World Citizenship: the individual and international governance·

by

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In a speech to students at a university, the rapper Chuck D of the group Public Enemy said: "the best American citizen is the citizen of the world." (Esquivel, 2006, p. B3). He touched on a theme that is becoming more common as globalization and interdependence affect individual lives everywhere. There is also a growing discourse about how this world will be governed. As Florini (2005, p. 15) says "This is where hard thinking is needed about what constitutes 'democracy' in the context of global governance. … Democracy requires two things: a system for providing people with a voice in the making of decisions that affect them and a mechanism for holding representatives accountable to those whom they represent." To this can be added a third, Democracy requires citizens who are able to exercise their voice and hold their representatives accountable. This implies world citizenship. But what does this mean?

Much of forward thinking in the world came from the transnational discussions of Pugwash, a venue where scientists from all parts of the world could discuss issues of common concern. The Pugwash Workshop in July 1994 dealt with the theme of world citizenship. As M.G.K. Menon (1997, pp.36-37), in a keynote article, states,

> Any call for strong international consensus raises fears of a tyrannical imposition of a uniform system of values on a highly pluralistic world. This need not be so; just as no reasonable nation imposes any such system on its citizens. International consensus should be a flexible, dynamic and minimalistic one, which respects the virtue of existing pluralism, and is based on a few irreducible values. The most important element is for each individual to extend his or her loyalty, beyond the now familiar groupings based on ethnicity, religion, community or nation, to the human race as a whole. That is the concept of world citizenship. Science and technology are increasingly taking us towards this.

In the context of academic examination of globalization, Caparaso (1997) made the same point in his presidential statement to the International Studies Association.

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In many of his statements, Boutros Boutros-Ghali spoke about the contradictory trends of globalization and fragmentation. Globalization, based on the increasing interdependence of the global economy pushes toward ever-larger organizational principles. Fragmentation, based on ever narrowing sources of identity such as ethnic group or locality, pulls in the opposite direction. *The Economist* (1995-1996), reflecting on the situation, published an article entitled "The Nation-State is dead.." in which it argued that Rosenau (1997) considers multilateralism as connected to levels of association.

Coping with globalization, avoiding fragmentation, stimulating voluntarism and achieving integration all can involve citizenship. But, at the global level, it will require a different understanding of what citizenship means.

This essay looks at what world citizenship might mean in the twenty-first century.

What is citizenship, anyway?

The concept of citizen is an old one. It is clearly defined in many dictionaries. The Random House Dictionary of the English Language defines it as "1. A native or naturalized member of a state or nation who owes allegiance to its government and is entitled to its protection. 2. An inhabitant of a city or town, esp. one entitled to its privileges or franchises." From this, citizenship is defined as "the state of being vested with the rights, privileges and duties of a citizen," and "the character of an individual viewed as a member of society; behavior in terms of the duties, obligations, and functions of a citizen." Behind this definition is an architecture of values and processes that reinforce or erode them.

Citizenship from Aristotle to the Scouts

Aristotle based much of his discussion of politics on the concept of citizen. After dismissing place of residence and certain legal rights as the basis for citizenship, Aristotle (1943) states: "He who has the power to take part in the deliberative or judicial administration of any state is said by us to be a citizen of that state. And speaking generally, a state is a body of citizens sufficing for the purposes of life." Embedded in this definition are three concepts: rights, responsibilities and authority, the architecture of citizenship. Citizenship requires all three.

A citizen has all of the rights granted to people in a given state. These are expressed in rules which specify what an individual may or may not do, and what the State may or may not do. They are usually defined in constitutions or other basic legislation. At a world level they are found in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, one of the first links between the international system and the individual.

Citizens have responsibilities as well. They are expected to vote, pay taxes, obey the law, and perform voluntary public service like serving on juries. Some of these are codified in law, but most are part of the normal expectations of behavior. While international

responsibilities are less clear than national ones, they increasingly involve expectations of behavior: as a tourist, one should not pollute or write graffiti on national monuments; one should recycle in the interest of a global good; one should not send SPAM on the Internet.

Moreover, citizens have authority. This is the central pillar in the architecture. Slaves may have rights and responsibilities, only citizens have authority over their governments. They provide the legitimacy to most governments (absolute monarchies based on Divine Right aside), based on the principle of consent of the governed. They may change government leaders and may determine what constitutes the common good. This idea of legitimacy that was posited by Max Weber as the most effective and least expensive form of power underlies democratic government. Citizen authority has, until recently, extended only as far as the nation-state; it has not reached the international system except on delegation to representatives of states.

Aristotle (1943, Chapter IV) answered the question of what makes a good citizen, by saying "...one citizen differs from another, but the salvation of the community is the common business of them all. This community is the state; the virtue of the citizen must therefore be relative to the state of which he is a member."

As a youth I was a member of the Boy Scouts of America. Embedded in its ideology was the development of citizenship. When I was a Boy Scout there was only one merit badge entitled citizenship. Now there are three: citizenship in the community, citizenship in the nation and citizenship in the world. The borders of citizenship are surely changing. In a similar vein, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girls Scouts' (WAGGGS) triennial theme for 1996-2002 was Building World Citizenship.[1] The current WAGGGS' Global Action Theme (GAT) is girls worldwide say "together we can change our world," which focuses on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

An analysis of the Boy Scout merit badge requirements is telling.[2] To earn the merit badge for citizenship in the nation, the scout must basically show an understanding of the structure of United States national political institutions, a curiously academic approach.

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[1] The report of the Theme states, "Through becoming involved in Building World Citizenship projects Girl Guides and Girl Scouts became aware of the reality that we all share one world from which we take every day, and recognised the necessity of giving something back. Positive local action taken all over the world had a global effect, and responsible local citizens became responsible world citizens." http://www.wagggsworld.org/aroundtheworld/projects/bwc/

[2] The requirements for all three are found at http://www.meritbadge.com/bsa/mb/index.htm

In contrast, the citizenship in the community merit badge requires a scout to participate in (or at least actively observe) local governance. [3]

The requirements for world citizenship, in contrast to the almost proforma approach to national citizenship, call for the scout to explain the meaning of citizenship by comparing two or more countries, describe the world in terms of a realist model (e.g. defining what is meant by "national interest") and show an understanding of multilateral institutions. Embedded in the requirements is a link between the individual scout and the international system, by requiring the scout to "(b) Explain how world trade and global competition affect the economy of your state and your community.

While, for the Boy and Girl Scouts, the borders of citizenship are changing, for levels above the community, the content is rather orthodox and abstract. Citizenship only has personal meaning at the community level.

What citizenship means to individuals

Seen from the individual perspective, citizenship is part of identity. Who we are is largely defined by our relationships with our environment. The relationship with the polity is citizenship: it tells us who we are politically.

It is different from nationality. When I was growing up in Western Minnesota and someone asked me, "what is your nationality?" my response (and that of any of my friends) would have been "Norwegian, English, German and French" referring to my ancestry. If you asked me, "what is your citizenship", I would have answered "American." The question would have been easier to ask in Europe, where nationality and citizenship often overlap, although not obviously, as was clearly shown in the break-up of the Soviet Union, the Yugoslav Federation and Czechoslovakia.

Individuals have hierarchies of loyalties as part of their identity. When Lyndon Johnson, asked who he was, answered "A free man, a U.S. Senator and a Democrat, in that order..." (Johnson, 1958, p. 17) he was expressing his own hierarchy. He could have

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[3] The requirements include: 4. Attend ONE: (a) County board meeting, (b) City council meeting, (c) School board meeting, and (d) municipal, county, or state court session. 5. After visiting the governmental meeting, obtain a copy of that body's published budget. Review the major sources of income and expenses for its operation with your counselor. 6. List the services your community provides to the citizens in return for the taxes paid by you and your parents. 7. Select a city county, or school problem or issue under consideration from the local newspaper or news broadcast and write a letter expressing your views to the mayor, administrator, or school board president. Show this letter and any response to your counselor. The requirements include: 4. Attend ONE: (a) County board meeting , (b) City council meeting, (c) School board meeting , (d) municipal, county, or state court session. 5. After visiting the governmental meeting, obtain a copy of that body's published budget. Review the major sources of income and expenses for its operation with your counselor. 6. List the services your community provides to the citizens in return for the taxes paid by you and your parents. … 8. List and describe the work of five volunteer organizations through which people in your community work together for the good of your community.

been, in some respects, a citizen at any level of the hierarchy, except, perhaps, party. He could have considered himself a citizen of the human race (i.e. the world), of a universal church, of his country, or of his state. Whether he would or not, would have depended on whether the level concerned provided him with rights, exacted responsibilities, provided a measure of protection and offered him access to governance.

Put another way, as individuals we have multiple anchors to our identity (family, community, religious affiliation, province and nation). Which one dominates is determined by the extent that we feel attached to it and the extent to which it does not compete with other anchors (the demands of the nation, for example, do not ask us to renounce our religion or our ethnic group). Community is based on public activity, participation is related to citizenship. Citizenship needs its own anchor.

The locus of citizenship has varied over history. In Aristotle's time it was the city. For centuries it was the empire. In the Middle Ages it was whatever boundary could be guaranteed by some lord. For the last two centuries, it has been the Nation-State, the normal anchor of citizenship today.

The increasing globalization of the economy, the spread of universal human rights norms, environmental interdependence, the communications revolution and the attending and increasing permeability of borders have reduced the capacity of the Nation-State to protect its citizens and solve their problems. Nation-states are increasingly failing. Certainly, absolute citizenship for an individual is no longer desirable, either for identity or for services.

What citizenship means for politics

In their classic study, Almond and Verba (1963) introduced the concept of "civic competence" as a key ingredient to the participant political culture that they argued was essential for democracy. Defined by a belief that an individual could influence government decisions, civic competence meant that the individual felt a commitment to the political system. It is the basis for political stability.

As Almond and Verba (1963, p. 163) put it:

> "The active influential citizen described in normative political theory is not excused from the obligations of the subject. If he participates in the making of the law, he is also expected to obey the law. It has, in fact, been argued that he has greater obligation to obey because of his participation."

The existence of active citizenship underlies claims for any level of government to legitimacy, the right to make decisions in the common good. Legitimate political decisions that are self-enforced because they are perceived to be right, are the basis for order. The notion of legitimacy as a normative structure was explored by Max Weber (1947) early in the Twentieth century.

If one considers oneself a citizen of something, one has to believe that one can influence decisions and one has to accept to abide by them. The Nation-state has provided that locus of citizenship, successfully when individuals believe that through their vote or their voice they help make political decisions and reciprocate by their behavior in paying taxes, doing public service and obeying the law. David Held's (1987, pp. 290-291) analysis of the working of democracy in the nation-state, led him to pose a model involving both the state and civil society that he calls "democratic autonomy", whose general conditions include:

- Open availability of information to ensure informed decisions in all public affairs
- Overall investment priorities set by government, but extensive market regulation of goods and labour
- Minimization of unaccountable power centers in public and private life
- Maintenance of institutional framework receptive to experiments with organizational forms
- Collective responsibility for mundane tasks and reduction of routine labour to minimum

At the international level, it is both harder to believe in influence and therefore less easy to reciprocate by behavior and the general conditions specified by Held may be difficult to meet.

But this too may be changing in an interdependent, globalizing world. Rosenau and Fagen (1997, p. 658) , for example, argue for a "fundamental transformation of the analytic and emotional skills of ordinary people" which requires treating their role "as a major variable in world politics."

A globalized, segmented citizenship

As States increasingly cede responsibility for regulation of public goods to international entities, or to the market, the perceived influence of an individual over political decision-making might be expected to decrease. There are no Almond and Verba-like studies of this phenomenon, although one is well overdue. Caparaso's (1997, p. 579) Presidential Address to the International Studies Association referred to "the domestification of international politics" as "the process by which [the international] system becomes less anarchic, more 'governmentalized' or more rule-governed."[1] He pointed out, however, that there was little literature on the phenomenon.

There are some probable consequences of the cession of responsibility from the Nation-State.

First, the Nation-State can be expected to be of lessening relative importance for citizenship. As the ability of the State to provide protection and services considered essential for the public good declines, so too will loyalty to it. As decisions taken become less important, the obligations accepted from those decisions will similarly become less

important. Perhaps this is reflected in declining turnouts at the polls in States where voting is not compulsory. The legitimacy of the State becomes lessened in proportion to the decline in its ability to deal with common concerns, as Rosenau (1992) has pointed out.

Second, there will be an increasing need to construct citizenship about issues that are now dealt with globally, but it will be a new type of citizenship, limited in scope and segmented. It can be a new anchor for identity, displacing in some ways the identity built on the Nation-State.

What is a "citizen of the world"?

To a certain extent, we are talking about a concept of "citizen of the world." The term exists in popular use, but mostly to refer to the image of certain urbane, suave and debonair sophisticates who, in their cosmopolitan behavior, seem to transcend national identification. Certain actors have been considered such, like George Sanders, David Niven, Maurice Chevalier or Omar Sharif.

A real citizen of the world would be one who senses an ability to influence global decisions and accepts behavior that is congruent with those decisions. It would be one who takes these decisions as legitimate. But it would be a citizenship limited by the scope of issues on which those decisions were taken. This is a more limited scope than those of the Nation-State and the citizenship derived from it would be partial or sectoral one.

What are global issues and what is civil society?

The issues whose resolution and management are devolving upon the international public sector are largely those that are concerned with what could be called the global commons. The commons can be seen as a policy space that:

> (a) is either outside national jurisdiction or the ability of national authorities to deal with it and therefore cannot be managed through or by the actions of individual nations, in an exercise of national sovereignty but rather it can only be managed by actions directed by the larger international community;
>
> (b) includes issues or phenomena which are of public interest and cannot be taken care of by the operations of the market.

While no inventory of issues that fall within the commons has yet been made, it would clearly include physical territories outside national jurisdiction like the deep seabed, the troposphere and outer space and Antarctica. It would also include issues related to phenomena that cross national boundaries in such a way that they cannot be regulated by national action, such as global warming, pandemics like HIV/AIDS, bandwidths and stationary orbit slots. It would encompass issues where, because of technology, the porous nature of borders and the interdependence of the global economy that need international solutions, including examples like regulation of the Internet, control of

international financial transfers, prevention of trafficking in illicit drugs, adjudication of trade disputes based on international norms and elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Increasingly it involves international enforcement of universal human rights norms as reflected in the work of international tribunals.

The most public of these are the issues related to the environment, where the ineffectuality of national action is most poignantly clear to the average person. The environmental area is where the emergence of a world citizenship is beginning to be seen, in the concepts of civil society and global governance.

The incorporation of civil society, defined as non-governmental actors, into international decision-making has become a major concern in the context, particularly, of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and its follow-up. It has even invaded the Security Council where, for the first time, non-governmental organizations have been allowed to address a body that represents State sovereignty at its extreme. The idea is that individuals, organized in interest groups, have a right to seek to influence international decisions. In terms of many of the texts adopted by the United Nations conferences of the 1990's, the impact of civil society on outcomes is very evident. The role of civil society in promoting international disarmament conventions was demonstrated by the adoption of the Landmine Convention.

The fact that international decision-making bodies recognize that individuals may by-pass their States to influence global policy is the beginning of recognition that there is something that might be termed "global civic competence" and the beginning of elements of world citizenship.

The communications revolution and global citizenship

There is no doubt that the process is made possible by the communications revolution. For much of the second half of the Twentieth Century, international institutions were, in an information sense, remote. Information about international problems and actions to address them was specialized and restricted. The "CNN effect" has given global priority to humanitarian and political issues that would have otherwise been remote or absent from the public consciousness.

It has begun to make the international public sector more accessible in terms of its ability to perceive what is happening within the international system. Documents of United Nations bodies used to be printed in 5000 copies only, distributed to foreign ministries, registered non-governmental organizations and a limited number of libraries. A capacity to mobilize people around global issues simply did not exist.

The rise of the Internet, as one aspect of the communications revolution, has changed this. United Nations (and indeed many individual government) documents are readily accessible. As one commentator put it, in arguing that the current volume of information leads to increasing specialization in information use, "The Internet does allow previously disinfranchised groups to communicate cheaply without geographic limitation." (Shenk,

1997, p. 23) It is possible for persons concerned with a given issue to exchange information easily and steadily. For the UN Expert Group Meeting on Empowerment, the possibility of remote participation has been created, and an on-line survey sent to provide input into its deliberations.

The fact that the United Nations conferences of the 1990's were transmitted over the Internet was one factor in their success. Even the largest of these, the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing, reached far beyond the 50,000 persons who physically went to Beijing. The women involved, for the issues of women's rights and advancement, are world citizens for that part of international public policy.

The growth of these new methods of communication can be expected both to erode further national barriers to participation and increase the number of sector or segments in which there will be a functioning civil society. The debates about reforming the machinery for assigning domain names in the Internet were powered primarily by non-governmental actors working with international agencies like the International Telecommunications Union and the World Intellectual Property Organization with governments in many ways being carried along by the tide.

The borderless nature of the Internet has caused some commentators to suggest that new types of communities will emerge. In his influential study, Nicholas Negroponte (1995, p. 7) asserts that:

> As we interconnect ourselves, many of the values of a nation-state will give way to those of both larger and smaller electronic communities. We will socialize in digital neighborhoods in which physical space will be irrelevant and time will play a different role. Twenty years from now, when you look out a window, what you see may be five thousand miles and six time zones away. When you watch an hour of television, it may have been delivered to your home in less than a second. Reading about Patagonia can include the sensory experience of going there. A book by William Buckley can be a conversation with him.

Negroponte sees a fragmentation of identity, but an equally plausible result would be an expansion and specialization of identity.

World citizenship: Creating a new Civic Competence

International solutions to global problems can only be obtained if people accept the decisions that are taken as legitimate and act so as to implement them by taking responsibility. The reduction of greenhouse gases will occur if people are willing to use new types of non-polluting energy (and pay for them in higher costs). International control of trafficking in illicit drugs will only be possible if demand for these drugs is reduced. International public management will only be possible if people continue to be willing to pay for international institutions. In short, world citizenship is a necessary pre-condition as well as a consequence of international action to deal with the commons.

The rights, responsibilities and authority underlying world citizenship, as a complement to national citizenship, have yet to be set out. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights still defines individual rights in terms of the State, not the international system. International programmatic statements like the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women are only now beginning to target some responsibilities to individuals.

The debate on the content of world citizenship would help place other discussions of global governance in context. It would help determine what international authority could mean.

It would be important to set out more clearly the relationship of the individual to world order in terms of rights and obligations. This would show the importance of world citizenship and its complementarity with the kinds of national and sub-national citizenship that have been taught in schools (and the Boy Scouts) for generations. The point made by Ana Maria Cetto (1997,p. 147.) at the Pugwash Workshop is important

> In this context there is a basis for education on global peace and world citizenship. The choice of the contents of the courses Is of course important, to ensure that the student learns from the early years about the history of civilizations and their legacies; nature and its evolution: the organization of social and political systems; the rich variety of peoples that cohabit on our planet, their cultures, their traditions and their values; about themselves as a human being; about their future rights and responsibilities as a citizen, and so on. This kind of knowledge is an absolutely necessary element of educating for world citizenship. However, in itself, it can hardly be successful if it is not accompanied by a Practice whereby the students learn basic norms of behaviour based on mutual respect, coexistence and cooperation, and face real dilemmas and conflicts of interest and learn to manage them in a peaceful way.

This approach to education would require a modification of most curricula, but the effect could be beneficial, even in terms of understanding national behavior. The fact that, at the international level, decisions have to be made largely by consensus could give important lessons for resolving national- and subnational-level conflict.

At the heart of the issue is finding out how to relate the individual to the international public sector, in terms of the issues for which public policies must be decided at the global level. It is the matter of creating a sense of world civic competence.

Following on Held's (1987) conditions for democratic autonomy, the issue is partly one of information access. The remoteness and technical nature of many policy issues need to be overcome by providing accessible news and analysis about them. It involves ensuring that the Internet is used to open up access. The Pugwash Workshop (Rotblat, 1997) made this point in a number of its chapters.

But information is processed through cognitive categories that are set in place through the education system. While schools in a number of countries, under the rubric of sustainability education, are beginning to introduce concepts like global climate and environment in the curriculum, nowhere is there a curriculum to discuss the new roles of the international public sector in this. The concepts behind world civic competence are not explicit and, as such, are not taught.

Of equal importance is information about the structure of the new international system. Knowledge about the United Nations system is poor. Absent an understanding of its structure, the ability of individuals to deal with it is perforce limited. But there are conceptual issues about how to describe the new international system: clearly the old realist paradigm does not work, but new paradigms like "the new institutionalism" as described by Oran Young (1994) are not accepted either.

Perhaps the greatest defect is that the discourse on global governance does not focus on the relationship between the individual and the new suprastate machinery in the terms that define citizenship. It does not consider how new world-based identity is being created and it does not look at how attitudes like civic competence can be developed with a world focus.

The present discourse does not examine the role of the institutions of international civil society to mediate in the creation of civic competence. Early in my career, my research examined an apparent contradiction: Venezuelan peasants, who were largely uneducated and had limited access to information, had levels of attitudes of civic competence as high as citizens of the United States (Mathiason and Powell, 1972). The reason was that their institutions, peasant unions, were perceived to mediate for them and therefore they could influence government decisions in the areas of greatest concern to them. Rather than civic competence leading to participation, it was participation in their organizations that led to civic competence. They rewarded the government by support. The question of the extent to which the specialized institutions of international civil society can provide that kind of mediation in terms of global governance needs to be asked.

The same phenomenon can be occurring at the international level. The most successful non-governmental organizations (the international analogs to the Venezuelan peasant unions) have been those that have found out how to influence decisions made by intergovernmental bodies and have, in the process, empowered their members. These include Amnesty International, which has shown to its members that they can affect human rights compliance in sovereign States by using the mass media. It includes the campaign to ban land-mines, where non-governmental organizations worked with sympathetic governments to promote a significant disarmament convention.

The preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, the largest United Nations conference in history until the 2012 Rio+20 conference, were heavily influenced by a vibrant, diverse and very effective group of non-governmental organizations (described in Anand, 1998). One of the agendas in preparing for the conference was to use it as an excuse for mobilizing women's groups around key issues and in the process showing

them both that they could influence international decision-making.[4] Reports from non-governmental organizations showed that the strategy has worked.

A similar situation has occurred among the community of persons with disabilities. The United Nations has begun the process of developing a human rights convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. Groups and organizations of persons with disabilities, who have difficulties traveling, have used the Internet to organize themselves and provide input to governments. This has been facilitated by the United Nations secretariat through a series of seminars that have been organized to enlist NGO participation.[5] In so doing, a significant population group has begun to develop their sense of civic competence in a way that may even be more effective than at the national level.

The influential Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a remarkable multi-stakeholder institution made up of governments, epistemic communities of scientists and civil society organizations, seeking a consensus on the nature of the problems to be addressed on climate change. It is a forerunner to similar organizations where a public-private consensus needs to be reached to address problems.

When events and structural changes seem to overwhelm existing concepts and paradigms, it is often useful to go back to first principles. Aristotle in his *Politics* and Almond and Verba in their *Civic Culture* went back to the individual to build their paradigms. It is perhaps opportune to do this now in the context of global governance and begin a discourse on the meaning of world citizenship.

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[4] The logic behind this is described in my self-published analysis of the United Nations and the women's movement (Mathiason, 2001).

[5] Reports and materials about these seminars are found on http://www.worldenable.net .

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