The Liberal International Order and Peaceful Change: Spillover and the Importance of Values, Visions, and Passions

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The fundamental and enduring question in the academic discipline of international relations (IR) has always been how to change the world into a better and more peaceful place—peacefully. However, although the discipline has agreed that peaceful change is desirable, there has been less agreement on what peaceful change is and how to achieve it. The debate has centered on whether peaceful change should be understood as simply a change in the status quo without resorting to war, or rather as a change that produces a specific outcome, such as justice and well-being, and that it is achieved through persuasion without the threat of violence and anchored in the rule of law.[1] During most of the history of IR, realists have dominated the discipline and focused on the former understanding, while liberal theorists, and later constructivists, have emphasized the latter. Yet, despite the disciplinary dominance of realism, in practical governance, the idea of peaceful change has long been closely associated with a perspective rooted in the idea of Immanuel Kant that free trade, democracy, and cooperation through international institutions is the best way to bring about peaceful change. This worldview was later articulated by Woodrow Wilson as "liberal internationalism" and it has guided the gradual institutionalization of international society culminating with the establishment of the liberal international order after the Second World War.

For the purposes of this essay, I understand peaceful change to be change that is undertaken not only without the use of violence and coercion but also with the

agreement and acceptance of those affected by it. I focus on the role of institutions operating as agents of peaceful change by way of making policy decisions that aim to foster cooperative rather than conflictual relationships. I do so from a perspective that emphasizes the importance of a wide spectrum of human emotions[2] to better understand the less quantifiable but nevertheless important conditions for being able to sustain initiatives for peaceful change.[3] The essay sheds light on the often overlooked psychological and emotional hurdles standing in the way of agents' abilities to undertake and sustain action designed to lead to peaceful change. To do so, I return to the pioneering work of Ernst Haas and his important concept of "spillover," which suggests that once a decision has been made to pursue an initiative designed to achieve peaceful change, unintended consequences and unforeseen problems often compel agents to undertake further steps within and beyond the initial policy area to achieve their set goals. Although the influence of Haas's work faltered once it became clear that spillover was far from a universal response to unintended consequences and unforeseen problems, his work is a rare early example of theoretical IR thinking that paid attention to identity, emotions, and values as motivations for peaceful change. However, while acknowledging that Haas's work was critically important, this essay will also argue that he was wrong to focus on negative emotions rather than positive ones to understand why peaceful change processes often cannot be sustained. To both illustrate the problems with Haas's version of spillover and highlight the potential the theory still holds, I turn to the crisis of the liberal international order as an example of a forum where the agency to undertake peaceful change seems to be faltering. According to Haas, the current situation of crisis, frustration, and disappointment is precisely what he would argue would fuel the spillover process and therefore should enhance the process toward peaceful change. Yet, rather than fueling the spillover process, the current crisis appears to be having a negative impact on the motivation of those working on behalf of the liberal order. This seems to have left the liberal international order and its institutions unable or unwilling to start and sustain initiatives that could contribute to peaceful change.[4]

Ernst Haas and the Concept of Spillover

Spillover was the central concept in neofunctionalism[5] used to explain the process that would lead toward a new form of political organization—a "political community"—in which it was thought that the many reasons for war and conflict would

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be a thing of the past. Although Haas was a little vague about what exactly political community involves, he clearly thought that the achievement of a political community would entail a shared identity and that a politically significant segment of collective life would be subjected to the political intentions of a supranational authority. Spillover would eventually—and according to Haas, inevitably—produce the political community[6] because unintended consequences and unforeseen problems would compel agents to undertake further integrative steps within and beyond the initial policy area to achieve their original goals. Although Haas focused on European integration as a means to change the war-prone European relationships to peaceful relationships, his theory was intended as a theory of global peaceful change,[7] as he believed that the European process would eventually become relevant globally.

Haas was ahead of his time in that he paid attention to identity and emotions in a scholarly environment that was not overtly receptive to such thinking.[8] Moreover, his belief that agents faced with negative emotions such as frustration and disappointment "would rethink their values, redefine their interests and choose new means to realize them"[9] put him at odds with the dominant thinking of the time. It is therefore not surprising that Haas's neofunctional theory remained in the shadow of the work done by "the other guy down the corridor"—Haas's colleague at Berkeley, Kenneth Waltz.[10] Today the scholarly environment in IR is more receptive to sociological and psychological forms of theorizing, which provides fertile ground for revisiting spillover as an important element in peaceful processes of change. In this essay, I argue that Haas was on the right track but that his theorizing had a number of flaws that need to be revised. With the revisions I suggest here, spillover might again become a useful concept to help us understand why international peaceful change sometimes takes place in dynamic bursts and why sometimes—most of the time—the dynamism fizzles out and the initiatives fail.

Ontological Security, Meta-Stability, and the "Good Life"

I argue that Haas's treatment of three issues related to the nonmaterial aspects of spillover undermined the theory and led to it falling out of favor, but that more recent constructivist theorizing related to the importance of ontological security, visions of a "good life," and emotions can be used to resurrect the concept.

This recent theorizing helps to rectify three missteps in Hass's original argumentation: (1) the incorrect idea that negative emotions drive the spillover process; (2) the misplaced assumption that policy failure will change values; and (3) the failure to provide a clear vision for what "political community" would entail.

Positive Emotions as Motivation for Action

Haas's assumption, and unwavering conviction, that spillover would result from negative emotions such as frustration and disappointment arising from unforeseen problems in implementing policies is not supported by the literature on social identity theory[11] and ontological security.[12] Contrary to Haas's focus on the motivational force of negative emotions, Rubin and Hewstone have convincingly demonstrated that people always seek to maximize their self-esteem,[13] and it is well understood that people derive positive emotions from having a high status[14] and from being able to demonstrate success in their undertakings.[15] These authors argue what any parent knows well—that frustration, disappointment, and failure lead to feelings of shame and embarrassment and a diminished motivation to try again. Positive—rather than negative—emotions must therefore be assumed to be the driving factor for potential spillover.

The literature on ontological security supports the idea that it is not negative but positive emotions that motivate people to take any form of action that lies outside the everyday practice of maintaining the status quo. Research on ontological security is instructive for understanding the psychological needs of human beings and the conditions necessary for them to be able to invoke their agency and maintain their motivation to engage in the kind of action that is necessary to achieve (peaceful) change. Ontological security necessitates a high level of cognitive consistency such that one is able to construct a sense-making narrative about the self that provides biographical continuity. Giddens suggests that to be ontologically secure is to possess "answers" to fundamental and existential questions, which furnishes the individual with a sense of "unreality" and thereby acts as a protective cocoon against the full realization of the many dangers that could threaten that person's bodily or psychological integrity.[16] Without this sense of unreality, agents will be overwhelmed by anxiety that will challenge the very roots of their sense of being and negatively impact their ability to invoke their agency.[17] Therefore, only ontologically secure people have the necessary psychological disposition to motivate the action that can lead to peaceful change.

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All human beings seek ontological security through two interconnected strategies: a "strategy of being" that aims to maintain a stable identity and biographical continuity expressed through a sense-making narrative about the (collective) self, and a "strategy of doing" that aims to maintain cognitive stability about the world and relationships through institutionalized practice that simultaneously reinforces and reifies the identity, norms, and values of the (collective) self.[18] Action to change the status quo—even for the better—is mostly resisted because it inevitably leads to cognitive inconsistency and a disconnect between identity, narrative, and practice, which will trigger new, time-consuming processes in search of ontological security through the strategies of "being" and "doing" in order to reconnect narrative, identity, and practice. Change of any kind is therefore always regarded as a costly undertaking and will usually only be commenced under two conditions: either in response to a critical danger experienced as a crisis or major turning point, or in a wave of enthusiasm and a "can do feeling" arising from prior successful action. In other words, barring an existential threat, successful action and the pride and enthusiasm it generates are what motivates action, while policy failure, disappointment, and frustration lead to anxiety, paralysis, and loss of agency.

The Link between Values and Identity

The other aspect of Haas's analysis that is not supported by constructivist literature is the neofunctional argument that, faced with frustration and disappointment, people "would rethink their values, redefine their interests and choose new means to realize them."[19] Although disappointment can be a first step in the process leading toward an increased awareness of what needs to be done,[20] the insights from constructivism suggest that values are tied to identity and are thus unlikely to change every time the outcome of a policy decision is thwarted. Values and identities are remarkably stable and act as both the glue that holds a social group together and as the compass that gives it a sense of purpose and direction. As outlined above, the insights from ontological security suggest that human beings are hardwired to dislike and resist change because it challenges our sense of ontological security. In practice, this means that identity-based values and their expression through institutions and practices are extremely sticky.[21] On one hand, this makes the institutions necessary for peaceful change very stable and durable, but on the other it makes them vulnerable because they find it hard to adapt in response to a changing global environment.[22]

Although individuals and communities may instinctively avoid change, it cannot be denied that we live in a world that is characterized by rapid and far-reaching change that requires continuous reflection and adaptation. Adler describes the outcome of continuous adaption as "meta-stability," which he argues is a necessary condition that allows for fluctuations in an institution's practices while its ideational social fabric remains relatively fixed.[23] His position concurs with that of Giddens, who suggests that the identity and values of an individual or social order constitute the essence of its "being in the world,"[24] which indicates that values are unlikely to be changed in response to policy failure. To be sure, an ontologically secure person (or institution) would be able to continuously change his or her practices in small and incremental ways as part of a collective learning process to maintain meta-stability. Only in exceptional circumstances, however, would that learning lead to a change in values as suggested by Haas. Therefore, spillover would be more likely to involve gradual adaptations in practices than a change of values. Meta-stability is essential to maintain, as failure to adjust practices will eventually leave the entity brittle and dysfunctional. Paradoxically, therefore, the most stable entities are those that change the most.[25]

The Need for a Clear Vision of "The Good Life"

As outlined above, Haas was never very clear about what the end point of spillover was supposed to look like, and his rather vague concept of "political community" and the neofunctional strategy to concentrate the integration efforts in functional policy areas that were unlikely to stir the passions of the European publics also meant that the project had limited motivational power—it simply could not generate a passionate interest. The choice seemed to be between downplaying the project by surreptitiously undertaking functional integration through small incremental steps in areas that most people cared little about (such as coal and steel), or to declare European integration a grand peace project designed to fundamentally change relations between states on issues of war, peace, and cooperation. Perhaps the choice of the former was influenced by the catastrophic experience with Nazism, Fascism, and Marxism, which showed that although grand visions can produce passion that can reverberate through a society and motivate—even incite—people into action, populist politics based on passion and strong ideologies also have a dark side that can easily get out of control.

Even if passion is a risky thing when seeking to bring about peaceful change, visions are important for motivating people to support and undertake any form

of change-making action.[26] It is therefore always necessary to strike a balance between the "boring" neofunctional concept of political community and the articulation of a shared vision of a meaningful future that involves living a "good life." Although all human collectivities rest on shared ideas about what is meant by the good life,[27] their perceptions of what constitutes that life vary enormously. I use the concept in a pragmatic way, encompassing an assemblage of shared norms, rules, principles, values, and knowledge about what makes life worth living and how to achieve a worthy life. The good life comprises not just what makes our continued existence possible but what makes life a gift—including what Aristotle referred to as "goods of the soul," such as love, friendship, fairness, self-esteem, honor, morality, and justice.[28] To be fair, the context within the IR academy at the time of Haas's writing was not conducive to these sorts of motivational factors, so Haas settled for the vague and rather uninspiring notion of political community, which probably was unlikely to persuade anyone to change their values, let alone their identity, and which made it difficult to visualize precisely what kind of good life spillover would produce. It seems likely that the liberal international order suffers from the same problem.

The Crisis of the Liberal Order: Transformational Change, Anxiety, and Westlessness

The crisis of the liberal international order is clearly causing alarm, with growing concern that the order is in a terminal condition and that the days of (some of) its multilateral institutions are numbered.[29] The obvious question therefore is why those acting on behalf of the liberal order and its institutions, who have talked so much about the crisis, have not taken the urgent action that is clearly needed to bring the order back from the brink. This is what the neofunctional perspective would expect to happen, as the current situation is characterized by precisely the negative emotions, such as frustration and disappointment, that Haas thought would constitute ideal conditions for a spillover process, whereby agents will rethink values, redefine interests, and find new means to realize them. Unfortunately (part of) the answer to the apparent lack of motivation to kick-start the liberal international order can be found in the missing elements of the spillover process outlined above. The current situation is characterized by a drain of ontological security following the poor performance of a variety of policies; failure to take adaptive action to adjust established practices to a rapidly changing environment; fading support for

the order's legitimizing ideology; and failure to articulate a vision for the "good life." These are matters that go to the heart of the liberal order and that may seriously compromise its ability to contribute to peaceful change.

Perception of Poor Policy Performance and Diminishing Ontological Security

It may be a cliché to say that we live in times of great—perhaps transformational—change. Cliché or not, modern societies are characterized by accelerating globalization,[30] rapid and fundamental technological change, global power shifts, and looming catastrophic climate change, which will inevitably produce a high degree of anxiousness and constitute a drain on the levels of ontological security. As outlined by Ulrich Beck, in the modern, future-oriented "risk society,"[31] policy must be conducted in response to the uncertainty of risks by using anticipatory governance[32] rather than in response to much more concrete threats. Given that a risk is an imagined scenario of something that might unfold in the future, the task of modern governance is ideally to prevent the imagined future from materializing, or at least to mitigate its consequences. The problem is that when dealing with such scenarios, success is difficult to demonstrate, while even mitigated consequences are likely to be perceived as policy failures that reflect the incompetence of those who were supposed to have anticipated and prevented the calamity from unfolding. As a result, the policy-action undertaken by agents working on behalf of the liberal international order is less likely to have a positive influence on the agents' ontological security. Most importantly, a number of high-profile crises such as the financial crisis; the migration crisis; the many long-running wars and persistent instability in places such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen; and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic make it easy to blame the liberal international order and its institutions for having failed in their primary tasks of providing peace and prosperity. Politicians who promise to "take back control," "make a country great again," or return to a better past therefore hold a great deal of attraction even if their promises are plainly not realistic.

Fading Resilience

As discussed above, change often causes human beings to feel anxious and uncertain, prompting them to take action to reduce their uncertainty. If they are ontologically secure, they may be able to maintain their individual or collective "meta-stability" by adapting their narrative and practice to external change while maintaining the social and ideational fabric expressed through their values and identity. However, if, as is more likely, their level of ontological security has

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been reduced as a consequence of experiencing such change, they will probably do everything they can to maintain or reestablish their cognitive consistency by continuing their established, perhaps dysfunctional, practices—until a crisis point is reached where such a strategy is no longer viable. In cases where outmoded practices are maintained despite a changing environment, the resilience of the entity in question will inevitably be negatively impacted, which will eventually bring about a crisis with the potential to collapse or transform the entity.[33] Many worry that the latter is currently taking place in the liberal international order. As evidence, these worriers often cite the inability of the United Nations Security Council to undertake reform; NATO limping along with a seriously outdated strategic concept; the inability of the World Trade Organization to address issues related to its dispute settlement system; and the inadequate and fragmented response to the COVID-19 pandemic from the WHO.

The problem is that if resilience is understood as the ability to remain fit for purpose by reflecting upon and adapting to a continuously changing external environment,[34] then the resilience of the liberal international order is certainly showing signs of being negatively affected. In the face of myriad crises resulting from rapid global change, the institutions of the order are struggling both to respond and to take adaptive action. More worryingly, it seems that the foundational values upon which the liberal international order rests are being contested by a new populist constituency. If the contestations eventually lead to a change in the value base of the liberal order, the order will have moved from seeking meta-stability to unwittingly approaching unintended transformational change. Although transformational change can happen peacefully—as demonstrated by the end of the Cold War—it carries a heightened risk of violent upheaval.

Faltering Support for the Legitimizing Ideology and the Emergence of Westlessness

Unfortunately, we seem to have reached a point where the foundational values of the liberal international order are no longer certain. Such a shift in the values of an international order is not something that happens through mere disappointment with policy failure. Rather, it is likely to be a symptom of something far more fundamental. The uncertainty surrounding the value base of the liberal international order was the main theme of the 2020 Munich Security Conference, where the concept of "Westlessness" was introduced.[35] Westlessness suggests that not only is the world becoming less Western but also that the West is itself becoming

less Western as it experiences increased internal contestation and fading support for its legitimizing ideology. The conference report concluded that the West, and with it the liberal international order, now appears to be "in retreat, in decline and under constant attack"—both from within and from without.[36] The shift in values is seen most clearly in the end of cross-party support for the liberal international order and in the rise of right-wing populism across liberal democracies.[37] This is a real problem for the liberal order in that without a clearly articulated value base rooted in shared ideas about what constitutes the "good life," the liberal international order is deprived of its vision for the future and its compass for being able to formulate policies to bring about peaceful change. In this respect, the worry is not so much that the world is becoming less Western—this may indeed be a long overdue development allowing others to live their lives under the guidance of a culturally and identity-appropriate sense of the good life. However, with increased cultural and ideational diversity,[38] a new form of international system consisting of several international orders may be in the making.[39] In such a multi-order world, the conditions and mechanisms for peaceful change will probably be fundamentally altered and perhaps impaired because the conception of what constitutes a just and desirable outcome of peaceful change is likely to be associated with contestation and disagreement. Without a shared systems-wide legitimizing ideology such as (at least) a thin form of liberal internationalism, the prospects for peaceful change may be limited to the negative conception of peaceful change as merely maintaining the status quo without resorting to war.[40]

Conclusion

This short essay has of course only been able to scratch the surface of what is an extremely complex situation. However, it does seem that the neofunctional concept of spillover (albeit in a different form than Haas originally anticipated) is of some value for understanding when and how agents—including international institutions—are able to sustain their initiatives for peaceful change. The essay has shown that the neofunctional understanding of spillover was missing three essential elements: an understanding of the need for positive emotions and ontological security; an understanding of the link between values and identity; and a realization of the importance of a shared vision for the "good life."

The current crisis in the liberal international order should, according to Haas, result in a burst of activity to safeguard the achievements of the order and give rise

to new policy initiatives to counteract what are largely perceived as policy failures. In contrast to Haas's findings, however, this essay has demonstrated that it is positive emotions and ontological security that constitute the on-off button of spillover. This suggests that spillover is only rarely activated because ontological security is a fragile condition. Furthermore, while disappointment and frustration are frequent emotions in policymaking, they more often lead to paralysis and an unwillingness to invoke the agency of key actors rather than productive spillover. This point is further underlined by the growing influence of right-wing populism, where success, enthusiasm, and a strong sense of shared knowledge appear to be contributing to a dynamic spillover process for those movements.

The positive finding of the essay is that it is possible to identify the conditions necessary for spillover to take place. However, the bad news is that such conditions are difficult to establish and even more difficult to sustain, suggesting that although spillover certainly is possible, it is a fragile and transient condition that is likely to proceed with more stops than starts. This must therefore also be assumed to be the rule for initiatives for peaceful change. The current global situation is not encouraging because the crisis in the liberal international order is draining the ontological security of those working on its behalf, while its policies are often seen as failures. Its vision for the good life is seen at best as unclear and at worst as one that benefits only the cosmopolitan elite. The risk, therefore, is that the emerging right wing populist forces will gain the upper hand because they are willing to stir passions and to outline a clear, albeit unrealistic, vision for the good life.

NOTES

[1] T. V. Paul, "Assessing Change in World Politics," *International Studies Review* 20, no. 2 (June 2018), pp. 177–85, academic.oup.com/isr/article-abstract/20/2/177/5026360. For a thorough conceptual and theoretical discussion of peaceful change, see Peter Marcus Kristensen, "'Peaceful Change' in International Relations: A Conceptual Archaeology," *International Theory*, November 12, 2019, www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-theory/article/peaceful-change-in-international-relations-a-conceptual-archaeology/B7ED04369C6902AB62720AA9C1D78925.

[2] Emma Hutchison, "Emotions, Bodies, and the Un/Making of International Relations," *Millennium* 47, no. 2 (January 2019), pp. 284–98, journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0305829818811243.

[3] Trine Flockhart, "The Problem of Change in Constructivist Theory: Ontological Security Seeking and Agent Motivation," *Review of International Studies,* 42, no. 5 (December 2016), pp. 799–820, www.cambridge.org/core/journals/review-of-international-studies/article/problem-of-change-in-constructivist-theory-ontological-security-seeking-and-agent-motivation/5CC379187B7C0EF84D4EE07E5BBF30C4.

[4] I discuss the apparent paralysis in the liberal international order in more detail in Trine Flockhart, "Is This the End? Resilience, Ontological Security, and the Crisis of the Liberal International Order," *Contemporary Security Policy* 41, no. 2 (2020), pp. 215–40, www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13523260.2020.1723966?journalCode=fcsp20.

[5] Neofunctionalism is an integration theory developed in the aftermath of the Second World War. It theorized that functionally motivated integration in individual policy sectors would gradually spread to

other sectors through the process of spillover. As presented by Haas, neofunctionalism is a "self-consciously eclectic" effort at explaining the dynamics of change in an international system composed largely—but not exclusively—of established nation-states. Philippe C. Schmitter, "Ernst B. Haas and the Legacy of Neofunctionalism," *Journal of European Public Policy* 12, no. 2 (2006), pp. 255–72.

6 Ernst B. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe: Political, Social, and Economic Forces, 1950–1957* (1958; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), p. xxi; Ben Rosamond, "The Uniting of Europe and the Foundation of EU Studies: Revisiting the Neofunctionalism of Ernst B. Haas," *Journal of European Public Policy* 12, no. 2 (April 2005), pp. 237–54; and Jeppe Tranholm-Mikkelsen, "Neo-Functionalism: Obstinate or Obsolete? A Reappraisal in the Light of the New Dynamism of the EC," *Millennium* 20, no. 1 (March 1991), pp. 1–22.

7 Only weeks before his death in 2003, Haas specified what he had left unsaid in the original version of *The Uniting of Europe*: that "the study of integration is a step toward a theory of international change at the macro level." Haas, *Uniting of Europe*, p. xv.

8 Emanuel Adler, "Ernst Haas's Theory of International Politics" (paper presented at a conference honoring Ernst B. Haas, University of California, Berkeley, March 20, 2000; speech manuscript provided by the author).

9 Haas, *Uniting of Europe*, p. xv.

10 Ibid.

11 Henri Tajfel, *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (London: Academic Press, 1978); and Mark Rubin and Miles Hewstone, "Social Identity Theory's Self-Esteem Hypothesis: A Review and Some Suggestions for Clarification," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 2, no. 1 (February 1998), pp. 40–62.

12 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge, U.K.: Polity, 1991); and Jennifer Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics: State, Identity and the Security Dilemma," *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 3 (September 2006), pp. 341–70; and Flockhart, "Problem of Change in Constructivist Theory." See also R. D. Laing, *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* (1969; London: Penguin, 1990); Charles Taylor, *Human Agency and Language*, Philosophical Papers 1 (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and Hutchison, "Emotions, Bodies, and the Un/Making of International Relations."

13 Rubin and Hewstone, "Social Identity Theory's Self-Esteem Hypothesis."

14 Richard Ned Lebow, *A Cultural Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

15 Michael Billig and Henri Tajfel, "Social Categorization and Similarity in Intergroup Behaviour," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 3, no. 1 (January/March 1973), pp. 27–52; and Tajfel, *Differentiation between Social Groups*.

16 Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p. 47.

17 Ibid., p. 44.

18 Flockhart, "Problem of Change in Constructivist Theory."

19 Haas, *Uniting of Europe*, p. xv.

20 Emanuel Adler and Beverly Crawford, *Progress in Postwar International Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 29.

21 Maria Josepha Debre and Hylke Dijkstra, "Institutional Design for a Post-Liberal Order: Why Some International Organizations Live Longer than Others" (working paper, Maastricht University, September 20, 2019).

22 Flockhart, "Is This the End?"; and Jessica Schmidt, "Intuitively Neoliberal? Towards a Critical Understanding of Resilience Governance," *European Journal of International Relations* 21, no. 2 (June 2015), pp. 402–26, journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1354066114537533.

23 Emanuel Adler, *World Ordering: A Social Theory of Cognitive Evolution* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

24 Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, p. 38.

25 Richard Ned Lebow, *The Rise and Fall of Political Orders* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

26 Felix Berenskoetter, "Reclaiming the Vision Thing: Constructivists as Students of the Future," *International Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (September 2011), pp. 647–68, academic.oup.com/isq/article-abstract/55/3/647/1827582?redirectedFrom=fulltext.

27 John Williams, "Structure, Norms and Normative Theory in a Re-Defined English School: Accepting Buzan's Challenge." *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 3 (July 2011), pp. 1235–53, www.cambridge.org/core/journals/review-of-international-studies/article/structure-norms-and-normative-theory-in-a-redefined-english-school-accepting-buzans-challenge/F4C75260FD950ACB2F540E62711E043D.

28 John M. Cooper, "Aristotle on the Goods of Fortune," *Philosophical Review* 94, no. 2 (April 1985), pp. 173–96, www.jstor.org/stable/2185427?origin=crossref&seq=1.

29 Robert Jervis, Francis J Gavin, Joshua Rovner, and Diane N Labrosse, eds., *Chaos in the Liberal Order: The Trump Presidency and International Politics in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018); and Amitav Acharya, "Asia after the Liberal International Order," *East Asia Forum*, 10, no. 2 (2018), www.eastasiaforum.org/2018/07/10/asia-after-the-liberal-international-order/.

30 At the time of writing, there is much to suggest that the accelerating globalization of the past century may in fact be in the process of turning into deglobalization as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is too big a question to address in this short article, but it does not change the fundamental argument being made here, as a change from globalization to deglobalization would constitute a new and unforeseen form of transformational change that is likely to have negative impacts on the ontological security of relevant agents.

31 Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: SAGE, 1992).

32 Leon Fuerth and Evan M. H. Faber, *Anticipatory Governance Practical Upgrades: Equipping the Executive Branch to Cope with Increasing Speed and Complexity of Major Challenges* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defense University, 2012).

33 Flockhart, "Is This the End?"

34 David Chandler, "Beyond Neo-Liberalism: Resilience, the New Art of Governing Complexity," *Resilience* 2, no. 1 (January 2014), pp. 47–63, www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21693293.2013.878544; Schmidt, "Intuitively Neoliberal?"; and Flockhart, "Is This the End?"

35 Munich Security Conference, *Munich Security Report 2020: Westlessness* (Munich: Munich Security Conference Foundation).

36 Ibid, p. 22.

37 Charles A. Kupchan and Peter L. Trubowitz, "Dead Center: The Demise of Liberal Internationalism in the United States," *International Security* 32, no. 2 (Fall 2007), pp. 7–44, www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/isec.2007.32.2.7.

38 Christian Reus-Smit, *On Cultural Diversity: International Theory in a World of Difference* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2018); and Bentley B. Allan, Srdjan Vucetic, and Ted Hopf, "The Distribution of Identity and the Future of International Order: China's Hegemonic Prospects," *International Organization* 72, no. 4 (Fall 2018), pp. 839–69, www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/distribution-of-identity-and-the-future-of-international-order-chinas-hegemonic-prospects/6B178D9A058C016F6C7A50A089AA7290.

39 Trine Flockhart, "The Coming Multi-Order World," *Contemporary Security Policy* 37, no. 1 (March 2016), pp. 3–30.

40 Kristensen, "'Peaceful Change' in International Relations."

Abstract: As part of the roundtable "International Institutions and Peaceful Change," this essay focuses on the role of institutions as agents of peaceful change from a perspective that emphasizes the importance of a wide spectrum of human emotions to better understand the less quantifiable but nevertheless important conditions for being able to sustain initiatives for peaceful change. It aims to throw light on the often overlooked psychological and emotional hurdles standing in the way of agents' ability to undertake and sustain action designed to lead to peaceful change. To do so, the essay returns to the pioneering work of Ernst Haas and his important concept of "spillover." The essay shows that the neofunctional understanding of spillover was a theoretically important innovation, but that it was missing three essential elements: an understanding of the need for positive emotions and ontological security; an understanding of the link between values and identity; and a realization of the importance of a shared vision for the "good life." To illustrate the problems with Haas's version of spillover, but also to highlight the significant potential of the theory, the essay turns to the crisis of the liberal international order as an example of a forum where the agency to undertake peaceful change seems to be faltering. The essay concludes that the ability of the liberal order to effect peaceful change is currently hampered because the order is characterized by negative emotions, contested values, and a vision of the good life that is seen as mainly a benefit for the cosmopolitan elite.

Keywords: Ernst Haas, ontological security, good life, emotions, transformational change, Westlessness