New Media-enhanced Human Rights Movements in a Globalizing World: A New Epoch of Cosmopolitanism for Larger Freedom?

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The globalization project for free flows of capital, goods and labors championed by international governmental organizations (IGOs) like IMF and WTO has inherent contradictions. Far from benign that fosters better economic benefits for all, the unbridled capitalism leads to the exploitation of the weak and to socio-ecological degradation, and engendering xenophobia and the demise of local people's jobs and culture. The globalizing mobility processes have been indeed polarizing people's socio-economic lives and consequently affect their economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights － challenging the nation state based (T.H. Marshall's concept of) social citizenship.

Globalization is not just testing the limited governance capacity of IGOs, but also remaking non-governmental organizations' (NGOs) quest for global human rights. This paper examines the emerging cosmopolitanism in the information age, focusing on the new concepts of transnational advocacies networks (TAN) and global-local social citizenship, to understand the new media-enhanced participatory regime for global governance. Enhanced by new media (mobile communications, Internet, etc.), NGOs' critical e-mobilizations at various geo-political forums in the last decade have been redefining international norms for global governance: IGOs have been forced to make policy adjustments or concessions, resulting in new IGO-NGO policy regime for consultative consensus building(?) for promoting (or exploiting?) people's ESC rights.

The paper has four parts. After outlining the dynamics and contradictions of the globalization project which threaten the ESC rights, Part Two situates human rights movements within a wider context of new (and media-enhanced) social movements at global-local scaling of TAN. Part Three discusses socio-political significance of the critical engagements for new ethics and norms for social development. The paper ends with normative remarks on the project for global sustainability, larger freedom and human rights for all.

Key Words : Citizenship, Globalization, Human Rights, NGOs, Social Development

1. Positioning Human Rights unto Globalization Project?

Recent political activism in northern Africa, starting from Tunisia and spreading across Egypt and the middle-East signifies the impact of new socio-political mobilization with new media, not least Twitters and other mobile devises….In actuality, we are in an informational new world, shaping by the processes of globalization-localization (glocalization)!

Globalization is a real challenge to and a test to the capacity of IGOs and iNGOs in the promotion of global human rights (Held, 2002; Milanovic, 2003; UN, 2005; World Bank 2006). Globalization processes tend to polarize the socio-economic lives

of people and consequently affect their economic, social and cultural rights. This has been validated by the Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization (WCSDG 2004).

There are two contesting views on globalization: One hails globalization as a benign and automatic force that fosters better economic benefits for all, including the poorest group; the other contrary view is espoused by the political extremes of the Left and Right. For the Left, unbridled capitalism leads to the exploitation of the weak and to socio-ecological degradation; for the Right, the malignant forces of globalization engender xenophobia and the demise of local people's jobs, culture, language and hence identity (Milanovic 2003, Lai 2005a).

1.1 Differential Impacts on People: Genesis of Anti-Globalization Movement

The globalization discourse has been defined by the debates on the political and ideologically-driven "economic reforms" in the so-called welfare states in the developed economies. Most of these reforms have not been successful as judged by their fellow citizens (Lai 2008b). On the other hand, for most of the developing economies, the globalizing forces have not helped them much either. With the exception of China, global poverty has not improved during the globalization decades of the 1980s and 1990s (Milanovic 2003, p.679, Ravllion 2004). The number of the poor (subsisting on less than US$1 per day) has fallen in Asia, but has risen elsewhere. It is roughly doubled in Africa and the overall the figure is about one in three now (see Fig.1)! At the global level, income inequality has become the norm for many developing countries (see Fig.2). Thus, the question is rightly raised: is the worsening of ESC rights at the global level not the trend?

To recapitulate the state of the globalization project: economic productivities have improved in the developed economies and in a few developing countries, like China and India, but the aggregate human progress arising from economic liberalization has not achieved globalization's intended purpose of a better and just world (WCSDG 2004). It is against this context that the anti-globalization movement or discourse has been articulated and has developed (Held and McGrew 2002).

The globalization processes are giving rise to dual/divided cities, great disparity between the rich and the poor, and wider gaps between urban and rural life (see for instance the case of mainland China, Fig.3). So far, global economic liberalization and globalization have not improved the daily life of people and their local welfare, with the local labor market declining due to the off-shoring strategies of firms. What has instead developed as a common trend is social dualism: widespread poverty within affluent societies/localities, with the set of deregulatory policy initiatives favoring the private sector and resulting in the commodification and privatization of social services.
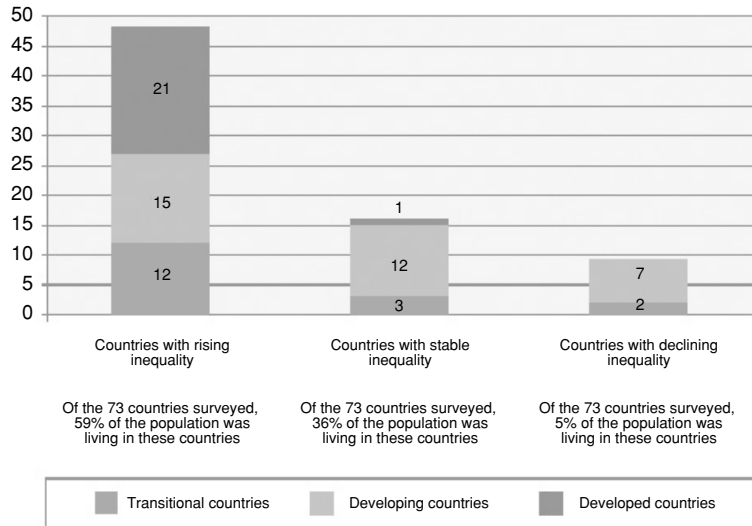
Fig.1: People living on less than US$1 per day, 1990 and 2000 (millions)
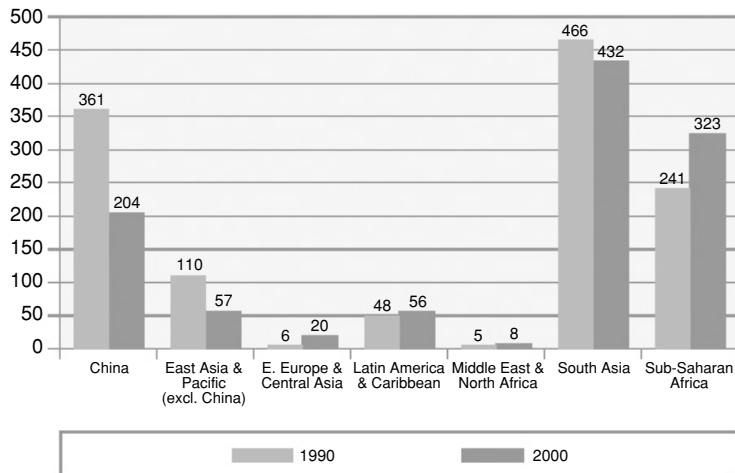
Source : World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects 2004*.
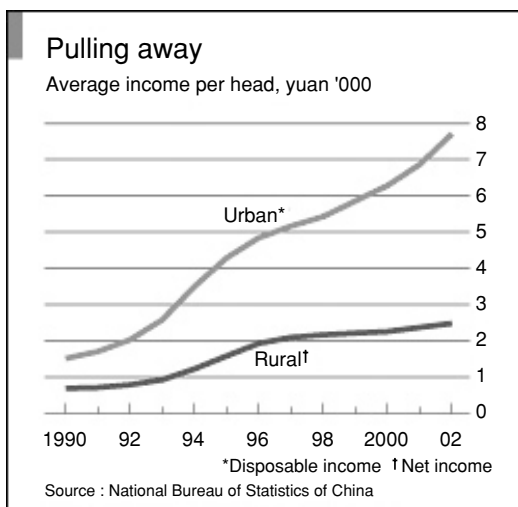
(Source : WCSDG, 2004, p.45)

Fig.2: Income inequality changes in 73 countries, 1960s to 1990s

Source : Giovanni Andrea Cornia and Sampsa Kiiski, "Trends in Income Distribution in the Post-World, War II Period : Evidence and Interpretation", WIDER Discussion Paper No. 89. UNUWIDER. Helsinki. 2001

(Source : WCSDG, 2004, p.44)

Fig.3: Modernization - Life Chance Divides

(Source : The Economist, 25. September 2003, online edition)

Individual ESC rights, e.g., labor standards, social protection and welfare entitlements, are downgraded by the call for deregulation and flexible labor market initiatives under the reform banner of economic liberalization towards globalization. Although the provision or extension of all kinds of welfare services (social security in particular) is supposedly assured to a citizen (a status conferred by the nation state), the concept of social citizenship itself is eroding under strong currents and waves of economic globalization and pro-market initiatives (Rodrigues 2005, Roth 2004).

Globalization processes hence have put state-society at very peculiar position, as both are exposed to the challenges of 'external' forces. Capital, goods and labor (jobs) are more mobile than the previous international economic order. Social impacts are eminent! In response, the anti-globalization campaigns at various international economic institutions' (WTO, World Economic Forum and G7/G8 and G20) meetings have become more the norm, with the battle cries based on the demands for global social justice and a sustainable future (Lai 2004a/b, 2005a/b, 2008b).

1.2 Activating Glocal-Networks for New Human (Social, Economic and Cultural) Rights

At the international and regional levels, the promotion of human rights (HR) has historically been the mandate of HR-oriented international governmental organizations like the United Nations and its affiliated institutions, e.g., Commission on Human Rights,[1] regional institutions like the

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1   UN Commission on Human Rights: http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/2/chr.htm

European Union's Human Rights Principle and Policy,[2] Council of Europe[3] and the European Court of Human Rights.[4] For more than half a century, human rights promotion and advocacies have centered on the articulation of people's civil and political rights under the banner of *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which was ratified in 1948 by the United Nations in the aftermath of the Second World War and the Holocaust; the European Convention on Human Rights (1950);[5] the 1966 *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR); and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR).[6] The new waves of human rights advocacies around the people's economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights are rooted in all these fundamental international conventions.

Compared with the UN framework, the European one is more progressive for human rights protection. In Europe, the human rights framework model of rights has been tailored to the continent. On 4.November 1950, members of the Council of Europe signed the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The Convention came into force in 3rd September 1953 and three major subsequent institutions were entrusted with safeguarding its workings: The European Commission of Human Rights (1954), The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR 1959), and The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The creation of these bodies (the court being based in Strasbourg) allowed individuals with a grievance against the state to challenge their treatment at an international level. Compared with regions, the European human rights regime hence is more progressive, as well as conducive for NGOs (as well as individuals) making their case to be heard by the ECtHR (*BBC News*, 29.September 2000,15: 19GMT; Moravcsik 2000).

Nevertheless, the six-decade-old *UN Human Right Declaration* forms the basic foundation for all the legal and quasi-legal HR frameworks. More recently, human rights issues have been taken up by international financial institutions (IFIs) like the World Bank in the scrutiny of fund application and dispatch. But the intervention of IGO's and/or IFIs at the international level for the protection of human rights (the minimal task in promoting human rights)

is far from satisfactory, resulting mainly in the paper documentation of HR debates and articulation of 'sanitized' HR policy declaration and principles. Thus, one observer noted:

> *The World Bank claims that the advancement of broadly defined human rights is not possible without development. Development, of course, is the Bank's business. Yet large amounts of money continue to flow to governments that systematically abuse human rights and have shown little commitment to alleviating poverty or protecting the natural resources on which a majority of people in developing countries depend. Financial support for an authoritarian government often leads to a further strengthening of the repressive apparatus of its regime, worsening the country's human rights situation. Under such conditions, the World Bank's stated goals of achieving broad-based economic development have to be called into question (Horta 2002: 228).*

On the other hand, it is the critical engagement of NGOs at the local, regional and international arenas, in partnership with the mass media, which has illumined societies on human rights situation, usually done through daily reminders on and continuing advocacies for human rights in response to the abuse, negation and/or neglect of human rights. This is illustrated by the active engagements of iNGOs like the Amnesty International (AI) and the Human Rights Watch (HRW) in their campaigns for the release of or the more humane treatment of prisoners of conscience and victims of torture, supplemented with the strategies of shaming the regimes that torture, unjustly imprison or disenfranchise their citizens. By internationalizing (the politics of embarrassment) the HR campaigns, the offending regimes are isolated and sometimes the victims are released or given better treatment. Usually, however, these campaigns lead to the establishment of stronger international norms on human rights, particularly those for the protection, as well as the promotion, economics, social and cultural rights: children, ethnic minorities, labor, migrant-workers, refugees, women, and other vulnerable groups-which all respect the individuals and communities at the local levels (Human Rights Watch 2008; Lai 2004a,

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2005b, 2006, 2008a/b).

The articulation and international mainstreaming of ESC rights can be seen in the profile of Human Rights Watch (HRW). Since its formation in 1978, HRW has focused mainly on upholding civil and political rights, but in recent years it has increasingly addressed ESC rights as well. HRW focuses particularly on situations in which HRW methodology of investigation and reporting is most effective, such as when arbitrary or discriminatory governmental conduct lies behind an economic, social and cultural rights violation.[7] More specifically, HRW monitors and mobilizes supports against ESC rights violations when they result from violations of civil and political rights or contributing to the violations of civil and political rights. Reportage of HRW addresses to ESC rights, including the rights to health care, education, and fair conditions of labor.

More specific for the NGOs' promotion of labor rights, the ILO's *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work,* and the more recent *Declaration on Social Justice and Globalization*[8] (ILO 2009) have been serving as a leverage for, and used by, human rights activists and groups to challenge those corporations and state institutions if they are doing their duties to promote ESC rights.

2. Contradictory Dynamics of Action-Policy Learning: Activism of IGOs and iNGOs

Glocal responses against the globalization project are more than obvious: the internationalization of advocacies networks and the iNGOs' appeals are more than visibly seen in mass and cyber-media (Lai 2004a/b). More specifically, in the last decade, partly in response to the failure of IGOs and IFIs initiatives in the enforcement of human rights at the global and local (glocal) levels, iNGOs' global movements have been targeting the IGOs and IFIs themselves. And yet, the latter also realizes the potential contribution of iNGOs in shaping participatory human rights movement at societal and community levels (Lai 2006, Rodrigues 2005). More fundamentally, they see the increasing importance of iNGOs in global affairs, as can be seen in the burgeoning growth of iNGOs as well as their diversification of services and advocacies (Fig.4 and Fig.5). Thus, there seems to have a convergence in the mobilization of international communities' support for civil and political rights (ICCPR) for both the IGOs and NGOs.

Historically, IGOs set the background and framework for discussing human rights, or human rights in the course of socio-economic development. For this, international and global summits, conferences and symposia organized by IGOs and IFIs become the targets for iNGOs mobilizing work
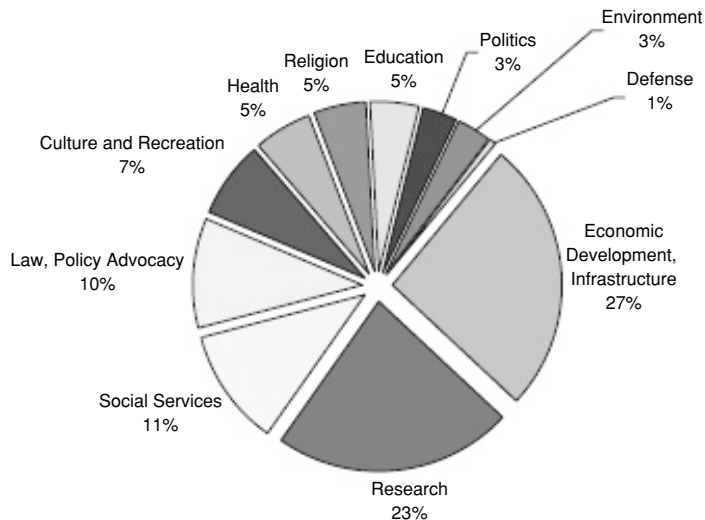
Fig.4: iNGOs Growth
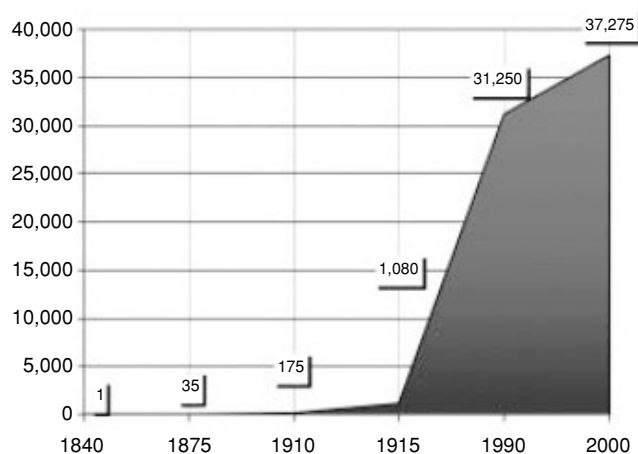
(Source : Christensen 2006)

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7   Human Rights Watch actions on ESC rights: http://www.hrw.org/esc/

8   Details refer to ILO Website: http://www.ilo.org

Fig.5: Range of iNGOs Activities

(Source : Christensen 2006)

and demonstrations, challenging the established rule and way of governance of the global order. We are witnessing the conglomeration of IGOs and iNGOs in global summits like G8 meeting, World Bank and UN Summits and alike, with confrontational protests and demonstrations outside, yet heated debates within the conference venue (Lai 2008b).

Overall, iNGOs serve as:
• Focal point, platform and network for information gathering and research required to challenge as well as create new policy for human rights like those in the Human Rights Watch.
• Base for articulating particular human rights abuses/issues. For example, the Amnesty International has a large monitoring component to challenge human rights abuses, be they individual or collective cases.
• Agency for mobilizing and/or articulating various forms and modes of confrontational protests and demonstrations, targeting IGOs and allied Transnational Corporations (TNCs).
• Networking forum for transnational advocacies and communication to push local, regional and international government bodies to react to human rights abuse.
• Center where good local supports and iNGO activities help reshape the contours (for the benefits of human rights) for national policy or constitutional domain, which are more likely to promote a shift in the worldview towards global society (Christensen 2006).

From the insightful studies on iNGOs (Christensen 2006, Roth 2004, Tsutsui and Wotipka 2004) and based on the foregoing discussions, the following iNGOS' influences can be highlighted: firstly, in shaping policy processes at the international, national and local level, by offering alternative perspectives and logic for socio-developmental course; secondly, in moving the human rights concern beyond a particular geo-political space, to the global level, shaping global norms, politicking and law governance for human rights; thirdly, in legitimizing non-state actors (iNGOs) as global monitor and adjudicator for human rights; and last but not least, in providing for cross-national policy learning (Stone 2004).

For IGOs, intervention comes in two ways, namely the call (sometimes treated as lip-service) for human rights observance and the creation of development fund (mostly set up by the UN and World Bank and some bilateral funds) for developing countries. For the advocacies side, statements or declarations on human rights without the political, economic, or military sanctioning power are mostly ineffective in preventing human rights abuse, as the genocides prior to international intervention at Sarajevo, Rwanda and Darfur demonstrate clearly.

On the other hand, with reference to the governance and human rights issue at Chad, the receiving country for World Bank's funding, Horta (2002) noted that the situation in Chad and so many other countries shows that money is not the

answer; oftentimes it is at the root of the problem. In other words, international development funding often strengthens the hands of an authoritarian government and leads to more human right abuses. It eases pressure within the country for policy changes towards a better society. This observation echoes many NGOs' claims that development funds reinforce human rights abuse and reduce the development potential for better alternatives by legitimizing the authoritarian regime and its abuses on human rights. Perhaps, development funds and corporations are part of the sin against human rights (Darrow and Tomas 2005).

However, despite the obvious inadequacies of IGOs' intervention in promoting human rights through development initiatives, there is also mis-management of human rights issue in the development works by some iNGOs, which is an important aspect of policy learning. Thus, there is a there is an emerging space for joint consultation and joint policy learning processes, between and among iNGOs and IGOs, in targeting nation state's agencies in charge of improving human rights. Their synergetic efforts, though clouded or overshadowed in some instances by confrontational conflicts, are moving into consensus for not only basic human rights but also economic, social and cultural rights in general, highlighting that the project "human rights for all" is much shaped by, as well as shaping, the international norms and values for social and sustainable development.

In this regard, the call by a recent UN report entitled *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* (UN 2005) is right: "the world must advance the causes of security, development and human rights together, otherwise none will succeed. Humanity will not enjoy security without development, it will not enjoy development without security, and it will not enjoy either without respect for human rights".

3. Transformative Human (ESC) Rights Movement: New or Old (Media) Issues?

With the iNGOs-driven glocal activism, the transformative change in human rights advocacies is emerging! Historically, the HR promotion and advocacies have been based on the articulation of people's civil and political rights under the banner of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as ratified in 1948 by the United Nations

in the aftermath of the Second World War and the Holocaust. This has been reinforced by the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).[9]

The focus on civil and political rights (ICCPR) has provided a base for both the IGOs and NGOs in the further mobilization of international communities' support to the cause of human rights. This is exemplified by the active critical engagements of NGOs, like Amnesty International (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW), in their campaigns for the release or more human treatment of prisoners of conscience and victims of torture, utilizing strategies of shaming offending regimes and/or internationalizing (politics of embarrassment) their HR violations such as torture, unjust imprisonment or disenfranchisement of their citizens. This has sometimes resulted in the release or better treatment of victims and usually in facilitating the establishment of international norms on human rights (Lai 2005b).

3.1 Glocalization of Human Rights Advocacies: New Ethics for Development!

Under the impact of globalization as championed by the international corporations, the individual's ESC rights are under threat. And at this historical conjuncture, NGOs at both international and local levels are confronted by the social calamities that are rooted and embedded in the globalization processes.

They are thus moving to a new arena of critical engagement, namely, from the focused articulation of human rights to incorporating ICESCR. For instance, the Human Rights Watch (HRW) has in recent years increasingly addressed economic, social and cultural rights as well. HRW focuses particularly on situations in which HRW methodology of investigation and reporting is most effective, such as when arbitrary or discriminatory governmental conduct lies behind economic, social and cultural rights violations.[10] More specific, HRW monitors and mobilizes supports against ESC rights violations when they result from violations of civil and political rights or contributing to the violations of civil and political rights. Reportages of HRW address ESC rights, including the rights to health care, education and fair conditions of labor.

Another example is Oxfam, an international development charity movement originating from

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9 ICCPR: http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ccpr.htm, ICESCR, http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm

10 Human Rights Watch actions on ESC rights: http://www.hrw.org/esc/

Great Britain, which has been actively mobilizing people and resources to advocate ESC rights for both developing and developed economies. Oxfam International seeks increased worldwide public understanding that ESC rights and social justice are crucial to sustainable development. They strive to be a global campaigning force promoting HR awareness and global citizenship, seeking to shift public opinion in order to make equity the same priority as economic growth.[11] For advocacy on ESC rights, it mobilizes people for popular campaigning, alliance building and media work designed to raise awareness among the public of the real solutions to global poverty, to enable and motivate people to play an active part in the movement for change, and to foster a sense of global citizenship.

Drawing from decades of experience in international movements for human rights and varous social movements, human-rights campaigners are now boldly lobbying for ESC rights such as the rights to health, information, healthy water and food, and even sexual pleasure (Oriel 2005, Solomon 2005, Tsutsui & Wotipka 2004).

3.2 New Logics and Reasoning for Global Norms on Humanity

Moving from an approach to advocate the civil and political rights towards the ESC ones requires the change not just in terms of strategy, but also the reasoning for morality. For the latter one, it has to be demonstrated that the moral imperative to stop poverty, exploitation/discrimination against the disadvantaged groups, or disease is as convincing as the moral imperative to stop torture. The attempt so far is far from successful.

For new strategies, the anti-globalization protest movements at the global level, which usually attack IGOs meetings (of APEC, G7/8, IMF, World Bank and WTO) and international business forums (like World Economic Forum), highlight the 'parallelization' of international events. By challenging as well as embarrassing the status quo and the legitimacy of the pro-economic liberalization bodies, NGOs contribute a service towards the promotion of ESC rights with examples, including visualization, of the victimization of individuals and groups.

NGOs are now assuming the role of "morality checker", providing guidance on ESC rights, usually using tactics of blacklisting and embarrassment publicity for the offenders of international norms on

ESC rights such as state agencies, governments and transnational corporations. This is the reason why some TNCs, stung by anti-HR labels, now respond with their so-called corporate social responsibility or CSR initiatives (cf. Bastmeijer and Verschuuren 2005, Dermirag 2005). Hence, the morality checker role extends to preventive and precautionary one, with suggestive problem-solving options for TNCs and governments to consider in enhancing ESC rights of all people.

For instance, Amnesty International (AI) has recently attacked a consortium involving two American oil giants, Exxon Mobil and Chevron, and Petronas of Malaysia, which are extracting the African oil in Chad and pumping it to the Cameroon coast via a 665-mile (1,070-km) pipeline. This is a \$4.3 billion project in Africa, the biggest foreign investment in Africa.

This has long been a cause celebre for NGOs, which fearful of the impact of the project on one of the poorest and most ill-governed parts of the world, has exposed the one-sided and anti-people nature of the project (*The Economist*, 8.September 2005, online edition). Against the context that oil firms have often been damned by association with human-rights abuses in similar places, not least Royal Dutch/Shell in Nigeria and Unocal in Myanmar, AI is not (yet) accusing the consortium of any specific human-rights abuses in the Chad-Cameroon project (though protesters against it have been abused in government crackdowns). Instead, the AI's preventive and precautionary report focuses on the potential harm that may be done, as a result of the contracts governing the deal. At the heart of these contracts is a "stabilization of law" clause, under which the consortium will be compensated for any economic harm caused to it by changes in the legal regimes governing the project — a protective clause for the oil firms against the risk of the unscrupulous governmental ripping off foreign investments. But, AI argued that one effect of the clause may be to impose a financial penalty on any government that tries to improve human rights by, for example, requiring higher minimum safety standards or quicker redress for lost land.

To recapitulate, the nexus between business and human (civil and political, as well as ESC) rights is that there are many (financial, ethical, regulatory) reasons why human rights have become a business issue. This is against the context that, as a key player in the globalization process, many TNCs have been, taking their technological and capital advantages,

destroying local customs and cultures, exploiting workers, bankrupting the local poor and widening the gap between the rich and often politically repressive elite and the rest of society. What is more critical now is that, apart from legal obligations set down by the host country and the moral responsibilities towards local and international norms, TNCs can — through their foreign direct investment and business practice — make important contribution to the promotion of economic and social welfare, the improvement of living standards, the creation of employment opportunities and the realization and enjoyment of basic human rights (Sullivan 2003).

3.3 Synergy of Cyber-Activism and Glocal Human Rights Advocacies

Human rights activism stands out to be active in getting projection in both mass and cyber-media, and in the advanced use of the new media. For example, HWR provides its expertise in human rights abuse reportage, ranging from the political imprisonment to the censorship of the high-tech viaduct, like the Internet. Juxtaposing the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS, on 15 November 2005 in Tunis), HRW released a comprehensive report on the repression of Internet users in the Middle East and North Africa, exposing that the host of WSIS has been jailing individuals for expressing their opinions on the Internet and has been suppressing Web sites critical of the government.[12] States have been facilitating the spread of information and communications technologies mainly with economic benefits in mind. At the same time, they pursue a contradictory and double-bladed policy by maintaining their old monopolies and control over the flow of information. Thus, HRW argued that the Internet has proven a boon to the development of civil society and freedom of information, but it has occasionally provoked government backlash as well.

Thanks to the global communication networks in the era of globalization, the timely and fast dissemination of information on human rights and human rights abuses is extremely important. Therefore, the informational rights should be protected and become the fundamental one for ESC rights (Lai 2005a/b, Rodriguez 2005, Roth 2004). The essence of recent advocacies of human rights and development NGOs, for the promotion of ESC rights, is that the informational rights (for freely access and communications) are obviously an extension of ESC rights. In short, the new campaigning theme

for human rights NGOs is broadening, widening and deepening into all aspects of human development.

The new form of mobilization called cyber-activism has five distinct yet inter-related issues: Firstly, the globalization processes have put state-society relations at very peculiar position, as both are exposed to the challenges of 'external' forces. Capital, goods and labor (and jobs) are more mobile than the previous international order. Sometimes, the globalizing forces adversely affect the livelihoods and jobs of the people, causing human rights abuses (WCSDG 2004). There is the recognition that global economic change reinforces the existing socio-economic-cultural fault-lines, but it also creates new and different kinds of alignment of non-state actors around core issues and across borders. Their collective impacts are rarely addressed by government policy. The contribution of TANs of iNGOs like AI, Greenpeace International, HRW and Oxfam alike are invaluable and should help address this missing link.

Secondly, thanks to ICTs, the cyberspace has become a domain where individuals can articulate non-mainstream politics, ranging from human rights to animal rights. Here, non-state actors can participate and non-traditional political themes can be discussed. Moreover, they can gain visibility in international politics beyond one's nation state territory (Sassen 2004). Indeed, the diffusion of human rights information, ranging from the 'abuse' to 'good practices', from individuals and among NGOs, from HR movement to social movements, can be instrumental in defining the global and local human rights agenda.

Thirdly, there are1,966 million world online population (mid-2010), or 28% of the world population. Asia users account for over 42% of the world internet users, followed by Europe (24.2%) and North America (13.5%). What is important here is the recent momentum for cyber-dynamism in East Asia's Newly Industrializing Economies (NIEs), China and India in particular, followed by the Four Little Dragons (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore), and the earliest developed economy of Japan. As ICTs are become integral part of modernization and development, the call for Human Rights for All, particularly in Asia, will witness more cyber-dynamics in decades to come.

Fourthly, the issue of culture and language has to be taken seriously, especially considering that human rights form part of global values that many (but not all) cultures share. The problem

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12 See: InternetWorldStatistics: http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm

of cyber 'imperialism' and cultural domination over the universal values of human rights should be noted (Hamm & Smandych 2004) here. In 2010, English was used as the primary language of cyber-communication (27.3%), followed by Chinese (22.6%), Spanish (7.8%), Japanese (5%), Portuguese (4.2%), German (3.8%), Arabic (3.2%), French (3%) and Russian (3%) and Korean (2%). In a highly differentiated way, the top ten languages accounted for 82.2% of the cyber-communications (See Fig.6). Here, English consequently is the *de facto* standard language of the Internet, and the domination effect of the English language in global communication is threatening the existence of minority languages (Lai 2004b). Furthermore, other than the language itself, the contents and messages for communication are influenced for commercial and political purposes, such as the promotion of the US style of life or perspective in movies, music, comics, other forms of popular culture (cultural imperialism), and news and documentaries (the US version of the War Against Terrorism represents such a case). These are cultural manifestation and celebration of the Western global capitalism. In short, as long as the Internet is based on the existing social cultural structure, the Internet could also work to reinforce such cultural imperialism in our complex, globalizing world.

It is culturally sensitive that global human rights values be communicable in local languages, at the very least making the case of human rights universalism down-to-earth. For this, AI has a Russian language website (http: //www.amnesty.org.ru) to promote respect for human rights in the Russian Federation, and the campaign for justice in the Russian Federation (http: //www.amnesty.org/russia), with more almost one million page views in 2007.

Last but not least are the networking logic and dynamics. In most cases, the offerings of informational society enhance the least advantaged groups' life chances or choices (cf., Lai 2008a/b). More specifically, the logic of Internet enhanced e-mobilization is its bottom-up process: communities and interest groups are able to connect to one another. We need to enable the deliberative skills (informational personality) people may possess, and look into about what actually happens in the space for advocacy. The Net is instrumental in various stages of building up the informational personality in social mobilization: individual chat rooms and discussion lists enable people to communicate and learn from each other. The discovery of new knowledge, the building up of trust among each other, and enhancing the capacity to mobilize others to make social change — this cycle is clearly a progressive capacity-building process for social change. In short, human rights advocacy is not just talk and communication in cyberspace, but action in the real world as well. Therefore, direct actions at the local (for both individuals and groups) level are still the basics for social change for a better world.

Fig.6: Top Ten Languages Use in Internet, 2010

TOP TEN LANGUAGES IN THE INTERNET	Internet Users by Language	Internet Penetration by Language	Growth in Internet (2000 - 2010)	Internet Users % of Total	World Population for this Language (2010 Estimate)
English	536,564,837	42.0 %	281.2 %	27.3 %	1,277,528,133
Chinese	444,948,013	32.6 %	1,277.4 %	22.6 %	1,365,524,982
Spanish	153,309,074	36.5 %	743.2 %	7.8 %	420,469,703
Japanese	99,143,700	78.2 %	110.6 %	5.0 %	126,804,433
Portuguese	82,548,200	33.0 %	989.6 %	4.2 %	250,372,925
German	75,158,584	78.6 %	173.1 %	3.8 %	95,637,049
Arabic	65,365,400	18.8 %	2,501.2 %	3.3 %	347,002,991
French	59,779,525	17.2 %	398.2 %	3.0 %	347,932,305
Russian	59,700,000	42.8 %	1,825.8 %	3.0 %	139,390,205
Korean	39,440,000	55.2 %	107.1 %	2.0 %	71,393,343
TOP 10 LANGUAGES	1,615,957,333	36.4 %	421.2 %	82.2 %	4,442,056,069
Rest of the Languages	350,557,483	14.6 %	588.5 %	17.8 %	2,403,553,891
WORLD TOTAL	1,966,514,816	28.7 %	444.8 %	100.0 %	6,845,609,960

(Source : www.internetworldstats.com)

4. Human Rights for All: Unfinished Project for Informational 21st Century?

Social agencies and their (electronic-) mobilizations in transnational advocacies networks (TAN) represent the praxis learning dynamics and processes. More specific, it is not just the knowledge sharing per se through various face-to-face and mediated communications, but the actual involvement, or the critical engagements of social agencies, both for veteran and novice activists, in various localized and globalizing campaigns and protests. All these create informational spaces for policy learning.

More specific, the praxis of transnational advocacies network (TAN), succinctly discussed by Keck and Sikkink (1998, 1999) and recently explored in depth by Piper and Uhlin (Eds., 2004), is firmly established and embedded in the new communicative flows of the new media and the identity politics of social activists within and outside the cyberspaces. Cyber-politics challenges the traditional political establishment as well as the behavioural repertoire of political actors (IDEA 2001; Goldstein and O'Connor 2000; Hick et al. 2000; Hick and McNutt 2002; Stefik 1999).

It has been rightly pointed out that the new media not only has a strong impact on global politics, but also has become the weaponry of individuals and groups who have been excluded from traditional mass media making (Thompson 2005):

In this new world of mediated visibility, the making visible of actions and events is not just the outcome of leakage in systems of communication and information flow that are increasingly difficult to control: it is also an explicit strategy of individuals who know very well that mediated visibility can be a weapon in the struggles they wage in their day-to-day lives. Once again, the war in Iraq provided us with countless reminders of this fundamental truth: the macabre beheadings carried out by (among others) Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's Tawhid and Jihad group, videoed and shown live on the Internet and then recycled with varying degrees of explicitness through the mass media of television and the press, are only the most dramatic illustration of a new political theatre that is played out in the world of the media, where spatial distance is irrelevant, communication instantaneous (or virtually so) and — especially with the rise of the Internet and other networked media — the capacity to outmanoeuvre one's opponents is always present. (Thompson 2005, pp.31-32)

Similarly, James N. Rosenau (1997, 1998) in his seminal work, Globalized Space, stresses that the new media and their networking capacities are one of the functional equivalents of democratic governance where transnational issues are beyond the control of the nation state as well as a state-sponsored institutionalized regime, such as the UN:

The widespread growth of the Internet, the World Wide Web and the other electronic technologies that are shrinking the world offers considerable potential as a source of democracy... by facilitating the continued proliferation of networks that know no boundaries, these technologies have introduced a horizontal dimension to the politics of Globalized Space. They enable like-minded people in distant places to converge, share perspectives, protest abuses, provide information and mobilize resources — dynamics that seem bound to constrain vertical structures that sustain governments, corporation and any other hierarchical organizations. (Rosenau 1998, p.46)

David Held's (1998, 1999) theory of 'Cosmopolitan Democracy' argues that in a world of overlapping communities of fate, Cosmopolitan Democracy is the creation of new political institutions and a diversity of NGOs in global civil society, with the democratic principle and praxis of broad access to avenues of civic participation on national, regional, and international levels. More specifically for our discussion here, TAN is the new wave for the democratization process aided by new electronic communication technology through various forms of electronic-mobilization.

Here, the ideas (and ideal) of human rights or the questions it focuses on of liberty, open society, socio-economic and cultural rights, progressiveness and democracy's extension beyond the nation state in terms of the articulation of international (humanity's) norms and justice call for a more open and participatory regime of global governance. This echoes the ideas of international civil societies and social movements for global and local justices (Archibugi and Koenig-Archibugi 2003). These movements are multi-dimensional, ranging from local human rights to global environmentalism (Hick, et. al. 2000; Lai 2008, Piper and Uhlin, Ed. 2004). In all, the extending informational spaces help the advocacies for human rights at various geo-social domains.

The debates and advocacies on human rights have become the currencies for international development discourse for both IGOs and iNGOs; more even so in the informational age. They use the discourse on human rights as the default for social

development. This is vividly shown in the case of Myanmar (Burma) for Asia. Here, the HR rhetoric is not yet translated into reality (Darrow & Toma 2005, Horta 2002, Roth 2004, UN 2005, WCSDG 2004, World Bank 2006). In particular, the neglect of human rights damages effort for social development, possibly reinforcing inter-state, inter-ethnic groups and inter-classes conflicts, lead to civil war or genocide. Yet, the iNGOs' mobilization process and dynamics for human rights reinforce global social development:

> By the same token, development would be at best hindered and at worst reversed in a world driven by violent conflict or mesmerized by the fear of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, or one in which human rights were trampled, the rule of law was disregarded and citizens' views and needs were ignored by unresponsive and unrepresentative Governments (UN 2005: 23).

For IGOs, the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and the related Declaration have important strategic direction, for which members of IGOs (in the UN system in particular) have been making efforts to promote democracy, the rule of law, as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedom. The lip service respect for human rights is not enough. All human beings have the rights to be treated with dignity and respect, with the support of global civil society, NGOs and people organizations in particular.

To continue the project for promotion of human rights, four major arenas of development need to be highlighted. Firstly, for IGOs (UN, World Bank) and regional institutions like EU, it is a positive development that human rights are now part of the default for all policy making for member states, although far more has to be done by these global and regional bodies. This should also apply with more vigor on IGOs like the WTO and the emerging economic regional blocs like the ASEAN and APEC. To what extent are these institutions to be developed into pro-human rights one is a challenging task for iNGOs. Hopefully, iNGOs can be as successful in their campaign to make IGOs responsive to human rights appeal.

Regionally, development banks have to taking up the ESC rights, within a broader framework to promote healthy development of civil societies. For instance, since1995, Asian Development Bank (ADB) has established an Accountability Mechanism which local and international NGOs can use to protect and promote ESC rights vis-à-vis development issues.

Secondly, continuing the project for the synergy

between and among IGOs and iNGOs will be critical for the future promotion of human rights. This is critical in the case of governmental institutions and non-governmental agencies at the local, national and regional levels. It is necessary to challenge human rights abuses, undemocratic processes and the less than normal rule-of-law regimes. Here, it would be a mistake to compromise human rights observance or enforcement with the need for security or ill-defined development.

Thirdly, iNGOs have been instrumental in shaping the moral and ethical appeal of global standard(s) for human rights, rule of law and democratic governance. Their innovative strategies should be benchmarked for practical effectiveness in human rights promotion and should be shared with as many institutions as possible. Thus, the recent consultation with iNGOs during IGOs' summits and business grouping like the World Economic Forum is a welcome one, especially in developing the concept of global citizenship.

Lastly, the promotion of the universal values of the rule of law and human rights, within a framework of participatory democracy, can not be compromised, whether undertaken by IGOs and/or iNGOs. The basic respect for human dignity and striving for a world of social justice and stability with peace are fundamental and non-tradable. The project, however, is an unfinished one. More synergy regarding policy and praxis learning is needed and should be articulated and practiced by all stakeholders.

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