Polity in the 21ˢᵗ Century

Context

Today all things are global. The same can be said, all things are local. To be a moral person today means taking responsibility for the whole from the perspective of the part. This does not mean you control or can see the affect of your thoughts and actions on the whole, but responsibility means knowing deep within that what you do and say does affect all because all things are connected. The Institute of Cultural Affairs has an operating context that states: **"All the Earth belongs to all, all the decisions of history belong to all and all the gifts of humanness belong to all"**. This is not a statement of "oughts" or "should-be's", but a statement of the indicative reality of our time. We are all in this together on this one planet, and we need to find ways to make this operationally possible.

But doing so is not easy, for the structures of our society were created in other times, with other self-understandings of how the world is. Once there were no nations, and then they got invented, and they have served the journey of civilization pretty well, but now they do not. People cling to a national identity and are willing to die in the name of a nation, or its symbol, the flag. People clearly need a way to identify with others in any polity system. You just can't have me (my family) and then everyone else.We need a "nested" identify system through which we can connect creatively with all others. The objective is not to work to replace the old, but to transform it. One can find ways to work through existing polity systems while holding clearly a new self-understanding which enables the polity system to grow.

Perhaps the two most evident global polity systems that are operating today are found in the structures of MNC's and the United States Military. Both see their operations as being global and act accordingly. Of course the military is an arm of the nation state, but it is the only nation that presently practically operates without boundaries in terms of defense. In theses two examples you can see the emergence of a polity system that although clearly is a self-interest, has the elements of what we in the ICA call "operating out of a global grid".

Today the ability for the world to work together globally is weak, primarily because of the primacy of the nation state. Some very limited power is vested in global organizations such as the UN, IMF, World Bank, World Court etc. But even these have power imbalances towards certain major countries. Conferences on global topics such as peace, environment, land mines, technology standards, trade, etc. often provide good forums for expressions, but are weak in implementation and enforcement.

Global Grid

Gridding the world is an activity that is both rational and trans-rational. By rational it based on an analysis of how the world functions and what relationships exist and structures serve. For instance, ask any resident where they point to a demarcation between their neighborhood and others and usually everyone knows "When you cross this street, or go over this river you are in a different part of town.", or, "This police precinct serves the following area." As you go into larger units the divisions of the grid you will note economic, political and, especially cultural divisions that need to be understood and taken into consideration. By "trans-rational" you will see that from top (the earth as one thing) to the level next to the smallest the divisions are the same, regardless of where in the world you are. This discipline allows an easy way to relate and forces you to see the dynamics operating. The lowest level, the actual local villages and communities where people relate at the most intimate level is allowed to be the number it actually is. This will be evident from an example later.

To understand the dynamics of today's world you need to see the major shift in consciousness that the whole world is experiencing. At one time (mostly in the west) the Church was the dominate power and the world was divided accordingly. Decisions affecting everyone's life flowed from the ecclesiastical structures. Next the nation-state began to emerge and the power was seen to reside in great nations, even small ones like Portugal. But in the 19th and into the 20th century the economic became king and people began to see the shape of the world in economic terms. We still have the expressions with us in our conversations. We once talked about the world as divided into East and West, (political division), with India calling for a third dynamic, non-aligned countries, which never played a major role. More recently the term North-South divide has been used to talk about how the world operates through a dominating economic paradigm.

But we at the ICA see the emergence of the cultural as the paradigm of our present and future time. The **Cultural Revolution** consists of the three great revolutions of our time; the **Scientific Revolution** which has given us a new common sense, the **Urban Revolution**, which is the emerging dominating life style for all(there is no longer a "rural", but just ex-urban beyond sub-urban) and the **Secular Revolution** which is the fading of traditional religious two-story images and the emergence of a new understanding of being human, a new consciousness. So we use this cultural screen as our major way of seeing the new world, with the economic and the political as secondary. This will be evident as you see especially the dominance of major metropolitan cities as the "hubs" of the world, exerting a sphere of influence on large areas of the world.

When you live out of this new emergent paradigm you relate to the world differently. Sure, there are great political divides and economic divisions, but more and more the cultural demarcations are dominating how things happen. To put it another way, you live out of an emergent vision that allows you to interpret events and trends.
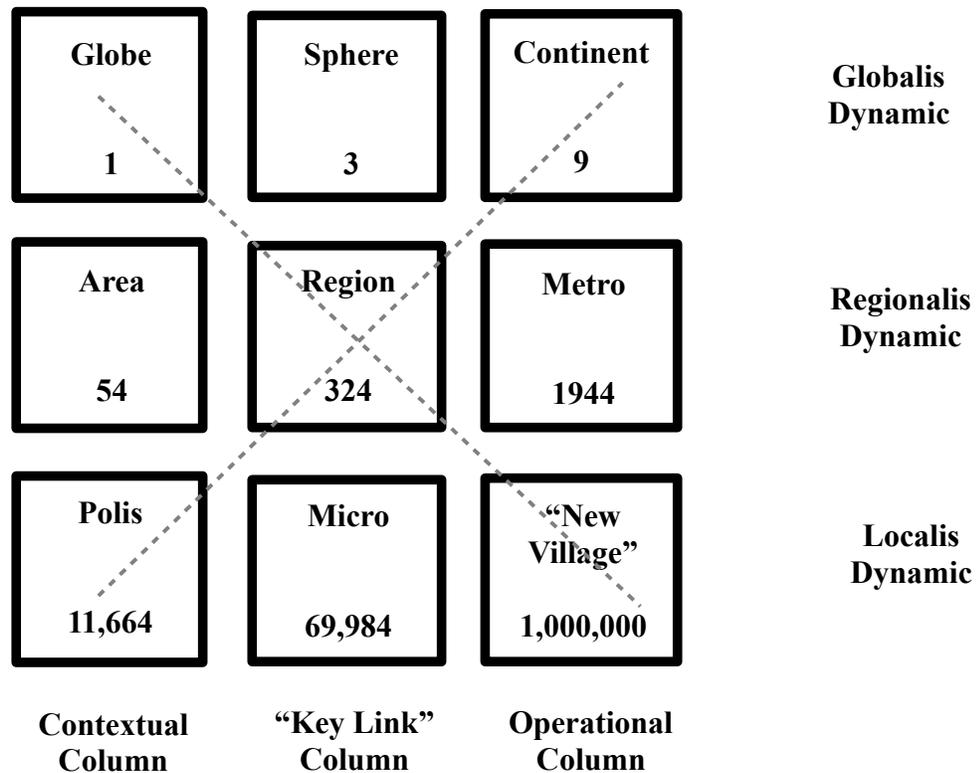
Dynamical Sociality

We divided the new polity through three dynamics; **Globalis**, **Regionalis** and **Localis**. There is a set of perspectives that the whole world dynamics function (Globalis), another set that allows the flow from the "globe" to the "local" (Regionalis) and finally a set of dynamics that is how the local functions (Localis). We draw this as two triangles touching at their apexes (the top Globalis dynamic is an inverted triangle), the bottom triangle being the Localis and the intersecting place being the Regionalis dynamic.

The Globalis dynamic is divided into three; the **Globe** as "one thing", the world as three things (3 **Spheres** (the key is always the middle dynamic) and the world as "nine things" or **Continents** which is the operational level. The highest level is of course when we see the whole earth as the starting point of all things. Never in history has this been so strong. And as I said, the MNC's and the US military operate this way. If you look at any MNC and the US military you will also see them have a polity that operates from the continental perspective. The military operates with 6 strategic Commands (North America, South America, Central (middle east), Africa, Europe (includes Russia) and Asia-Pacific. We also see Russia, South Asia and China as separate continents. MNC's also have similar divisions with people overseeing continental areas, but often they will combine the middle east and Africa because they are not large enough economic differences to separate them yet. The Sphere is seeing the world as East-West-South dynamic, which is our cultural grid. The West is North America, Europe and Russia, the East is the Sub-continent, South-east Pacific (Seapac), and China and the South is Latin America (we put Mexico and the Caribbean into Latin America because of the cultural perspective), North Africa-Middle East (NAME or MENA) and Black Africa.

The Regionalis dynamic is all about strategic thinking, that is, how is the world going to operate that enables the flow from the local to the global and from the global to the local. The three "fields" of the grid are: **Area**, there are six in each continent (6x9 = 54) which are the major urban centers of the world, like Singapore which is a great example of the sphere of influence of an Area city. For the Sub-Continent these are: Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Dhaka, and Kirachi. These will eventually replace the nations as the identity centers. Next, in the middle, are the **Regions** (6x54 = 324). Again, being in the middle these become the primary identity of a people. You see this already, like the Kurds, African tribal areas and the separatist movements in India. The "Region" becomes the key polity dynamic. And at the right on the Metropolitan centers within each Region (6x324 = 1944). Again, being on the "right" of the three this is the operational level. The ICA wanted to eventually have an office in each **Metro** of the world (We reached all North American metros, and about 100 others. At the zenith we only had one in China - Hong Kong, and none in Russia and only one in NAME – Cairo).
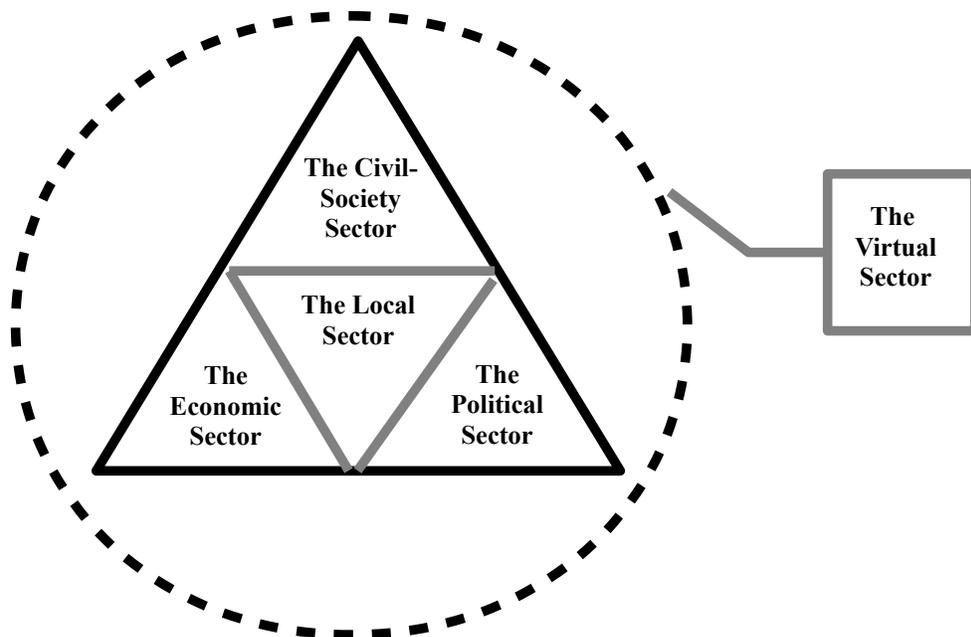
The Localis dynamic is key to how the "local" will operate. The three are, the **Polis** (6x1944 = 11,664), the **Micro** (6x 11,664 = 69,984), the key central dynamic, and then the very local level which we called the **Parish**, which could be said to be the "new village cluster". There are an indeterminate number of these depending on the location, but the size is probably under 10,000 people (7 billion divided by say 7,000 would mean about 1 million "villages" in the world. In India these three roughly correspond to the District (Polis), Taluka (Micro) and then clusters of villages, perhaps based on a watershed (being the new "Village").Where it gets interesting is in the urban areas where you may be talking about a single apartment building or perhaps a cluster of buildings, or a neighborhood. Lots of experimentation is going on at this polity level. Here is a chart of the whole global polity dynamic.

Globe 1	**Sphere** 3	**Continent** 9	**Globalis Dynamic**
Area 54	**Region** 324	**Metro** 1944	**Regionalis Dynamic**
Polis 11,664	**Micro** 69,984	**"New Village"** 1,000,000	**Localis Dynamic**
Contextual Column	**"Key Link" Column**	**Operational Column**	

Implications

There are several implications to working from this new dynamical sociality and polity. It allows a person to trace a path from their own community to the whole globe. You live within the future vision, but working in and through the current structures and decision making system. The model has implications for living in sustainable fashion. The localis is a large enough reality to create structures that can draw from its own boundary area for the critical sustainable areas, like food production, water conservation, land use, locally generated energy, major intra-commerce, education and expertise for most areas. Of course there will still be global commerce, and areas of specialization (like certain crops, mining etc.) but these will be in a balance with a dynamic of sustainable local communities.

Secondly, there needs to be the development of partnerships, with the primacy being the wisdom and destiny control (as much as possible) at the very local level. We saw the emergence of a five-fold partnership between the E**conomic Sector**, the P**olitical Sector**, the **NGO (civil society) Sector** serving the L**ocal Sector**. These four are all to be found within the localis geographic areas. The fifth sector however is the ever-increasing ability of any local community to draw on resources and wisdom from the whole world, what I call the **Virtual Sector**. Here is a diagram that holds that model. It has the local sector as the center and serves the local vision and local implementation.

Thirdly, there needs to be a new leadership style with new skills, thinking, and catalytic action capacities. They need to know how to empower people through participation. They need to be able to think strategically and learn the power of indirection. They need to learn to trust local wisdom and to allow credit to be directed to others. These skills can be learned and training systems designed.

Finally, the success of local empowerment and change is rooted in Spirit. The role of the symbolic dimension is key, for it is in and through the symbolic dimension that courage is released, momentum sustained and new life is given form.

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