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Dawn of the Cosmopolitan: The Hope of a Global Citizens Movement

Orion Kriegman
John Wood

This paper describes global civil society and examines the potential for what we call movement diplomats to facilitate a citizens' movement to action beyond today's fragmented dialogue at the World Social Forum. The paper concludes that while the emergence of a Global Citizens Movement (GCM) may not seem probable, we argue it is possible given the historically unique factors pushing us into a global age. We discuss further some of the necessary missing ingredients for the emergence of a GCM and point to future avenues for exploration. Our work is animated by the prospect of a GCM and we build on previous literature in this area. We start our discussion with an examination of the basis for a GCM through the growth of civil society and the advent of global identity.

Global Civil Society and Latency

The early 19th century campaign spearheaded by religious organizations to end the slave trade was perhaps the first concerted effort by civil society organizations to exert influence on global affairs. Since the end of World War II, global civil society grew at an unprecedented and escalating rate (Florini, 2000; Kaldor, 2003). As one indicator of the growth of civil society, we examine the rise of globally active non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Global NGOs have been steadily accumulating, and by the 1990s their numbers reached 13,206 active at the global level, with more added each year (Kaldor, 2003). These global NGOs increasingly make their voices heard in global forums and negotiations, and many participate in issue-oriented networks with intergovernmental organizations and the business sector. Some have viewed the main thrust of this activity as "a world-wide co-ordination of resistance against the global market" (Hayduk, 2003, p.25).

The unprecedented growth and rise in influence of global NGOs may represent the tip of an iceberg regarding a deep shift in public engagement and awareness. While part of the rapid increase in global NGOs can be attributed to the advent of modern information and communication technology, this alone cannot explain the explosive growth of global activity. Perhaps even more important is the fact that the very idea of civil society has increasing legitimacy among the general public in most regions of the world (Florini, 2000) – especially as the post-colonial state and private enterprise have lost legitimacy. Thus developing countries have experienced the emergence of vibrant domestic civil society organizations that then provide a foundation for transnational organizing (Smith, 1998). This is the platform upon which the globalization of activity could build, tracking the globalization of social, ecological, and economic challenges over recent decades.

Global NGO activity not only points to a possible latency for a new global citizen identity, but also contributes to it by articulating the universality of basic human rights and sustainable development as the basis for a global political culture (Florini, 2000). Latency is similar to Ray and Anderson's (2000) notion of an "emerging culture," which is a growing trend of what he calls Cultural Creatives who coalesce into mutual "self-awareness."

Despite the growing awareness of the interrelated nature of today's challenges, the interests of donors, the dynamics of professional organizations, and certain ideological orientations tend to favor a narrow issue-oriented approach to the work, encouraging NGOs to specialize in delineated niches, "issue silos," or what Harvey (1996) calls "militant particularisms" (p.34). The strength of global civil society remains circumscribed by this organizational and philosophical fragmentation. Additionally, success stories of community action, often inspiring in terms of local accomplishments, have not been able to scale up to new pathways for global development. Today's civil society efforts remain too dispersed, diffused, and small scale to systematically transform the dominant trends of globalization led by powerful state actors and multinational corporations (Raskin et al., 2002).

Still, the rapid growth of civil society is a profound source of hope if it represents an early manifestation of a widespread latent desire among concerned citizens who recognize that the world must address a suite of deepening social, economic, and environmental problems, but do not yet know how to take action themselves. This hypothesis—positing such a latent desire to be engaged in shaping global society—is further strengthened by an examination of the novel conditions defining this planetary phase of history.

Planetary Phase of History: Support for the latency hypothesis

The formation of the UN, ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Accords among other landmark treaties, and development of institutions such as the International Criminal Court, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) express the growing need to develop new forms of cooperation at the global level. Yet the tantalizing promises of improved global relations, new technologies bringing widespread prosperity, and rational management of the earth's resources seem to dangle just out of reach.

Since the 1960s, ubiquitous images of our fragile planet floating in the vastness of space have changed our consciousness—making us more cognizant of humanity's vulnerability and interconnectedness (Giddens, 2000; Scholte, 2000). Technologies such as airplanes, TV, satellites, and the Internet have expanded awareness of cultures and events across the world. We are now instantly aware of havoc wrought by hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, genocide, poverty, and AIDS. Displaced by such tragic events, or simply seeking better opportunities, increasing numbers of migrants test the hospitality of wealthy, relatively homogenous communities. As economies become more interconnected and the rate of cultural exchange increases, for better or worse, our world is shrinking.

Pursuing business as usual in this rapidly shrinking world is increasingly difficult, not least because the planet's climate is becoming less predictable, with the catastrophic consequences of greenhouse gas accumulation becoming bleaker and more evident daily (Speth, 2005). In addition to global warming, we are faced with other unparalleled environmental challenges, such as cross-boundary water degradation and air pollution, overfishing, declining ecosystems, and loss of biodiversity. The threats to our collective existence are quite real. Ecocide, nuclear proliferation, global terror networks, new military technologies, and the threat of pandemics remind us, as Bertrand Russell once said, "it's coexistence or no existence" (Locke, 1962: 694). Only greater degrees of international cooperation can possibly resolve these complex dilemmas.

People's psychological responses to a shrinking world include some mixture of fear and hope. When fear dominates, this can lead to xenophobia, retreating into protected enclaves, and projecting militaristic solutions (Rothman, 1992). It can also fuel fundamentalist movements that offer reassurance and simple answers for an increasingly perplexing world. When hope is strong, people's highest aspirations motivate them to uphold their moral responsibilities to their fellow humans and the larger community of life. Countless new cultural developments manifest the growing awareness that one's narrow self-interest is dependent on general social and ecological interests (Ray & Anderson, 2000).

In contrast to fundamentalism, many religious leaders now seek to emphasize the great humanitarian traditions of their faiths and the theological basis for tolerance and cooperation.

In developing countries this hope is expressed by communities devising new development paradigms seeking sustainable livelihoods (Amalric, 2004). Indigenous groups, women's place-based initiatives, worker-owned cooperatives, and community lending institutions all enhance local empowerment. La Via Campesina, for example, is a 56 country movement coalition with the expressed goal to unite small farmer organizations to promote social justice and gender equality in fair economic relations as well as the preservation of land, water, seeds, and other natural resources. This non-western movement also focuses food sovereignty and sustainable agricultural production.

In relation to peasant struggles, Via Campesina who has managed to bring together the most active peasant organizations, basically in Latin America, is extremely influential much more than Western NGOs. Via Campesina has recently built ties with peasant organization in countries as far different as in West Africa, Southern Africa, India and even China (Amin, 2008).

In wealthier countries, these insights manifest in various lifestyle movements (e.g., voluntary simplicity, slow foods, cooperatives, eco-villages) seeking to consume less and devote more time to family, community, and personal projects (Degraaf, et al., 1995). The hope of improved lives in a just and caring world is the most empowering psychological response to the turbulence of our times. The Internet has facilitated intercommunication about the Zapatistas' plight in Chiapas, which also influenced protests in Seattle that set off the intense, yet brief interaction between activists in different movements, each with different goals, strategies, and visions (Wood 2008). The increased interaction of activists through the Internet, protests, and social forums has intensified both intercommunications as well as the potential capacity to influence future movement activity, especially as globalization processes intensify.

These objective and subjective conditions emerging in this planetary phase of civilization underpin the latency hypothesis, that more and more people are inclined to understand themselves as part of a common community of fate that includes all of humanity and the biosphere (Raskin, 2006a). This transformation of consciousness challenges conventional categories of identity. The key to the political crystallization of today's cultural latency is the shift toward a shared identity—the co-recognition and internalization of others' struggles as our own in a global community of fate, i.e. the dawn of the cosmopolitan.

Cosmopolitan Identity

The identification of oneself as part of the human family, with responsibility for one's brothers and sisters, is an extension of the sense of kinship many already feel for their nation, hometown, and family. Political theorists discussing the sense of belonging and responsibility to an "imagined community" (Anderson, 1991) have introduced the concept of an implicit social contract that characterizes the presumed rights and obligations of individuals to the community, and of the community to individuals. This implied citizenship can precede explicit constitutional and institutional manifestation.

The emergence of a global identity is a new implicit social contract in which increasing numbers of people understand themselves practically and aspirationally as global citizens (Dower, 2007). Carter (2001) locates the emergence of global citizenship within an emergent transnational civil society. Global citizens, she argues, are transnational social movement activists who are committed to "social justice, diversity, sustainable economic development respecting the environment and to a peaceful world" (p. 98). These global citizens share the broad values and principles that would underlie a transition to a just and sustainable planetary society. This new global identity need not subsume or eliminate particular subglobal or group identities, although it would certainly transform them.

Identity, like personality, is quite complex and hard to delineate as different aspects of it are evoked under varying social and political pressures (Stryker, 2000). People can simultaneously identify with their local sports team, their undergraduate alma mater, their gender, their religion, their ethnic group, their generation, etc. Humans are not reducible to either the universal or the particular—we are dynamically multi-dimensional (Wood, 2005). In the United States, the fluidity of identity is often observed. After centuries of migration, many people hyphenate their identities: African-American, Italian-American, Jewish-American, Indian-American, etc. Some might feel most loyal to their hometown, then their state, then their geographic region, and finally identify as American; while others might see themselves primarily as American, not invested in any specific locale. Recently, due to popularization by the mass media, some Americans identify as part of the Democratic "blue-states" or Republican "red-states," illustrating how quickly identity can be constructed and deconstructed. While the assertion that we choose our identities is an oversimplification, it is clear that personal identity is influenced by collective human choices in relation to external factors. The question then is: under what circumstances might the identity of global citizen emerge?

People have identified themselves as "citizens of the world" at least as far back as the Stoic philosophers in the Roman Empire who argued that

all humanity belongs to a single moral community (Cooper & Procopis, 1995). The Stoics have their roots in the Greek Cynics of the fourth century B.C. who coined the term "cosmopolitan" meaning "citizen of the cosmos." Today, to embrace an identity as a cosmopolitan, one can continue to take pride in one's local, regional, or ethnic culture and community—but add a healthy respect for other cultures in the context of pride for the diversity of human achievement.

What does need to be abandoned is any fundamentalist notion that all of humanity must conform to a single cultural expression—no longer can we afford to tolerate chauvinist pretensions. The reification of cultural archetypes ignores the fact that culture itself is always fluid and evolving, and that human societies have continuously traded ideas, cuisine, music, etc., while absorbing, blending, and innovating (Appiah, 2006). Cosmopolitanism rejects chauvinism and values diverse cultures, regarding all people of the earth as branches of a single family tree. The diffusion of this old consciousness in the new context of globalization is the basis for forging global citizenship.

Lest this sound too utopian, let's remember that the extension of identity has historical precedent in the enlargement of society from clans to tribes to chiefdoms to city-states to nation-states. At one point the crystallization of national identities seemed as implausible as global identity might seem today, and yet, with hindsight, the formation of nation-states appears natural, almost inevitable (Raskin, 2006a). More recently, we can observe social and political forces attempting to construct identity around multinational regions. But, as the struggle over the European Union constitution shows us, identity realignment is a nonlinear process that must overcome historically rooted inertia (Klitou, 2005). As identities enlarge, so do the existential fears that what one cherishes may be dissolved. Today, powerful conservative elements are mobilized to resist the loss of autonomy to broader decision-making communities that include people of other cultures, languages, and histories. Such fears should not be dismissed as mere xenophobia. The historical expansion of identity is a process riddled with wars, genocides, and subjugation. Threats to the identities of peoples, certainly in past times, have been quite deadly.

In fact, the threat of an external foe has often been a significant part of the impetus to overcome regional antagonisms and forge new bonds of cooperation (e.g., the Greek city-states vis-à-vis the Persian Empire) (Staggenborg, 1986). Moreover, a common enemy was the focus at the Seattle protest, where activists framed the WTO as the main target of their opposition. Benjamin (2000) argues: "The violence of the World Trade Organization and its corporate beneficiaries are our true opponents" (p. 72). Ideology, myths, and religion often serve as the tools to weave people together in the context of common defense or conquest.

Yet, for robust new identities to cohere, in addition to external threats there must be the internal motivation of a shared dream of people-hood.

For example, it has been argued that the novel, a relatively new art form that offered a narrative story written in vernacular, played an instrumental role in helping construct the imagined community of the Italian nation-state, which had to overcome strong antagonisms between city-states (Anderson, 1991). The novel helped inspire people to conceive of themselves as part of a common cultural group. While other factors such as leadership and the role of elites were essential, the novel seeded the cultural moment, or latency, for national identity.

Thus, the push of necessity (external threat) and the pull of desire (internal motivation) are both critical in the construction of identity. In retrospect, the specific boundaries framing national identities are somewhat arbitrary, while the case for global identity is more objective: we all share one world. Many people, from the Stoics onward, have noted this. While past movements for world citizenship were premature, the objective and subjective conditions shaping the planetary phase create conditions that are ripe for the emergence of global citizens.

Of course, this latent inclination among an increasing number of people to see themselves as part of a common community of fate cannot be directly observed since, by definition, it is yet to manifest. It is a multi-layered phenomenon with many cultural currents just under the surface that occasionally bubble up as movies, books, lectures, songs, websites, study groups, new organizations, protests, or other modes of expression. As these signifiers of new identity become more noticeable, they feed back and amplify, stimulating reflection and action on the part of others, bringing the latency in the system closer to the surface. New information technologies accelerate this process.

We argue that it is in the latency hypothesis that we find the potential for the emergence of a historically novel phenomenon: a Global Citizens Movement (GCM). In contrast to the existing fragmented global movements, a GCM implies a framework for common action that moves beyond reactive protest to the proactive implementation of a hopeful vision – this is discussed further below. Although it would emerge from the inchoate pool of latency, in its robust form a GCM would be a coherent movement of a significant segment of the world population. Such a movement would emerge in opposition to mainstream notions of development and the meaning of “the good life,” and would provide plausible alternative visions. A movement that engaged ordinary citizens throughout the world, as it expanded and matured, would eventually connect with sympathetic partners in political parties, governments, corporations, even the military. Thus, a GCM would be distinct from, but engaged with, other major global actors.

To be clear, we do not accept the notion that a GCM would spontaneously self-organize once a critical mass of civil society activity is reached. Such convenient fatalism

downplays the need for intentional leadership. A GCM is not a foregone conclusion, or even a probable outcome. Stipulating the latency hypothesis, the pertinent question becomes: how could cultural latency crystallize into a robust GCM?

Hope is a crucial missing ingredient. Increasingly, the general public is aware of emerging dangers but, in the absence of compelling alternative visions and a clear way to take action, apprehension can lead to apathy and resignation. Should the de-stabilizing tensions in the emerging global system ultimately lead to some form of global crisis, people well could embrace authoritarian solutions out of desperation and retreat into national enclaves. Fear without hope is not a powerful basis for social change. The development of a plausible vision that reflects our highest aspirations while respecting local differences and the diversity of human culture would provide a basis for hope. The diffusion of such a hopeful vision prior to a global crisis could make the crystallization of a GCM possible.

Today's Global Justice Movement

The broad umbrella term "Global Justice Movement" refers here to many different movements seeking to find areas of overlap and common agreement.

This "movement" developed from a series of obscure transnational campaigns led by NGOs organizing protests and counter-summits against global financial institutions (WTO, IMF, World Bank) and neo-liberal trade negotiations throughout the 1990s (Hawken, 2000). Major UN-sponsored conferences during this decade brought feminists, human rights activists, environmentalists, and many other groups from the global North into contact with their counterparts from the global South. Activists in the Global Justice Movement seek to link Northern solidarity movements with myriad struggles for sustainable livelihood and self-determination in the global South. A common thread connecting these groups is a shared critique of the dominance of neo-liberal economic doctrines shaping globalization (Brooks, 2004; Callahan, 2004).

The 1999 protest that shut down the WTO meeting in Seattle marked a turning point—for the first time, blue-collar workers, farm workers, consumers, environmentalists, churches, feminists, pacifists, and human rights associations joined to address policy making at the global level (Hawken, 2000; Welton et al., 2001). The protest in Seattle was followed by a series of large demonstrations at major international meetings through 2003. A globally coordinated wave of protests against the threat of war in Iraq culminated in an international protest with approximately ten million people in 60 countries on 15 February, 2003 (Guinness Book of World Records, 2004). While large transnational grassroots protests continue to shape negotiations around the WTO and other proposed trade agreements (such as the FTAA), they have not captured the same attention from the global media since the

US-led invasion of Iraq. The emergence of the "Global War on Terror," ongoing conflict in the Middle East, and other geo-political developments (such as left-of-center political victories in Latin America), continue to influence the character and strategies of this maturing movement (della Porta, 2005).

Of particular note is the World Social Forum (WSF), first held in 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, on the same dates as the World Economic Forum (Lewis, 2001; Bello, 2003). Convening a wide range of activists and NGOs from civil society in the global North and South, the WSF has grown from about 16,000 participants in 2001 to 155,000 in 2005 (with a smaller number in 2007) (della Porta, 2005). In 2006, in order to increase accessibility and worldwide participation, the WSF adopted a "polycentric" approach with meetings in Bamako, Caracas, and Karachi. In addition, local and regional forums have been held in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the United States. These global and regional forums express the desire among activists in different movements to overcome fragmentation and create linkages between their various campaigns. However, also visible are "continuous divisions between activists of the global North and the South, as well as 'old left' and New Social Movements (NSMs) visions of the world, [that] are reflected in only temporary, and turbulent, alliances" (della Porta, 2005).

Limits of Existing Movements and WSF

Despite the potential to build on natural synergies, existing movements are severely limited by current political realities; i.e., the process of building practical linkages between multiple actors requires continuous negotiation and dialogue. Among social movements seeking to ally in the Global Justice Movement—e.g., indigenous, feminist, labor, peasant, human rights, environmental, socialist, etc.—it is difficult to move beyond reactive protest and articulate a common proactive agenda. Issues, priorities, and even goals often conflict. For example, feminism is fundamentally devoted to modernizing gender relations, while many indigenous groups and religious formations revere patriarchal traditions (Harcourt, 2006). Furthermore, even among groups that share priorities, they can differ over the strategies and tactics endorsed. The need to overcome fragmentation and cohere as a movement capable of offering credible alternatives is hampered by organizational turf wars, competing personalities, different languages, racism, conflicting goals, and divergent priorities.

We argue that the success of the WSF in convening large numbers of individuals and delegates from existing movements throughout the world is a step toward increasing coherence, and demonstrates the desire for interaction among a wide range of activists. The great strength of the WSF has been its commitment to maintaining itself as a forum, refusing to articulate an official platform or

resolutions that would endorse specific policy recommendations (WSF, 2004) – thus, limiting the gathering for the exchange of ideas and information – allowing the broadest range of social movements to participate.

Yet, this process is slow and flawed (Larson, 2006; Waterman, 2005). Sophisticated dialogue is the hard work necessary to reframe movements out of particular issue-silos into a common systemic effort. However, the leadership of the WSF—mired in ideological divides and factional power struggles that mirror the philosophical debates engulfing the movement as a whole—has been unable to devise a process that facilitates real dialogue and engagement of competing tensions among WSF attendees. This problem is exacerbated by rhetoric describing the WSF as a “leaderless self-organizing” event which further obscures reality and undermines clear communication over the challenges facing the WSF (Waterman, 2005).

At the sub-national level, for community-based groups seeking sustainable livelihoods and new modes of development, the challenge of building linkages is closely related to the challenge of expansion and the need to scale-up nationally (Amalric, 2004). For example, the empowerment of local actors has yet to translate into electoral power in countries like India or South Africa. Conversely, while on a global stage transnational protests are making a mark, nationally many of the most active groups have limited visibility and political influence.

The expansion of social movements is constrained by the active opposition of entrenched powers, limited access to media and resources, and the extension of a globalizing consumer culture that fosters cynicism and resignation. Of course, these political realities vary from country to country and throughout regions of the world. For example, widespread social movements in Bolivia and Venezuela have led to changes in political power. Still, in both these countries, environmental concerns and the rights of indigenous communities are subordinated to the need to address poverty through economic growth and job creation.

A telling question is: Should a global crisis strike tomorrow, would the existing cacophony of social movements be able to adequately channel the erupting energy towards positive solutions? We argue that the turbulence of crisis would likely further weaken existing movements and scatter new energies, thus while today's fragmented movements continue to evolve they do not add up to a GCM.

Lessons for a GCM

The ends of a just and equitable world filled with cultural diversity and freedoms must be alive in the means the movement utilizes to organize itself. Building a united movement requires overcoming massive barriers of regional antagonisms, ideological conflict, and organizational turf battles (Zald & McCarthy 1987). Such

a movement needs a "politics of trust," balancing a commitment to both pluralism and coherence, seeking common ground despite differences (GTI Proposal, 2003). McAdam (1982) would contend that a diverse coalition can apply pressure on the opposition from many fronts. This diversity of allies also indicates a potentially nurturing place to learn and engage with others who are different (Warkentin, 2001) – and would thus help the movement embody the ends it seeks.

The creation of a politics of trust requires transcending polarities that constrain the potential for effective action. People often construct a narrative of stark binary choices in order to emphasize a point, call attention to a problematic situation, and provoke others into choosing sides. However, such polarized debate can limit the generation of creative solutions. We find that the most problematic polarizations for a politics of trust revolve around the question: can we find a legitimate means to balance the commitment to both diversity and coherence? This question is not new (e.g., earlier scholars, such as Diani (1992) and Melucci (1996), have asked academics and activists to explore the same question).

Proponents of diversity decry homogenization and emphasize that political and cultural diversity is a strength, just as biodiversity maintains the health and resilience of ecosystems. Conversely, advocates for unity decry fragmentation and insist that unity is necessary for effective action that can scale-up to effectively challenge entrenched powers and the direction of global development. Thus, a binary choice is presented between (a) a homogenized unification with the danger of authoritarian suffocation or (b) a fragmented diversity with the risk of a cacophony of ineffective voices. Obviously, as framed, neither option is desirable. While it is easy to say a GCM needs both the strength of unity and the strength of diversity, it is important to understand why these concerns are historically pitted against each other.

The New Social Movements (NSMs) that emerged in the 1970s and '80s celebrate a "plurality of resistances, each of them a special case" (Foucault, 1980). The French philosopher, Michel Foucault, problematizing traditional notions of power, explained that everyone has power over someone else and therefore a unified struggle for social transformation would result in replicating oppression, silencing deviant minorities for the sake of "victory." In this vein, NSMs criticize the "old left" for attempting to subsume all efforts under the single banner of class struggle, without concern for the multiplicity of issues involving gender, race, or the environment.

Fear of tyranny of the majority and oppressive hierarchies dominates NSM strategies (Melucci, 1989; Best & Kellner, 1991). There is an ongoing debate about the role of leadership versus faith in "spontaneous self-organization." Leadership implies an organizational hierarchy that can be anti-egalitarian and limit the autonomy of factions within an organized structure—an oft-cited cause of the collapse of the bureaucratized socialist parties of the old left (Rowbotham

et al., 1980). Many of today's activists argue we are moving into an era where self-organizing networks of relatively independent, loosely connected actors will be increasingly important (Wood, 2005). While this claim has been around since the 1960s, recent examples abound, from the Internet (blogosphere, open source movement), to protests (1999 Battle of Seattle, Critical Mass bike rides), to the activity at the World Social Forum. However, others note that this rhetoric generally obscures very real mechanisms of authority, and a lack of transparency reduces accountability (Waterman, 2005). Ironically, for some, the anti-leadership orientation has become yet another ideological rigidity.

An antecedent of the contemporary call for unity around a shared vision is the writing of Antonio Gramsci, an Italian social theorist jailed in the 1930s for his anti-fascist organizing, who critiqued the fatalism of Marxists who believed in the inevitability of socialist revolution. Gramsci argued that the capitalist system did not maintain its dominance simply through economic power and coercion, but that it also manufactured ideological and cultural consent (Gramsci, 1971). While Gramsci underscored the importance of a shared identity and vision in social transformation, he did not believe this could be authentically articulated by top-down leadership, but rather would have to be articulated by those immersed in the social conditions being contested.

There is no one rallying point (e.g., climate change, poverty, imperialism, justice, etc.) that will galvanize a GCM—as Foucault warned, all other struggles should not be subordinated to a superordinate cause. Still, the problems we face are interconnected and cannot be solved in a piecemeal fashion. Those fighting for human rights, and those fighting for ecosystem protections, those seeking to forestall global warming, and those struggling to escape from poverty must all recognize that they are addressing different aspects of a unitary challenge of building a just and sustainable global future and their success is interdependent and requires a systemic shift (Albert et al., 1986). It is important to understand how each effort is part of a larger framework for analysis and action.

A shared framework need not be thought of as a static blueprint created by elite leadership. Instead, an effective and legitimate framework would need to be iteratively articulated through a dynamic process of dialogue rooted in the diverse experiences of participants. An effective process would require transparent and accountable leadership to facilitate the involvement of diverse peoples, and ensure the participation of historically marginalized voices. Instead of pretending there are no leaders, or no need for them, it is important to acknowledge that what it means to exercise leadership is evolving. The models of steep hierarchy and command-and-control are increasingly questioned even in the business sector and some aspects of the military (Hock, 1999).

Increasingly, scholars distinguish the act of leadership from the role of authority (Heifetz, 1994; Williams, 2005). Authority figures are authorized by constituencies that put them in power to carry out certain functions, and in doing so they may, or may not, exercise real leadership. Real leaders are those who empower and inspire groups to engage unpleasant realities, work through conflicts, and generate new insights that increase effectiveness—regardless of what rank they may hold. Thus, although George W. Bush is in a role of authority as President, when it comes to preparing the United States to face the unpleasant reality of climate change, he responds to the demands of his constituency (i.e., the oil lobby) and fails to exercise leadership. Leadership scholars emphasize that it is rare for authority figures to act courageously, and even rarer for them to purposefully disappoint their constituents' demands, as their primary focus is on gaining and maintaining their position (Heifetz, 1994). Real leadership—in the sense of mobilizing people and groups to deal with problematic realities on behalf of improving the human condition and generating progress—is needed at every level of every organization, and from the local to global level of action (Williams, 2005).

In sum, a worldwide movement of global citizens will need to draw strength from both diversity and unity. The latency hypothesis posits that the potential for the emergence of cosmopolitan identity is present in the historic moment. The upsurge of civil society activity, in the form of NGOs and social movements, over the past few decades can be understood as an early manifestation of the latency in the global system, and at the same time this transnational activity helps deepen the latency. However, the existing Global Justice Movement remains fragmented and has yet to provide a plausible alternative vision that can be widely shared. Without a shared pro-active framework, it is hard to imagine how the latent potential would coalesce into a GCM. The development of a shared vision will depend on new forms of leadership to facilitate engaged dialogue inclusive of diverse voices.

Contours of a Global Citizens Movement

As we have shown, there already are many groups taking action on a wide range of issues. If a GCM were to coalesce, existing activity would be amplified as new groups emerged—thus the challenge facing a GCM is not promoting action per se, but increasing the strategic impact of action as part of a common project. This means the critical need is for dialogue, analysis, and visioning. Without clarity of vision, tapping into the latent potential of the concerned but currently inactive citizens, and thus mobilizing the requisite numbers of people for a truly global movement, will not be possible. Many of the people in our lives are in this boat: they would love to be a part of a movement if they could find one they could

believe in. Instead, they see cacophonous efforts that don't seem to be building in strategic fashion toward plausible solutions.

In its early phases a GCM can perhaps be thought of as a seed crystal, containing within the means it uses to organize itself the ends of a just and sustainable world. Organizing this seed crystal prior to any emerging global crisis increases the likelihood that, should crisis strike, the vision of the GCM could spread rapidly to inspire humanity's efforts toward renewal and hope (Raskin, 2006a).

A sustainable world is one of biodiversity and diverse, healthy ecosystems. Likewise, a just world is one of human liberation, filled with cultural diversity and creative expression and exploration. Thus the means by which a GCM is organized must honor the diversity of voices that give rise to its creation. The tension between unity and plurality, like many of the paradoxes in life, is not to be overcome; instead we argue a GCM must somehow hold both truths simultaneously. This inherent tension between unity and plurality always persists—indeed it is the cause of political struggle in all communities. Thus a GCM will have internal conflicts and will contain its own politics. Bounded by the container of a shared vision of a just and sustainable world, conflicts can be engaged through a politics of trust—i.e., “a collective commitment...emphasizing a predisposition toward seeking common ground and tolerating proximate differences in order to nurture the ultimate basis for solidarity” (GTI Proposal, 2003).

Creating an expedient unity—through majority rule or authoritarian leadership—is a form of tyranny counter to the vision of justice that would animate the GCM. Rather than replicating domination, we argue that a GCM must seek to create mechanisms for authentic partnership and cooperation between equals. This will require clear shared first principles that protect the rights of minority and deviant voices. Identifying these principles creates a framework for justice claims to be negotiated and conflicts to be resolved. Similarly, informal, unspecified power structures have a tendency to be dominated by cliques and remain unaccountable, potentially corrupting into their own form of tyranny. Rather than denying the value of authority and leadership, explicit, transparent power structures are needed to hold authority figures accountable and promote active leadership at all levels.

With the above lessons in mind, we can assert that in addition to a wide-range of ongoing activity with its diverse tactics, campaigns, and actions at local and global scales, an authentic GCM needs a shared vision emerging from a process of engaged dialogue effectively coordinated through new forms of leadership.

Constructing a Shared Vision

A shared vision would naturally rest on principles that were forged through centuries of struggle and are the heritage of all humanity: freedom, equity, democracy, and sustainability. Articulated in the UN Declaration of Human Rights, Agenda 21, the Earth Charter, and scores of other documents, these principles provide a framework for further discussions on how to realize them in practice.¹⁸ The ethical foundations would be based on individual and collective responsibility for the well-being of others, the wider community of life, and future generations. The value foundations would be "quality of life, human solidarity, and ecological sensibility.... A culture of peace, reconciliation, and non-violence would infuse the new global movement" (GTI Proposal, 2003).

The iterative articulation of a shared vision would rest in a process of engaged dialogue. Engaged dialogue differs from mere tolerance. Tolerance could be said to be the basis of the WSF, allowing diverse and contentious groups to attend the same forum without ever engaging the source of their difference. Engaged dialogue requires that key conflicts are not avoided, but are approached with skilled facilitation and a commitment to a politics of trust, so they do not become so disruptive as to cause disengagement. Constructively engaging conflict requires that all parties are open to transforming their identities in relation to new learning. In successful dialogue process, disputants learn to express their own voices (empowerment) and hear one another (recognition) (Bush & Folger, 1994). Identity is reframed from "I" to "we" as shared values and concerns are recognized (Rothman, 1997).

The WSF demonstrates the potential to convene a large number of actors to a space of pseudo-dialogue, but we argue it fails to generate the level of engagement necessary for a reframing of identity. An authentic GCM would have spaces in which conflicts are surfaced and relationships are transformed and strengthened through dialogue. Thus, a GCM would not be free from dissent and internal politics, but rather would express a new form of politics bounded by shared values and principles. In fact, a movement that embodied diversity engaged in constructive dialogue would carry within it the seed of a new global governance system. Modeling such engagement would also create a plausible basis for hope and attract many more participants.

New forms of leadership

Rather than understanding the GCM as a single organization (e.g., as a global political party), we should bear in mind that, historically, social movements are composed of multiple, even competing, organizations. What binds a GCM is a shared vision of global citizenship and a life-affirming planetary civilization, not

a single organizational structure. A GCM would grow through widening circles of participation and dialogue as increasing numbers of citizens self-identify as part of a common movement.

A specific type of leadership, we argue, is required that would have the authority and resources to convene and maintain the dialogues for developing shared visions and perspectives. A GCM requires a new form of leadership—movement diplomats—that would complement civil society's paid staff, charismatic visionaries, influential philanthropists, community organizers, and organizational heads. Trained and supported directly by organizations or communities, these diplomats would be charged with the task of building systemic coalitions, bridging diverse movement cultures. These diplomats would seek to translate the rhetoric of different factions, foster communication, and find common ground. We envision that they would provoke learning in their own organizations, challenging sacred cows and calling attention to problematic realities, as part of the job of bridging diverse movement cultures. This difficult work is ongoing and leads to the transformation of identities as new realities are integrated into the work of organizations and communities. Ideally, this new evolution in leadership would include core competencies of facilitation, strategic dialogue, systems thinking, and familiarity with the scientific requirements for an ecologically sustainable world. This new role of leadership would not replace other necessary types of leadership, but would complement them in helping to maintain the balance between coherence and diversity within a GCM.

This difficult work of diplomacy, often unglamorous and contentious, could become a highly respected and influential form of leadership. If such roles are given recognition and support, a network of movement diplomats and diplomatic training programs could help a systemic movement overcome barriers of language, class, region, and outdated "issue-silos." It would be through the work of these diplomats that spaces for engaged dialogue would be developed, multiplied, and enhanced. Movement diplomats could be a key to developing coherence while avoiding the evolution of stultifying movement hierarchies.

Sharing an identity and constructing a vision through multiple spaces of engaged dialogue, the GCM would be an "ecosystem" of organizations, networks, and individuals all occupying the "niche" of sustainability and justice. This essential "biodiversity" of the movement encompasses a world with diverse cultures, regions, and modes of life. The diagram below suggests the relationships between elements of this ecosystem. The arrows represent the work of the movement diplomats in building and maintaining relationships, and translating lessons from one level to another.

Figure 1: Ecosystem of a Global Citizens Movement

The upper left of the figure depicts the diverse organizations and informal groups that will continue to be active at local, regional, or global levels. This could include political parties, faith-based communities, and NGOs engaged in campaigns, protests, and construction of positive alternatives. Individuals would join the GCM by linking to existing groups or creating new ones. Taking advantage of increasingly high-powered information and communication technology, many local, regional, and global networks (illustrated by the overlapping circles) would continue to form on a range of themes. Importantly, those organizations with transparent, accountable lines of decision-making authority might more easily forge linkages among plural actors.

In the middle of the image, regional councils governed by transparent and accountable leadership structures and funded by constituent organizations could be open to all who agree to the ground rules necessary to generate engaged dialogue. Scenario building methods could be used to develop consensus around regional visions. Delegates from community groups and organizations could be organized into discussion groups with a full range of diversity (class, gender, ethnicity, age, etc.) to engage in dialogue with the help of trained facilitators. The results would be synthesized, debated, refined, and taken back to constituent groups for input and improvement. Councils would reconvene annually to repeat this process as conditions evolve.

The goal of this process would be to produce a broad consensus that was rooted in sophisticated analysis that rigorously weighed various options, guided by the values underlying the GCM. Different regional councils could develop their own cultures and might differ in their decision-making practices; importance

would be placed on the engagement and dialogue across sectors and issues. These councils would be the operational hub of a GCM, and would have trained staff skilled in dialogue and facilitation, scenario development, and diplomacy.

To coordinate issues of global concern, regional councils would need to select regional representatives for a global council. In an authentic GCM, the formation of a global council would be guided by the same principles that define the movement (e.g., equity, democracy, freedom, sustainability, reconciliation, nonviolence, etc.). Elected representatives would be held accountable and could be removed from office. However, elections that are decided on majority votes could perpetuate the historic marginalization of minority voices. Each regional council would have to engage these concerns, and solutions might vary (some might choose to guarantee slots to indigenous communities, women, and other historically marginalized groups). The power of the global council within the GCM as a whole would reside in the wisdom of its suggestions and whatever resources it could direct toward these ideas. As a body representative of the regional councils, it would have the moral authority to speak to the press, governments, and corporations on behalf of a growing global movement. As the GCM matured, this global council could offer clues for the establishment of a global citizens' parliament.

While the communities, organizations, and institutions inhabited by global citizens would use a range of democratic decision-making structures, from representative democracy to consensus, the dominant ethic in all these endeavors would be to seek first to understand, then to be understood. This new mood of discourse and listening could allow the movement to transcend the stale dichotomy of highly centralized decision-making versus uncoordinated, weak alliances.

Conclusion

While more thinking is needed about the relationship between latency, vision, and social movements, it does seem possible that a positive feedback loop could be established. A vision that convincingly describes a hopeful image of the future and a plausible pathway for getting there could inspire more people to believe in the possibility of a sustainable planetary civilization and, thus, to take up the challenge of global citizenship. Strategic campaigns initiated by widening circles of activists in concert with this vision would, in turn, allow more impressive victories to occur, inspiring yet more people, and so on. The combination of a shared vision with clear victories expands the frontiers of the possible—hope is contagious and change happens quickly. As substantive gains are made and the lives of the poor improve, the solidarity of the peoples of the world deepens, and a new sense of identity as global citizens takes hold.

A GCM must be able to contest power and shape the global future—without

this there is no "movement," just a lot of chaotic activity. A shared vision needs to embrace "plural solutions"—alternative local and regional approaches that are compatible with global responsibilities and citizenship. Thus, a GCM will have different local and regional expressions, but share similar values. Leadership will be essential at all levels to help educate, coordinate, facilitate, and motivate. Such a process can only be built in stages, and each stage would mobilize more citizens and revise organizational structures and processes.

This movement would draw its energy from multiple sources. Certainly, local conditions and the struggle against direct oppression would be central. But more, it would be animated by concern with the well-being of the whole human family, with the fate of future generations, and with the sustainability of the broader web of life. Such a shift in consciousness toward a capacious cosmopolitan identity is a historic potential resonant with the objective conditions of deepening global connectivity. This is the hope of a Global Citizens Movement.

Appendix 1

A Typology of Global Civil Society Activity for Justice and Sustainability		
Type	Description	Examples
Global Forums	Civil society meets to share ideas, discuss experiences, and build community.	World Social Forum, NGO meetings accompanying major international summits (e.g., annual UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, etc.)
News and Information	Various initiatives enhance connectivity by providing information resources for civil society organizations and the wider public.	Inter Press Service, Sustainable Development Communications Network, Social Watch, Coalition for the International Criminal Court, Indymedia, etc.
Research Networks	Analysts from policy institutes and academia build the knowledge base for sustainable development and influence policy.	The Ring, Third World Network, Trade Knowledge Network, Trans National Institute, Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, International Forum on Globalization, Focus on the Global South, etc.

A Typology of Global Civil Society Activity for Justice and Sustainability		
Type	Description	Examples
Humanitarian and Development Aid	Organizations respond to natural disasters, genocides, famines, deforestation, extreme poverty, etc.	Oxfam, CARE, World Vision, Médecins Sans Frontières, Red Cross and Crescent, Catholic Relief Services, World Wildlife Fund, etc.
Global Campaigns and Protests	Coalitions address ongoing international policy debates, environmental and human rights issues, or mobilize action around specific events linking local place-based struggles to transnational networks.	Climate Action Network, ATTAC (Association pour la Taxation des Transactions pour l'Aide aux Citoyens), Global Forest Watch, World Movement for Democracy, Transparency International, Amnesty International, EarthAction, etc. Zapatistas in Mexico and protests of G-8, World Trade Organization, World Bank, and other global institutions as well as the war in Iraq, transnational corporations, etc.

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End Notes

- 1 With extensive advice, feedback, and support from Franck Amalric, drawing on his unpublished working paper, and other members of the Great Transition Initiative working group.
- 2 We borrow the concept of a Global Citizen's Movement from Raskin et al., (2002)
- 3 Latency in this context refers to the potential emergence of a new identity as people come to view themselves as part of a single global community united in human solidarity (See Raskin et al., 2002).
- 4 Civil society refers broadly to voluntary activity that is not strictly familial, governmental, or economic. As individuals, we are all members of civil society, participating in sports leagues, church groups, book clubs, or any organized activity with our neighbors. Civil society includes civic action by individuals, associations, foundations, faith-based groups, and nonprofit organizations, and has been active on a global level for centuries (initially in the form of missionary work) (Melucci, 1993).
- 5 While the rise of NGOs indicates a potentially profound shift in public engagement, we need to acknowledge that some NGOs are vehicles for corporate or special interests with little or no grassroots. Others are linked to fundamentalist groups or reactionary forces, corresponding to elements of the public threatened by the rapid pace of global change. Still, many others are engaged in the struggles for peace, justice, development, and environmental health. Smith (1998) finds that Transnational Social Movement Organizations (TSMOs) contribute to the formation

of social capital, even though these organizations do not generate routine, face-to-face contact among members. TSMOs provide an infrastructure that facilitates transnational communication and action, by cultivating transnational identities, and by developing a global public discourse.

6 The chart in appendix 1 offers an overview of civil society activity focusing on those efforts to create a just and sustainable world rooted in democratic principles.

7 In our view, globalization arises out of a centuries-long process that accelerated dramatically over the last fifty years (Scholte, 2000) and is qualitatively different from previous epochs of world capitalism (Robinson, 2004).

8 The Civil Rights movement provides an example of this change of consciousness when mainstream America's public opinion was galvanized from television news' depiction of the sheer violence – the beatings, fire hose blasts, and taunts – endured by the peaceful African American protestors on the streets (Berman & Murphy).

9 See Harcourt, et al. (2006) for more details on women's place-based initiatives.

10 La Via Campesina is an international movement of peasants, landless, rural women, small- and medium-sized producers indigenous people, agricultural workers, and rural youth. http://www.viacampesina.org/main_en/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=27&Itemid=44

11 Our understanding of Global Citizenship resonates with Oxfam's, and would include of necessity:

- awareness of the wider world and a sense of one's role as a world citizen;
- valuing diversity;
- some understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally;
- outrage at social injustice;
- participation in and contribution to the community at a range of levels from local to global;
- willingness to act to make the world a more sustainable place;
- taking responsibility for their actions.

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/teachers/globciti/whatis.htm>

12 Calling for "a different form of globalization, involving global citizenship rights" (della Porta, 2005), activists prefer terms like global justice, new-global, or words with no exact English translation, such as *altermondialiste*, or *Globalisierungskritiker*. Other examples of this include the "Global Democracy Movement" and "Global Solidarity Movement" (Milstein, 2001), and the "Progressive Movement" (Berg, 2003). Since there is not an agreed upon name for this contemporary movement phenomena, we will give it "Global Justice Movement" here.

13 Confusingly labeled by mass media as the "anti-globalization movement," most activists reject this term as an inaccurate characterization of diverse social movements which value cross-cultural exchanges, and even supranational governmental structures.

14 The World Economic Forum is an exclusive gathering of political and corporate elites, which takes place every January in the resort town of Davos, Switzerland.

15 Personal communication with members of the International Committee of the WSF (2005, 2006).

16 Although events are still unfolding, the socialist governments' disregard for indigenous community concerns in Venezuela are perhaps good illustrations of this point.

17 His argument that power must be contested in the cultural realm, ironically, has resonated strongly with the neo-conservatives and those active in the resurgence of the political right in the US (Epstein, 1991). Interestingly, some of the most prominent neo-conservative intellectuals had been active in the New Left during the 1960s, where Gramsci's ideas had a large influence.

18 Efforts such as the Apollo Alliance, which seeks to link labor, business, social justice, and environmental concerns by focusing on the agenda of energy independence, fall into this trap.

19 "The Principle of Constrained Pluralism" (paraphrased from Raskin, 2006b)

The basis for unity amidst diversity is found in the principle of Constrained Pluralism, which resolves the competing imperatives of global responsibility and regional autonomy; and includes three complementary ideas: irreducibility, subsidiary, and heterogeneity. Irreducibility means that certain issues are properly resolved at the global level of governance. A global society needs to ensure universal rights, the integrity of the biosphere, and the fair use of common planetary resources. Subsidiary sharply limits the scope of irreducible global authority. To promote effectiveness, transparency, and public participation, decision-making should be guided to the most local feasible level. Heterogeneity validates the rights of regions to pursue diverse forms of development constrained only by their obligations to conform to global responsibilities and principles. These constraints do not resolve all gray areas. They leave open much room for contention and interpretation. Politics and debates would continue within a Global Citizens Movement. See www.GTInitiative.org for further discussion.