

Global Education In Global Village: Golden Rule

Dr. Ramezan Mahdavi Azadboni¹, Dr. Hossein kazemi²

¹Associate Professor of university of Mazandaran

Abstract— We, human beings are living in a global village as the shape of universe has been changed due to the fast development of information technology in recent century. Information-technology has reduced the world to a global village through internet, satellite, and so on. The rise of global village naturally caused different discussion in many areas such as ethics, politics, and education and so on. Part of such discussion is to attempt for finding a proper response for the possibility of universal ethical value as the basic foundation of education in global village. It is against the nature of education in itself that we lack any universal ethical value in global village. Can we find a universal ethical value to based education on in globalized village? The aim of this essay is to deal with this question and the writer attempts to display how ethical golden rule can provide us with a proper foundation for education.

Index Terms — education, global village, world, golden rule

I. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to provide some reflections on ethical accounting of globalization. According to some thinkers globalization is inevitable and it makes no sense to approve or disapprove of it, therefore we cannot go against it. Some other thinkers argue for the human liberty and they consider human liberty as the source of globalization, and thus advocate for its transformation. In this paper the writer holds that globalization is indeed the climate of the times and it is brought about by human beings whose social behaviors are considered responsible for its direction and shaping the universe.

Although globalization has different aspect such as economic, cultural and so on but the writer believes that we should not limit globalization to one particular aspect, in particular, if we consider globalization as the result of time requirement. Of course globalization has its root in economic aspect and it started first as a material or economic phenomenon that has become global. That free trade is now being conducted globally, that is to say across national boundaries, is not new. The countries of Asia, Europe and the Americas have long been trading with each other for more than a century. What is new is that the world economy is heading towards a single, integrated free market (Boatright, 2000, p. 2).

Markets are becoming "denationalized," that is to say, "national markets are increasingly mere subsets of a

worldwide international or...transnational marketplace." (Madison, 1998, p. 28).

This is true of goods and services, finance and capital, and labor. Many manufactured goods, for example, no longer originate in one country but are the composite products of an "elaborate international web of suppliers and assemblers." (Ibid., p. 28, citing Iain Carson, *The Economist*, p. 5.)

Capital can move freely across nations at the speed of electricity.

This global free trade has been made possible by the new electronic technology of information and telecommunication. The instantaneous, inexpensive communication and abundant information readily accessible through the internet and the mobile phones, plus the plentiful highly mobile investment funds, have removed the natural barriers to free trade and have made it global. (Boatright, op. cit., p. 3. G. B. Madison, op. cit., p. 28.) Economic globalization, however, is not the only aspect of globalization. Marx's insight, reconstructed by Habermas, that the mode of production can never be isolated from social relations points to the influence of the material on the cultural, political and spiritual aspects of human existence. Global free trade demands that people change their working habits and lifestyles and retool themselves if they are not to fall behind. States must be prepared to liberalize their trade and investment policies, relinquishing part of their sovereignty to such international organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). (Madison, op. cit., pp. 28-29.)

Globalization has so to say overcome the limitation of place, resulting in the homogenization of cultures, where the particular is universalized and the universal is particularized. (Robertson, 1996, p. 104).

Globalization consists in the "interpenetrating processes of socialization, individualization, the consolidation of the international system of societies, and the concretization of the sense of humankind." (Ibid., p. 104.)

What is happening in globalization is what Paul Ricoeur calls "universal civilization". (Ricoeur, 1965, pp. 271-284). Anyway globalization originate in global village according to which natural boundary is omitted therefore human beings are closer together beyond our imagination. It is a process stand against becoming a lonely nation among the nations and seeking a universal way of life for different aspect of human beings. Of course this kind of understanding has cultural, religious and social implications among which ethical implication is considerable and the concern on the status of moral values in a globalised world become more serious. We cannot escape making ethical discussions regarding

globalization since moral values has significant role both in religions and philosophy.

Ethic and Globalization

Ethic both in religions and philosophy is considered an inevitable aspect of human life. According to some thinkers it is ethical aspect that distinguishes human being from animals. In such perspective the lack of moral values in human life makes human being equal to animal life.

Christianity is regarded as an ethical religion due to its deep moral perspective. Contemplation on ten commands given in Holy Bible reveals the truth of such view. In Holy Quran also we observe that ethical development is introduced as significant mission for divine messengers. In Quranic perspective whenever man goes beyond ethics and breaks moral values and standards in his behaviors, is lifting distinguishing border between him and animals. Ethic is a necessary aspect of human life while human being is living in different world that its order and border is significantly different comparing with last centuries. Standing on the doorstep of the twenty first century one sees with wonder how InfoTech has reduced the world to global village through internet, E-mail and so on. Telephones equipped with automatic translation from Indian to English and vice versa created an entirely different situation. It is an undeniable fact that science made for human life new frontiers through its tremendous success and the feature of life for mankind became totally different from previous centuries. Our world is called as global village (Swammi, 1999,p.2) therefore ethical concern for such borderless world must significantly be at hand.

As indicated in introduction globalization while has been started from economic activities but it is not limited to economic aspect of human life and cultural and ethical concerns are significant as well. The contemporary background to the questions emerged is the fact that the globalization of the economy, the technology and the media has also brought a globalization of problems, from the financial and labour markets to ecology and organized crime. If there are to be global solutions to them, they therefore also call for a globalization of ethic. Of course globalization of ethic due to globalised world does not mean uniform ethical system ("ethics"), but a necessary minimum of shared ethical values, basic attitudes and criteria ("ethic") to which all regions, nations and interest groups can commit themselves. In other words there is a need for a common basic human ethic. There can be no new world order without a world ethic, a global ethic. Here making a pint may save the reader from a misunderstanding. The ethical reassessment does not mean moralizing (MORAILSM) every aspect of human life. Overvaluing morality is the basic character of moralizing. Moralizers make morality the sole criterion for human action and ignore the relative independence of various

spheres of life like economics, law and politics whose role in human life justify some kind of relativism in ethic.

Anyway if ethic is regarded an evident necessary requirement for human life, then global ethic must be a necessary requirement in a globalised world as well. Namely globalization calls for global ethics. The following points regarding global ethics are noticeable:

- 1- Global ethic is not a new idea in the history of philosophy. Since the ancient time in Greek Socrates made his project against Sophistic movement according to which there is no human universal moral standards. Socrates admitted the Sophistic idea according to which human being is considered as the measure of everything. But Socrates argued for the universal interpretation of human being as measure for everything.
- 2 - Global Ethic is seen as the necessary minimum of common values, standards and basic attitudes. In other words a minimal basic consensus relating to binding values, irrevocable standards and moral attitudes, which can be affirmed by all religions despite their undeniable dogmatic or theological differences and should also be supported by nonbelievers.
- 3 - Due to the problem of orientation and existing desire for racism and so on, the global ethic is considered as a project to defeat what makes human beings separated. The consensus of values and arriving at a universal agreement on moral standards will be a decisive contribution to overcome the crisis of orientation, which became a real global problem.
- 4 - Global ethic is considered as a project which needs more than a decade to be fulfilled; it calls for a change of consciousness which has already made great progress in the last decade.

Ethical Golden Rule

Global ethic needs global foundation and ground on which ethical system in globalised world need to be based. One such foundation could be fulfilled through ethical golden rule (EGR). EGR can provide us in a global village with global foundation. It must be pointed out that the *golden rule* as the basic principle of an intercultural dialogue is suitable to build bridges between different religious and cultural traditions due to its global distribution.

The Golden Rule or ethic of reciprocity is a [maxim](#) that essentially states either of the following:

- (Positive form): One should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself.
- (Negative form, also called the [Silver Rule](#)): One should not treat others in ways that one would not like to be treated.

This concept describes a "reciprocal" or "two-way" relationship between one's self and others that involves both

sides [equally](#) and in a mutual fashion (from Wikipedia free encyclopedia)

As a *concept*, the Golden Rule has a long history. As a concept of "the ethic of reciprocity," it has its roots in a wide range of world cultures, and is a standard way that different cultures use to resolve conflicts. It has a long history, and a great number of prominent religious figures and philosophers have restated its reciprocal, "two-way" nature in various ways (not limited to the above forms.)

EGR in Religious Tradition

According to [Simon Blackburn](#), although the Golden Rule "can be found in some form in almost every ethical tradition", (quoted from Wikipedia the free encyclopedia) the rule is "sometimes claimed by Christianity as its own". (Nayyar, "Democracy, 1998, vol. II., no. 1, p. 68.)

The "Golden Rule" has been attributed to [Jesus of Nazareth](#): "Therefore all things whatsoever would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" ([Matthew 7:12](#), see also [Luke 6:31](#)). [Leviticus 19:18](#) ("Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself"; see also [Great Commandment](#)) and [Leviticus 19:34](#). The [Old Testament Deuterocanonical](#) books of [Tobit](#) and [Sirach](#), accepted as part of the Scriptural canon by [Catholic Church](#), [Eastern Orthodoxy](#), and the [Non-Chalcedonian Churches](#), also express a negative form of the golden rule:

"Do to no one what you yourself dislike."

—Tobit 4:15

"Recognize that your neighbor feels as you do, and keep in mind your own dislikes."

—Sirach 31:15

The Golden Rule is implicitly expressed in some verses of [Qur'an](#), but is explicitly declared in the sayings of [Muhammad](#). From the Qur'an: the first verse recommends the positive form of the rule, and the subsequent verses condemn not abiding the negative form of the Golden Rule: "...and you should forgive and overlook: Do you not like God to forgive you? And Allah is The Merciful Forgiving." — [Qur'an \(Surah 24, "The Light," v. 22\)](#)

"Woe to those... who, when they have to receive by measure from men, they demand exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due"

— [Qur'an \(Surah 83, "The Dealers in Fraud," vv. 1–4\)](#)

"...orphans and the needy, give them something and speak kindly to them. And those who are concerned about the welfare of their own children after their death, should have fear of God [Treat other people's Orphans justly] and guide them properly."

— [Qur'an \(Surah 4, "The Women," vv. 8-9\)](#) "They assign daughters to Allah, Who is above having a child [whether male or female] and to themselves they assign what they desire [which is a male child]; And when the news of the birth of a female child is brought to one of them His face darkens and he hides his inward Grief and anger... They attribute to Allah

what they dislike [For themselves] and their tongues assert the lie that the best reward will be theirs! Undoubtedly, the Hell fire shall be their lot and they will be foremost [in entering it]."

— [Qur'an \(Surah 16, "The Honey Bees," vv. 57-62\)](#)

From the [hadith](#), the collected oral and written accounts of Muhammad and his teachings during his lifetime: A Bedouin came to the prophet, grabbed the stirrup of his camel and said: O the messenger of God! Teach me something to go to heaven with it. Prophet said: "As you would have people do to you, do to them; and what you dislike to be done to you, don't do to them. Now let the stirrup go! [This maxim is enough for you; go and act in accordance with it!]"

—[Kitab al-Kafi](#), vol. 2, p. 146

That which you want for yourself, seek for mankind. The most righteous person is the one who consents for other people what he consents for himself, and who dislikes for them what he dislikes for himself.

[Ali ibn Abi Talib](#) (4th [Caliph](#) in [Sunni](#) Islam, and first [Imam](#) in [Shia](#) Islam) says:

"O' my child, make yourself the measure (for dealings) between you and others. Thus, you should desire for others what you desire for yourself and hate for others what you hate for yourself. Do not oppress as you do not like to be oppressed. Do good to others as you would like good to be done to you. Regard bad for yourself whatever you regard bad for others. Accept that (treatment) from others which you would like others to accept from you... Do not say to others what you do not like to be said to you." —[Nahjul Balaghah](#), Letter 31.

The Nature of EGR

Very important is, that the golden rule has developed independently in different regions and in different cultural contexts. That makes it a principle of universal ethics. Beside its universality, it is an essential aspect of the golden rule that the reciprocity and the moral responsibility make it possible to build up a relationship with empathy and respect. Further the golden rule covers two basic aspects of every theory in ethics: In the positive form („Treat others as you like them to treat you.“) contextual *benevolence* is addressed, in the negative form („Don't treat others as you don't like them to treat you.“) the contractually defined limits of intervention into the autonomic sphere of the individual are mentioned, led by the concept of *justice*. Justice and benevolence come together in the golden rule, meanwhile they were treated separately in the traditional philosophical debate about deontological or teleological ethics: The claim that an action is right or wrong *independent* of the consequences (deontological ethics) favors *justice* as the central term, the claim that an action is right or wrong *on the basis of* the consequences

(teleological ethics) does so with *benevolence*. In addition to this important fact the golden rule manifests a valuable progress of civilization, from the *ius talionis* to a principle of desirability. Neglecting the talionist principle of the Old Testament, as it is summed up in the famous verse „And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth

for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.“ (Deuteronomy 19, 21), covers the knowledge and the experience that continuing with the wrong does not heal any wounds. Only with the moral implications drawn by the golden rule, one can overcome hate and self-hate, installing a new form of relationship by appealing to the desirable – a relationship in *tolerance* and *appreciation*. So even in the challenges, fanaticism and extremism put on the open society; the golden rule proves to be a suitable principle, because the dialogue can only be successful when it strengthens the progressive concept of tolerance and appreciation, which takes into account justice and benevolence. (The Golden Rule as a Global Ethos by Josef Bordat)

Anyway, close contemplation on EGR displays its very nature according to which altruism and human or human equality is most considerable.

Altruism

There is self-interest and self-preservation element in the Golden Rule, as there is in most things that people do; but that's not the only reason that the Rule is commonly followed. Altruism is also a human trait. Altruism means that people care about others' well-being even when there's no possibility of a return favor. They simply feel good when helping others. Think of relatives who take in a child if its parents have been killed. Think of people around the world who have aided the Asian tsunami victims and those who have suffered from hurricanes and other natural disasters. The altruistic frame of mind that is fostered is significant—it shifts thinking from oneself to the welfare of others. Instead of thinking "what's in it for me," Golden Rule-minded people consider other peoples' needs and desires—how other people will benefit (or at least not be hurt) by what one does. Such acts can be their own reward; they make people feel good about themselves—finding joy in doing things that make the lives of others a bit more pleasant.

Moreover, Golden Rule thinking expands as our group identifications expand. Compared to previous ages, we have larger numbers of "others" with whom we now identify. At one time group loyalty—a sense of belonging—did not go much beyond the family, the clan, the band or one's tribe. "Outsiders" were not to be trusted.

Today we use "we/our" terms for huge groups, most of whose members are not personally known to us. For example, the vast majority of Americans is patriotic and regards the millions of other Americans as a part of "we/us". And for many Americans, their loyalties extend far beyond the country's borders.

Human Equality

The Golden Rule—treating others as you would want to be treated if you were in their situation—implies a general human equality, an ideal that has slowly grown to be verbally honored around the world. The United Nations' 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* provides an example. Its provisions emphasize the "dignity and worth of the human

person and in the equal rights of men and women...without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion."

The Declaration further states that no one is to "be subject to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." Governments are to be based upon "the will of the people...expressed in...elections" in which there is equal suffrage and secret votes. All children are to have "the right to education [that's] directed to the full development of the human personality."

We are far from realizing these goals, but there are reasons to be hopeful. That such a "Declaration" exists is an achievement, and actual progress is being made. Slavery still exists, but it is being challenged. Despite problems, the number of democratic governments in the world has increased. In many societies, women now have a larger measure of economic and political power than in past times. Young people are raised more humanely than in previous centuries; girls' prospects for fully developed lives have greatly improved.

The morality of the Golden Rule and altruism—considering the well being of others as well as our own—is a part of human nature. It is found worldwide and in all enduring cultures. One's aspiration to live the Golden Rule needs nourishment, but it's not dependent upon one being a member of this or that particular group, religion, or cultural tradition. (The Golden Rule Basis for Ethics and Morality

Brant Abrahamson)

2- Critics on the golden rule

Kant for instance took the golden rule for „trivial“ and held, that a criminal could argue against his judge, because he himself would not like to be sent to prison, therefore he (the judge) may not sent him (the criminal) into prison (Kant 1997, p. 68). But with this case Kant ignores two aspects. First it fails to take into consideration all the relevant social circumstances under which the case takes place. The judge must not see only the criminal, but also the victim, the relatives of the victim, the society that is entitled to live in security and the state that has to guarantee this security. His point of view has to be based on a multilateral consideration not on a bilateral one. Second – and this is more important – he has not to apply the golden rule in the actual case *in fact*, but in an *hypothetical* case. The question is not: „How would you like to be treated in this real case if you were him?“, but „How would you like to be treated in a *hypothetical* case in which you are in his place?“.

The second criticism comes from the Swiss Brülisauer (1980, p. 325) who blamed the golden rule for being against competition, because possibly a competition with winner and loser (e.g. in sports) is not according to the golden rule and therefore seems to be immoral. How – morally – can I make someone lose by winning the competition if I do not like to lose myself? To solve this problem it is indispensable to distinguish between the act itself and the result of the act by means of linguistic analysis. In that way, Ryle discriminates between *terms of act* and *terms of result* .(1949, p. 55). Here

comes out clearly that „to win“ is a term of result and not of act. Hence it is not possible to act

„wrong“ in a moral sense by winning a competition if one gave its best as the others did. „To give one’s best“ and „to try to win“ are expressions of acting and therefore relevant to ethics. The golden rule is only applicable on *terms of act*. So one just has to give its best in every competition in which one takes part, in order to obey the golden rule, whatever the result will be.

The third problem of applying the golden rule appears in a bilateral situation of acting beings with different prerequisites and conditions. One example can be found in the famous fable *The fox and the stork* by La Fontaine (n. d., p. 29). The fox invites the stork to dinner. He had prepared a soup and serves it on flat plates, so that only he is able to eat, meanwhile the stork due to his long bill does not eat even a bit. Here it could be possible to see an objection to the golden rule, because the fox treats the stork as it is desirable for him (the fox), also if he is invited by the stork. The argument to remember what it means to you if the other treats you in the same way as you treat him is not effective in this case. But that is not at all meant so by the golden rule. The demanded empathy has to ensure finally that one act in a *right* way for the other, taking into consideration hereby all the *other’s* prerequisites and conditions. So the question is not: „How would I like to be treated in his place with *my* prerequisites and conditions?“, but „How would I like to be treated in his place with *his* prerequisites and conditions?“. Accordingly it is important to imagine, what it would mean to have special qualities of the other or to miss special qualities of oneself and how to do *that*. The fox has to think about having a bill and how he would like to get served his soup *than*.

If that is done so, homogeneity of the participants is not required to apply the golden rule to initiate e. g. an interreligious dialogue, because than the theological differences can be accepted and overcome by the full empathy the golden rule implies. Cultural pluralism is no impediment for the application of the golden rule, if every participant of the dialogue is willing to apply it in a way of full empathy as a sign of respect for the other. A last objection makes clear the limits of the golden rule in the ethical discourse. Hare describes his “golden rule-test” as an instrument of checking ethical arguments, that shows in cases of fanatics the limits of the applicability of the golden rule, because e.g. a suicide bomber satisfies the testcondition, for his act has the same consequences to him as to others (Hare ,1963) himself uses the example of the Nazisympathizer who is so doctrinaire that he would be willing to consign himself to a concentration camp if he learned that he had Jewish ancestry), but, however, his attitude cannot be regarded as a *sensible* and *reasonable* moral principle. So Hare emphasized the importance of generalization and therefore finally comes to his *universal consequentialism* as a conclusion.

Concluding Remarks

Education has a significant mission. It is to produce a desired change in human life. Creating desired changes needs an objective basis and ground in order to create an objective educational system teaching and producing objective changes. The principle of golden rule could provide us with such objective basis for education.

References

Holly Bible

Holly Quraan

Nahjolbalageh

1 - John R. Boatright, "Globalization and the Ethics of Business" *Business Ethics Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 1 (January 2000).

2-Hare, R. M. (1963) *Freedom and Reason*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

IDRC (ed) (2001) *The Responsibility to Protect. Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty*.

3 - Kant, I. (1997) *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. La Fontaine, J. d. (n. d.), *Die Fabeln. Gesamtausgabe in deutscher und französischer Sprache*, Emil Vollmer Verlag, Wiesbaden..

4 - G. B. Madison, "Globalization: Challenges and Opportunities" *Philosophical Challenges and Opportunities of Globalization* (Washington D.C., Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1998).

5 - Ryle, G. (1949) *The Concept of Mind*, Hutchinson, London.

6 - Roland Robertson, *Globalization, Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 1996).

7 - Paul Ricoeur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures," *History and Truth* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965).

Works cited from net:

Global Ethic and Human Responsibilities

by Hans Küng

Submitted to the High-level Expert Group Meeting on "Human Rights and Human Responsibilities in the Age of Terrorism" 1-2, April 2005, Santa Clara University

The Golden Rule as a Global Ethos by Josef Bordat

The Golden Rule Basis for Ethics and Morality (Brant Abrahamson)