

GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY, GLOBALIZATION AND NATION-STATE

- Kameshwar Choudhary
(E-mail: kc@irma.ac.in)

Introduction

There is witnessed a growing popularity and visibility of the global civil society (GCS) in the recent years. In 2003, there was observed an unprecedented global popular mobilization/demonstration in about 800 cities across the world against the war in Iraq. In this context, the *New York Times* described global civil society as ‘the second superpower’ (Tyler cited in Anheier et al. 2003:3). This was possibly the largest one-day protest in history. But this anti-war protest failed. The USA and UK started and continued the unilateral war against Iraq. This probably reflects that the GCS does not yet have much substance, though it is very much a fact in appearance.

GCS is generally perceived as following a ‘morally good mission’. But there are also critical questions being raised regarding GCS in the recent times. There are, in fact, observed contrasting views about GCS in the growing literature on the subject. Drawing on the existing literature, this paper presents a critical view on GCS against the backdrop of globalization with a focus on the implications for the nation-state in the developing countries in particular, and the world in general. The paper is divided into five parts. First, it briefly discusses the issue of conceptualization of GCS. Second, it examines the question of linkages between GCS and globalization. Third, it throws light on the relation between GCS and the nation-state. Four, it briefly touches upon the role of GCS with reference to two noted international agencies, viz. the World Bank and the United Nations. Five, it proposes an alternative schema of categorization of GCS from a perspective of societal transformation. Finally, there are certain concluding remarks in the last section.

1. Definition/ Conceptualization of GCS

There is noted lack of clarity in conceptualization and theorization of GCS (Boli 2001). Rupert Taylor observes that the term GCS has emerged as ‘a kind of catchall term for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or social movements, of all shapes and sizes, operating in the international realm’ (2002:339). *The Economist*, for instances, used the term to refer to a diverse and diffuse range of actors, campaigns, and events such as NGOs and citizen groups and the battle at Seattle. Also, GCS is said to be manifested in the ever-increasing number of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). There is recorded a rapid increase in the number and activities of such organizations in the last decade. For instance, the number of INGOs is found to have increased from about 6,000 in 1990 to over 25,000 in 2002 (Anheier et al. 2003). There is announced a veritable ‘global associational revolution’ underway as manifested in a massive upsurge of organized private, voluntary activity in all corners of the world (Salamon et al 1999:4).

This ‘associational revolution’ is situated in the contemporary context of the widespread crisis/retreat of the state, collapse of state socialism, questioning of the ‘neoliberal consensus’ referred to as ‘Washington consensus’, and continuing/aggravating environmental degradation and social deprivation/exclusion. The state/political response to this crisis in the West has emerged in the form of Tony Blair’s ‘Third Way’ in U.K., Gerhard Schroder’s ‘New Middle’ in Germany, and Lionel Jospin’s ‘Yes to a market economy, no to a market society’ in France. Moreover, the civil society organizations have emerged as “strategically important participants in this search for a ‘middle way’ between sole reliance on the state that now seems to be increasingly underway” (Salamon et al 1999:5).

In recent years, there is underscored the existence and rapid growth of a broad range of social institutions that operate outside the domain of the state and the market. Different terms have been used referring to them – nonprofit, voluntary, civil society, third sector, or independent sector. In this category are placed a ‘bewildering array of entities’. In spite of wide diversity, however, they share some common features. The Johns Hopkins Centre project on GCS identifies the main common features of civil society. According to this project report,

these features are: (i) Organizations (i.e. have an institutional presence and structure), (ii) Private (i.e. institutionally separate from the state), (iii) Not profit (no profit returns to their managers or owners), (iv) Self-governing (control their own affairs), and v) Voluntary (membership and contribution of time/money) (Salamon et al 1999:3-4).

Further, the London School of Economics (LSE) published GCS Yearbook 2001, edited by Helmut Anheier et al.(2001), has listed several definitions of GCS. First, the Yearbook 2001 offers a working definition of GCS as ‘an emerging sphere of ideas, values, institutions, organizations, networks, and individuals located between the confines of the family, the state and the market and operating beyond the confines of national societies, polities, and economies’. The final definition it provides is that GCS is ‘a set of public interactions which involve but not exclusively self organized groups autonomous from the state, market and family that operate or are linked across state territorial borders’. It is observed that this definition takes a formal spatial approach to GCS and ignores the substantive content part of civil society, viz., the politico-ideological/moral dimensions (for example - status quo, reform/structural change). The space included in the definition is two-fold i.e. societal and physical/geographical. The former would refer to the form (‘public’/‘group’ nature) of interactions and the domain of GCS, i.e., autonomous from the state, market and family. The latter refers to the geographical space, i.e., linkages across national/state borders. The missing (content) part of interactions relate to ignoring the complex and conflictual nature of the GCS which makes it a weaker force in the face of other contending global institutions representing the state and private business/corporate/market forces. This lacunae needs to be addressed in further refining the definition/conceptualization of GCS.

It is understandable that the LSE 2001 definition, as stated in the report, is meant to ‘serve operational purposes only’. Helmut Anheier et al. opine that ‘the normative content is too contested to be able to form the basis for any oprationalization of the concept’ (GCS 2001:21). Then why, according to Munck, do the same authors holds at the same time that GCS is ‘essentially a normative concept’? Munck adds, if GCS is (normatively) viewed, for instance, as part of a ‘civilizing process’, then definitions could also be normative. Further, the LSE team treats GCS as ‘a shared discursive framework’ which provides a common language to both

opponents and advocates of global capitalism. Munck (2002:351) rightly questions, 'Does everyone really share this common discursive terrain?' The GCS concept thus seems to 'slide between the descriptive, analytical, and normative terrains' (ibid). But Munck does not think that GCS can be conceived as a unitary terrain. He considers a perspective of 'radical indeterminacy' to be useful that would stress the 'very real role of struggle in shaping the political impact of various elements within what is currently viewed as GCS' (ibid:351).

Further, Taylor finds the domain of GCS 'a complex multifaceted one' which has been 'barely grasped by social scientific inquiry'. Current research is said to have thrown little light on 'what is best seen as an active and ever-emerging multiorganizational field marked by innovative network forms and transformative purpose' (2002:341). GCS is a global phenomenon. Hence, he suggests a 'global approach' to be adopted in its study. This would require 'moving beyond state-centric perspectives' and focus on the intrinsic meaning of the experiences of actors in this field as a central part of analysis. This multiorganizational field would include organizations of both types, i.e., those which tend to operate within the INGO and nation-state system (involved in complex multilateralism), and those movements (antineoliberal and anticorporate) involving direct action like street protest (Taylor 2002: 344).

2. GCS and Globalization

Globalization is broadly viewed as a contemporary process of increasing intense interconnectedness/interactions/inter-dependence/integration across borders/state and communities (local/national) in different spheres of human life - economic/financial, technological, social, cultural, and political. This process, it is stated, is leading to the emergence of 'one world', a global society. Immanuel Wallerstein (1984) locates the driving force/cause of this in the central nature of the 'capitalist world economy'. James Rosenau (1990) considers the new technology (ICT) as the transformative factor that has promoted the interdependence of local, national and international communities. But another set of scholars does not accept this mono-causal explanation of globalization. R. Robertson (1990), for instance, sees the trajectories of globalization in a multi-dimensional fashion. Anthony Giddens (1990) locates the logic of globalization as having interlocking 'institutional dimensions'. The

main elements here are capitalism, the inter-state system, militarism and industrialism. Each one of these has a separate role in the creation of the global-world. Moreover, all these dimensions have interactions and intersections in the multi-causal process of globalization. Robertson notes the growth of growing global consciousness, i.e., the sense of a common community of humankind in the current times.

Like globalization, the emergence of GCS also is a recent global phenomenon. It is hypothesized that there is a mutual interaction between GCS and globalization. Khagram (2000) opines that GCS is an aspect of globalization. Moreover, GCS contributes to globalization. Further, an important proposition formulated by the LSE team of Anheier et al (2001) is that 'global civil society both feeds on and reacts to globalization'. Globalization provides the foundation for GCS. This seems to be reflected in a 'strong and positive correlation' between 'clusters of globalization' and 'clusters of GCS'. The high concentration of GCS (e.g. secretariats of INGOs, parallel summits) is found in north-Western Europe which is also high on globalization in terms of, for example, presence of TNCs, Internet usage, importance of trade and foreign investment. It is observed that GCS also reacts to globalization, especially to the negative consequences of the expansion of global capitalism and interconnectedness. Globalization is not found to be an even process. It has yielded benefits to some and caused deprivations and exclusion of others. The victims of globalization have reacted in an increasingly organized manner which is reflected in the growing strength and activities of GCS. The victims in the South are linking up with those in the North. This has created a new kind of solidarity movement and new form of activism. These new movements aim at revitalizing Southern and Northern self-determination through joint struggle against the disempowerment and social injustice caused by unbridled global capitalism (Anheier et al 2001). In addition, NGOs/CSOs have been given representation at several multilateral agencies, like the World Bank to express the voice of the marginalized.

It needs to be noted that GCS comprises diverse set of organizations, individuals, and ideologies. It does not take an unified/single stand on globalization. Its responses are widely varied that have been classified into different categories. In 2001, Anheier et al. placed GCS position on globalization into four main categories – Supporters, Rejectionists, Reformists and

Alternatives (see Table 1). The supporters are those groups and individuals in GCS, who advocate globalization and are enthusiastic about it. They are in favour of the expansion of global capitalism and interconnectedness or global rule of law (global governance) and global consciousness. They are allies of transnational business, and also of governments that want globalization to move ahead. This category also includes the advocates of ‘just wars for human rights’ and the enthusiasts for new technology.

GCS also has those who are called rejectionists, i.e., those who reject globalization and want to return to a world of nation-states. The rejectionists are of different types in terms of politico-ideological perspectives. It has the ‘new right’ who support global capitalism but oppose open border and a global rule of law. There are leftists here who are opposed to global capitalism, but do not oppose the spread of global rule of law (global governance of a just variety). Moreover, there are traditional leftist anti-colonial movements or communists who oppose infringement of state sovereignty. This category of GCS also comprises nationalists and even religious fundamentalists. They consider globalization harmful and hence oppose it with all their might. Use of the term ‘transformative’ for the religious fundamentalists is rejected because they look back backwards to an idealized version of the past rather than transformation into something new (Anheier et al 2001).

Further, the ‘reformists’ are said to be the largest segment of GCS. They welcome the spread of global capitalism and global connectedness which is considered potentially beneficial to all. But at the same time, they feel the need to ‘civilize’ the process of globalization – give it a ‘human face’. So, they want reform of international/multilateral economic institutions, and a global rule of law. They are in favour of greater social justice and a fair and participatory procedure in case of new technologies. Two sub-groups are identified under this category. These are ‘incrementalists’ who favour a slow and gradual reform, and ‘radicals’ who demand bigger and more substantive change. But Pianta suggests the need for making further distinction between reformists and radicals.

Table 1: Positions on Globalization revisited

Globalization of (domain)	(1) Supporters	(2) Regressives	(3) Reformers	(4) Rejectionists
i) Economy	<u>For:</u> As part of economic liberalism. e.g. The Economist, Thomas Friedman	<u>Mixed:</u> If beneficial to own country or group and leading stakeholders. e.g. French farmers: British fuel protest; US Admn.	<u>Mixed:</u> If leading to greater social equity. e.g. ATTAC; Fair trade cooperatives; Novib; Jubilee 2000	<u>Against:</u> Greater protection of national economies needed. e.g. 50 Years is Enough; Walden Bello; Ralph Nader
ii) Technology	<u>For :</u> As part of open competition for technological innovation. e.g. gene and plant technologists	<u>Mixed:</u> For in economic terms and for military and security purposes, against for social or environmental purposes. e.g. private sector scientists and business associations	<u>Mixed:</u> If beneficial to broader groups and the marginalized; e.g. Treatment Action Campaign; Copyleft	<u>Against:</u> Technology threatens local communities and traditional ways of life. e.g. Friends of the Earth; Aids sceptics; Vandana Shiva
iii) Law	<u>For :</u> With emphasis on international commercial law and human rights legislation; role for International Criminal Court	<u>Against:</u> For if facilitating private investment and trade but generally against. Emphasis on strengthening national laws on property rights and domestic democracy; no role for International Criminal Court. e.g. anti-Kyoto lobby	<u>For:</u> Building global rule of law not solely dependent on sovereign states. Pronounced role for International Criminal Court. e.g. Amnesty; Women's Caucus for Gender Justice	<u>Against:</u> Undermines national sovereignty and democracy. e.g. Euro-sceptics (left & right); anti-humanitarian intervention (left & right) such as Noam Chomsky, Samuel Huntington
iv) People	<u>For :</u> Open border policy, e.g.,The Economist	<u>Mixed:</u> For immigration for economic and domestic needs but against asylum seekers, cultures and ethnicities	<u>For:</u> Open policy. e.g. Genoa Social Forum ; European Council on Refugees and Exiles	<u>Against:</u> Closed border policy. e.g. European anti-immigrant parties; Australian government

Source: Anheier et al. GCS Yearbook 2003.

The last category of GCS identified by Anheier et al, in 2001 report, is called the 'alternatives'. This group does not oppose globalization, but does not support either. Rather, it prefers to opt out and adopts its own course of action independent of government, international institutions and TNCs. Their main aim is to develop their own way of life and create their own space without any kind of outside interference. This is reflected, for instance, in their preference for growing and eating organic food, opposition to brand names, efforts to reclaim public space, capitalism in local money schemes, and non-military 'civil society interventions' in conflicts. From this one may even try to understand GCS as a 'debate about the future direction of globalization and perhaps humankind itself' (Anheier et al 2001).

It is found that the LSE yearbook 2003 revisits the categorization of GCS. It observes that there are very few 'out and out' Supporters or Rejectionists. That is, there are very few GCS actors who support or oppose all forms of globalization (trade, finance, migration, law, and politics). The dominant responses to globalization are rather mixed. Other two categories are revisited and also is added a new category called 'regressive globalizers'. The new category represents the voice of individuals, groups, firms, or even governments that support globalization when it serves their particular interests irrespective of concern for negative consequences for others. They view the world as a zero-sum game and their attempt is to maximize the benefit of the few whom they represent at the cost of the welfare of many, about which they are indifferent. In contrast, Reformers (or redistributive globalizers) support 'civilizing' or 'humanizing' globalization, i.e. they favour those aspects of globalization that yield benefits to many. Regressive globalizers take a 'somewhat contradictory' policy position between Supporters and Rejectionists. They favour globalization if it strengthens their national positions and/or if there is scope for benefits to the key political stakeholders, electoral groups, or particular communities. They oppose it if this process threatens the interests of stakeholder institutions particularly national sovereignty and powerful lobby/ethnic/ religious groups (Anheier et al 2003:5-7). The moot point here is that GCS is multifaceted in nature. Its internal divisions are evident even in case of the recent growth of social forums and the anti-war movement. For instance, the activists involved in these new movements are divided between Rejectionists and Reformers (ibid:7).

Thus, we observe that the GCS categorization done by LSE team in 2003 retains three categories of 2001, adds a new category called ‘regressives,’ and somehow tries to accommodate/merge the 2001 category called alternatives in the category of rejectionists. The new category ‘regressives’ seems to be partly drawn from the 2001 category of rejectionists. On the whole the categorization still remains vague, far from clear, to a large extent.

Further, from the perspective of the role played and approach and strategy adopted, GCS yearbook 2003 places the varied manifestations of GCS into four types in the triad of market, state/governance and society (see Table 2). These types/segments of GCS include the following:

i) There is a segment of GCS which works for promoting new public management. To this category belong the professionalised components of GCS, NGOs and INGOs. They operate as sub-contractors to develop robust national and IGO (intergovernmental organizations) policy-making. The broad agenda here is the modernization of welfare states currently undertaken in many countries, including the most developed market-economies. This is being done through policy prescriptions by multilaterals like the World Bank, IMF and European Union. In fact, this has serious effects on the rudimentary social welfare systems in developing/transition economy/countries under the packages like the structural adjustment programme (SAP). Here, NGOs are viewed as strategic components of a third/middle way between market-centred and state-centred policies. The strategy is to take advantage of the comparative efficiency of NPOs through arrangements like public-private partnerships, competitive bidding, and contracting ‘out’ under the process of privatization.

In search of finding a balance between state-led and market-led approaches, the new public management paradigm uses NGOs as service providers and instruments of privatisation. NGOs are cast essentially in a sub-contracting role at the international level. No wonder, service provisioning is found to be the fastest growing area of INGO activities over last one decade. NGOs have emerged, at both international and national levels, as instruments to reform the welfare state. The guiding principle here is ‘less government = less bureaucracy = more flexibility = greater efficiency’ (Kettle cited in Anheier et al. 2003:8). This approach is typical of the Supporters and Reformers of globalization. This is viewed as cooption (Chandhoke 2002)

Table 2: Manifestations of Global Civil Society

Forms	Main actor	Of primary interest to	Example
i) <u>New Public Management:</u> Civil society organizations as sub-contractors to robust national and IGO policy-making	NGOs and devolved government	Supporters and Reformers	Oxfam, World Vision, Save the Children
ii) <u>Corporatization:</u> Civil society organizations partnering with companies	NGOs and TNCs	Supporters and Reformers	Nike and GreenPeace, Starbucks and World Wildlife Fund
iii) <u>Social capital or self-organization:</u> Civil society building trust through networking	NGOs and associations; alternatives	Reformers, Rejectionists, Regressives	Community building organizations, faith-based communities
iv) <u>Activism:</u> Civil society monitoring and challenging power-holders	Movements, transnational civic networks	Reformers and Rejectionists	Global Witness, Corporate Watch, Social Forums

Source: Anheier et al. GCS Yearbook 2003.

of GCS by the forces of globalization. Cooption takes different forms. In case of failed states, NGOs are artificially created to provide support. In other cases, NGOs are supported by international institutions, and later picked up for consultation rounds. This is done to gain some degree of legitimacy for the institution in question (K. Anderson cited in Anheier et al. 2003:8). This kind of exercise has gained increasing ground in recent years with all major multilateral (development) agencies, such as, the World Bank and UNO. Certain noted examples of INGOs, for instance, in this category include Oxfam, World Vision, and Save The Children.

ii) Another set of GCS manifestation has increasing and more frequent corporate facets. This is viewed as 'corporatization' of NGOs and also expansion of business into local and global civil society. Under the social responsibility programmes, corporates do offer, jointly with nonprofits, services like health care, child care, and other community services that were earlier in the domain of government. Here, nonprofits increasingly enter into partnerships with business. They also professionalize and increasingly follow corporate strategies. In the current context of neoliberal reforms and 'lean states', corporates are expected to shoulder greater responsibility for caring about society even in developed market economies. There is observed more of partnerships between global business TNCs and INGOs such as GreenPeace, World Wildlife Fund, World Vision, Oxfam etc. NPOs of this type are engaged in addressing global problems like environmental degradation, malnutrition, low skills and education levels. They are also involved in tackling local issues in 'failed' states and regions of civil strife and conflict. Their concern is to address 'bads' (negative externalities) of business and provide public goods, besides service delivery to company employees and their communities. This corporatization approach type GCS work as Supporters and Reformers of globalization.

iii) Third manifestation/segment of GCS identified by Anheier et al (2003) is the 'social capital or self organization' type. Here the focus is not as much on management. The emphasis is given on building trust and cohesion. Self-organization of civil society across borders promotes social cohesion within transnational communities. The concern is to build a social infrastructure of dense networks of face-to-face relationships that crosscut prevailing social cleavages of race, ethnicity, class, gender. It is held that creation of a 'strong and vibrant civil society' would underpin strong and responsive democratic government. Repeated trust-building

would subsequently get generalized to other arenas like business or politics. So, creation of social capital is considered ‘good for society and good for economic development’ (Anheier et al 2003: 9). The social capital approach is generally associated with the Supporters of globalization, as the creation of social capital is regarded as ‘good for political stability and international business’.

But there is noticed another side i.e. the ‘dark side of social capital,’ as labelled by Putzel. Associated with this are said to be the Regressives, who are also engaged in building trust and bonding among transnational religious or ethnic groups. Thus, it is found that the main actors of social capital segment include NGOs, associations and ‘alternatives’. Social capital is of primary interest to Reformers, Rejectionists as well as Regressives. The example of this type in the GCS consists of community building organizations as well as faith-based communities.

In 2003 GCS Yearbook (2003:10), Alternatives is considered ‘a form of global civil society organization than a position’ on globalization. It refers to those who adopt an alternative way of living/lifestyle – local barter schemes or ecologically responsible communities. This can include a Reformer (ecological experiment), Rejectionist (protecting the local), or Regressive (orthodox religious communities).

iv) The Activist type manifestation of GCS is witnessed in the actors like social movements, transnational civic networks, and social forums. They are said to represent a source of dissent, challenge, and innovation, and thus work as a countervailing force to government and the corporate sector. They operate as watchdog (social, economic, political) to keep both market and state in check. But the activist segment of GCS also reflects diversity and pluralism. This category includes Rejectionists and Reformers, as well as Regressives to the extent of activism of religious and nationalist militants groups.

Finally, Anheier et al (2003:10) put these four segments (approaches) of GCS into two broad categories. The first two approaches are said to be ‘more top-down and professional’, and the second two approaches as ‘more bottom up’. The first two are considered to be important in providing the infrastructure of GCS, and the other two in mobilising impetus and agenda-setting

component of GCS. So, this broad categorization emerges as being formal and spatial (top and bottom).

Further, the whole analysis of GCS by the LSE team seems to reflect certain Eurocentric affection in terms of implicitly projecting the modern secular capitalist globalizing Euro-American model of development. Religious and nationalist segment of GCS is portrayed in negative light, though discrimination and oppression on these bases is an order of the day. The analysis provided in the yearbook remains descriptive and analytical. It largely ignores the contradictory and incompatible nature of several major actors inhabiting GCS. On the whole, GCS seem to be treated as a space for complementarity of all the actors, except Regressives. But overlooking serious internal contradictions of GCS makes the analysis very weak in terms of identifying its transformative potential and the strategy for the same.

3. GCS and Nation-State

There is an intense debate on the nature and fate of the nation-state in the current era of globalization. There are different sets of widely divergent views in this regard. It is held that there is happening: i) (a trend towards) end of nation-state; ii) erosion/weakening of nation-state; iii) forced retreat of the welfare state, not the state as such; iv) adaptation/mutation of nation-state to neoliberal globalization; v) imperialism of the developed capitalist state over the rest; vi) neither weakening nor end of nation-state; and vii) the state is both victim and facilitator of globalization.

Globalization is increasingly viewed as a multi-dimensional process. It is also treated as a part of the historical process of multi-faceted modernity and considered an extension of the process of modernity (Giddens 1990). Increasing intense interactions/interconnections across borders has profound implications in terms of reorganising of space and time in social life. Development of global networks of production, exchange and decision making result into extraction of macro and micro level socio-economic decision making from local/national interests. There is a disembedding of social relations with the growth of global society (ibid).

It is opined that the individual nation-state has been usurped by the modern global nation-state (Newman 1998). State autonomy is threatened with the international regime imposing tighter constraints over the nation-state to pursue independent policies within its domestic affairs. A reduction in the autonomy of nation-state is evident in global environmental activism and policy making, and imposition of SAP in several third world countries by the multilaterals. In case of crisis-struck and weaker third world countries, the nation-state has acquired an image of an 'immobilised institution'. 'The nation-state seem like a local authority governed by globally structured regional and national governments' (Newman 1998). However, this does not seem to be true of the developed powerful nation-states.

It is already noted that GCS is a global phenomenon like the process of globalization. As in case of globalization, the issue here is whether the rising strength of GCS is leading to the end or weakening/retreat or adaptation/mutation or neither weakening nor end of nation state; or GCS is facilitating imperialism of the developed capitalist state over the rest; or GCS is both a victim and facilitator of nation-state. Given the diverse nature of GCS, it can be stated that different segments of GCS have, directly or indirectly, different implications for the nation-state. Certain segments of GCS would lead to the end of nation-state, certain others to its weakening/adaptation/mutation, still others to neither its end nor weakening but its strengthening.

The spatial boundaries of GCS are different from the nation-state. It operates in 'political spaces other than those bound by the parameters of the nation-state system'. This space is inhabited by networks of individuals, groups, and organizations which are linked together, though situated in separate physical locations, for particular social and political objectives. With increasing global interconnectedness, they have moved away from national politics, towards the domain of global politics. This is because many issues today have acquired universal dimension and appeal, and so have a universal moralistic stance. Several issues like environmental degradation could be handled only at global level.

There are different types of global institutions. Newman (1998) includes in this category: International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs), MNCs/TNCs, and an increasing number

of International Regimes (Intergovernment multilaterals, for instance). Each of these has its own agenda and ideology. Only INGOs are generally regarded as part of GCS as the other two represent for profit business and the nation-state.

Larger INGOs (like Oxfam and Amnesty International) are found to operate internationally at five levels (Newman 1998). This is done by creating an international constituency for national issues, by acting jointly with other INGOs, by working with national branches and NGOs; through regional branches, and via a network of supportive organizations – individuals and even governments. Through coordinated activities, INGOs influence internal political relations between states. They are able to bypass national governments and operate directly in world politics. They are able to collect and publish data and use the mass media for raising awareness on issues at national and international levels. They also launch campaigns on their own to help change the global agenda. INGO members are able to bypass their own governments and participate directly in global politics and debates. ‘In this way, governments lose their traditional role as the sole external representatives of those they govern and this weakens in part their claim to legitimacy’ (ibid).

Further, GCS is said to have emerged as ‘structural equivalents’ of the inter-state institutions of the International Regimes (represented by WB,IMF,WTO), Universal Postal Union, World Meteorological Organization and others that are playing an increasing role in managing global economic, political, social and cultural affairs. It is observed that the growing global society consists of a multitude of different interfacing systems. And GCS is one of the major arena in which issues of globalization and national autonomy are being discussed (ibid). But GCS actors reflect diverse responses to this.

4. GCS, World Bank and UNO

In the era of globalization, it is observed that the policies and practices of multilateral public institutions like the World Bank are increasingly influenced by powerful private sector players like national corporations (TNCs) and powerful nation-states. The Bank and the IMF are in the forefront of pushing the neoliberal agenda of reforms particularly into the third world countries. The Bank also has its own development commitments. But in case of conflict of

interests between its social and environmental policy commitments and the interests of its corporate partners, the Bank is frequently found to sacrifice the former in favour of maintaining support from the latter (Ishii-Eiteman 2002). Also the biggest borrowing countries (e.g. India, Brazil) have been able to push back the Bank on social and environmental issues. It is true that the Bank has set up a NGO/CSO forum to have dialogue and feedback on issues of concerns. But, despite its collaborative/consultative status the forum is not able to influence the Bank policy in any significant manner. A review covering five years period by the World Bank Inspection Panel found that (even in case of transnational advocacy-driven multilateral institutional innovation) ‘nation-states retain powerful levers to block accountability politics’ (e.g., social and environmental commitments) of the Bank (Fox 2000:2).

The World Bank has several initiatives over the years to have a systematic dialogue or partnership with NGOs, both international and local ones. The Bank has set up various bodies like World Bank-NGO Committee (1981), NGO Working Group (1984), and Council of the Global Environmental Facility. It has sponsored several regional meetings with NGOs, also certain conferences on social issues like hunger and poverty, hired NGO staff, NGO participation in some of its projects, and even incorporated its powerful critics like D-GAP (Development Group for Alternative Policies) into its SAPARI (Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative) programme. ‘These steps give the Bank an appearance of openness and accountability, but in the final analysis they do not change the essence of power at the Bank or in the affected countries. NGOs will have to work by persuasion; they will not have any direct voice in the Bank’s decision-making process nor in its fundamental mission’ (Paul 1996). No wonder there are bitter critics of the Bank’s approach, as in the ‘Fifty Years is Enough’ campaign slogan. Bank opponents are both on the libertarian left and on the libertarian right (free marketeers). But reformist segment of GCS prefers to work with the Bank in a collaborative consultative style.

Further, NGOs have multifaceted relations with the UN Secretariat and its agencies. They occasionally interact with high UN officials like the Secretary-General generally in the form of letters, petitions, and other communications about policy matters. They also interact with country delegations to provide them assistance in presenting their views effectively. The UN Charter (Article 71) clearly states that the ECOSOC ‘may make suitable arrangements for

consultation with non-governmental organizations, which are concerned with matters within its competence. Such arrangements may be made with international organizations and, where appropriate, with national organizations after consultation with the Member of the United Nations concerned' (cited in Steinberg 2001). The Secretary General has frequently affirmed the importance of NGO role and referred to NGOs as 'indispensable partners' in helping UN achieve its goals. NGOs are regarded as 'partners in the process of deliberation and policy formation' as well as in the 'execution of policies'. But NGOs do not enjoy formal policy making rights. They are able to exercise influence over outcomes through their expertise and creative proposals as recently observed during the negotiations towards establishing an International Criminal Court. The Commission on Human Rights attracts a large number of NGO participants. In recent years, NGOs have been very active organizing parallel forums and summits to forcefully express the concerns of the GCS. But there are reported cases of NGO 'misbehaviour' at various international forums and conferences, including some violent protests against WTO. Some NGOs have tried to dissociate from such incidents. There is talk about having a 'code of conduct', 'code of ethics' or some sort of 'self policing' of NGOs, and also strict accreditation process by the UN. There are problems and irritants in the relations between NGOs and the UN. However, the UN Secretariat has strengthened its relations with NGOs by improving services like accreditation process, the NGO Resource Centre, and NGO training programmes. The moot point is that NGOs do not have a formal authoritative voice but merely a consultative status with the UN. In addition, the UN is getting marginalized by the multilaterals like WB, IMF and WTO in management of the world economy.

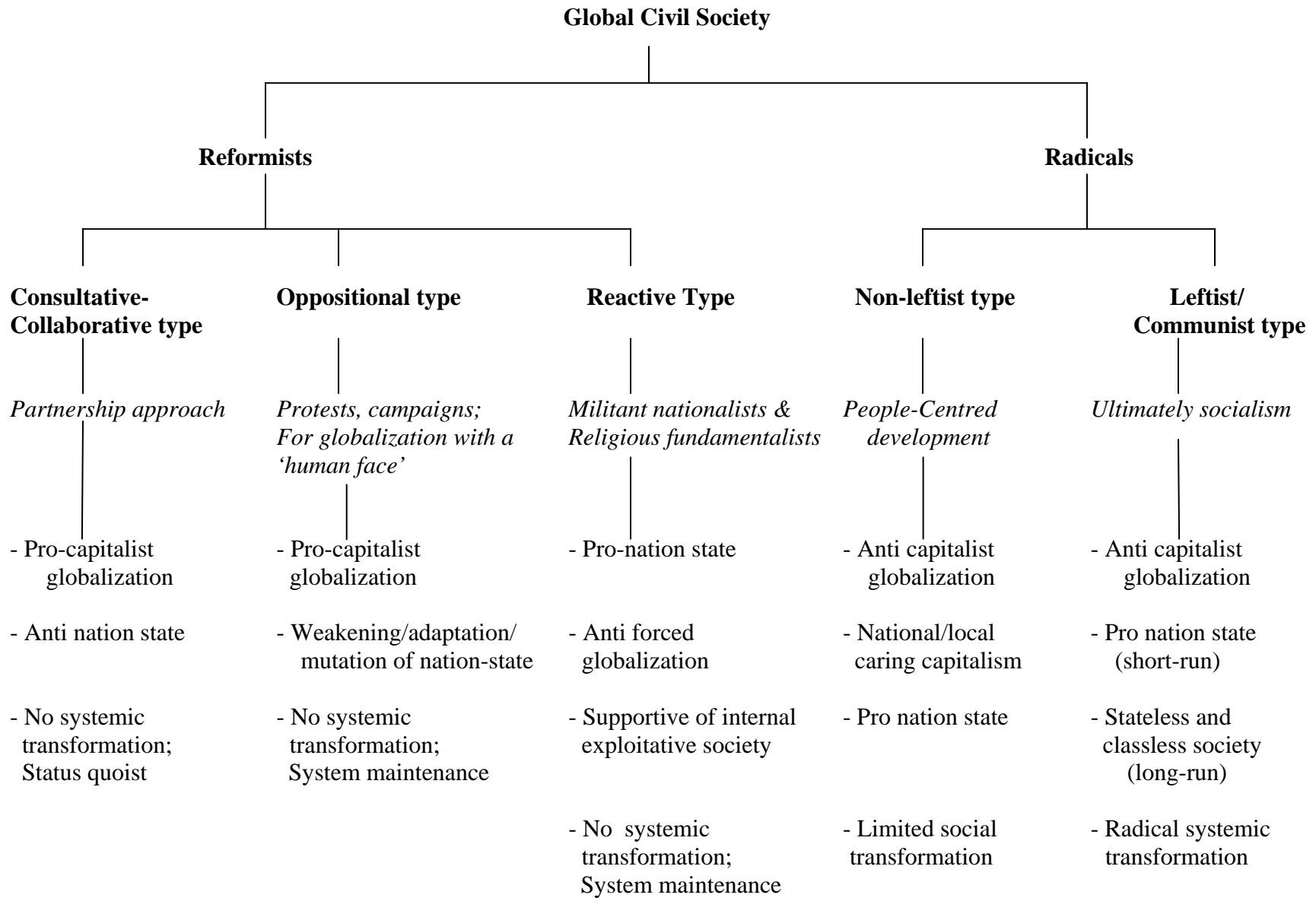
The UN is regarded as more democratic and representative of the world than the international financial institutions (IFIs). So, an important challenge identified is to affirm 'UN Yes! Bretton Woods No!' (Korten 2000). In addition, there is a need to democratise the Bretton Woods institutions. And the GCS may always work in the direction of building 'a democratic world of peace, justice, and prosperity for all' (ibid).

5. Suggested Alternative Categorization of GCS

Keeping the serious drawbacks of the analysis provided in the GCS yearbook, I would like to suggest an alternative categorization of GCS from the perspective of social transformation. This will provide the desired clarity that would be analytically rigorous and also potent in socio-political transformative terms. This categorization of GCS is different from the one provided by GCS Yearbook 2001 and 2003. In this proposed schema, transformation refers to the objective/potential scope of GCS for a radical change in the currently dominant neoliberal capitalist development which is exploitative and oppressive of both weaker nations and peoples, towards building of a new system, both at national and global level that is non-exploitative and non-oppressive of weaker nations and peoples, and which fully addresses the social, environmental and, above all, moral/valuational crises currently faced by the humankind.

From a transformative perspective, I divide the GCS into two broad categories, i.e., Reformists and Radicals. Reformists are subdivided into three, viz., Consultative-collaborative type, Oppositional type and Reactive type. Further, Radicals are also divided into two sub-categories, viz., Non-leftist 'alternative' type and Leftist/communist alternative type (see Figure 1). Here, the Reformist segment of GCS is viewed as the one that does not want significant change in the existing state of affairs. They are supporters of neoliberal capitalist globalization that would finally lead to demise of the nation state. However, they want globalization to proceed little cautiously. Under this category, there is a segment that enters into collaboration and partnerships with multilaterals as well as global business/TNCs. They provide feedback and also contribute to more efficient delivery of services under the new public management paradigm. The Oppositional type GCS segment is represented by the actors who organise protests and campaigns so that globalization is given a 'human face', but keep moving ahead. They are pro-capitalist globalization with a 'human face'. This approach involves weakening/adaptation/mutation of the nation-state. Reactive reformists are different. They want to reform globalization with a view to protecting national sovereignty and community identities of varied types, and at the same time support internal exploitative/oppressive system in individual countries/societies/communities. They are conservative/reformist from societal angle. They are

Figure 1 : Suggested Categorisation of GCS from a Transformative Perspective



opposed to globalization by coercion. This category would include the militant nationalist and religious fundamentalist type segment of GCS.

In the Radical category, the non-left 'alternative' type segment is opposed to neoliberal capitalist globalization, but not against the capitalist system as such. They favour people-centred development (Korten 1995, 2000) and national/local capitalist system which care for the common people. This category would include also the essentially non-capitalist Gandhian champions of alternative development. This non-left segment of GCS emerges as pro-nation state but anti-neoliberal capitalist globalization.

Finally, the leftist/communist alternative segment of GCS could be considered most radical in terms of potential for progressive systemic transformation. It completely rejects neoliberal capitalist globalization. It stands in favour of nation-state, but only in the short term. In the long term it would ideologically stand for a stateless and classless society which would involve no discrimination on the lines of nation, race, class or any such narrow bases that would be non-universalistic and inegalitarian. A synoptic view of the scheme is provided in the Figure.

6. Conclusion

Finally, I would argue that even the leftist/communist segment of GCS or even 'actual' existing socialism/communism does not seem to be fully transformative in nature. The epitome of actual existing socialism i.e. the one practiced till recently did not guarantee political freedom and thus made humans less than fully fulfilled human beings. It also caused extensive environmental degradation. It followed a model of economic development which was similar to the capitalist society, i.e., industrialism. The existing socialism stands highly discredited now. There is declaration from the roof top about the complete triumph of bourgeois capitalism and the end of history (Fukuyama 1992).

However, what we essentially face today is a serious crisis, especially true for the 'so-called' third world. The crisis is manifold and very serious. There is observed unprecedented economic growth. At the same time there is a huge number of people living in absolute poverty,

a subhuman life in different countries of the world. Unemployment and underemployment remain big problems even in the developed economies. There are nation-states so powerful as to declare unilateral war on other nation-states ignoring the august global collectivity of the United Nations. There are also weak and even failed states not in a position even to control bitter ethnic wars in their own countries. Inequality is rapidly increasing between and within nation-states. The dominant cultural mooring increasingly pervading all spheres of life across the world is that of materialism, individualism, hedonism, commodification, and atomization which is typical of the modern Western civilization.

So, I would hold that cultural/moral/valuational crisis is at the top of the manifold crises today – social, economic, political, and cultural. There seems to be a moral breakdown of human civilisation. We have largely become unidimensional. Economic dominates all other spheres of life. But the essence of human species is that they are social beings – the need to relate to others, feel and be one with others, share in the happiness and help in the sorrow of others, be a collective social being (not merely a hedonist individual entity), and have a balanced holistic social life (not merely economic).

Given their limited resources, what the GCS can do at best is to respond to this civilization moral crisis. They cannot compete with the nation-state and market in the political and economic spheres. The need for them is to work in the cultural domain with a focus on moral/valuational elevation of humanity, champion the cause of dehumanizing the dehumanizing humans. And in this endeavour GCS in both the West and the East can work together on an equal footing, drawing positive elements from their respective cultures and rejecting the regressive ones, and thus build a new moral order for a holistic non-oppressive human life for all the peoples and countries in the world. Operations on this line would, I hope, gradually unfold whatever is further needed to be done at political and economic levels.

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