Forging a United Front of the Global Left:
A Vessel Proposal

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Abstract: This article proposes a project to build a united front composed of capable political organizations for the Global Left during the next few decades of the 21st century. We discuss the multicentric structure of the global justice movement and what can be done to make it more coherent. The World Social Forum (WSF) process needs to be reinvented for the current period of rising neo-fascist and populist reactionary nationalism and to foster the emergence of a capable instrument that can confront the global power structure and the popular reactionary movements. This will involve overcoming the fragmentation of progressive movements and identity politics that have been one outcome of the rise of the Internet and social media. The new should be designed to support contentious politics and institution-building at the local, national and global levels. We discuss the implications for the Global Left of the decline of the Latin American pink tide, the Arab Spring, the and the rise of new global right and the coming period of "deglobalization." We propose a holistic approach to organizing a vessel for the global left human rights, climate justice, feminism, sharing networks, peace alliances, taking back the city, progressive nationalism and confronting and defeating neo-fascism.

Social movements both reproduce social structures and change them, and they have been important drivers of social change since the Stone Age. The comparative evolutionary world-systems

perspective studies the ways that waves of social movements (world revolutions[1]) have driven the rise of more complex and more hierarchical human societies over the past millennia. A long-run historical perspective on these processes is helpful for comprehending the current moment and for devising political strategies that can help mitigate the problems that must be addressed in the 21st century so that humanity can move toward a more just, peaceful and sustainable global commonwealth. The contemporary world-system is entering another interregnum and a Malthusian correction similar to, but also different from, the "age of extremes" that occurred in the first half of the 20th century (Hobsbawm 1994). Devising a helpful political strategy for the Global Left requires that we understand the similarities and differences between the current period and the first half of the 20th century and that we consider the cultures of the movements and counter-movements that have emerged in the last few decades. The current period is daunting and dangerous, but it is also a period of great opportunity for moving humanity toward a qualitatively different and improved world society.[2]

The Global Justice Movement and the Social Forum Process

The global justice movement that emerged beginning in the 1990s with the rise of the Zapatistas in Southern Mexico rose in response to the neoliberal globalization project. The Pink Tide was the advent of leftist-populist political regimes in most of the Latin American countries based on movements against the neoliberal structural adjustment programs promoted by the International Monetary Fund (Chase-Dunn *et al* 2015). The World Social Forum emerged in 2001 in reaction to the exclusivity of the neoliberal World Economic Forum to provide a venue for popular movements to protect politically excluded people from neoliberalism.

The social forum process spread to most of the regions of the world. The charter of the World Social Forum did not permit participation by those who wanted to attend as representatives of organizations that were engaged in, or that advocated, armed struggle. Nor were governments or political parties supposed to send representatives to the WSF. There was a great emphasis on diversity and on horizontal, as opposed to hierarchical, forms of organization. The use of the Internet for communication and mobilization made it possible for broad coalitions and loosely knit networks to engage in collective action projects. The movement of movements at the World Social Forum engaged in a manifesto/charter-writing frenzy as those who sought a more organized approach to confronting global capitalism and neoliberalism attempted to formulate consensual goals and to put workable coalitions together (Wallerstein 2007).

One issue was whether the World Social Forum should itself formulate a political program and take formal stances on issues. The Charter of the WSF[3] explicitly forbade this and a significant group of participants strongly supported maintaining the WSF as an "open space" for debate and organizing. A survey of 625 attendees at the World Social Forum meeting in Porto Alegre in 2005 asked whether the WSF should remain an open space or should take political stances. Almost exactly half favored the open space idea (Chase-Dunn, Reese, Herkenrath, Alvarez, Gutierrez and Kim

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[1] World revolutions are periods in world history in which rebellions and revolutions break out in many locations within the same decades. Symbolic years designate the signatures of each world revolution (1789, 1848, 1917, 1968, 1989, and 20xx). 20xx refers to the period of the rise of the global justice movement since the 1990s (Chase-Dunn and Niemeyer 2009)

[2] This is an update of an earlier article that reviewed the sociological literature on coalition formation, the history of united and popular fronts in the 20th century, and considered which of the central tendencies of the new global left might be in contention for providing leadership and integration of the network of anti-systemic movements that have been participating in the World Social Forum process (Chase-Dunn, Stabler, Breckenridge-Jackson and Herrera (2014).

[3] The charter of the World Social Forum discourages participation by those who attend as representatives of organizations that are engaged in, or advocate, armed struggle. Nor are governments, confessional institutions or political parties supposed to send representatives to the WSF. See World Social Forum Charter

2008). Trying to change the WSF Charter to allow for a formal political program would have been very divisive.

But this was deemed not to be necessary. The WSF Charter also encouraged the formation of new political organizations. Those participants who wanted to form new coalitions and organizations were free to act, as long as they did not do so in the name of the WSF as a whole. In Social Forum meetings at the global and national levels the Assembly of Social Movements and other groups issued calls for global action and political manifestoes. At the 2006 "polycentric" meeting in Bamako, Mali a group issued a manifesto entitled "the Bamako Appeal" at the beginning of the meeting. The Bamako Appeal was a call for a global united front against neoliberalism and United States neo-imperialism (see Sen *et al* 2006). And Samir Amin, the famous Marxist economist and co-founder of the world-system perspective, wrote a short paper entitled "Toward a fifth international?" in which he briefly outlined the history of the first four internationals (Amin 2008). Peter Waterman (2006) proposed a "global labor charter." A coalition of womens' groups meeting at the World Social Forum produced a feminist global manifesto that tried to overcome divisive North/South issues (Moghadam 2005).

There was an impasse in the global justice movement between those who wanted to move toward a global united front that could mobilize a strong coalition against the powers that be, and those who preferred local prefigurative horizontalist actions and horizontalist network forms of organization[4] that abjure organizational hierarchy and refuse to participate in "normal" political activities such as elections and lobbying. These political stances had been inherited from anti-authoritarian and anti-bureaucratic new left movements of the world revolution of 1968. The New Left of 1968 embraced direct democracy, attacked bureaucratic organizations and was resistant to the building of new formal organizations that could act as instruments of revolution (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein (2011: 37-8). Institutions that are instruments of revolutionary change and challenges to the existing power structures were thought to have become sclerotic defenders of the status quo when they got old. This was understood as an important lesson of the waves of class struggle and decolonization that had occurred in the 19th and 20th centuries. Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein (2011:64) said:

> … the class struggle "flows out" into a competitive struggle for state power. As this occurs, the political elites that provide social classes with leadership and organization (even if they sincerely consider themselves "instruments" of the class struggle) usually find that they have to play by the rules of that competition and therefore must attempt to subordinate the class struggle to those rules in order to survive as competitors for state power.

This resistance to institutionalized politics and contention for state power has also been a salient feature of the world revolution of 20xx. It is based on a critique of the practices of earlier world revolutions in which labor unions and political parties became bogged down in short-term and self-interested struggles which then reinforced and reproduced the global capitalist system and the interstate system. This abjuration of formal organization is reflected in the charter of the World Social Forum as discussed above. And the same elements were strongly present in the Occupy movement as well as in most of the popular revolts of the Arab Spring (Mason 2013).

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[4] Prefigurationism is the idea that small groups can intentionally organize social relations in ways that can provide the seeds of transformation to a more desirable form of future human society. Horizontalism abjures hierarchy in organizations. It is inspired by Roberto Michels's (1968 [1915]) observation that all organizations become conservative because the leadership ends up only trying to defend their own interests and the survival of the organization. Thomas Jefferson claimed that a revolution was needed every 20 years to deal with the sclerosis issue. The ease with which new organizations can be formed is another solution to this problem. Leave the old one and start a new one.

Paul Mason's[5] (2013) analysis contended that the social structural basis for horizontalism and anti-formal organization, beyond the disappointment with the outcomes of the struggles carried out by the Old Left, was due to the presence of a large number of middle-class students as activists in the movements. The world revolution of 1968 was led mainly by college students who had emerged on the world stage with the global expansion of higher education since World War II. John W. Meyer (2009) explained the student revolt and the subsequent lowering of the voting age as another extension of citizenship to new and politically unincorporated groups demanding to be included, analogous to the earlier revolts and incorporations of men of no property and women.

Mason pointed out the similarities (and differences) with the world revolution of 1848, in which many the activists were educated but underemployed students. He also argued that the composition of participation in the current world revolution (here called WR20xx) has been heavily composed of highly educated young people who are facing the strong likelihood that they will not be able to find jobs commensurate with their skills and certification levels. Many of these "graduates with no future" have gone into debt to finance their educations, and they are alienated from politics as usual and enraged by the failure of global capitalism to continue the expansion of middle-class jobs. Mason also pointed out that the urban poor, especially in the Global South, and workers whose livelihoods have been attacked by globalization were also important elements in the revolts that occurred in the Middle East, Spain, Greece and Turkey. Mason also stressed the importance of the Internet and social media for allowing disaffected young people to organize and coordinate large protests. He sees the "freedom to tweet" as an important element in a new level of individual freedom that has been an important driver of those middle-class graduates who enjoy confronting the powers-that-be in mass demonstrations. This new individual freedom is cited as another reason why the movements have been reticent to develop their own hierarchical organizations and to participate in traditional political activities.

But Mason and other participant/observers in the global justice movement somewhat overemphasize the extent to which the movement has been incoherent regarding goals ("one no, many yeses") and shared perspectives. Surveys of attendees at both world-level and national-level Social Forums have found a relatively stable multicentric network of movement themes in which a set of more central movements serve as links to all the movements based the reported identification of activists with movements (Chase-Dunn and Kaneshiro 2009). All the twenty-seven movement themes used in the surveys were connected to the larger network by means of co-activism, so it was a single linked network without subcliques. This multicentric network was quite stable across venues.[6] This suggests that there has been a fairly similar structure of network connections among movements that are global in scope and that the global-level network is also very similar to the network that exists among Social Forum activists from grassroots movements within the U.S. (Chase-Dunn and Kaneshiro 2009; The central cluster of movement themes to which all the other movements were linked included human rights; anti-racism; environmentalism, feminism, peace/anti-war, anti-corporate and alternative globalization (see Figure 1).

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[5] Paul Mason is a 58-year-old British journalist who is well-known to scholars of transnational social movements for his perceptive ethnographic coverage of the global justice movement (Mason 2013).
[6] The surveys were conducted at Social Forum meetings in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2005, Nairobi, Kenya and Atlanta, Georgia in 2007 and Detroit, Michigan in 2010.
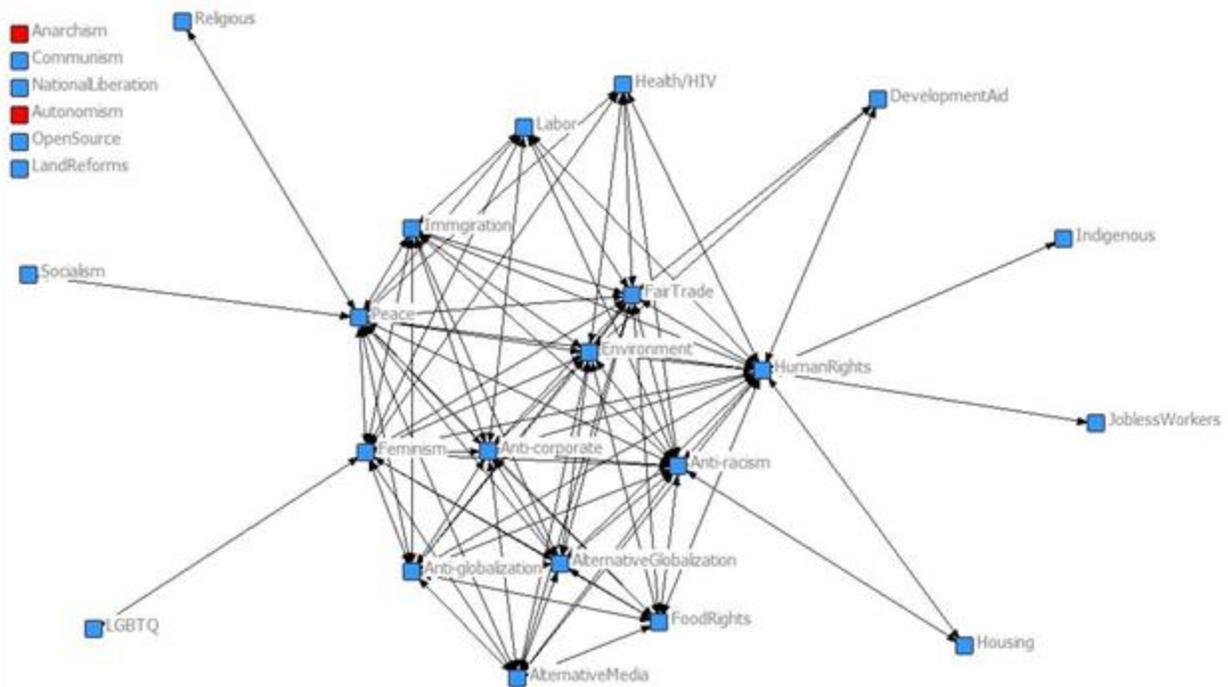
Figure 1: Movement links: the number of affiliations based on active involvement in 27 movement themes from the Social Fora surveys in Nairobi, Atlanta and Detroit[7]

Justice Globalism as a Discourse

Manfred Steger, James Goodman and Erin K. Wilson (2013) presented the results of a systematic study of the political ideas employed by forty-five NGOs and social movement organizations associated with the International Council of the World Social Forum. Using a modified form of morphological discourse analysis developed by Michael Freeden (2003) for studying political ideologies, Steger, Goodman and Wilson analyzed texts (web sites, press releases and declarations) and conducted interviews to examine the key concepts, secondary concepts and overall coherence of the political ideas expressed by these organizations as proponents of "justice globalism."

The key concepts of justice globalism extracted by Steger *et al* (2013: Table 2.1 pp. 28-29) are:

- · participatory democracy,
- · transformative change,
- · equality of access to resources and opportunities,

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[7] Figure 1 displays the network connections for the 27 movement themes using data from Nairobi, Atlanta and Detroit. In order to produce this figure it was necessary to dichotomize the distribution of affiliations because formal network analysis requires it. We use the same cutting point that we have used in earlier studies of the network of movement ties, 1.5 standard deviations above the mean number of affiliations. Using this cutting point results in a figure that indicates that anarchism is below the threshold for showing its relations with the other movements. This happens because anarchism is a relatively small movement theme and so when we use the mean of the whole distribution as the cutting point the ties that anarchism and the other movement themes in the upper left hand corner of Figure 1 are coded as zero because the number of their connections was below the cutoff. This figure is good for showing the relative location of the largest and most central movement themes such as human rights, anti-racism, environmental, fair trade, and anti-corporate and the overall multicentric structure of the movement of movements. But the implication that the movements in the upper left hand corner were disconnected with the rest of the network is incorrect. All the movement themes had some connection with the larger network.

- ·   social justice,
- ·   universal rights,
- ·   global solidarity and
- ·   sustainability.

The meanings of each of these concepts have emerged in an on-going dialectical struggle with market globalism (neoliberalism). Steger *et al* discussed each of these and evaluate how much consensus exists across the forty-five movement organizations studied. They claim that there is a relatively impressive degree of consensus, but their results also reveal a lot of on-going contestation. For example, though most of the organizations seem to favor one or another form of participatory democracy, there is also awareness of some of the limitations of participatory democracy, and different attitudes toward participation in representative democracy. The important notion of "horizontality" is not examined in detail, but it is well-known that networks of equal and leaderless individuals are preferred to formal or informal hierarchy within movements.

Some of the organizations studied by Steger *et al* eschew participation in established electoral processes, while others do not. Steger *et al* highlight the importance of "multiplicity" as an approach that values diversity rather than trying to find "one size fits all" solutions. They note that the Charter of the World Social Forum values inclusivity and the welcoming of marginalized groups. But Steger *et al* do not give much attention to the issue of prefiguration --"building the new society inside the shell of the old," though this stance has found wide support from many important global justice social movement organizations. The Zapatistas, the Occupy activists, and many in the environmental movement are engaged in efforts to construct the sustainable alternative world that they want to see rather than trying to change the whole system. Also, not much attention is given to the notion of community rights in the human rights discourse, nor to the idea that nature ("Mother Earth" has rights as proposed by the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth held in Cochabamba, Bolivia in 2010. The discussion of global solidarity emphasizes the centrality of what Ruth Reitan (2007) has called "altruistic solidarity" – the identification with poor and marginalized peoples – without much consideration of solidarity based on common circumstances or identities. Steger *et al* do, however, mention the important efforts to link groups that are operating at both local and global levels of contention.

Steger *et al* also designate five central ideological claims that find great consensus among the global justice activists:

- Neoliberalism produces global crisis,
- Market-driven globalization has increased worldwide disparities in wealth and well-being,
- Democratic participation is essential for solving global problems,
- Another world is possible and urgently needed, and
- People power not corporate power.

These assertions shape the policy alternatives proposed by global justice activists. The Steger *et al* study is a useful paragon of how to do research on political ideology and it provides important insights into what we have called the New Global Left. It also, as do the movement network results summarized above, implies that the New Global Left does have a degree of coherence that can be the basis of greater articulation.

Arab Spring, Pink Tide and Deglobalization

The global political, economic and demographic situation has evolved in ways that challenge some of the assumptions that were made during the rise of the global justice movement and that require adjustments in analyses, strategies and tactics of progressive social movements. The Arab

Spring, the Latin American Pink Tide,[8] the Indignados in Spain, and the rise of New Leftist social media based parties in Spain (Podemos) and in Greece and the spike in mass protests in 2011 and 2012 inspired us to temporarily label the contemporary world revolution "WR2011."[9] The left-wing Syriza Party, elected in Greece in 2015, was a debacle that was crushed by the European banks and the EU. They doubled down on austerity, threatening to bankrupt the pensioners of Greece unless the Syriza regime agreed to new structural adjustment policies, which it did. This was a case in which another world was possible, but it did not happen. This tragedy was a slam on the other new leftist social media parties in Italy and Spain as well as on the global justice movement.

The huge spike in global protests in 2011-2012 was followed by a lull and then a renewed intensification of citizen revolts from 2015-2016 (Youngs 2017). The Black Lives Matter movement, the Dakota Access Pipeline protest, the Me-Too movement, the anti-Trump Women's Marches and the Antifa rising against neo-fascism show that the World Revolution of 20xx is still happening.

The mainly tragic outcomes of the Arab Spring and the decline of the Pink Tide progressive populist regimes in Latin America were, and are, bad hits for the global left. The Social Forum process was late in coming to the Middle East and North Africa, but it eventually did arrive. The Arab Spring movements in the Middle East and North Africa were mainly rebellions of progressive students using social media to mobilize mass protests against old authoritarian regimes. The outcome in Tunisia, where the sequence of protests started, has been fairly good. But the outcomes in Egypt, Syria and Bahrein were disasters (Moghadam 2018). Turkey and Iran should also be added to this list. Mass popular movements calling for democracy were defeated by Islamist movements that were better organized and by military coups and/or outside intervention. In Syria the movement was able to organize an armed struggle, but this was defeated by the old regime with Russian help, extremist Muslim fundamentalists took over the fight from progressivists, and the Syrian civil war produced a huge wave of refugees that combined with economic migrants from Africa to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. This added fuel to the already existing populist nationalist movements and political parties in Europe, propelling electoral victories inspired by xenophobic and racist anti-immigrant sentiment. In Iran, the green movement was repressed. In Turkey, Erdogan has prevailed, repressing the popular movement as well as the Kurds. All these developments, except Tunisia, have been major setbacks for the global left.

The replacement of most of the Pink Tide progressive regimes and Latin America by reinvented local neoliberals has largely been a consequence of falling prices for agricultural and mineral exports because Chinese demand has slackened. The social programs of the leftist populist movements were dependent on their ability to tax and redistribute returns from these exports. But this may also represent an improved new normal for Latin America because almost all earlier transitions involved military coups and violent repression, whereas most of these recent rightward regime transitions have been relatively peaceful and have not involved takeovers by the military or violent repression. The legal shenanigans in Brazil are not pretty, and the threat of a military coup continues to play a role in politics, but at least so far the rightward shift has been less violent than earlier regime transitions. Stable parliamentary democracy seems to have finally arrived in most of Latin America. This is not utopia, but it is progress. Leftists can contend for power in the next round.

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[8] Our categorization of reformist and antisystemic regimes in Latin America from 1959 to 2012 is contained in the Appendix to Chase-Dunn, Morosin and Alvarez (2014) which is available at
http://www.irows.ucr.edu/cd/appendices/pinktide/pinktideapp.htm

[9] World revolutions are named after a year that symbolizes the issues, events and the agents that signify the nature of and culture of the revolts that occur over a period of time. The denouement of the Arab Spring, discussed below, caused us to renege on our choice of 2011 as the namesake of the WR that began in the 1990s.

The continuing rise of right-wing populist and neofascist movements and their electoral victories in both the Global North and the Global South[10] have added a new note that is reminiscent of the rise of fascism during the World Revolution of 1917 (Chase-Dunn and Dudley 2018). This raises the issue of the relationships between movements and counter-movements (Nagy 2018) and the possibility that the instrumentation and articulation of the global left could be driven by the need to combat 21st century fascism. The glorification of strong leaders in the right-wing populist and neo-fascist movements was also seen in the 20th century. But charismatic leaders have also been important in progressive movements in the past. The Democratic Socialists of America (D.S.A.) in some ways seem to be reacting against the "leaderless" ideology of the horizontalists by capitalizing on the extraordinary popularity of their most famous member, Bernie Sanders, currently the most popular politician in the U.S., with 57% public approval. The irony here is that the platform proposed by Sanders incorporates many of the tropes of the New Left and the global justice movement.

It is important to note that the rise of the right-wing populist movements has largely been a reaction against the neoliberal globalization project. Dani Rodrick (2018) contends that the neoliberal globalization project has had different political effects in Latin America versus Europe and the U.S. In Latin America, the IMF structural adjustment programs requiring the ending of social programs led to the mobilization and electoral success of populist left politicians with the support of the urban informal sector – the Pink Tide. These leftist populist regimes were able to use revenues from agricultural and mineral exports, buoyed by Chinese demand, to implement new social programs. In Europe and the United States those workers in older industries who had been decimated by capital flight to low-wage countries, were mobilized by right wing politicians who blamed immigrants and liberals for what had happened during the neoliberal globalization project.

There has always been a tension within the global left regarding antiglobalization versus the idea of an alternative progressive form of globalization. Samir Amin (1990) and Waldo Bello (2002) are important progressive advocates of deglobalization and delinking of the Global South from the Global North. The alter-globalization project has been studied and articulated by Geoffrey Pleyers (2012).

Waves of Economic Globalization and Deglobalization

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[10] The terminology of the world-system perspective divides the Global South into the periphery and the semiperiphery. This turns out to be an important distinction for comprehending political developments in the Global South. Activists from the semiperiphery have been far more likely to participate in the Social Forum process, and activists from the periphery have been much more critical of international political organizations than those from either the core (Global North) or the semiperiphery (Chase-Dunn *et al* 2008).
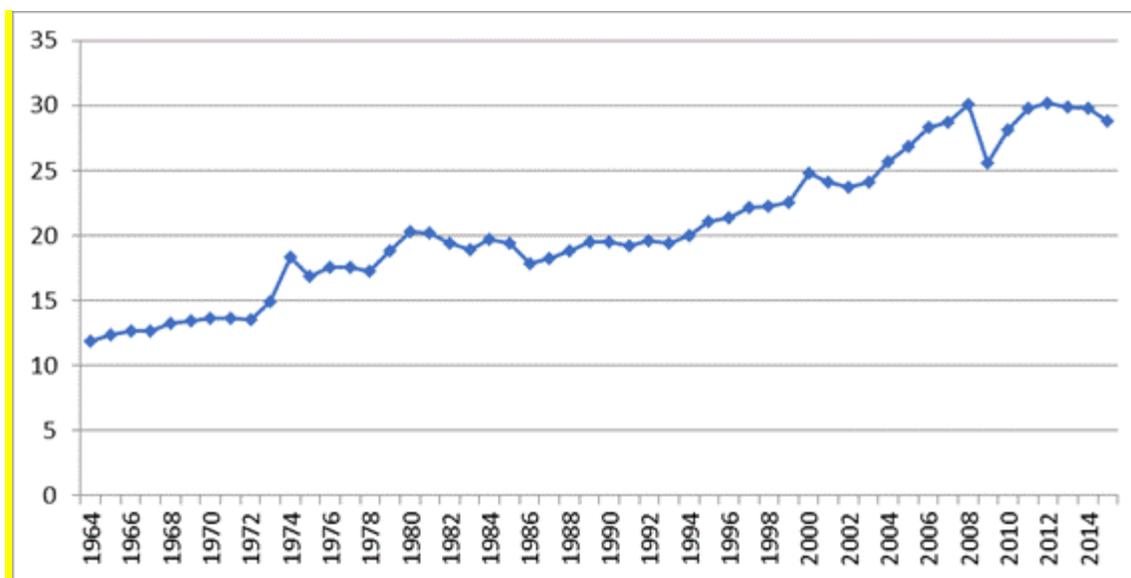
Figure 2: Trade Globalization 1964–2015: World Imports as a Percentage of World GDP (Source: World Bank (2017)

Figure 2 is an updated extension of the trade globalization series published in Chase-Dunn *et ., (2000). The earlier study showed the great nineteenth century wave of global trade integration, a short and volatile wave between 1900 and 1929, and the post-1945 upswing that has been characterized as the "stage of global capitalism." The earlier results showed that trade globalization has historically been both a cycle and a bumpy trend. There were significant periods of deglobalization in the late nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century. Note the steep decline in the level of global trade integration in 2009, a recovery by 2011 and then what seems to be the beginning of another, slower, decline that began in 2012. This may signal the start of another episode of deglobalization – a more multipolar world. The long-term upward trend was bumpy, with occasional downturns such as the one shown in the 1970s. But the downturns since 1945 have all been followed by upturns that restored the overall upward trend of trade globalization. The large decline of trade globalization in the wake of the global financial meltdown of 2008 was a 21% decrease from the previous year, the largest reversal in trade globalization since World War II. The question is whether or not the sharp decrease in 2008 and the slower decrease since 2012 represent the beginning of a reversal of the long upward trend observed over the past half century. Was this the beginning of another period of deglobalization? It is plausible that the rise of economic nationalism seen in the growth of right-wing nationalist parties in Europe, the Brexit vote and the election of Donald Trump in the U.S. could lead to another round of trade wars and further trade deglobalization. Such further economic dislocation would likely exacerbate the tensions that have led to political polarization and the rise of both a New Global Left and a New Global Right based on populist nationalism. The deglobalization that is emerging could be an opportunity for the Global South to institutionalize less dependent development projects of the kind advocated by Samir Amin and Walden Bello. Indeed, the rise of BRICS[11] suggests that this has been happening. But, as Patrick Bond (2013) has argued, many of these semiperipheral state challengers to the hegemony and policies of the United States seem mainly to be trying to move up the food chain within the capitalist world-system rather than trying to produce a more democratic and sustainable

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[11] The BRICS are Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, all semiperipheral countries.

world society. Revolutions are needed within these polities to produce regimes that will be effective agents of transformative social change.

The Vessel: forging a proposed instrument for the Global Left

A new discourse is emerging regarding possibilities for greater articulation among the movements of the global left and around the ideas of united fronts and popular fronts. The tendency of progressive social movements to form around single issues and identity politics is increasingly seen as a problem that stands in the way of mobilizing more effectively to be a significant player in world politics. The World Social Forum held in Salvatore, Brazil focused on how the Social Forum process could be reinvented to more effectively confront the rise of right-wing forces (Mestrum 2017, 2018).

We contend that the anti-organizational ideologies that have been a salient part of the culture of progressive movements since 1968 have been a major fetter restricting the capability of progressive movements to effectively realize their own goals. But these ideas and sentiments run deep and so any effort to construct organizational forms that can facilitate progressive collective action must be cognizant of this embedded culture. The Internet and social media, allowing cheap and effective mass communication, have been blamed for producing specialized single-issue movements. We suggest that virtual communication can be harnessed to produce more sustained and integrated organizations and effective tools that can be used to contend for power in the institutional halls of the world-system. We also think that the old reformist/revolutionary debate about whether or not to engage in electoral politics is a fetter on the ability of the global left to effectively contend. States are not and have never been whole systems. They are organizations, like the Boy Scouts of America. And their organizational resources can be used to facilitate the building of a postcapitalist global society. Progressive transnational social movements should be prepared to work with progressive regimes in order to try to change the rules of the global economic order (Evans 2009; 2010).

Progressive transnational social movements should also be willing to work at the local level with city governments to implement progressive goals such as a universal basic income, as these cities then serve as an emulative example (Lowrey, 2018; Vanderborght, 2017). This includes learning from cities in the Global South and applying lessons learned in the Global North. For instance, a universal basic income was piloted in the twenty-first century first in Kenya and Brazil, and now is being introduced in Oakland and Chicago. We agree with Paul Mason (2015) that the anti-utopianism of the Old Left and some in the New Left was a mistake. Prefiguration[12] is a good idea. Sharing networks, coops, community banks, zero emissions homes, farms and industries are worthwhile endeavors for activists of the global left.[13]

The Vessel is a **horizontal and diagonal[14] network formed of project affinity groups who share the results of their experiments and constructions and coordinate with one another for political actions, included mass demonstrations and electoral campaigns**. The Vessel will focus on the articulation of several central issues and will discuss vision, strategy and

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[12] Prefigurationism is the idea that small groups and communities can intentionally organize social relations in ways that can provide the seeds of transformation to a more desirable form of future human society.

[13] We doubt that Mason's (2015) version of postcapitalism, a global society in which wage labor has been replaced by the provision of free goods produced by networked machines, is a possibility for the next few decades, but we agree that this is a desirable goal for humanity.

[14] Keith Hayson (2014) outlines a consideration of organizational diagonalism inspired by David Graeber's *The Democracy Project* (2013).

tactics for the global left and for collaboration among transnational, national and local projects.[15] The Vessel should not be a political party, but it should be allowed, unlike the World Social Forum, to adopt resolutions and to support candidates and campaigns. It should not have a designated hierarchy but could appoint facilitating delegate group to coordinate collective decision-making and to deal with problems of security and communications.[16]

The main issues that we think should constitute the focus of the Vessel are:

- Humans rights/anti-racism
- climate justice,
- feminism,
- sharing networks,
- peace/anti-war alliances,
- taking back the city,
- democratic global governance.

The Vessel should also coordinate efforts to combat 21st century fascism and right-wing populism and should make alliances (united fronts; popular fronts) with NGOs and political parties that are willing to collaborate with these efforts.[17]

Human rights and anti-racism have been central in the network of movements participating in the social forum process. And global indigenism (Hall and Fenelon 2009) has been an important issue for the global left (Chase-Dunn *et al* Forthcoming). The rights of colonized peoples, racial and ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples and people with minority gender and sexual orientations are central to the inclusive concerns of the global left. The climate justice movement is already a collaborative project combining environmentalists with those who focus on the most vulnerable communities (Bond 2012; Foran 2018; Foran, Gray and Grosse 2017). Feminism has been one of the central movements in the social forum network of movements (Moghadam 2018). Sharing networks are a potentially potent tool for organizing postcapitalist institutions that can transform the logic of global capitalism (Mason 2015; Danaher and Gravitz 2017). The peace/antiwar movements need local and national mobilization against militarism (Benjamin 2013) as well as engagement with international governmental organizations in order to prevent the emergence of wars among core states in the coming multipolar world. The existing international political organizations are under attack from right-wing forces. The Vessel needs to advocate the strengthening and democratization of global governance institutions that can help keep the peace as humanity passes through the coming multipolar phase of interimperial rivalry and to move in the direction of an eventual democratic and collectively rational form of global governance. The take back the city movement is an important venue for activists fight for social justice in both the Global North (Harvey 2012; Fasenfest 2018) and the Global South (Evans 2002; Davis 2006). Progressive nationalism is an important fight-back against the appropriation of nationalism by the right-wing populists and neo-

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[15] Digital organizations and the discourse on net governance make new forms of network organizations possible. Organizations need to be able to make decisions. This can be done hierarchically or by means of group voting or discussions, or various combinations of these. The Vessel could declare itself in favor of horizontal authority structures but allow subgroups to pick the structures that they want. Organizations also need to specify their boundaries and protect themselves against those who would like to disrupt them, or worse. These jobs are best done by all active members, but it may be found necessary to delegate security jobs to individuals or subgroups. The best practices can be developed as things progress.

[16] Forging the Vessel could be done by starting with a meeting held under the auspices of the World Social Forum in 2019.

[17] This is list is just a proposal for discussion. The development of a list of central issues should avoid the tendency to try to include everything. Simplicity is a virtue.

fascists. For example, how could the national economy of the United States be reorganized to produce things needed abroad without destroying the environment and that uses the skills of those who have been left out of the neoliberal globalization? The deglobalizing world is reinventing nationalism as a response to the crises produced by the neoliberal globalization process. The global left has been resolutely cosmopolitan and internationalist, but how could it engage the rising wave of nationalism to propose more cooperative relations with peoples abroad and with the Global South? The Vessel also needs to provide analyses and strategies movements at the local and national levels who are fighting against the rise of right-wing authoritarianism and the suppression of progressive popular movements.

Conclusion

Rather than giving way to cynicism and resignation, the global left needs to face up to the setbacks that have occurred and devise a new strategy for moving humanity in a better direction. The next few decades will be chaotic, but the movements and institutions we build can make things better. Whether or not the big calamities all come at once or sequentially, we need to pursue a strategy of "disaster postcapitalism" that plants the seeds of the future in the midst of the chaos. It is not the end, just another dark age, and an opportunity for transition to a much better world-system. The Vessel can take us there.

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