**The retreat of Global Public goods and Global Governance**

**and the search for Global citizenship**

*The owl of Minerva spreads its wing only with the coming of dusk (Hegel)*

**The context**

By any standards the postwar period led humanity into a world of increased interconnectedness and expanding global governance allowing for un-precedent gains in material welfare that took place in a context of limited international conflict and contained global security threats (Held, 2017).

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Source: World Development Indicators

It was not easy sailing and at many points in time the whole international order seemed to be in the brink of catastrophe[[1]](#footnote-1) or serious unraveling. It was also far from perfect, with increasing inequalities amongst nations in the first phase of the postwar period (1945-1970s) and increasing within country inequality afterwards (1970s-2019). But what is more important is that this period saw a major increase in inevitable interactions between people, businesses, countries and regions. These interactions were fueled by increasing capital penetration and mobility, migrant flows, knowledge sharing and communications. An originally small and relatively compact set of international institutions, norms and informal arrangements allowed and fueled such process of deepening globalization. Yet it is also true that such process was mostly led by capital and business and far less by political will and institutions especially after the 1970s. In the race between capital and coercion as vectors of global order and disorder the former predominated. And while capital became endowed with increasing rights for mobility, labor lagged behind. In factual and concrete reality capital also became a political global force while labor withered both at the global level and the national level. Finally global governance also lost the race with decreasing capacity to exert binding normative frameworks and decisions and with increasing fragmentation and loss of efficacy.

Held argues forcefully that the post-war global and national institutions, “put in place to create a peaceful and prosperous world order, established conditions under which a plethora of other social and economic processes, associated with globalization, could thrive. This allowed interdependence to deepen as new countries joined the global economy, companies expanded multi-nationally, and once distant people and places found themselves increasingly intertwined”. In a way it is the success of the postwar order that breeds today´s crises by deepening globalization and interdependence to levels that the old institutions can no longer manage. It is also true that the balance of power in the industrialized world between workers as national citizens and capitalist as global ones has become increasingly unbalanced in favor of the latter. Yet we want to argue that this state of affairs corresponds to a crisis that can also breed a new momentum in global governance. More forcefully we could argue that what we are seeing is precisely the last efforts of a dying order to retreat to a previous order, one of the sovereign nation state. Yet such an option is not only bad for it breeds nationalism and xenophobia, but also impossible, for the ties that today bind the world together will remain making inevitable interactions still in need of appropriate regulatory frameworks. Furthermore the global issue that we now confront and that are part of the goods and evil of the process of deepening globalization cannot be tackled with a return to autarchy. There is no way but forward. Forward in a human narrative that increasingly recognizes that a global reality requires a global order, and that a global order requires stronger, not weaker, forms of global authority. Ideally global democratic authority.

For that to happen many thing need to take place, but a prominent critical one is simple: we should set our goals at global citizenship. Even if such a goal seems utopian now, it is the correct general direction that we should strive for and the parameter against which we should evaluate each decision in matters of global architecture and governance. We are today living in a vicious circle that if uncontained and unbroken will lead to human catastrophe.



As Held once again notes these state of affairs and the horrible path that followed is not entirely unique: “The 1930s saw the rise of xenophobia and nationalism in the context of prolonged and protracted economic strife, the lingering impact of World War I, weak international institutions and a desperate search for scapegoats. The 2010s has notable parallels: the protracted fallout of the financial crisis, the clamour for protectionism, ineffective regional and international institutions, and a growing xenophobic discourse that places virtually all blame for every problem on some form of Other. In the 1930s the politics of accommodation gave way to the politics of dehumanisation, war and slaughter. In the 2010s, we are taking steps down a dangerously similar path. The question remains: will knowing this help us choose a different route?”

If we want to first stop the retreat

**The three levels of citizenship**

In 1949 Thomas Humphrey Marshall (or T.H. Marshall as he is commonly known), an institutional and historical sociologist gave a momentous lecture in the Alfred Marshall Foundation at Cambridge University where he laid out his idea of three distinct forms of citizenship that evolved sequentially in England throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th century[[2]](#footnote-2). He became famous for analytically differentiating civil, political and social citizenship as the foundation of modern democratic states. Yet as important as his description of the normative basis of each form of citizenship is, it is his historical analysis of their emergence, development and consolidation in England that provides a metaphor and a blueprint to think about global citizenship.

Regarding the analytical distinction Marshall states that:

“…the civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom-liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice. The last is of a different order from the others, because it is the right to defend and assert one's rights on terms of equality with others and by due process of law. This shows us that the institutions most directly associated with civil rights are the courts of justice. By the political element I mean the right to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body. The corresponding institutions are parliament and councils of 10cal government. By the social element I mean the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the fuIl in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society. The institutions most closely connected with it are the educational system and the social services”

Yet it is the next sentence that opens up his historical analyses:

“In early times these three strands were wound into a single thread. The rights were blended because the institutions were amalgamated”

No truly national form of citizenship existed. Locality or status, be it feudal, manor based, gild based, village based or city based, offered distinct sets of right and duties, and with the exception of cities, most of these right and duties as well as the institutions that upheld them were not differentiated along civil, political and social ones, but rather amalgamated and upheld at the local level by single institutional arrangements. This had definite implication for concrete people. Mobility was limited, different laws applied to different classes of people (lord and serf, noble and commoner), participation and voice in their local polities could exist, but none was granted outside such local level. Educational practices, common fields and access to resources, support to the infirm and elderly as form of social services and insurance did exist in different forms across the British Isles but again it was only provided to those born and dwelling in given communities or enclosed status systems.

Yet this state of affairs would prove ineffective and problematic because of the increasing inter-connectedness of people across localities –migration, trade, transport and the displacement and limits that markets brought to bear on labor, capital and common and collective goods- would tear asunder the local administration of these rights and duties and prove increasingly incapable of providing adequate rules for farther reaching, broader, and deeper social, political and economic interactions.

Thus civil citizenship is first and foremost a matter of freedom to move and freedom to work. It emerges in the wings of deep economic transformations that uproot commoners from collective or manor lands and then pushes them to cities were an embryonic notion of legal equality among economically unequal people slowly takes shape. These then extend to the general community or country. In Marshall words “…the old assumption that local and group monopolies were in the public interest, because 'trade and traffic cannot be maintained or increased without order and government', was replaced by the new assumption that such restrictions were an offence against the liberty of the subject and a menace to the prosperity of the nation”. Increasing trade, new forms and shapes of private property and a displacement of capital from country to city required a national functioning labor market. A national labor market could not coexist with both statute and custom that assumed that birth-place was destiny in work and dwelling”. Polanyi who Marshall read and quoted would go one step further: the end of “speenhamland” was the corollary of the maturity of and need to consolidate ad create national labor market and a market for lands that were not tied to blood lineage, gilds and local customs. The first form of citizenship is thus a consequence and a response by emerging national states to what markets through trade, labor mobility and capital mobility had already accomplished: the destruction of the locally and gilded based forms of belonging and dwelling. Political citizenship first, and with overlaps social citizenship later would follow as localities lost endogenous legitimacy and capacity to regulate the lives of people and nation states slowly took their place.

Political citizenship in particular follows a different route than civil citizenship. Political rights were defective not in content according to Marshall but in distribution –and to a certain extent in nature-. Thus, political citizenship at the national level was more about granting old rights to excluded populations than about changing its content. Still such movement did imply a change in the nature or the basis on which political citizenship rested: from acceptance of a new member in a previous entitled group by its members, to universal capabilities and rights granted to a class of people by the nation state. This also implied a change in the scope and specialized institutions where political power rested. Parliament no longer exerted functions that were close to justice distribution but gained power over localities in drafting law of the land. An inversion of power took place: deciding how to allocate justice in conflicting claims and action went to local and then national courts civil citizenship), determining laws that at the state level would allow for its binding action supported by the threat of coercion (taxation, national regulation, allocation of treasury resources) became centralized and located in the representative body of political citizenship: parliament.

Social Citizenship on the other hand has an even less straightforward and simple development. At first the Elizabethan laws and the relief act when read can be seen as a form of modern social citizenship that went well beyond basic relief. In a way these laws attempted to retain the local functions of the old locally based order by providing a safety net but only to those that belonged to the locality.

The three forms of citizenship were both the means to and the taming of capitalist expansion at the nation level. Broader territorial domains and functional defined institutions upheld and were part of this transformation. In Marshall words citizenship, modern citizenship, that is, “…involved a double process, of fusion and of separation. The fusion was geographical, the separation functional.” Such a process is now underway at a global scale. The fact that we see today the exact opposite of what Marshall would have predicted should not fool us. The reactionary political coalition that exists today also existed when the citizenship of the nation state was being built. But in the end order prevailed. And that order required according to Marshall these three forms of citizenship. This time is no different.

**Summarizing the context: Interconnectedness, global challenges and the limits of present day national and global governance**

**Capital, trade and migratory flows: the accelerated pace of globalization**

* <https://ourworldindata.org/trade-and-globalization>
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_financial_system>
* <https://www.socialeurope.eu/the-overlapping-crises-of-democracy-globalization-and-global-governance>

**Global public goods and public evils: free riders, lack of enforcement, and problems of coordination**

* Global macroeconomic stability
* Climate change
* Infectious diseases
* Global crime

**The democratic nation state under siege**

* The breakdown of sovereignty
* The democratic erosion
* The fragility of the micro-foundations of the democratic order
* The withering of traditional parties

**The three levels of citizenship**

* Global civil citizenship: international law, global courts and migrants’ rights
* Global political citizenship: the bodies of multilateralism (UN, IMF, WB, Regulatory bodies)
* Global social citizenship: UN, SEC rigths. Millenium Development Goals, and SDGs, financial framework and obligation in aid.

**Proposing a way forward: Better global governance for stronger global solidarity and citizenship**

**Fleshing out the utopia**

* Freedom of movement, international law at the individual level
* Representative body at UN from universal world suffrage
* Global taxes, binding transfers to countries and individuals (global basic income)
* etc.

**Mapping the transition**

* Scenarios (catastrophic, utopian, intermediate/muddling through)
* Defining explicit goals
* Moving forward on the three levels of citizenship
* The first steps from the old stepping-stones

**Implementing the transition**

* Pushing forward piecemeal but positive reforms and initiatives
* Integrating the various levels of governance (subsidiarity/efficiency/democratic deliberation; cities, regions, nations, interregional, supranational)
* The evolution of the nation state in the new globalized governance
* Mobilizing leaders and allies (NGOs, IOs, civil society, private companies, governments, academia, changemakers)
* Articulating the role of the West, the role of the East, the role of the Global South
* Making sense of progress on the global governance agenda
1. The cold war and the MAD doctrine led the world close to nuclear anihiliation not just potentially, but at times almost unleashed. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In strict terms Marshall identifies the first basis of civil citizenship in England to be present as early as the 12 century, with the . [↑](#footnote-ref-2)