Stream 1: Concept of Civil Society

ON THE IDEAL OF A GLOBAL COMMUNITY:
A Latin-American Communitarian Approach to a Global Civil Society

Discussions on the importance of a global civil society have stressed an idea of “community” that can be used to criticize three controversial issues:

1. an emphasis on the State that is blind to a “post-national constellation”;
2. imposition of a nationalist unilateralism contradicting interests of local and global civil initiatives;
3. supremacy of neoconservative policies that oppose idealist views through belligerent actions.

Against this, the normative framework of a “community” would demand the continuous empirical inclusion of persons, groups, communities and regions excluded by these views. Indeed, the Latin American experience of Base Christian Communities is a practical example of how civil society can become “more global” by stressing an inclusive communitarian dimension. This example complements the normative framework and allows for concrete answers to the three above points:

1. there are alternative forms of inter-cultural relations promoted by persons, groups and organizations of a transnational civil society, which question the State-centered approach.
2. multilateral and supra-national initiatives can create solidary networks that question unilateralism.
3. there are critical theories emphasizing community values in opposition to neoconservatism.

This shows that the concept of “community” allows the inclusion of more persons, groups, communities and regions in a global civil society.

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2004a ‘The importance of intercultural studies for international relations’ in I Congress on Ethics in Business and International Relations, Universidad Madero, Puebla, Mexico
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2004d ‘Befreiung, Globalisierung und Multikulturalismus’, Theologische Fakultät, Ludwig Maximilian Universität, München, Germany
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2004a Articles for The Encyclopaedia of Politics: Right & Left (Editor: Rodney Carlisle, Rutgers University) Sage Publications [in preparation].
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2003b  ‘Introdução a um Debate Filosófico’ (Guerra, terrorismo e as relações internacionais) in *IMPULSO* 35 Vol. 15, 2003. (4 p.)