governance offers a strong reason for the principled and non-arbitrary regulation of global capitalism with such a common liberty in mind. Of course the difficulty is actually arranging – on a global scale between widely differing states – the actual institutional basis that enables the regulation of capital to be practical and non-dominating. At a minimum, common rules centred on regulating capital in an era of globalisation would have to occur within globally negotiated limits. Such rules would regulate and structure capitalism with non-domination at the forefront of policy deliberation. This intervention could only be enforced and justified by appealing to the notion of non-domination and the state being the citizens’ common ground not an organisation that opens society for global capitalism.

The fourth point of clarification relates to the exercise of moral duties. Republicanism’s emphasis on the state bound notion of the common good is a necessary good entailed in the civic enactment of non-domination – controlling the state in a way that prevents the state from itself dominating and forces the state to act on other forms of domination. However, as indicated previously this does exhaust moral or political commitments of individuals within republican states. This intersects with Onuf’s claim that before liberalism dominated the shape of the state and the context of world politics, there was republicanism as a way of thought which “which took a world of politics, not states, as its frame of reference”.

Republican global governance unfolds the idea that while the state is crucial to liberty, it is not the end of politics or morality. Not only does the enactment of republicanism require

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63 Note Montesquieu’s instrumental reasons concerning size. “If a republic is small, it is destroyed by a foreign force; if it be large, it is ruined by an internal imperfection. This twofold inconveniency democracies and aristocracies are equally liable, whether they be good or bad. The evil is in the very thing itself, and no form can redress it. It is, therefore, very probable that mankind would have been, at length, obliged to live constantly under the government of a single person, had they not contrived a kind of constitution that has all the internal advantages of a republican, together with the external force of a monarchical, government. I mean a confederate republic.” Montesquieu, The Spirit of the Laws (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1977), p. 183 (Book IX.1).
64 Onuf, Nicholas Greenwood, The Republican Legacy in International Thought, p. 58.
65 Onuf, Nicholas Greenwood, The Republican Legacy in International Thought, p. 60 chp 3 and 4 more generally.
66 Pettit, Philip, Republicanism, pp. 158-63.
68 Onuf, Nicholas Greenwood, The Republican Legacy in International Thought, p. 3.
global thinking on the part of the agents of the state but on the citizens - the ability of citizens to both discipline the state and to be concerned with global issues. In addition peoples personal affiliations and actions cross boundaries in a world of globalised complexity. But to the republican position such personal or moral cosmopolitanism does not translate to necessitate political or institutional cosmopolitanism of Richard Falk or David Held for example. While the contrast of republicanism to cosmopolitanism can be overdrawn and requires longer treatment than possible here, republicanism emphasises that governance protects liberty by taking power and diversity seriously and by balancing universalism with the capacity of constructing liberty via more localised decision-making.

Republicanism provides foundational principles for governance that provide strong reasons to regulate some aspects of life. As an approach to governance, republicanism seeks to reclaim the state in order to fashion a liberty against powerful interests that in a liberal world are allowed to create conditions of subordination and vulnerability. However reclaiming the state such that people have the protection of a state expressly designed to promote their liberty will probably fall short of a 'green state'. If a green state means a state embeds an overarching and unwavering concern for environmental justice and sustainability in all policy and law this is beyond the ambit of republicanism. The condition of non-domination is the aim of republicanism not ecological justice. That being said the concern for non-domination has to include ecological forms of domination if it is to be at all reasonable. Therefore republicanism provides far superior grounds for global environmental governance than that liberal and neo-liberalism because it discards the deep rooted liberal reluctance to interfere in the decisions of individuals – particularly private property holders. In order to avoid domination and allow the common liberty of republicanism delimited and purposive interference is necessary.

The sort of environmental decision-making we would expect from republican states, while not green can be characterised by the following types of activity;

An active state – The republican promotion of non-domination requires various types of non-arbitrary interference on the part of the state. In order to enable people to be the condition absent of relations of domination from the state or other parties the state will have to actively track its citizens common interests and enact common laws. This type of state contrasts with the minimal actions required of the liberal state and clearly demands increased responsibility of the government and the state to citizens,

A cooperative state – In a globalising context the enactment of non-domination and the achievement of civic liberty will require extensive cooperation between republican states. Increased responsibility of states to other states requires and constitutes a context where states are conceived and act as being within a larger political space with institutions aimed at constructing and negotiating common rules,

A differentiated state – While liberalism requires a unified and homogeneous state, united largely by principles of constitutional law, the republican states is more liable to being heterogeneous and differentiated. In addition to the principle of federation (which

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republicanism shares with liberalism) the principles of subsidiarity and mixed government seek to sharpen the ability of the state to track its citizens common interests and provide additional mechanisms that protect citizens from arbitrary sources of power,

A pluralist state – Republicanism accepts the need for ethically ‘aware’ governance- that is including multiple ethics or voices into the constitution of political life and the domination of no single voice. The practice of such governance is important given sidelining of voices other than those associated with neo-liberalism and transnational capital the domination of the state by the ideas and practices of transnational capital. This means that green political movements have an even more crucial and receptive role in promoting environmental justice in a republican regime than in a liberal one,

A politicised state – Rather than depolicising environmental issues or reducing them to questions of technical concern, republicanism seeks to promote dialogue that sharpens the individual interests in play and place them alongside the common interests only shareable by everyone within the state. This state bound public good needs to be considered at a global level with what is compatible with the interests of all people in all states. This political processes ultimately means that green groups will have to operate across borders to stimulate interest regarding issues of ecological concern that fall short of forms of human domination (eg animal rights).

While a green state could use the various mechanisms associated with the neo-roman legacy, the republican idea of non-domination is aimed directly at humans. Likewise republican conceptions of citizenship are inherently tied to a particular state in which a person resides– ideas of world or green citizenship are of little practical currency to the republican. In republican governance, citizenship is license to discipline public forms of power via the state and to construct political life in a way that avoids private forms of domination that includes those that stem from ecological degradation that persists across time and space. Ultimately a world coloured by the meta-values of republicanism would express greater commitment to environmental justice. However it would fall short of a world that asserts absolute primacy of environmental justice.

Conclusion

The limits of republicanism and non-domination to global environmental governance are seemingly clear. Firstly, the narrow concern of republicanism, in particular its express humanism does not seem to translate into ecological awareness or justice in any obvious way. Secondly, republicanism relies on state bound politics to reach moral goals: state bound notions of citizenship, democracy and the public good. This paper has claimed that these limitations are not as inviolate as they appear. While republicanism falls short of a green state the enactment of non-domination surely includes ecological concerns. Likewise while liberal sovereignty protects states from outside interventionism, republicanism considers politics to be a broader field that will require elaborate forms of cooperation and intervention if non-domination and human security are to be possible.

The aim of this paper has been to assert that the prevailing and underlying values of liberalism and neo-liberalism are central to environmental change and ecological crisis. It is not sovereignty or the separateness of states that hinders the moderation of the ecological
harm but the way the liberal value of non-interference allows the displacement of domination across time and space, and allows capital to dominate both the composition of the state and the interrelations of states. As such in establishing republican governance and the norm of non-domination the public of a state must discipline their state and prompt it towards the protection of their public interest that in the area of ecological governance will require interstate cooperation consistent with the public goods of other states. It does not, however replace the need for green groups to prompt states and international organisations to promote environmental justice. The republican requirement of having a state able to intervene to promote its society’s public interest offers solid grounds for global governance able to regulate human affairs and provide protection from ecological domination that stems from environmental change wrought by humankind.