**The Angry Global Public: Dissent and New Citizenship Practices in an Age of Social Media**

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## Sceptical Global Publics and their Aspirations

Since Obama's 2008 upset election victory global publics have grown brasher, more articulate, numerically larger, bolder and more troubling for elites and their neo-liberal ideas and practices. Almost daily at such gatherings of the G 20 London meetings in 2009 powerful global images of protesters dominate the media when governments misstep and dissimulate. Derrida once wrote that "public opinion is a spectre," present in none of the places "where it is held to be." [1] How perceptive he was about the vitality and innovative instinct of the lone 'long' lost public!

Certainly the public is no longer a 'phantom,' a term coined by Walter Lippman in the early 20s, to account for a disenchanted citizenry that loses interest in politics and drops out. Instead modern global publics are cheering for their communities, their visions of the world, and they are giving a lot of themselves too. Anyone can be a contrarian, a sceptic, or a battler in an information age. Today, according to Inglehart of the Michigan World Values Survey, anyone under thirty and many over fifty is as likely to be dissenters as conformists. With the demographics favouring the youth crowd, boomers and an emergent middle class in the global south numbering in the tens of millions worldwide, the recruiting pool of dissenters is virtually unlimited.

The ‘disconnected observers of the system’ another term once in fashion to describe the public as a kind of undifferentiated mass is also now largely discredited as an accurate descriptor for our age. Some experts like Cass Sunstein and Bruno Latour believe that these networks and networking practices should be thought of as an extension of the Habermasian ideal of a transnational sphere of interactive communication. They contend that slowly over time, the global publics have emerged as a consequence of Web 2.0 with high powered two way model of participation. The rapid diffusion of new information technology correlates very closely with Castell’s original insight that capitalism is under fire from transnational networks, coalitions and advocacy campaigners with their own iconic heroes and ideas. These social networks provide a badly needed incentive structure for micro groups on and off line to organize and mobilize across state boundaries in unprecedented ways.

This intense on line activism among discursive communities is a capstone achievement. We can see the magnitude of the information age in a single fact. The much in vogue Facebook has passed the 200 million mark of registered ‘users’ in April 2007 and its growth in attracting so many participants to dialogue and converse sets a modern record. New information technologies have succeeded beyond the wildest predictions in attracting millions of exclusive users. In one year the number of Twitter users has grown to 7 million a fifteen percent increase from the year earlier. We see the spitfire growth of the Huffington Post of only four years in existence. According to Comscore, the ratings website, the HuffPo has wooed more than 7 million of the New York Times unique users and now has almost 20 million dedicated users. The critical idea is that the arrival of micro-blogging and social networking together has become a global hinge social phenomenon involving vast numbers of people across the globe from India to the US.

**The End of History and the Rise of Internet Activism**

In the space of little more than a decade when voting in elections in many countries has fallen to all time lows internet activism has supplanted membership in political parties as the preferred route for modern activists. The ability of these activist epublics to self-organize needs to be looked at with fresh eyes to understand the full potential of the high powered Web 2.0 participatory model of two way communication.

Since Obama's stunning victory over McCain changed the rule book and the rules of the game, experts and governments everywhere need to rethink the role of the internet as part of their electoral strategy. The fact that he succeeded in organizing an on line movement to go off line and become a political movement contains important lessons for winning and losing in an internet age. The genius of Obama's electoral strategy set him on the road to become the first Face Book e-president. But he will not be the only political leader to attempt to win high office by reaching out to the disaffected voter, the sceptic and contrarians who until Obama's upset likely didn't vote and didn't trust politicians. Every political party in the world are looking at his success in 'connecting' with the apathetic and indifferent voter.

The most important thing to remember is that Americans turned out in record numbers to vote in the 2008 election. Not since Lyndon Johnson's epic 1964 victory has any presidential candidate connected with the average voter. Almost fifteen million more voted than in the previous election largely thanks to voting drives in the South to register Afro-American and first time voters and Obama's use of Facebook groups to mobilize tens of thousands supporters and

undecided. The worried public to use Michael Waltzer's eloquent turn of phrase has found an outlet in public activism and opened the door to a vastly expanded sphere of interactive communication. Why should this not only be happening but setting the stage for new citizenship practices of such diversity and scale?[2]

At first during the Cold War period, elites everywhere were convinced that they had tamed the shrew of public dissent. Capitalism was to be the basis for all social life, and market fundamentalism was to be the religion that gave us domestic bliss at home and peaceful prosperity abroad. In his bestseller *The End of History*, Francis Fukuyama saw no reason to alter this convenient arrangement. Millions agreed with him that this was the most pessimistic of ages, a period in which the public saw few possibilities beyond the paternalism of global capitalism.[3] Today, coordinated and defiant activists are standing up to market fundamentalism and testing the conservative belief in a narrowly defined technocratic process of politics. These diverse publics in Australia, Brazil, and South Africa have challenged the command and control structures of undemocratic state authority and the new property rights created by global neo-liberalism's agenda of privatization, deregulation, and global free trade.[4] How could the high priests of supply-side economics, who preached the power of low taxes, freewheeling entrepreneurs, and liquid capital for global growth, have missed the other side of globalization – the rise of social movements, micro-activists, and networks of oppositional publics? How could Fukuyama, like many elites before him, have failed to learn Hegel's biggest history lesson?

Hegel, like the classical scholars he studied, understood well that history is a process of evolution and change. Social change is a foundational element of human society and the best

efforts of the political class to maintain social structures that facilitate hierarchy and protect political privilege are ultimately self-defeating.

What should we make of these angry, defiant, self-organizing publics as they reshape the sphere of interactive communication and affect the landscape of electoral politics? How should we think about this new geography of power with its disorderly voices, opposing interests, and virulent claims? These are only a few of the pressing questions we must consider. Whether or not neo-conservatives are prepared to face it, their defining moment is over. Moises Naim got it right when he wrote that: "concerns about states that were too strong has now given way to concerns about states that are too weak."[5] The single-minded obsession with crushing inflation has been substituted by a much more immediate need to regulate chaotic financial markets following the collapse of the US sub-prime housing market. A new global order is taking shape, and there is very little that Obama can do to restore American hegemony to its former glory.

**When Global Publics Step Up to the Plate**

Today publics are increasingly better informed and better educated about the world around them. Many decades ago the great American scholars Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton wrote about the social impact of the mass media, at that time print, radio, and television. They were deep pessimists about its "narcotizing dysfunctionality" and the information overload that the free flow of information has had on the world of the citizen.[6] Two generations later citizen democracies no longer conform to this stereotype, if indeed they ever did. At the present time massive social change in the structure of power is intimately related to the remarkable evolution of the structure of communication. In previous times the technology of communication was

highly centralized along with the mechanism of governance and public authority. We live in a very different world that is defined by the globalization dynamic in which the technology of communication and structures of public authority are highly decentralized, networked, and driven by a model of social relations rooted in a complex culture of consumption. When this occurs, society becomes destabilized by the intense diffusion of new information technology, new ideas and the anti-democratic top-down command-control model of social organization. Like the rapid and massive introduction of the radio in the early twentieth century and the telegraph decades earlier, new forms of communication and political activism require us to rethink the dynamics of power and the way that digital technology reallocates power and authority downwards from the elite few towards the many.[7]

**The individual in public: reasoning together**

At the heart of every dissent movement is a struggle with elite authority over how societies allocate public and private goods. Establishing the boundary line for rights and responsibilities between private interest and public purpose has always been intensely important, but is particularly so at a time when states, markets, and publics are negotiating the rules of economic integration and political interdependence. Societies need rules, and when political power is no longer contained within the nation state, finding new ways to address transnational issues, from poverty eradication to climate change, becomes a primary focus point for publics. If there are to be clear sites of national authority and a stable international community, the public domain, in which consensus, cooperation, and public discourse figure predominately, has a compelling role to play as one of the coordinates that will "rebundle" identity and territory, in John Ruggie's evocative. words.[8]

Terms such as “the public domain” and “public reason” constitute the new vocabulary of global dissent.[9] But it is this exercise of reason in public for defined social ends that has been pushed to the front of the agenda by new information technologies. These differently constituted discursive arenas should not be confused with the commonly accepted definition of the public sector. Nor should the public domain be limited to the provision of public goods, a staple of modern liberal economic theory. The public domain is a sphere of political agency, first and foremost, in which individuals work together to meet collective needs and overcome complex political and economic challenges. *The public domain, above all else, is a forum in which to be heard*. This is a very different insight on what it means to be in public, but it is hardly radical. This definition of the public can be found in the political writings of Enlightenment philosophers and more recently, in the theoretical contributions of the aptly named and loosely defined recognitionist school of citizenship founded by Hannah Arendt and led today by Charles Taylor, Arjun Appadurai, and David Held.[10]

Recognitionism has become the dominant current in social science for thinking about the public domain. Even the term is new and its ideas reflect the need to transcend narrow academic disciplines such as law, economics, and political science. The irreversible trend toward the growth of democratic rights and the rule of law at the international level has gone hand in hand with a more inclusive approach to pluralism. Through this rights-based discourse the international community empowers governments to take collective responsibility for all their citizens. The urgent need to create pluralistic, diverse societies was born out of the catastrophic world wars of the twentieth century and the Holocaust. The colonial legacy of racism and social

exclusion has been amply documented by anthropologists, historians, and cultural theorists. After 1945 societies began to rededicate themselves to humanist ideals best reflected in the growth of international human rights law. Philosophers have long argued that rights rest on a foundation of tolerance and social recognition. Without recognition of the uniqueness not only of individuals, but also religions, ethnicity, and cultures, there can be no strong system of human rights.

Recognitionism has struck a deep cord with researchers worldwide. Its theoretical contributions range from a deep study of the transcendent ethic of human rights, to the power of public reason as one of the motors of transformative social change. It also presents a powerful explanation of collectively-minded individuals who form discursive communities of choice. The common thread that runs through the recognitionist school is plainly seen in the work of Charles Taylor, who declares that: our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the *mis*recognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves . . . due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people, it is a vital human need.[11]

This penetrating read of recognition draws directly on Hannah Arendt's theorization of the public as the primary site of recognition and the terrain of individual achievement. Hannah Arendt was one of the great postwar theorists of the twentieth century. She believed that a liberal society in a social democratic age was rooted in public transparency and individual actions performed in public.

**The right to have rights: The wide-angled vision of the Recognitionist school**

David Held explored the implications of this vital collective need. His key contribution is a sophisticated theorization of how the transfer of power from national to international levels has shifted the locus of citizenship**.** The cosmopolitan citizen does not need to choose between the community and identity that they were born into and the communities of choice that they belong to outside the traditional boundaries of their states and societies. At any time they may belong in multiple spheres of political interaction maintaining overlapping ideas and identities. Other schools of thought in this vein include the neo-Gramscians such as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri who have gained a large following in cultural studies.[12] Also the Network Society thesis of Manuel Castells has been influential among those scholars who are interested in mapping the shifting sands of structuralism.[13]

Uniquely Arjun Appadurai stands apart as a theorist of misrecognition. He shows how new forms of wealth generated by electronic markets have increased the gap between the rich and the poor. This phenomenon, coupled with fast-moving technologies of communication and highly unstable financial markets, produces anxieties about people's identities. And these anxieties hold new potential for violence.[14]

No matter the school of thought, much attention has been focused on "things public" and the way we think about them because the one thing that all scholars now agree upon is that the public domain will be the defining arena of conflict and progress in the twenty-first century. The modern and multidimensional public domain has expanded beyond the bounds of elites and the control of the political class. As a body of public opinion, the sphere of interactive

communication has lost its social exclusivity. You don't have to attain a high level of education to be part of it. You can be a teenager at a cyber-café, a tenant renter in Bombay, a soccer mom, a boomer retiree, or from any of the inner cities of the world. The 1 billion person e-universe has not yet reached its limits. It keeps on expanding at the blistering pace of more than 10 percent annually. And many of the issues debated and discussed, such as the rights of children, once exclusively the prerogative of the private sphere of the family, are now subject to the public's scrutiny.

In an era of globally connected networks of communicative interaction, the personal is not only political, it is also public. Whereas Habermas thought that the institutions of modern society and government frequently attempted a refeudalization of the public sphere, in which bureaucratic interests trap the public in a clientelistic relationship with public authority, we think that modern communication technologies, which blur the lines between public and private, citizen and client, have widened the access points into public discourse and offer a phenomenal opportunity to democratize the public domain. Over the past three decades, the public domain has become more diverse, conflictual, and internally differentiated. More than ever, it is a sphere where theory, possibility, and the virtual can become real.

The early modern conception of the public was rooted in a complex understanding of what it means to be an individual – a person with many different values, goals, aspirations, and motivations. If liberalism in political theory has given us a robust view of the individual living in society, then economic liberalism offers a one-dimensional caricature of the individual. Economic theory simplifies the concept of the socially embedded individual. The economic

individual is a rational maximizer, a person who sees the world in terms of self-interest, economic utility, and scarcity. For the economic individual, the public does not exist as a significant category. Society is the totality of all individuals and is rooted in market activity. Those goods that individuals are unable to produce are produced through collective effort. These "public goods," such as national defense, are the rationale for a public sector. But there is no room in this view for a notion of public goods and the public good that is separate from economic need and the self-interest of individuals. When Margaret Thatcher pronounced in her famous 1987 interview with *Woman's Own* magazine that "there is no such thing" as society, she was simply reducing liberal economic theory to its foundational assumption.

**The search for theoretical clarity about the modern idea of the public**

Most people intuitively understand a concept of the "public" that sharply contrasts the understanding of Baroness Thatcher and other neo-liberal thinkers. For nineteenth-century liberals and twenty-first-century social conservatives the public stands in contrast to the private world of the family and the everyday experience of work. In the present we tend to define the public in terms of openness and inclusiveness with regards to the actions performed in public spaces as well as the attitudes and values that define "public" values. When we think of the public as an ideal institution, we think of the Keynesian welfare state as a step up from the watchman liberal state. When we think of the kinetic energy of crowds and the revolutionary potential of the public, we think of the *citoyens sans culottes*. When we imagine the capacity of the public to reason about the common good, we think of the American founding fathers who came together to throw off the yoke of colonialism and build the first modern democracy. Public reason, for James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and Alexander Hamilton, was an active process of

thinking about the possibilities for a collective future, not the passive process of public opinion polling that passes for the general will today. All of these are part of what it means to be in public, yet we need to find our way out of the definitional morass that holds us back from thinking of the public today as an interactive environment in which we, as individuals, play a valuable autonomous role just as citizens have repeatedly done in the past.[15]

What is the relationship between the public as an institution, the public as a force for change, and the public as a body capable of thought and reason? Can our knowledge of the public even hold all of these concepts at once? The answers lie in the way we define the noun "public." In common parlance the public refers to space that is owned or supervised by the state, or the people who gather together in such a space. In this usage, people in public have little in common except their wish to experience some aspect of social life together, such as a speech, concert, or political protest. But this is not always what has been meant by "public."

Hannah Arendt reminds us that in classical antiquity the public was a space of appearance and recognition, a space where individuals were recognized and actions could be judged. A person was affirmed in their individuality and recognized for their achievements in public. This idea dovetails nicely with Habermas's idea that public acts of assembly and speech have the power to change the ways in which we are governed and the policies pursued by our governments. Public debate sets the rules by which society is governed. Every controversial action on the part of government is debated first in the public sphere. In this way we can understand the notion of the public to have yet another critical dimension. It is a sphere of uniquely endowed communicative action in which citizens can reach consensus on divisive and complex issues. From these

definitions, we can imagine the public to be the decisive space for recognition as well as the sphere of choice for individuals whose action is informed by the process of reasoning together.

Our common belief of what it means to be in public is not far off this mark, but we have been misled as to the capacity of the public for collective action because our definition of what it means to be an individual has been so thoroughly informed by economic theory. The classical appreciation of individualism emphasized the ability to reason with other people and the capacity to be recognized in public. Before economic liberalism claimed a monopoly on the concept of individualism and Marxism claimed the realm of collective action, classical political theory imagined that individuals need the public and that the public needs individuals. Contemporary citizen practice has reclaimed this older tradition of the individual and the public – a symbiotic relationship that was never properly understood by thinkers in the conservative and radical traditions.

**The great reversal: Devolving power downwards**

So far the "great reversal" consists of *three constant and cyclical phases*. First, in the beginning period of globalization, political and regulatory powers were transferred away from the state and into the command and control structures of global financial corporations. In the early 1980s**,** markets for money were deregulated in the United States and corporate financiers were given new powers to redirect massive flows of capital as they saw fit. The value of derivatives markets and hedge funds skyrocketed into the trillions of dollars. New rights, and the attendant wealth and privilege, were given to the few; countless workers with well-paying jobs were stripped of economic security. In the words of Martin Wolf, the lead economic reporter for the *Financial*

*Times*, "there has been a big income shift from labour to capital – managers can earn vast multiples of employees' wages."[16] The shocking extent to which this power transfer had taken place without the public being the wiser was first revealed by the spectacular collapses of Enron in 2001, Worldcom in 2002, and the Hollinger newspaper empire in 2005.

At the same time, technological change drove the other side of this double movement in which communicative power funnelled downward from the few toward the many. In every historical epoch, the Innisian bias of communication has had the potential to topple hierarchies and facilitate the radical transfer of political power. This does not happen the way that Marx imagined, with workers seizing control of the commanding heights of the economy. Rather it happens because information becomes a currency of exchange, and technological change democratizes access to information. Ironically, Marx was partially right. When the production of information becomes the highest goal of societies, digital technology and the Internet allow anyone to control their own means of information production. New technology encourages opportunities for social action and amplifies the voice of the activist.

Second, just as printed text was instrumental to the birth of modern forms of national identity, so hypertext has given birth to the powerful idea of the global citizen connected to other citizens through the networked public. Print capitalism presaged nationalism, national community, and state sovereignty as Benedict Anderson has shown.[17] The printing press, the map, and the museum constructed the ideal of the nation even as people's lived experience remained firmly rooted in the local with no real identity beyond the village gate. At the time of the French Revolution only 11 percent of the population spoke French. Information moved at a snail's pace

and even as late as the 1860s a quarter of French army recruits only knew patois. The same is true today of the Internet, the satellite, and the news broadcast, which construct the possibility of an idealized global village, a term coined by Marshall McLuhan, even as most people remain local actors.

The dominant feature of globalization has been a slow bleeding of power from the national level, toward regional organizations, international institutions, and non-governmental actors. Information flows are behind this structural transformation, and Manuel Castells demonstrates the way in which new informational processes create a new form of consciousness today in the global "network society."[18] A pessimistic reading of this process is that national sovereignty has been subverted, and the nation-state is being hollowed out by multinational corporations. A more optimistic reading focuses on the way that citizens are developing new forms of engagement to achieve their goals at a time when the old templates of authority and loyalty no longer fit the contours of social life.

Finally, these new citizenship practices have become the motivating ethos for emergent forms of transnational public action. Microactivism is the idea that individuals can make a difference through their actions wherever they live, work, or meet. Micro-activism is entrepreneurial in the Schumpterian sense because it creates new political forms where none existed before; projects are undertaken in an ad hoc way, with individuals rising to take action on an issue that they feel strongly about and disengaging after they have made a contribution. Micro-activists recognize that they can participate in the public sphere without devoting decades to gaining credentials and developing the legitimacy of a specialist. In a very real way, microactivists recognize there can

be no individuality without being in public, and there can be no public without a concrete understanding of others as individuals with their own hopes, dreams, and desires. None of this is to suggest that the act of being in public or the reasoning of micro-activists is necessarily enlightened or progressive. Publics are often just as reactionary as the worst dictators. Activists can be informed and forward-looking, or biased and prejudiced. They can be autonomous, independent-minded, and contrarian. Or they can be moulded, manipulated, and kept on a short leash by elites.

**Diversity is always the rule, but . . .**

In their agential aspect, modern defiant publics are the sum political power of many different people, whose only common goal is the public good. For sure, these people and groups are often working at odds with each other. One only has to think of the Taliban's understanding of the public good in Afghanistan and juxtapose it with the Bush administration's vision of the public good for the Middle East to see that no single group has a grasp on what is good for all of us. In fact, it is the sovereign responsibility of our elected representatives to wisely choose the best policies that will benefit most of us. Even more importantly, we count on them to implement other measures for those who are not helped and are perhaps hurt by the will of the many. Public agency has its clearest expression in democratic governance, but publics are increasingly aware that democracy is quite literally the rule of the majority, and this requires that citizens think carefully about the way their policy choices affect others both at home and abroad. It is necessary to follow the argument to the next step.

In its structural form, the spatial idea of the public is harder to grasp. Is it one domain or many? Public culture is a loosely related collection of local, regional, national, and transnational cultures. They are linked by shared memories and values. They have their own myths, heroes, villains, aspirations, and dreams and are rooted in local histories and lore.[19] Who, beyond the borders of Canada, knows the names of the rebels of Upper and Lower Canada who forced British colonial administration to develop a more responsible form of government? William Lyon Mackenzie and Louis-Hyppolite Lafontaine are public icons in a small sphere, just like thousands of other larger-than-life figures that populate the narratives of public memory.

Clearly, there are many different public domains at the national level, and they are organized and regulated according to the values and norms of their particular cultural context. They are sometimes larger, sometimes smaller. Sometimes they are inclusive and restorative of the social bond by universal education and poverty eradication, and sometimes they are exclusive, ceremonial, and authoritarian to cite only the dangerous use of war chauvinism.[20]

Will progressive states, activists, and social movements succeed in creating an inclusive domain for public interaction beyond the state? Quite possibly, the public domain beyond the state will be an inclusive global zone where an infinite number of individuals and groups will interact with each other despite their competing nationalisms. Yet as Kant foresaw, there is always danger in perpetual struggle towards an idealistic goal. World government would be what he termed ‘soulless despotism’ if it did away with the republics that give boundaries to the space of citizenship. It is not surprising then that the WTO’s erosion of those boundaries and intrusive

presence in domestic standard-setting has awakened a centuries-old fear that larger governance agglomerations will surely undermine rights and disenfranchise the most vulnerable.[21]

The private world of social preferment and global competition has a way of rewarding the fittest at the expense of the rest. The Hayekian vision of the market becomes too intrusive when private actors overtake the public interest and appropriate collective goods for private gain. Even so, national publics have never been simply creatures of the state. They arose in tandem with the sovereignist theories of the nation-state to be sure, but their genesis must be traced back to the rise of public reason, the gradual appearance of the sphere of interactive communication, and the efforts of activists and intellectuals. Nevertheless, modern public authority, with its arsenal of policy tools from monetary to social policy, must protect the social bond from corrosive pressures. It is of the utmost strategic importance that citizens in democratic societies wrap their minds around a single proposition: every society must take self-conscious measures to reinforce its public domain, whether in full-scale or piecemeal fashion.

**Lineages of the modern public**

For twenty-first century discerning publics the strategic questions are: what do we really know about the origins of the public domain, how can it be strengthened, and what lessons can we draw from history? In a rudimentary way the idea of a domain of public concern begins in antiquity. It emerged with the growth of cities, the delivery of early types of public goods, such as defense and food rationing, and the emergence of bureaucracy, the military, and the courts. In Lewis Mumford's words, the public emerged with the introduction of drains, piped drinking water, and water closets into the cities and palaces of Sumer, Crete, and Rome. Cities needed an

infrastructure, roads, harbours, ports, and an administration to collect revenues, maintain order, and organize pageants and spectacles for the masses.[22]

The public was a terrain of strategic planning and engineering accomplishment. It was a practical and ingenious solution to the problems of urban densification in early settlement, much like today. It was at the center of daily life since antiquity where the formal world of politics and private interests were played out. In his book *How to Make Things Public*, Bruno Latour asks "has the time not come to bring the *res* back to the *res publica*?"[23] The stuff of the *res publica* – "public matters", literally translated from the Latin – has never been in doubt. Things public have always been serious business for the engaged citizen because so much is at stake when we set out to develop the domain of the common good.

There is no consensus on the part of scholars about the precise origins of the boundary between public and private. Who first manned the frontier between the good of all and the privilege of the few? In Greek mythology, Prometheus is the great defender of the public; defying the gods to bring fire to humankind. In Judeo- Christian mythology, an angel with a flaming sword guards the gate to Eden and forces humanity to make common cause in suffering. Sociologists and anthropologists offer a more prosaic explanation. For Michael Mann and Charles Tilly the public interest can be traced to the need for increased public goods provision, particularly in times of war and insecurity.[24]

The military historian John Keegan reminds us that it was initially warfare and the aggressive cost of empire and not an incipient belief in welfare that built the public domain in most

European countries. In the nineteenth century an effective fighting army required public authority to improve the health and living standards of the average conscript.[25]13 In England, parliamentary committees discovered that as much as a quarter of conscripts were too malnourished to fight for king and country.

Taxation was also initially a result of military adventurism. Income tax was introduced, in William Gladstone's words, "as an engine of gigantic power for national purpose." The rationale, he argued, was not to tax the undeserving rich, in order to use taxation to help the deserving poor.[26] But his contemporaries knew where the money for empire building actually went; the country had to pay for the glory of going to war, and this entailed massive public spending. In 1820 in the UK, 80 percent of government spending went to the military and soldiering, while only 10 percent was spent on civil society. Sixty years later, non-military spending such as on welfare and public goods had increased to a paltry 20 percent.[27]

In the passage from feudalism to capitalism, if we step back a moment and look at the dynamics of the way the public domain evolved, it is clear that the category of the public evolved through fits and starts. The entanglement of public interest and private markets was constantly in flux, and the emerging boundaries between them were inevitably contested. Earlier on, probably from the sixteenth century, the state was paradoxically a stabilizing force for societies because it reinforced class relations at the same time that it strengthened the very idea of society torn by conflict and held together by the forces of order. It is one of the great ironies of history that the egalitarian and inclusive public emerged from inauspicious beginnings in absolutism and the preening presumption of the new bourgeoisie.

In Europe, for much of the medieval and pre-modern period, there was no political language of the public good and no political culture or institutional space of the public interest in the modern sense. As Louis XIV indulgently stated, "L'État c'est moi." Public offices were bought and sold, and the landed aristocracy and upper classes, the avowed enemies of constitutional guarantees of social rights, relied on the rule of law to suppress communal interests. The modern idea of the liberal public as a freestanding and autonomous sphere began to emerge in Britain only with the closure of the commons in the seventeenth century and would take a century or more to complete its long and complex institutionalization.

Historians have shown how shifting agricultural production patterns ushered in a legal regime of private property and the abolishment of the principle of common land use.[28] The privatization of rural land placed new demographic pressures on cities, but urban public space remained restricted to the moneyed elite and later the emerging professional classes. Jürgen Habermas reminds us, in his magisterial study of the public domain, that anything we would recognize today as a robust public sphere emerged gradually and much later as part of the rule of law and the end of absolutism.[29] Fealty – loyalty to the clan, race, and family and faith – constricted the appearance of the public domain proper until the late eighteenth century. To be in the public was synonymous with bourgeois respectability, the rigid maintenance of law and order, service to the nation, and, above all, strict conformity to society's belief in sobriety and private property. So many groups, classes, and individuals were excluded from the formal world of debate and deliberation. This was hardly an auspicious beginning for our modern belief in the deliberative public sphere as a privileged place of interaction, political freedom, and citizenship.

The public domain took on a life of its own in the nineteenth century as part of the larger political project to enhance the security of elites and form a privileged site for the middle class. On the European continent, desperately needed urban reforms, such as roads and proper sanitation facilities, added public goods as a constituent part of the public in cities – although its autonomy was precarious and the spread of democratic rights of speech and assembly often in question because there was as yet no clearly articulated public interest nor legal idea of the citizen protected against the state and the private interest of property owners.

The classes without property were regarded as dangerous elements to be disciplined by the rule of law and kept in check by police magistrates. Citizenship was rudimentary and not yet a legal category with judicial clout. The authoritative idea and legacy of the French Revolution – that of "rule by the people" – would have momentous consequences on political thinking as it captured the imagination of working people across the globe. By the middle of the nineteenth century, traditional forms of being in public – the market and the fair – had been reinvented on a vast global scale, aptly called World's Fairs. The international public sphere was getting organized by the flows of ideas, people, money, and information.

**Three models of citizenship beyond the state**

It used to be that globalization was measured by the exponential growth of world trade and the technological leap of the digital revolution. In a century or more, historians will also measure twenty-first century interdependence by the metrics of the Great Reversal. Hierarchical authority, centralization, and what Inglehart refers to as "bigness" are under increasing strain, burdened by

the mistrust of the multitude. These sentinels of extreme economism "have reached a point of diminishing effectiveness and diminishing acceptability."

The public shift is underlined by a move away from traditional state authority and the new radical powers of the market – what Inglehart calls a shift from "scarcity values" to "security values." [30] Even so, contemporary public life is an entanglement of public and private interests. The strategic notion of the public domain as a critical space of ideational competition and collective action requires, above all, greater clarification and a more precise benchmarking of its effect upon democratic public life.

The era of global monetarism has lasted only half as long as the golden age of the Keynesian welfare state. Its fate was sealed when global publics lost confidence in elites who promised that stringency and self-help would release the market from its bonds and create unprecedented prosperity. Transnational networks rooted in the local open the possibility of new varieties of citizenship by enhancing the importance of recognition. They reveal the public as a sphere of unplanned encounter, fluid sociability among strangers, and multi-stranded public life.[31] For the foreseeable future, there are three divergent and often competing models of citizenship on offer in the global realm.

The first is the Anglo-Republican model of citizen participation. It has been aggressively promoted by the US trade representative and British and American regulators who believe that the global citizen is essentially an Anglo-American prototype of the international entrepreneur. His basic rights are guaranteed by his national passport and his standing in a national

community. The other substantive entitlements he enjoys are rooted in his economic rights and the WTO's regulatory model of global governance that Michael Trebilcock has termed "negative integration."[32] Negative integration is a form of economic governance that outlines the actions that economic actors may not take. It focuses on the "thou shalt not" side of governance and remains silent about the obligation owed by economic actors to the international system. Its minimalist approach to rule making leaves a very small window of opportunity for developing substantively inclusive institutions beyond the state.

Proponents of this form of citizenship had hoped that the WTO would become a sort of economic constitution for the world. It would fulfill the same basic role that the American constitution did for the thirteen original colonies – namely laying out the basic rules for a free-market economy. Thinkers in this vein tend to believe that citizenship beyond the state can only be guaranteed by a global constitution; until such a time as the world is ready for a common set of rules, state power must stand in the place of a constitutional order. Nothing more clearly illustrates this perspective than the current issue of reform at the WTO. Its architects, rather than creating a trade organization that would deal with the substance of trade challenges, such as labor standards, created an institution that engages only with narrow legalistic issues and develops the barest framework necessary for a stable order.

Proponents of this citizenship model assume, like James Madison and the rest of the American founding fathers, that the countervailing power of liberal economic actors is the only guarantor of political freedom. The global provision of public goods, intergenerational responsibility for the environment, and the eradication of extreme poverty and illiteracy remain off its radar screen

because these are challenges faced by the poor and the default template of the global citizen is a person of economic means. This model has a very weak redistributional impulse because it thrives on status quo stability, rather than innovation and the championship of change. In this worldview, the citizen is the working out of a Tocquevillian figure of voluntary association and rational individualism; he is an individual driven by economic self-interest, not collective need.

The second model of citizenship beyond the state is that which takes as its basis the European-Federalist model of governance integration. In essence, the European model advocates the construction of a new level of political authority, formally rooted in state sovereignty, and based loosely on a federal model of governance that is qualitatively more similar to the national governments of Canada and Germany than the United States, because they have very strong subnational governments which are bound together by a high-wage, high-tax, high-skill approach to citizenship and economic management. They believe that federal community is rooted in investment in the social bond. This model of a social market rests on the assumption that political integration, what experts call 'positive political integration', creates new linkages between people and territories, and these provide a stage upon which citizens may exercise their political rights. The different levels of federal authority – regional, subnational, national, and maybe even global – guarantee citizenship rights through an institutional arrangement of judicial and administrative checks and balances and international public law.

This is a progressive and analytically audacious vision of global citizenship, and its architects are convinced that it can be broadened to include a number of developing countries. In the European- Federalist model, the complex interdependencies of the market need to be managed,

and market relations need to be rendered open and visible just as the activities of government bureaucracies need to be scrutinized and made transparent. It advocates a centralization of political authority that makes it possible to guarantee certain rights through governmental machinery located in Brussels, rather than London, Paris, Berlin, or Prague.

This model is intensely process-driven, and corporatist consultation is the primary mechanism by which governance change takes place.[33] It is a model in which everyone involved has a say in the outcomes, in theory, but experts point out that the flaw in European process-driven integration is that powerful business elites dominate the administrative and legislative system. Like the Anglo-Republican model, access to economic resources tend to play a significant role in who gets what, and the citizen is understood to operate in an arena of public choice.

The biggest difference between the two models is that the European citizen is far-sighted enough to see that political integration is a better guarantor of rights than is the power of the state on its own because state power has a way of waxing and waning, as the history of Europe has shown. The clearest expression of the European-Federalist model of citizenship is public space that is highly contested and social activists who are constantly multiplying their efforts to claim a larger share of federal resources for their public-interest projects. They are persistently pushing the envelope to build public domain networks from below.

The third model of citizenship that is being developed and articulated is the Developmental model of public citizenship. This template of the public is embedded in the Arendtian principle of the right to have rights. Citizenship rights are guaranteed for every person by every person;

citizenship is not earned or deserved because of who you are, what you possess, or your status as a smart economic actor but instead is bestowed by virtue of common humanity. Political philosophers and policy elites alike are wary of the implications of this form of citizenship because it requires a radical rethinking of what it means to recognize another person in public, and it sets a high bar for the social responsibilities required of all of us. It would require a massive global redistribution of wealth because much of the global north's economic muscle comes from an inequitable relationship to developing countries, which have been left in a dependent position of low value-added production and service provision.

This model of citizenship is not yet fully defined or articulated and is a work in progress. But it is being developed nevertheless persistently and patiently in piecemeal fashion in the thickening bed of international institutions that are clustered around the United Nations. The developmental public is popular in the global south, where there is little prospect for a European Union style of integration because economies are not stable enough, and there are too few shared values to justify such an intrusive form of political integration. Many countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia have been skeptical of the Anglo-Republican model of citizenship rooted in economic integration. Liberal citizenship, idealized in American political life, based on the self-starting individual is far removed from the reality of the street, the bazaar, or even the process of nation building – all of which encompass what it means to be in public in the global south.

Publics in the global south need a vocabulary and vision for protecting and expanding the public domain. They need to reconcile many different definitions of the public good and interests held in common.[34] The WTO negotiations have proven conclusively that the Anglo-Republican form

of citizenship is actually corrosive for fragile and emergent forms of citizenship in the global south because it is only guaranteed by the hard power of economic superiority. The Anglo-Republican belief that the wealth of the few guarantees the rights of the many sticks in the throat of small nations who depend on American markets for their global trade, but have little say in the way that the multilateral trading system operates.

In 2000 the United Nations recognized the pressing importance of putting in place an institutional frame to address the negative externalities of economic globalization. The Millennium Development Goals are a prime example of the way in which the Developmental public builds support and cements its legitimacy amongst its many members.[35] It is well recognized by neo-conservatives and liberal reformers alike that the United Nations system is troubled and faces large hurdles in the near future. Its legitimacy rests on the fact that it is by far the most inclusive system ever created at the global level. This leaves it vulnerable from within to politicians who would undermine it, whether they are from the Bush administration or the regime of Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Also, its outdated processes leave it vulnerable to insider cronyism because too few states outside the G8 in the north and G24 in the south have actually mastered its diplomatic and bureaucratic complexities. But these are not reasons to weaken it further. Rather, our concern with higher order issues of institutional effectiveness suggests that the United Nations experiment has been a partial success. The job now is to retool and strengthen the mechanisms of democratic participation to make them more responsible, accountable, and transparent.

The main drawback of this model is that it rests exclusively on a Westphalian assumption of state sovereignty and therefore accords only states the prestige of full citizenship. This model has not yet fully developed an understanding of global citizenship that extends to the individual, although the growth and evolution of human rights law and the International Criminal Court are transformative movements in the right direction. The strength of this model draws from the fact that it is based on the formal equality of all nations and gives their publics equal status under international law.

Pluralism and diversity are necessary prerequisites to the development of a public domain that is both open and inclusive at the global level. Addressing these challenges is part of the normal development process that slows the emergence of a sphere of global publicness. To remove them is to accelerate its progress.

**A Habermasian or Foucaultian public sphere?**

The reallocation of power that comes with technological change is hardly a new phenomenon, but its dynamics are of singular importance to grasp. Today, the digital communications revolution is also changing the social landscape, with the power to free millions of people from the marginalization that comes from having no voice in global affairs. These three major transfers of power, from market to state, from men to women, and from transnational elites to the global citizen, share a common theme. They have been the great levellers of class relations in the twentieth century and have redefined the power dynamics between agency and structure. None of this has occurred in the way that Marxians had hoped for. Nor does this vision conform to Foucault's complex vision of society completely dominated by disciplinary neo-liberalism. The

post-structural lens has not been able to account for vibrant powerful and ultimately effective defiant global publics and the unprecedented reach of the global citizen.

Habermas's idea was that citizens can change state policy through acts of assembly. "No one, as Habermas says so eloquently, can be brought to apply the results of a decision if he has not participated in the discussion that led to the decision."[36] Before the Internet era, he thought that this had to happen through face-to-face interaction. Today, digital technology has facilitated this process in a radical and decentralized way, and communities of unprecedented influence and reach are formed online. The Washington Consensus prioritized system and structure as the key drivers of public policy; Internet, satellite communications, cellular phones, text messaging, and even radio and television have turned conventional wisdom on its head. The global cultural economy is instrumental in shaping the fully realized citizen, rooted in the local, but deeply interested in, and able to influence, global issues and events by forming active communities of choice rather than disinterested communities of fate.

In a post-9/11 world, the margin is filling up once again with the multitudes from the global south, and everywhere the political centre is crowded with articulate and angry sceptics and contrarians. Micro-activism has exploded as a global phenomenon of our age in the Middle East and the list of what is shared in common is no longer shrinking. The pessimism of the neo-liberal crisis is challenged by the skepticism of dissenting publics and rebellious activists. The mass mobilization in Egypt and Tunisa would not be possible without Twitter and Facebook. In its place grows the cautious optimism of reasonable people who have begun to define for themselves the limits of globalization and the steps required to protect the social bond from the tyranny of markets.

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