

INTRODUCTION

VIOLENCE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF GLOBAL CIVILITY

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Only climate change has come to equal violence recently as a threat to the continued existence of human society. In each case it is the advance of technology that has brought us to stare this prospect in the face. The existence of nuclear weaponry raises the risks in great power confrontations to the point where they include the end of life as we know it on this planet.

Nearly half a century ago, Arnold Toynbee (1961: 278) wrote about technology: 'Used for destructive purposes, it has now also opened up the unprecedented prospect of our being able soon to wipe mankind and perhaps all other extant forms of life off the face of the earth.' Now the proliferation of nuclear weapons beyond the great powers, and their possible use by autocratic regimes, failed states and terror groups, brings a catastrophic culmination to the escalation of violence ever closer.

In the Global Civil Society Yearbook series (Kaldor and Muro 2002; Glasius and Kaldor 2002; Kaldor, Anheier and Glasius 2003) and elsewhere, Mary Kaldor (1999) has pointed to the contrast between old wars and new wars, between wars of nation states and violent conflicts conducted across boundaries or within failed states by non-state actors. Escalating violence in the new wars poses immense challenges to states and their established military. To none are these challenges greater than to the United States, which has responded to the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York City and the attack on the Pentagon in Washington, DC, on 11 September 2001 by declaring the 'war on terror'.

However, in such a war the casualties are not just buildings destroyed and people maimed and killed. The debate that rages among activists and policy analysts in many countries today is about the balance between security and liberty, and its implications for the very future of transnational civil society. Central to this debate is the complex role of civil society in the 'war on terror', the events it triggered, and the developments it spawned. George Soros (2006), billionaire financier and philanthropist, is one of many

social commentators who have written in scathing terms about the 'war on terror' as a misplaced metaphor. It envisages a war on an abstraction, which intrinsically can never be 'won', and places the United States and large parts of the international community it seeks to dominate or influence on a permanent war footing.

Civil society cannot evade issues of war and violence. While the first editions of the Yearbook reflect the intellectual heritage of what Mary Kaldor, in a 2000 Speaker Series at the London School of Economics, called the 'Spirit of 1989' in reference to the peaceful revolutions in central and eastern Europe, later editions show more emphasis on the 'dark side' of civil society, including acts of violence, and a growing concern about civil society shortcomings and failures (see Glasius and Kaldor 2002; Kaldor and Muro 2003; Anderson and Rieff 2004).

It is more than merely ironical, and perhaps also deeply tragic, that the development of the modern understandings of civil society has alternated with periods of violence. Adam Ferguson's early optimism about the state of European institutions that set them apart from the 'savage and uncivilised world' beyond was followed two generations later by Hegel's efforts to save the idea of civil society in the face of revolutionary terror at the heart of that self-described 'civilisation'. Moreover, we should recall that the recovery of the idea of civil society in eastern Europe at the time of perestroika occurred at a time when many were aware that one false step could have plunged the area into bloody conflict.

In Hegel's account, there was a virtual trade-off between the civil order the nation state preserved and its freedom to wage war. However, warfare between states is a greater threat to civil society than violence by non-state actors, because it is during war between states that civil liberties are suspended, when citizens are conscripted into armies, freedom of expression is restricted, privacy is invaded and the right to employment gives way to direction of labour. In times of war, civil society is virtually suspended and this

becomes a severe test of the entrenchment of democracy and liberty in the mores and habitus of a society. This is why Soros (2006) is right to point to the dangers of the 'war on terror'.

When one looks back, it now seems clear how much the Introduction of *Global Civil Society 2001* was in the spirit of Ferguson's optimism when it said that 'we might want to preserve the connotation of non-violent interaction based on equal rights while we disavow the Euro-centric assumption of savage vs. civilised people' (Anheier, Glasius and Kaldor 2001: 12). Six years later, in a world soaked in images portraying and even celebrating death and destruction, carnage and brutality, we can be more emphatic. The development of the idea of civil society is entwined with the experience of conflict and the management of violence.

In this Introduction, we try to come to terms with the 'apparent ironical alternation' of civil society and violence – a task that requires us to adopt both a long-term and a theoretical perspective. Civil society in the time of old wars acknowledged a state monopoly on the means of violence as the price for securing periods of peace in which it could thrive. There is no partner global state with which civil society can make the same deal today, and global civil society has grown strong riding on the back of the very processes of globalisation that have provided fertile soil for the new wars.

New means of communication and travel, diasporas, global media events, the international arms trade, the exposure of local communities to global markets, and the worldwide mobilisation of protest are all forces that weaken the protection of civil society by the armed nation state; and global civil society is often viewed by the state as a source of disorder rather than of civility and good citizenship.

Whatever arguments there are about their moral equivalence, the restrictions on foreign-based non-governmental organisations in Putin's Russia point in the same direction as detention without trial in Blair's Britain or Bush's America. Equally, civil society is wooed by the state as a partner in mitigating conflict, enhancing solidarity and creating security. In this global age (Albrow 1996) state, culture and economy are de-linked and de-centred, crossing national boundaries, rivalling each other in their claims on individuals. Civil society is an arena of contested and competing values, a source of legitimacy with

potential for political mobilisation, impossible to ignore for states that find their military power inadequate for achieving peace and security when the sources of instability are not rooted in inter-state rivalries.

In the new field of forces in a globalising world, global civil society has achieved a degree of autonomy that was always implicit in the rights to free speech and association that the eighteenth-century proponents of civil society advocated. The advocates of those freedoms acknowledged the need for the state to defend them, but in their political economy they saw their scope extending beyond boundaries to underpin worldwide markets. Reacting to the consequences of free trade, it was free association across countries that led to the international labour movement. The universalism of those ideas from earlier centuries, plus the longstanding cosmopolitanism of academic and cultural elites, allied with the communication possibilities of our time, has helped shape today's global civil society.

Free association and free speech inherently tend to that intensification of conflict between values, which in Max Weber's (1919/1948) pessimistic world view was the mark of rationalised modernity. For him the armoury of the nation-state was the irrational bearer and arbiter of these conflicts. The potential for collective self-destruction today could induce an even bleaker mood save that this very prospect forces global civil society to look beyond states for non-violent ways of resolving conflicts.

However, we cannot take the relative autonomy that global civil society has achieved for granted. On the one hand, wooed by states, its goals can be subverted to reinforce the tendencies it aims to resist. On the other hand, its independence from the nation state can make it a scapegoat for failures in times of war. Courted by groups opposed to governments it can find itself in very non-civil company. Asserting civil liberties against authoritarian regimes it can find itself allied with resistance movements that see violence as a legitimate last resort. Therefore, engagement with issues of conflict and violence is not marginal to civil society but defining for its future. There are two main reasons for this. First, if civil liberty is no longer simply a concession granted in peacetime by the sovereign state, global civil society has to come to a fuller realisation of the values and principles on which it is based, and to develop its own

solutions to conflicts that will prevent them escalating into violence that destroys victims and perpetrators alike. Second, contemporary developments in civil society require an emphatic assertion that its autonomy is justified by commitment to principles of tolerance and the non-violent resolution of conflicts. Its contribution to the realisation of these principles is independent of anything states might or might not do. We base this assertion not simply in faith in the core ideas of civil society, but also in the light of a long social scientific tradition of theory and research into conflict resolution and management.

Civil society is the beneficiary of institutional arrangements developed within state frameworks in the modern period. Those have been the outcome, in large part, of historic accommodations between parties to conflicts where a common interest in resolving differences has outweighed even long-standing mutual antipathies. The capital-labour settlement in Western democracies is a prime example, and that was significantly informed by a tradition of thought represented above all by Georg Simmel (1983), Lewis Coser (1956) and Ralf Dahrendorf (1994), which treated conflict as a social relation that, managed effectively, could have positive outcomes for the broader social configuration in which it was embedded.

Conflicts are culturally and socially embedded, even if the issues are about resources such as territory or oil (for water, see Willemijn Dicke et al. in Chapter 5 of this volume) or other economic interests like capital-labour disputes. They are typically related to tensions between values and interests, arising particularly during accelerated economic and social change. The current impact of globalisation is an obvious case in point. Tensions can result in the 'creative conflicts' that sociologists such as Dahrendorf (1994) have written about, and the 'creative destruction' of existing models and practices that economists such as Schumpeter (1942/1962) and others identified.

Indeed, the dynamism of civil society is related to such 'creative' handling of conflicts. Harnessing them through adequate institutions and ways of conflict regulation in an era of globalisation is a key challenge not just for public policy makers. The civil society that claims freedom for itself must also take on responsibilities, to help identify potential conflicts, manage existing ones, and contribute to non-violent ways and means of conflict resolution. This

Introduction aims to encourage all those who take on those heavy responsibilities.

Civil society and violence in historical perspective

We want to emphasize the mutually defining nature of violence and civility in social life which renders our 'apparent ironical alternation' possible. Even in its absence, violence always threatens to occupy the space that civility vacates. Thomas Hobbes viewed violence as primordial. Life in his state of nature was 'nasty, brutish and short', peace being secured in civil society. Modern experience has taught us to be less confident. We know that the simplest societies can manage conflict, while conversely the potential for violence is ever-present in the most modern societies. If the legitimate monopoly on acts of violence asserted by a governing agency gives rise to a civil sphere of life, that monopoly has never extended to all violence, as Jenny Pearce shows in her account of the gendering of violence in private and public spaces in Chapter 2 of this volume. Legitimate violence has not been confined to modern state agencies. The right to bear arms and to use them in self-defence is fervently asserted in both strong and weak states, in the United States as much as in Afghanistan.

Civil society has historically developed in conjunction with the centralisation of power and the development of specialised military institutions. Great empires, such as the Chinese, Roman and Ottoman, achieved at various times a pacification based on specialised military organisation. The significance of the origins of Western ideas of citizenship and legal institutions in the expansion of the Roman empire from a city state is evident in the shared etymology of the terms: city, citizenship, civil, civility and civilisation.

We owe to Norbert Elias (2000) the disclosure of the intimate connections between modern Western notions of civility in interpersonal relations and public behaviour in the growth of centralised states in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. He pointed to the standards of behaviour required in the princely courts that regulated and removed the resort to violence in interpersonal conflict and that stemmed from the ruler's claim to monopolise the means of violence. Many princes ruled effectively over no more than city states, and Max Weber (1914/1978: 1239) drew attention to the revolutionary effect of medieval

cities in dissolving feudal bonds and creating the free association of citizens. 'Stadtluft macht frei', was the old adage, 'city air makes free', a principle understood by black people fleeing their masters in nineteenth-century United States as much as by medieval serfs escaping their lords.

Civility and free association, a non-violent space of discourse and behaviour, became a potent combination when guaranteed by increasingly powerful national states anxious to align themselves with the rising bourgeois classes of early modern Europe. The growth of this space resulted in the 'civil society' of the eighteenth century, an intimate blend of political and economic institutions, that demonstrated, however, a capacity for mobilisation and self-defence when it came into conflict with an older aristocratic, feudal order.

The resulting violence of the American and French Revolutions, fought in the name of freedom and democracy, has left a permanent reminder of the potential of civil society to adopt a quite different posture if its existence is threatened. Later, both the Second World War and the Cold War demonstrated that deep commitment to ideals fortifies and strengthens solidarity in times of conflict, even to the point of abandoning those ideals where the society's existence is endangered. Armed conflict always puts civil society in jeopardy; it is suspended in time of war, lost if the war is lost, and regained in peace only through resolute advocacy and clear-minded reconstruction.

The last three centuries have experienced the evolution of civil society through alternating periods of peace and war, while the transformation of technology and economy present it with a quite different set of challenges from those it faced in the revolutionary period of Western history. But the idea of global civil society is just as much borne by, and a response to, globalisation as eighteenth century civil society was inextricably linked with the rise of capitalism. Violence could not be ignored then, and neither can we fail to respond to the popular and political currents following the events of 9/11 and their aftermath.

We need to ask how globality makes a difference; and specifically, if civil society requires a state order to guarantee the peaceful conditions of its continued existence, when national states are relatively less able to exercise control, can global civil society thrive

without a global equivalent to the state, whatever it may be called? Global civil society may often resist the forces of economic globalisation but at the same time it draws strength from increased opportunities for transnational mobilisation and organising. In the absence of a global state does it have the capacity to fill the resulting void?

Indeed, intimate, even symbiotic, relations between civil society, war and conflict, long established in a frame of nation-state competition, as Mary Kaldor, Denisa Kostovicova and Yahia Said explore in Chapter 4, emphasize how global civil society becomes an even more active and responsible player in armed conflict situations where nation states are no longer sole protagonists.

What is at stake is the degree of autonomy and control global civil society can secure in promoting non-violent conditions of life. The configurations of state, economy and society in our global age are new and continually evolving. We are increasingly aware of the limited effectiveness of military intervention and the growing importance of soft power. For this reason we need to examine the scope that civil society has for expanding its influence and mitigating violence.

Conflict, institutions and globalisation

While wars might be fought in the name of free society, such is their intrusion into rights that, when won, democracy has to struggle to re-emerge in the aftermath. Even so, the struggle can be won, as the settlement after the Second World War showed, involving as it did the greatest advance in human freedom in history, with the establishment of the United Nations and the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while the development of international institutions has proceeded with no significant check ever since, until perhaps – and we can't yet be sure – the present time.

This international system, aided by and part of the Cold War, helped introduce a system of conflict management. To be sure, power continued to play a crucial role, closely linked to resource availability and legitimacy, as well as to the potential of inflicting violence and the deployment of military means. Conflicts, be they violent or not, are a clash of power, a pushing and pulling, giving and taking. In this balancing process of powers confronting each other, the capabilities of those involved vary and may shift. In other words, conflicts are dynamic and rarely static.

With the end of the Cold War and a weakened system of international governance, many conflicts were 'freed up' and became re-energised, and new ones engendered.

Sociologists such as Dahrendorf (1994) remind us that conflicts are manifest tensions that arise from perceived disagreements, as opposed to latent tensions where parties may be largely unaware of the level of threat and power capabilities. Once conflicts are manifest, the conditions for communicating, mobilising and organising are critical for their process and outcome. It is precisely the wider availability of information technology such as the Internet, combined with a steep decline in communication costs, which facilitates the transformation of latent into manifest conflicts. Political entrepreneurs, activists and ideologues of many kinds find access to the means of mobilisation easier than in the past. At the same time, the capacity to keep movements in check and violent-free has not kept pace.

The mismatch between the potential for mobilisation and the capacity for controlling it stands in marked contrast to the period after the Second World War and the Cold War. This period emphasized containment, control and predictability of inter-state conflicts, including domestic ones. By doing so, it also provided the reference point for national civil societies. The transnational conflicts of the early twenty-first century are different, as Kaldor (1999) points out, and require new institutional responses in conflict management. What institutions come to mind in this respect? Again, the sociology of conflict helps in suggesting answers.

While modern societies are conflict-prone they tend to seek ways and means of managing, that is, institutionalising conflicts (panels, hearings, political parties, social movements, judiciary, and so on) rather than seeking settlement through power domination alone (Dahrendorf 1994), including violence. Such institutionalised conflicts are seen as creative conflicts that reduce the amount of tensions that could otherwise build up along major societal cleavage structures. Such tensions could threaten the social fabric of societies, while managed conflicts contribute to social stability and 'tamed' social change. Could we think of global civil society as a means of institutionalising conflicts and preventing them from becoming violent?

However, over-institutionalisation of conflicts can

create inertia and stifle social change and innovation, whereas under-institutionalisation can lead to conflicts spreading into other fields and generating unintended consequences. Moreover, deep-seated core conflicts (for example, labour versus capital, value conflicts, ethnic conflicts) have the tendency to amass complicating factors around them that in the end can make some of them intractable. Such basic insights into the sociology of conflict are useful because they allow us to probe deeper into the alternating relationship between violence and civil society.

Institutions that mitigate violence within states are strengthened by the state's successful assertion of a monopoly of the means of legitimate violence. But the international system of sovereign states has also developed mechanisms to reduce the likelihood of war. Alliances, security pacts and a framework of law for the settlement of disputes, in addition to an American hegemony in conventional armed forces, have reduced the incidence and likelihood of international disputes culminating in war. Civil society has flourished for a long period without interruption from a major war.

At the same time, a new challenge has arisen and threatens state institutions and hence also civil society. In part it arises from, and is assisted by, the same set of globalising forces that favour the rise of civil society, and this affinity is sufficient for many to discredit the 'civilising power' of civil society altogether. Terror groups operate across borders employing the new means of communication, transportation, media and messaging, including smart weapons. They appeal to values that are beyond the nation state and at the same time exploit the freedoms of movement, association and speech that the democratic state serves to protect. They attack non-military targets and the civilian population. Indeed, they are an even greater challenge to civil society than they are to the state.

Let us summarise the reasons for that emphatic statement, first taking a brief overview of that challenge. In summary, these are the main issues:

- Cross-border terror provokes state reactions against non-state actors elsewhere and undermines international law.
- Non-state terror groups negate civil society and state institutions where they enjoy support.

- Terror groups employ and therefore damage civil society's access to global media, and hence undermine the mobilisation capacity civil society could have.
- Cross-border terror promotes reactionary xenophobia and repressive state action.

Thus, the danger cross-border terror poses to global civil society is the prospect of either a reversion to an international system of repressive states or the expansion of a global imperial state. At best, cross-border terror is a temporary diversion of civil society's attention and energies that could be allocated to peaceful conflict settlement and resolution, and, of course, to pressing issues like the environment, economic development, access to health care and education; at worst, cross-border terror depletes the enabling political, legal and social environment that global civil society requires for its sustainability.

It may well be too early to pass judgement on outcomes. At present, global civil society's response is in the balance, and the medium to long-term outcome will depend on how it manages to resolve the following issues:

- What are the limits of global civil society's intervention in national state-civil society relations?
- Can global civil society intervene effectively in areas where global terror groups are active?
- Can global civil society accommodate cross-border value conflicts?
- Are the causes terror groups espouse invalidated by their use of terror?
- Does global civil society now require the development of global state institutions to meet the threat of cross-border terror?

The severity and far-reaching implications of these unresolved issues suggest global civil society may indeed have reached a critical juncture. Global civil society actors can no longer avoid taking a position on violence for just causes, but if they are to assert themselves in the name of civil society they can hardly avoid contributing to the creation of institutions globally that are equivalent to those that sustain civil society within states. Global governance is then not an optional interest for civil society – its very future, globally and nationally, depends on it. Indeed, global civil society has to engage in profound self-

examination, the importance of which extends beyond itself and to the international community at large. The global conditions for its own continued existence may even be those for the survival of humankind.

The institutionalisation of conflict as understood in the past has been associated with the growth of rules of engagement and mediating agencies that channel and divert antagonisms before they reach violent confrontation, rather than remove them. Within nation states conflict management has relied both on the state's guarantee backed by legitimate use of force and the parties' perceived self-interest in observing the rules. In the international arena national self-interest is a more important factor given that hegemonic force can only acquire fitful legitimacy on a case-by-case basis. Nationally and internationally the nation state has been the key actor.

To be sure, in the past, the internationalism of the labour movement was recognised as a fundamental threat by the capitalist class, but this was a conflict replicated in each country, and each national solution contributed to a reduction of the threat of class warfare across boundaries, especially when during the Cold War the Soviet Union subverted labour internationalism for its own interest. Globalisation has come to challenge that model radically since 1989.

Globalisation processes penetrate and change the 'causal chemistry' and 'fabric' of existing conflicts, as well as emerging and re-emerging ones. By involving more frequent movements of objects, meanings and people across transnational space, they lead to a greater exposure of different audiences to each other, and to more frequent and intense contact between world views. Such contacts may challenge or reinforce long-held cultural assumptions about the world, identity and meaning, and they may also increase the frequency of 'meshing' and depths of interpenetration, including acceptance and rejection as well as patterns of innovation and diffusion. Whatever the outcome, such contacts also contribute to greater conflict potential (see Anheier and Isar 2007).

By implication, they also change the capacity of institutions, including civil society, to deal with conflicts. What the Danish cartoon crisis and other such developments point to is the importance of value systems and world views in conflicts and conflict management.

The Danish cartoon controversy has been one of the

defining events of the year for global civil society (see Box 1.1). It has been at the confluence of three critical points of controversy for any global order: the relations between the national and the global, between the public and the private, and between the right to free expression and the right to respect. State and civil society actors have been involved in a turmoil that shows how the failure to define their relations in a global frame threatens the national existence of the civil sphere.

The publication of 12 cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammed in *Jyllands Posten* on 30 September 2005, and media coverage of the subsequent series of events it initiated, became effectively a running commentary on conflicts in global society today. The parties to those events have also been willing to raise the temperature, to escalate the conflict, taking supporters and opponents with them.

The culture editor of the Danish newspaper who took the decision to publish has described his own motives (Rose 2006). Flemming Rose hoped to generate a debate 'to test the limits of self-censorship by calling on cartoonists to challenge a Muslim taboo', claiming that the subsequent establishment of a 'network of moderate Muslims' committed to the Danish constitution, and the call by the right-wing People's Party to its members to distinguish moderate Muslims from Sharia law proponents, vindicated his decision. But, while he claimed positive consequences for Denmark and Europe, the 'tragic demonstrations' in the Middle East and Asia were certainly negative.

Rose invokes Karl Popper's declaration that we cannot tolerate the intolerant and argues that giving incidental offence should not restrict freedom of expression. In other words, he claims an intentional and principled act in defence of European values, while not anticipating reaction in the rest of the world. Rose knew then he would offend many Muslims in Denmark, but asks us to accept he was naive about reaction in the rest of the world. But if the problem for him was the lack of integration into Danish society of an immigrant population, surely the counterpart of that had to be the likelihood of reaction from those with whom they sustained close bonds, namely, Muslims elsewhere. General experience is that communities and governments retain a strong interest in diaspora citizens. Moreover, in adopting a

role as defender of European, not simply Danish, values Rose contributes to the civilisational debate that preoccupies public intellectuals globally.

Rose's decision to commission and publish the cartoons was followed by decisions to republish in some form by editors in many countries, Muslim and non-Muslim. None of them could claim to be doing this unwittingly, because they were aware of protests, demonstrations and riots that were widely publicised and spread to more than 50 countries, including Iran, Indonesia, India, and Thailand. On 20 October 2005 ambassadors from ten Islamic countries complained about the cartoons to the Danish prime minister.

In Western countries Muslims sought to put their views within the public frame of protest. In Britain the Muslim Association of Britain called a rally in Trafalgar Square, London, on 11 February 2006. Spokesperson Anas Altikriti had three messages: to Britain that they were seeking to bridge the gap between Islam and the West; to Europe that Islamophobic caricatures are unacceptable; and to Muslims that 'a large number of people are on the side of reconciliation' (Muslim Association of Britain 2006). Altikriti was more clear than Rose that relations between Islam and the West were at stake.

The rapid escalation of conflict over the cartoons up to a declaration of a civilisational clash illustrates the failure of both states and global civil society either to create institutions to manage cross-border cultural conflicts of this scale or to address the causes of conflict. The historical experience of the Western nation state with class conflicts was that state provision of security and welfare, coupled with a rise in prosperity for all classes, was necessary to reduce the deprivation and grievance that could breed violent social upheaval. Co-optation into the system is not enough without delivery of goods that the system has hitherto failed to provide.

Globalisation processes, being pervasive and therefore often equated with our world as a whole, have become the target for those seeking to redress the imbalances and injustices in that system. Institutionalisation, equated with absorption into a global system, is then often seen as a cause for the inability of the system to change. It was resistance to this process by the anti-globalisation movement that captured global media attention when its demonstrations brought the Seattle meetings of the World Trade Organization (WTO), in December 1999, to a premature end.

Box 1.1: The cartoon controversy: from local test to global crisis

On 30 September 2005 *Jyllands-Posten*, a daily newspaper in Denmark, published an article titled 'Muhammad's face' accompanied by 12 cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad, an act prohibited by Islamic law in avoidance of idolatry. The cartoons also associated Islam with terrorism; one cartoon depicted Mohammed's turban in the shape of a bomb. By publishing the cartoons the paper sought to test the limits of self-censorship in the Danish media. In the past it had had difficulty finding illustrators willing to depict the Prophet out of fear of offending local Muslims (*Jyllands-Posten* 2006).

Immediately after publication, aside from a group of Danish Muslims who protested outside the offices of *Jyllands-Posten*, little notice was taken of the cartoons. But by early October many ambassadors representing Muslim countries in Copenhagen had received petitions from Danish Muslim organisations expressing anger over the cartoons. Eleven of these ambassadors wrote to Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Danish Prime Minister, requesting a meeting to discuss the 'demeaning' caricatures and what they called an 'on-going smearing campaign in Danish public circles and media against Islam and Muslims'. They also asked the Prime Minister to take 'all those responsible to task', referring to the editors of *Jyllands-Posten* (Letter to Prime Minister, Rasmussen 2005). In his response, the Prime Minister turned down the request for a meeting, reaffirmed Danish society's respect for freedom of expression and suggested 'offended parties' bring their case to Danish courts (Rasmussen 2005).

Angered by the Prime Minister's refusal to meet, a delegation of Danish imams travelled throughout the Middle East for the next two months with the aim of gathering support for a protest against the drawings and for pressing the Danish government to condemn the cartoons (Schofield 2006). They took with them a 43-page dossier that included the original 12 cartoons published in *Jyllands-Posten* and other offensive and perverse images never published by the paper. The imams said the images were hate mail from fellow Danes, but this has never been confirmed (Spiegel Online 2006).

By targeting prominent Muslim scholars, politicians and muftis (experts in Islamic law), the delegation, in combination with the power of mass communication, globalised the cartoons. The contents of the portfolio spread across the Middle East and soon protestors began to gather outside the Danish and Norwegian embassies (Norway's *Magazinete* had published the cartoons in early January) to show their anger over the disrespect, abuse and 'demonisation' of Islam, which they felt the publication of the cartoons represented (BBC News 2006b). Protestors burned flags, chanted anti-Danish and anti-Norwegian slogans, and demanded an apology from *Jyllands-Posten* and the Danish government.

Initially, both *Jyllands-Posten* and the Danish Prime Minister refused to give an official apology, citing the right to freedom of speech and of the press, respectively. But massive protests by offended Muslims from Qatar to Palestine, combined with a Saudi-initiated region-wide boycott of Danish goods, persuaded the newspaper to change its mind. On 30 January *Jyllands-Posten* posted an apology on its website in English, Arabic and Danish for having 'indisputably offended many Muslims', but not for the publication of the cartoons themselves because this was in accordance with Danish law (Juste 2006). The next day, *Magazinete* apologised as well. The Danish Prime Minister welcomed the move, but he did not follow suit, continuing to uphold the freedom of Denmark's press.

Meanwhile, more European newspapers (in Spain, France, Germany, Poland, Finland, Portugal, Sweden, Italy, and others) decided to republish some or all of the cartoons in solidarity with *Jyllands-Posten* and *Magazinete* and in defence of freedom of speech. Many Muslims saw republication as provocation, and as a result the protests amplified in number, geographic scope and target – from Denmark and Norway to Europe and the 'West' more generally.

In total, more than 1 million Muslims protested in more than 30 countries on every continent. While the majority of protests passed peacefully, some were violent, involving demonstrators affiliated with extremist or militant Islamic organisations, who threw rocks, clashed with police, and burned vehicles, restaurants, banks and embassies. In Nigeria, a nation nearly equally divided between Muslims and Christians and no stranger to sectarian violence, the cartoons sparked brutal inter-religious killings (*Agence France Presse* 2006). Many

protestors chanted violent slogans such as 'Death to Denmark' (Bilefsky 2006) and 'Hang those who insulted the prophet' (*Daily Times* 2006). More ominously, in Sudan, demonstrators shouted 'Strike, Strike Bin Laden' (scotsman.com 2006), and in London, '9/11, we want more' (Hawkins 2006). Osama bin Laden, leader of Al-Qaeda, produced a video tape aired by Al-Jazeera, urging his followers to murder those who published the cartoons (Bansal 2006).

On the diplomatic front, the violent reaction was widely condemned by government leaders and those representing multilateral bodies such as the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), the United Nations and the European Union. In the same breath that they denounced the cartoons, many mainstream Muslim community leaders distanced themselves from the rioters (BBC News 2006a). However some leaders and analysts, most notably Condoleezza Rice, US Secretary of State, suspected that in those states led or influenced by Islamic extremist groups, governments (or opposition factions within them) indirectly or directly encouraged anti-'Western' violence in an attempt to profit from their citizens' ire over cartoons for their own political gain (Asia-Pacific News 2006). This is thought to be the case with the violent protests in Syria, a police state where little activity takes place in public without the sanction of the government (TMCnet News 2006). Similarly, in Lebanon, half of those arrested were found to be either Palestinian or Syrian nationals (Bilefsky 2006). Other Muslim leaders, such as those gathered at a summit of the OIC in early February, blamed the violent reaction to the cartoons on Muslims' disapproval of the US-led 'war on terror'.

Apart from the human costs, the cartoon controversy caused considerable political fallout. At least four cabinet-level ministers resigned (Karen 2006), many editors were fired, at least five were arrested, and newspapers in at least five different countries were shut down entirely (Wikipedia URL). Diplomatic relations between many nations worsened, or were cut off altogether. Many ambassadors to Denmark were recalled, over a dozen Scandinavian embassies were closed, Danish citizens were evacuated from their residences and travels in the Middle East and parts of Africa and Asia, fatwas were issued and bomb threats made against the editors and offices of *Jyllands-Posten*. The boycott of Danish products in the Middle East cost Danish exporters an estimated US\$30 million (Janardhan 2006). Worse yet, the cartoons served to agitate extremist Islamic organisations that employ terrorism and other forms of violence. Denmark's Prime Minister declared that the cartoon controversy represented Denmark's 'biggest foreign policy challenge since the Second World War' (Guardian Unlimited 2006).

That the publication of 12 cartoons by a small Danish newspaper can trigger a conflict of such global reach and intensity is revealing of the degree to which contemporary society has become truly 'globalised'. The initiation and prolongation of this conflict relied on global communication in order to propagate the cartoons, the subsequent apologies, and media images of protestors with their various placards and banners. It also made possible the website activism, email and text-messaging capacity that united protestors.

This box is based on the author's MSc dissertation 'The Cartoon Controversy: Prelude to a Clash of Civilizations?'

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This was the backlash by identities and interests challenged by globalisation that Richard Falk (1993: 48) predicted and which UNRISD (1995) reported as 'states of disarray', including violence as a consequence. The UN offered a forum to civil society in its global conferences but Falk envisaged also a statist backlash against civil society (1999:102–3), perhaps best exemplified in the growing American disdain for the UN.

A recursive process of state co-optation accompanied by successive waves of anti-institutionalism within civil society continues unabated. Anti-globalisation was succeeded by the positive programmes of the World Social Forums with commitment to non-violence (see Glasius and Timms 2006). Geoffrey Pleyers shows (Box 1.2) how resistance to being institutionalised in civil society has led others to adopt the 'alter-global' quest for a 'new culture of politics', escaping the oxymoron of 'organising worldwide to defeat globalization'. Backlash against global civil society comes then from two opposite corners: from states and from those seeking radical alternatives to institutionalisation.

There is no safe haven for NGOs, working for or against states. In Afghanistan in 2005 the UN's World Food Programme Afghanistan (2005) reported it was working through 196 local and international NGOs while facing major security problems. An organisation such as CARE, with 12,000 staff worldwide collaborating with state agencies in conflict zones, lost one worker, Margaret Hassan, to murder in Iraq in 2004; had another, Clementina Cantoni, kidnapped in Afghanistan in May 2005; and had its Kabul offices demolished in a riot on 29 May 2006. Being for or against state solutions cannot protect civil society organisations nor absolve them from adopting their own explicit policies and procedures for dealing with violence and its justifications, as Heba Raouf Ezzat and Mary Kaldor show in Chapter 1.

Toward global civility

In fact it is the multiplicity of globalisation processes, their contradictory tendencies and unregulated development that makes the world of today so dangerous (see Berger 1998). The intensity and frequency of encounters between adherents of different values and world views result from the freedom that states have in part given, in part been forced to relinquish, to individuals and business in an

enormous expansion of markets and development of technology. The scope for free association worldwide by non-state actors needs now to be accompanied by a similar growth of worldwide civility. A climate of tolerance and preparedness to settle disputes peacefully can no longer be seen as the responsibility of state agencies alone, any more than good behaviour and mutual respect within states can be produced by law.

If we see states still as the main agencies through which resources may be redistributed to reduce poverty, civil society must recognise the consequences of the limits of military power in reducing conflict and accept that it has to play a major role in generating the everyday rules for global civility. If the will is there, the new means of communication make this a feasible objective. We conclude by reviewing some of a number of possible growth points for a new global civility, inadequate to be sure, but still enough to suggest that global civil society contains the potential for creating a less violent future.

Forums

The events of the cartoon controversy are actor-led and sometimes deliberately focused on highlighting areas of flux and ambiguity seeking resolution. As such, these events are open invitations to civil society agents to provide leads to the future and constructive interventions. Where are these happening? Can the World Social Forums and similar events provide a model?

Pressurised debates

The cartoon controversy is one example of developing political discourses under pressure from events where the place of civil society is negotiated. So too has been the growing debate over Russian legislation curbing civil society on grounds of foreign interference. The WTO has been under constant pressure from the debate generated at Gleneagles for a deal on trade to contribute to the global relief of poverty.

Media standards and events

The media nationally everywhere exercise discretion on matters of public morals and taste, but the standards for these are culturally specific. Equally there are zones within national culture where different standards apply. Can we have global definitions of

civility, perhaps as an understanding to agree to disagree civilly on contested issues that might otherwise become more threatening to all involved? What are the new structures of offence against public morals in a globalised world? And are there non-national zonings of taste? Can the Internet and blogs provide more 'globalised' global conversations? Kaldor (1999: 126) introduced the term 'spectacle wars'. The Make Poverty History campaign and demonstration prior to the G8 Gleneagles meeting in July 2005 was 'spectacle civil society'. So, too, was the globally viewed football World Cup in June 2006, validating national rivalries through a competition that serves also as a focal point for the thousands of NGOs worldwide engaged in using football for social development (see Chapter 7 by David Goldblatt).

Discursive relations

Should the West, Russia, China, India and Islam enter into discursive relations explicitly seeking new principles of coexistence, for example, re-zoning declared areas of decency, regionalising public-private divides, finding minimum entitlements? Are these matters solely for bilateral civilisational negotiations? Is civil society the arena where the new principles with emerge, or will it descend into violence transcending states? Amartya Sen (2006) argues that the politics of global confrontation should be wrested from civilisational partitioning of the world in favour of recognising the choices open to persons in their multiple identities. Civil society is the arena where such identities could be negotiated.

Reform of global governance

National civil society thrives within established democratic law-abiding states that recognise human rights. Rights require legitimate use of force if they are to be asserted against opposition, and this is what the state supplies. Do global civil society groups require equivalent rights-based global governance? And where are the enforcing agents? Global governance problems persist, and global civil society must make its contribution to conflict management – how can it be made more effective when there is no global state. UN reform will be a major aspect dealing with growing global governance problems, of course. However, the current reform process leaves much to be desired, and remains too focused on the nation-state (see Falk 2005). Moreover, UN forays into

improved UN-civil society relations, while yielding proposals of considerable potential, are in danger of becoming just that (Cardoso 2003).

Organising for peace and conflict resolution

There is a long history of civil society groups devoted to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and to principles of non-violence, raising awareness, promoting community security and community integration. But there are also groups opposed on issues of capital punishment and treatment of prisoners, for and against the rights of individuals to bear arms, to experiment on animals, to have abortions. Among these there are advocates of direct action, up to the point of justifying killing innocent civilians. Staged encounters between these groups could establish pragmatic conditions for non-violent outcomes. But global civil society might also activate democratic principles to out-argue and out-vote advocates of violence in its ranks, call for stops on the arms trade and for the reduction of nuclear weaponry. It can demonstrate the relative insignificance of civilisational divides when humankind has to measure up to global challenges. Ezzat and Kaldor, in Chapter 1 of this volume, show the affinities between Islamic and Western intellectual debates on the legitimacy of violence and their relevance for conflict resolution under global conditions. They point to new possibilities in building worldwide networks like Citizens Against Terror (URL). Civility has to be the ultimate weapon in the rhetorical armoury of global civil society, but also demonstrated in its effects.

Box 1.2: Under fire: NGOs in the alter-global movement

Civil society, I hate this term! Civil society is what we no longer are!... A lot of NGOs are now active within the UN and that hasn't changed anything. Those who want things to change are here in Porto Alegre and not in the UN...We can no longer be patient and friendly with everyone like civil society people do.

Naomi Klein, World Social Forum 2002

At the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre, 2002, Naomi Klein expressed a widespread feeling among many in the alter-global movement (also known as the 'global social justice movement'). Later in the same workshop, the main organiser of the Genoa Social Forum coalition said that he 'totally shared Naomi Klein's position towards civil society'. During the 2004 WSF in Mumbai, an experienced French activist complained in similar terms: 'In developing countries, civil society means corruption and incompetence.'

Of course, many WSF activists don't share this conception and consider themselves part of civil society. Rather than civil society as a whole, criticism tends to be directed towards NGOs – which many actors, scholars and international institutions have identified as representing 'global civil society', to the exclusion of other components. Indeed, there is a wind of revolt blowing against NGOs in many parts of the global social justice movement. In 2000, Bernard Cassen defined ATTAC (originally, the Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens) as 'a French international-oriented NGO'. His intention was to present the association in a progressive and positive way but the result was much criticism. 'To identify it as an NGO means that he wants it to become an international institution!', said one activist from ATTAC-France, (interviewed in 2000). Once perceived as a positive force, NGOs are currently under heavy fire from much of the global social justice movement.

African civil society elites complain about their dependency on Northern NGO funding and hence policies. African local actors complain that they have been instrumentalised by NGOs: 'Some NGOs use us all the time to hold money and contracts but never listen to us', said a grassroots activist during the Weekend Workshop on World Social Forums, Durban, 22 July 2006. They accuse 'NGOs and professional militants' of 'travelling all around the world following the forums' wake, getting far away from what happens locally' (Catalan activist, WSF 2003, personal interview). Young activists complain that NGOs preach democracy while sometimes practising an internal dictatorship. Libertarian activists invite all activists to 'abandon ESF, ATTAC and other NGOs and rather prepare revolution and social change in your neighbourhood' (Indymedia URL). Since the first WSF, the 'network of social movements and activists' aims to balance the 'growing weight of NGOs in the WSF' (Brazilian activist, WSF 2002, personal communication). Even leaders of small NGOs, without any social base, express their 'fear that the movement could be submerged by NGOs that may share similar preoccupations but are not directly linked with social struggles' (a member of the WSF International interviewed in 2003). Hence, a Mexican NGO leader involved in an alter-global coalition explained the 'necessity to rethink the concept of civil society starting from the social movements because social movements claim their sovereignty independent of political parties and NGOs' (interviewed in Mexico City, 2003).

Peasant activists are among the most strident critics. At the 2006 Bamako Polycentric WSF, Paul Nicholson, a leader of Via Campesina, argued that peasants 'no longer want NGOs to speak in our name about agricultural policy. We want to build our own movement, our own international network and to speak for ourselves' (lecture at the peasant space, personal notes).

Nevertheless, NGOs have played an important role in the alter-global movement. They brought new ideas, a new ways of getting involved in social and political issues, and a new repertory of action – including counter-summits. They helped finance WSF events and travel costs for Africans activists. Moreover, NGOs and alter-global actors share much in common, including their pragmatic conception of social change, ways of influencing policy makers by lobbying and expertise, and their contribution to the emergence of an international public sphere and a 'global civil society'.

A brief analysis of the complex and tense relations between NGOs and the new alter-global actors throws some light on the matter. Disappointment with NGOs is one reason for the foundation of the alter-globalisation movement, but NGOs also played a role in its creation. Therefore the relationship between these actors remains complex: on one hand, the alter-global movement has been constructed with, after and against NGOs, and trade unions; on the other hand, NGOs stand before, aside and within the alter-global movement. This is related to two major processes: the taming of new social movements and an emerging distinctive culture of politics. According to Mary Kaldor (2003; see also Kriesi 1996), NGOs result from an advanced taming process of new social movements. Many aspects of the criticisms of alter-global actors address this taming process, in particular four dimensions:

1. The taming process encourages the integration of some NGOs within international institutions and projects, which leads to criticism they have been co-opted.
2. Many activists denounce NGOs' lack of radicalism. Meanwhile some NGOs are fearful of the radicalism of the alter-global movement, an association they fear could undermine their credibility and their relations with policy makers.
3. As Kaldor explains, many NGOs no longer provide a space for debate. The production of ideas is no longer central for many of these organisations, which have become service providers or institutionalised agents. The alter-global movement aims to fill this empty space and create new 'open spaces' for public debates (Sen and Keraghel 2004).
4. Activists criticise the institutionalisation process, which they see as a specific problem of NGOs. However, they fail to acknowledge that this trend has begun in their own movement, and especially in the World Social Forum. As a radical Catholic priest explained at a 2002 WSF workshop, 'We have to avoid to start as a group of people that seek to change the world and to end being an institution like the Vatican'.

However, institutionalisation and the taming process that often characterise the evolution of social movements are not the only cause of tense relations between NGOs and alter-global activists. The alter-global new culture of politics contrasts with the dominant ideas and activities of some NGOs and humanitarian actors:

1. In contrast with the 'apolitical' commitment and conceptions of NGOs and humanitarian agencies, the alter-global movement embodies a renewed interest in political participation and debate.
2. A central divergence concerns the position on the state. NGOs are partially born from a reaction against a state-centred development model and a suspicion of political actors. In this way, they partly share some values and perspectives with neo-liberalism (for example, less institutionalised, smaller, more efficient, less 'political' development actors and projects). Conversely, alter-global actors aim to strengthen elected political actors who are seen as lacking power against economic actors.
3. The specialisation of civil society is a key element for its efficiency (Wahl 1997). But it also encourages a move away from original purpose and broader perspectives. The specialisation of NGOs on particular issues has sometimes led to their transformation into service providers or single-issue lobbyists of international institutions. The alter-global movement provides a space to debate broader issues and global perspectives, reintegrating a political dimension in social changes.

The lack of input and participation by the members of many NGOs, think tanks, and professional organisations in the decision-making and structure of their organisations is much criticised by other actors in the alter-global movement. It contrasts with the high level of concern about internal democracy among many alter-global activists who value open discussion and active participation.

However, such criticism of NGOs should not detract from their fundamental contribution to the alter-globalisation movement. Moreover, cooperation between NGOs and other alter-global actors provides an opportunity: NGOs' organisation, efficiency and expertise have often proved essential to the success of the alter-global movement. On the other hand, the dynamism and constructive criticism of alter-global actors may help NGOs to recognise the constraints of their organisational structure, tactics and strategies.

The quotations from activists reproduced here derive from field research by the author at meetings and lectures of the global social justice movement between 1999 and 2006.

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