

## Towards a Theory of the Intellectuals and their Political Ideology in the Post-Soviet Global Society

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### I

In spite of a multitude of theories and an unlimited number of books, essays and research papers, there is no coherent theory of intellectuals. It is particularly true of the post-Soviet global society where much of the previous discussions on the intellectuals lose their merit. Marx's theory of the 19<sup>th</sup> century or the Gramscian and the Mannheimian theories of the 1920s or even the works of later Marxists and neo-Marxists tend towards redundancy in the new realities of our time. True that each theory was, perhaps, capable of explaining part of the reality and may yet be useful in explaining some situations when taken in parts. But if a coherent picture is sought, these theories at best confuse the reader and at worst are totally out of tune. It is, therefore, proposed in this study that we need a fresh set of ideas, some of which are already in the offing, to understand who and what the intellectuals are and what role they play in the post-Soviet global society of supranational organizations, transnational corporations and information technology.

Much of the previous studies of the intellectuals refer to particular cases of national, regional or some micro-level units of analysis. Few refer to the historical growth of the intellectuals and attempt cross-national studies, let alone attempt an examination of the global situation. The theories that grow out of these, or used to explain these, are mostly ad hoc in nature and lose their applicability beyond the particular study for which they were proposed. Only a few studies like those of Gouldner, Gramsci or Mannheim can make any claims to applicability in a multitude of situations. All such theories, however, owe their existence to Marx and Engels and tend to argue in favour or against a class location of the intellectuals.

It would not come as a surprise today, at beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, that it is not possible to establish the identity of the intellectuals in terms of a class in the Marxian, neo-Marxian or some such sense. It may not also be a revelation that the intellectuals of today are not the same intellectuals as those of Marx's "thinkers", Gramsci's "organic intellectuals", or even Mannheim's "free-floating" ones (see also Lowenthal 1998 on Walter Benjamin). In the global economic setting or in the "postmodern" society, none of these categories make sense. Similarly it must be realized that capitalism of today is not the same capitalism of Marx, Gramsci or Mannheim. Nor is it the same capital that is dominated by the nation state. Thus the economy, which defined the class location or the ideologies and political opinions of the intellectuals, is no longer the same. So,

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what needs to be understood at the outset, in any analysis of the intellectuals and their ideologies, is the nature of capitalism today.

Back in the 1970s and 80s, what was seen by the dependency theorists and by Wallerstein as the world economy or the “world system” was merely the beginning of a process that has found its culmination in the form of the global system of today, where the economy is no longer dominated by national capital or national capitalists. The dependency theorists in the 70s and the 80s warned us about multinational or the transnational corporations as becoming more powerful and dominant than national capital. As a matter of fact even then many such corporations were larger in terms of capital than the GDPs of most countries of the Third world. Today such capital has taken a step further and is now supranational, not bound by the territoriality of a nation state; it is global capital that dominates the world economic scene now.

In Marx’s formulation capital was not expected, at least theoretically, to be limited within any state boundaries. Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* made the global nature of capitalism abundantly clear, indeed, they suggested that to achieve socialism, capitalism must be overthrown globally and hence the call for “the workers of the world” to unite. But the economic and political reality of the times not only made capital nation-state based, it thrived and prospered under the protection of the state all through the 19<sup>th</sup> century and much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, capitalism became an economy that was clearly international “amidst a world political system that was compartmentalized into separate nation-states” (Robinson and Harris 2000)

The global nature of capital was also theorized by some followers of Marx, including Lenin, who, during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, warned about the eventual growth of capitalism into imperialism. These Marxists, including Lenin, predicted the role of multinational capital in such a transformation. However, it was dependency theory and the world system theory that elaborated the extent of this transformation of capital into multinational capital, and in particular its subversive impact on the economy and society in the Third World.

However, these analyses, although trying to portray the historical reality of the growth of capitalism, were all limited to the explanation of capital in relation to the state or national capital. Theories of “capitalism as imperialism” saw the expansion of national capital as ruling the world. Even in the analysis of the dependency and world system theories it was the capital of the US or the core countries that dominated the world in the form of *multinational* capital. The word “national” remained at the core of these analyses.

Interestingly, however, even the proponent of the world system theory is today aware of the phenomenal changes that are taking place in the world economy and places it beyond the realities portrayed in the world system theory. Wallerstein in a recent essay (visit website below) argues that the capitalist world economic system, which has been in existence from the sixteenth century, is approaching its end, and is entering an era of transition to some new historical system. He feels that the capitalist world-economy is beset with structural strains, which it is no longer in a position to handle. Wallerstein identifies three sources of the structural strains which are a) near complete "deruralization" of the world that has driven up the price of labour, b) the ecological exhaustion, which is increasing the cost of inputs, and c) the democratization of the world, which has increased the demands for public goods. He feels that a combination of these three is creating a massive long-term structural squeeze on profits from production and is making the system unprofitable for the capitalists. He is, however, not certain which way the economy is actually moving and what kind of economic system lies in the future.

But there are others who have a clearer picture of the future of the world economy and argue that it is moving inexorably towards globalization. It was, perhaps, Barnett and Muller who, in their *Global Reach* (1974), presented the first real exposition of the nature of global capital. Today, an endless array of literature is available to support the view that over the past few decades capitalism has gone through a fundamental transformation. It has become global capitalism.

According to Burbach and Robinson, (quoted by Robinson and Harris 2000) this globalization involves an "epochal shift" in the development of the world capitalist system. In the nation-state phase the world was linked by commodity and financial flows in an integrated "international" market. In the global phase today the worldwide social linkage is an internal one (internal to the world as a whole, as the earlier "world system" theory so forcefully argued) and the process of production has become supranational (Robinson and Harris 2000). So that global capital is not just the mere collection of "national economies" or a quantitative extension of the same. It is a qualitatively different phase in the growth of capitalism, in which capital itself has become "supranational".

Finance capital is the most mobile and most deterritorialized factor and today \$25 trillion in currency move in the global financial market daily as compared to a mere \$10 billion in international trade per day (Robinson and Harris 2000). Along with money capital, the production process has also become deterritorialized. "Many previously nationally-based industries, such as autos, electronics, textiles, and computers, and even, in fact, services, are now thoroughly transnationalized" (Robinson and Harris 2000). Globalization is also evidenced in the phenomenal increase of FDI and mergers among ever-larger corporations often across

continents. This global decentralization and dispersal of production, has become possible partly because of the growth of science and technology.

## II

This is not the place to go into any detailed study of the process or the forces of this transformation of capitalism from national to the supranational or global one. An excellent study of this trend towards globalization of capital is offered by Robinson and Harris (2000). What is important to note here is that under such a condition class formation can no longer be bounded by the forces of national economies either. Therefore, along with the transformation of the global economy, a realignment of classes is also taking place, which no longer responds to the forces of national economies alone but become part of a supranational class formation.

Robinson and Harris (2000) in their study focuses on what they like to call a “transnational” ruling class. They seek to establish that a transnational capitalist class has emerged, and that this transnational class is in the process of becoming a global ruling class. The newly emerged class is in the process of creating a new globalist historic bloc, a new hegemonic bloc, consisting of various economic and political forces that have become the dominant sector of the ruling class throughout the world, both in the developed countries of the North and those of the South as well. This bloc, well on its way to becoming the global ruling class, is composed of the “transnational corporations and financial institutions, the elite that manage the supranational economic planning agencies, major forces in the dominant political parties, media conglomerates, and technocratic elites and state managers in both North and South” (Robinson and Harris 2000). The bloc also includes the cadre, bureaucratic managers and technicians who administer the supranational agencies, such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO, the states of the North and the South, and other transnational forums.

Leslie Sklair (quoted by Robinson and Harris 2000) similarly identifies this new class as being formed by the executives of transnational corporations, “globalizing bureaucrats, politicians, and professionals”, and “consumerist elites” in the media and the commercial sector. Sklair also argues that this capitalist class is no longer tied to territoriality or driven by national competition.

The global ruling class is also active in forming a global state apparatus. This is evident both in the economic and political spheres. The World Bank, IMF, WTO, UN, European Union, G7, OECD etc. are some such examples to that end. The global class “has directly instrumentalized this TNS (Transnational State, or global state) apparatus, exercising a form of transnational state

power through the multi-layered configuration of the TNS". Like its supranational component entities (the WTO or EU etc.) this global state is also supranational.

Robinson and Harris (2000) also try to argue that corresponding to the growth of this global bourgeoisie, the transnational (global) proletariat is also taking shape. However, unlike the bourgeoisie, which is both a class in itself and for itself, the proletariat has not yet attained the class consciousness, that is, it is not yet a class for itself. "The proletariat worldwide is as well in the process of transnational class formation. A transnational working class is increasingly a reality, a class-in-itself. But it is not yet for-itself." They feel that it is mainly because of the continued existence of the national-state and uneven development that class-consciousness is lacking.

In any case, this global society is increasingly crystallizing into stratified classes or class-fragments. Robinson and Harris (2000) argue that below the transnational elite or the ruling class is "a small and shrinking layer of middle classes who exercise very little real power but who – pacified with mass consumption – form a fragile buffer between the transnational elite and the world's poor majority". Thus, the global society is increasingly being characterized by a three-tiered social structure. "The first tier is made up of some 30-40 percent of the population in core countries and less in peripheral countries, those who hold "tenured" employment in the global economy. The second tier, some 30 percent in the core and 20-30 percent in the periphery, form a growing army of "casualized" workers. The third tier, some 30 percent of the population in the core capitalist countries, and some 50 percent or more in peripheral countries, *who are redundant to the system*.

According to Robinson and Harris (2000) these "casualized" workers face chronic insecurity in the conditions of their employment and the absence of any collective insurance against risk previously assured by the welfare state. The third tier who is "structurally excluded from productive activity" similarly remains completely unprotected, as the welfare and developmentalist states are "dismantled". They comprise the "superfluous" population of global capitalism (see also Hoogvelt, 1997) the caring of whom under the system is left unto themselves. In the absence of the welfare state the responsibility for care and protection of this superfluous population is being diverted to these helpless beings under the guise of "community empowerment" and the such. Hoogvelt notes that an attempt is being made by a section of the ruling bloc to organize "the poor and the marginalized to care for and contain and control themselves" (1997:149) The phenomenal growth in the NGO activities world wide, and the poorer countries in particular, attests to that effort.

However, and in spite of such claims, neither the nation state nor national capital has disappeared yet, although they may be heading in that direction. It is particularly true of the third world countries where globalization or its links are the weakest. So that, there is an uneasy coexistence of the nation state and the forces of globalization. Robinson and Harris (2000) are aware that national capital continues to define and dominate classes within the boundaries of the nation-states in these countries. The classes defined by the global economy may be superimposed on this national class structure but they do not dominate the national scenes as yet. This is particularly true of the Third world countries “where transnational class formation is weakest and where "national" bourgeoisies may still control states and organize influential political projects” (Robinson and Harris 2000) But even in these countries “transnational class formation is well underway”. We are thus, faced with a situation in which we find two sets of economies defining two sets of class relations, one national the other supranational.

### III

The intellectuals too, therefore, need to be redefined in terms of this new reality. *In terms of this new reality, we can expect two sets of intellectuals one dominated by the global forces the other by the local conditions. One, directly linked with the globalizing forces, trying to promote and consolidate the global system while the other seeking to assert their independence from global hegemony.*

Thus in the midst of this new class configuration the intellectuals occupy very interesting positions. First they form a part of the ruling elite or the global ruling class both as managers and technocrats as well as the politicians and the members of the think tanks. It is with their active cooperation and participation that the global ruling class is being formed and a global state apparatus is in the process of becoming a reality. R and H note that “studies on building a global economy and transnational management structures flowed out of think tanks, university centers, and policy planning institutes in core countries” Indeed, they like to argue that the supranational state apparatus has become “one important forum” for the socialization of the new ruling class as are the “ world class universities, transnationally-oriented think tanks, the leading bourgeois foundations, such as Harvard's School of International Business, the Ford and the Carnegie Foundations, policy planning groups such as the Council on Foreign Relations, and so on”.

Robinson and Harris (2000) also argue that it is the World Economic Forum (WEF) more than any other organization that is the “quintessential example of a truly global network” that binds the transnational ruling class (global ruling class) together. They add that the component forums of the WEF include the top executives of the top 1000 transnational corporations known as the “Foundation Members”, the leaders of the top 100 media groups known as the “World Media

Leaders”, key policymakers from national governments around the world and from international organizations known as the “World Economic Leaders”, as well as the “*select academics and experts from political, economic, scientific, social and technological fields*” (italics added) known as the “Forum Fellows”. They, thus, form the “organic intellectuals” for the new global ruling class.

Like other “organic intellectuals” the intellectuals of this global class for Robinson and Harris (2000) are also involved in creating the hegemony for this class. The media, particularly in its worldwide coverage creates that hegemony and makes possible the transmission of its ideology. Robinson and Harris (2000) note that the “transnational corporate media and its tight control over the worldwide flow of information and of images are issues of cultural domination”. In doing so the global corporate media “plays an essential role in producing the ideological and cultural bases for a hegemonic bloc” (the “globalist” bloc) that they earlier identified as the ruling class. The membership in the hegemonic bloc “*also includes the politicians and charismatic figures, along with select organic intellectuals, who provide ideological legitimacy and technical solutions*” (italics added).

At the local state level one would find the whole range of intellectuals previously known to be associated with the academic institutions, the state bureaucracies, cultural and social organizations, the poets, writers, journalists and other professionals. In Gramsci’s terms they would probably today qualify as the “traditional” intellectuals as opposed to the “organic” intellectuals of the TNS identified above. In any case their role, status and activities, as will be shown below, vary considerably from those of the global intellectuals.

However, another set of intellectuals may be identified whose location may be at the national level but are associated with the supranational organizations and transnational corporations at home. Along with these is also a whole range of expatriate intellectuals who may be truly supranational as they move globally while they get transferred from one location to another. These two groups of intellectuals occupy the middle grounds as they merge on both ends with the global and local situations and take out the sharpness from of the edges. As will be shown below their political ideologies and roles may of great importance in understanding the intellectuals of today.

#### IV

To appreciate these claims we need to look at the intellectuals in their current variations. Even in Gramsci’s work we note the need to make greater distinctions among the intellectuals in terms of the roles they play vis-à-vis the system of production. Like other Marxists, Gramsci (visit website below for text from Prison

Notebooks) considered the workers and the capitalists as the fundamental classes but that did not stop him from analyzing the position of the intellectuals in the world of production. He realized that it was not as direct as that of the fundamental classes but was influenced by the “whole fabric of society and by the complex of superstructures”. Thus, Gramsci was in a position to look at the nature of the various strata of intellectuals. He proposed to measure these in relation to the extent of control exercised by each stratum. Accordingly, he thought it possible to measure the a) organic quality of various intellectual strata; b) their degree of connection with the fundamental social group; c) to establish a gradation of their function; and d) also of the superstructures they are associated with. These he proposed to do in relation to their control of the social and political life, in terms of the hegemony and state domination.

Although Gramsci continued to consider the intellectuals as mere deputies of the ruling class he not only elaborated on the internal differences that distinguish various categories of intellectuals but also sought to arrange these and the institutions they are affiliated with into hierarchies both in relation to their control over society and administration and also in terms of the qualitative differences among them. Thus, he was the first to really emphasize the differences among the various categories of intellectuals and their institutions of affiliations. These we shall presently argue are of immense importance in analyzing the intellectuals and their political opinions today.

Traditionally the intellectuals have been seen as belonging to the humanities. They are the philosophers, the literary critics, the artists, writers, columnists etc. Various categorizations have often been made among the intellectuals such as the traditional, the organic, the liberal, secular, left or the conservatives. In these the whole profession is treated as a single entity and little distinction was been made among the fields of specialization. Although often the differences between the humanities and the sciences and the technical vocations have been recognized, these have not been followed to their logical conclusions. Nor was it practical until now. The global forum allows us to make the differences among the fields of specialization into very suggestive categories of differences among intellectuals especially in terms of their participation in politics or their ideologies and political opinions.

As early as the first decades of the 20th century Julien Benda felt the need to differentiate the intellectuals who seek practical ends from those who build ideologies. He identified as intellectuals “all those whose activity essentially is *not* the pursuit of practical aims, all those who seek their joy in the practice of an art or a science or a metaphysical speculation, in short in the possession of non-material advantages”(Benda quoted by Kimball 1992). Benda called them the *clerc*, which in the current usage would include “academics and journalists, pundits, moralists, and pontificators of all varieties”. Some like Kimball (1992) uses the term *intelligentsia* to identify



the same group. Bookchin (1991) also uses the term intelligentsia to identify the same group but excludes the academics from consideration as "true intellectuals". We shall look at the significance of this exclusion of the academics later. Edward Said (2001) makes a distinction between the "writer" and the intellectual, in which he sees the "writer" as a person who produces literature--that is, a novelist, poet, dramatist and has a greater prestige in society while for him the intellectual belongs to the slightly debased and parasitic class of "critics", although at the beginning of the twenty-first century, he adds, the writer has taken on the intellectual's adversarial attributes of speaking the truth and supplying a dissenting voice.

In a similar manner Denis Smith (2001) distinguishes between those intellectuals who are "useful", mainly to the "people in power" and the 'genuine' intellectuals who "want to actually influence the way people see and think about the world and in some cases they want to help set society's agenda". The "useful" intellectuals are "the cogs in a machine" they are the "experts". Others like Kellner (visit website below) tried to differentiate the "functional" from the critical/oppositional intellectuals. The critical/ oppositional intellectuals are the real intellectuals while the "functional" intellectuals are the "specialists in legitimation and technical knowledge." They are "mere technicians who devise more efficient means to obtain certain ends, or who apply their skills to increase technical knowledge in various specialized domains"

This emphasis on the technical skills of a group of intellectuals was also voiced by Gouldner in the 1970s while trying to establish the intellectuals as forming a "new class". In this formulation Gouldner (1979) saw the intellectuals and the intelligentsia as the two elites within the new class. By employing the analogous term "intelligentsia", Gouldner tried to identify a section of the ruling elite whose intellectual interests were primarily "technical." as opposed to the intellectuals whose interests are primarily critical, emancipatory, hermeneutic and hence often political (Don W. Dotson (visit website below). While the intellectuals are noted for their "love of books", the "intelligentsia often wish nothing more than to be allowed to enjoy their opiate obsessions with technical puzzles".

Gouldner argues that the sociology and the social psychology of the occupational life of the intellectuals and the intelligentsia (mostly prefixed by 'technical') "differ considerably". Using Kuhn's notion of normal science and its focus on a single paradigm he argues that the technical intelligentsia "concentrate on operations within the paradigm(s) of their discipline, exploring its inner symbolic space, extending its principles to new fields, fine-tuning it". In contrast, the field of activity of the intellectuals more commonly lack "consensually validated paradigms" and may actually have "several competing paradigms", because of which the intellectuals "often transgress the boundaries of the conventional division of labor in intellectual life." (Gouldner 1979). They belong to the traditional humanities (Dotson).

M. Ignatief (visit website below) in his essay with the intriguing question “where have all the intellectuals gone?” also builds up the definition of the intellectuals on the distinction between the “humanist” and the scientists. Indeed, he argues that by definition the intellectual is “a generalist rather (than a) specialist, a moralist rather than a technician”. Robert Nozick (1998), a Harvard professor of philosophy, is more specific about the distinction between the two sets of intellectuals. He distinguishes between the intellectuals who work with “words” and those who work with “numbers”. He likes to identify the intellectuals as those who “deal with ideas as expressed in words, shaping the word flow others receive”. He likes to call them the “wordsmiths”. These wordsmiths include poets, novelists, literary critics, newspaper and magazine journalists and many professors, “they shape our ideas and images of society”. He argues that from treatises to slogans they give us sentences to express ourselves. On the other hand, Nozick (1998) categorically excludes from his consideration as the intellectuals “those who primarily produce and transmit quantitatively or mathematically formulated information” whom he likes to call the “numbersmiths” and “those working in visual media, painters, sculptors, cameramen” etc.

This distinction made by Nozick (1998) is of vital importance to understand the intellectuals and their political ideologies today. It is seen very easily that the intellectuals who form the core of the new global elite belong to the category of numbersmiths and the visual media rather than the wordsmiths and the print media, although the printmedia is also increasingly becoming global. Yet, CNN is received in over 200 nations and territories while the *New York Times* is not. These numbersmiths are the “experts from political, economic, scientific, social and technological fields.” They work as scientist, engineers, as well as managers in financial institutions and supranational or global organizations and corporations.

Thus, not all intellectuals are considered as “true” intellectuals. Only those who are trained in the humanities or work as novelists, poets, journalists and critics etc. are the true intellectuals. Those trained in the sciences and technologies or work in such professions are not considered as “true intellectuals”. They are mere experts and technicians.

The second set of distinctions made in recent times is between those intellectuals who work within an institution and those who are free-lance. Bookchin (1991) distinguishes the intellectuals of the academia from the “true intellectuals”, whom he calls the “intelligentsia”. The intellectuals are the ones who are in the market as commodities and are absorbed by the academia as much

as by the government and the corporations. "Their public arena is the classroom and they work according to a syllabus." Because of this absorption into the universities and into corporations and the state machinery "they end up getting trapped in the institutions so that they can't get out of them anymore." They are, thus, the institutionalized thinkers and institutionalized people who train others, rather than impart wisdom.

Within the institutions a further distinction is also made between those in teaching and those in research. Brian Martin (1998) makes a clear-cut distinction between the intellectuals in teaching and those in research. In the academia research is more "highly valued" than teaching. Academics can increase their prestige considerably by "conspicuous research, but hardly at all by conspicuous teaching". Research is also of greater interest outside the academia, where the researchers have "more to offer to powerful groups" than do teachers. The researcher can sell his knowledge, which is seen as "expert knowledge" to the outsiders like the state and the corporations. Knowledge and advice are sought by corporations and state bureaucracies as a result those in research are more likely to become consultants for the government or industry and have personal links with the state and corporate elites.

For comparable reasons, in the earlier times, the teacher also enjoyed a higher prestige, as higher education was the preserve of the social elite. But as education became universal and higher education became more accessible to the general public, the status of teaching also declined. Ignatief notes that "never has society been better educated; never has intellectuals enjoyed less prestige". Also because research is routinely associated with social benefits and 'breakthroughs' involving medicine, space and the like, being a researcher seems more likely to bolster the prestige of individual academics. Michael Ignatief similarly says that "thanks to the brilliant popularizers of physics, genetics, and chemistry, the scientist (researcher) enjoys greater intellectual prestige than any humanist intellectual".

However, a further distinction among the various categories of intellectuals is also in order. As noted above, ever larger number of jobs both in the managerial and research sectors and consulting jobs are opening up within the global organizations and national and multinational corporations and the state. These are mostly highly paid jobs and attract a large number of intellectuals from the various fields of the sciences and technology as well as from among the social sciences, particularly economics. Many corporate research organizations have an edge over the university research organizations in terms of funds and benefits. So that ever-larger numbers are being attracted to these organizations. Similarly the major corporations including the global or multinational corporations and supranational organizations like the UN also attract a large number of intellectuals, Robinson and Harris (2000) argue that as many as 30- 40 percent people in the developed and a little less in the third world have tenured jobs in such organization.

Although this figure seems to be rather high the fact remains that an ever-larger number of intellectuals are being recruited by the multinational corporations and supranational organizations.

Of even greater consequence is the fact that these jobs attract intellectuals from all over the world and are often truly global in terms of the personnel, although the representation from the first world may be disproportionately higher. Also, these organizations disperse their personnel to distant countries and regions. Thus, it is a very likely scenario that a Bangladeshi computer analyst graduating from a US university is working for a Japanese firm in Brazil. Thus, among the global organizations we may get two categories of intellectuals, one working within their own countries for better pay and benefits compared to local jobs and the other category working for the global organizations for even better pay and benefits and working in countries and regions far from their place of origin or education and training.

It is, thus, obvious that the intellectuals of today cannot be seen as a homogeneous group and that the distinction among the various categories not only separate them into distinct groups, the nature of their jobs, terms of employment and their domain and even their place of work are all so different and dispersed that it would be too naïve to assume that they are alike in any manner. There are, therefore, several categories of intellectuals who need to be treated as separate groups of intellectuals. First, we have the distinction among their fields of specializations in terms of the humanities as opposed to the sciences and technology, then the distinction among the institutional as opposed to the freelance. Within the institutional intellectuals are those in teaching and those in research, and then there are those working at the local level or the state and national corporations and those working for the global and multinational corporations and supranational organizations working within the country and again those working outside the country. In terms of broader categories we have the intellectuals from the humanities, the wordsmiths, working mostly at the local levels in state bureaucracies and as university professors or freelance writers, journalists etc. The other is the scientists, technicians, the numbersmiths, working in various research institutions in the universities, local corporations, and multinational and supranational organizations, often becoming supranational themselves.

*Therefore, a distinction among the domains of their work is essential to fully appreciate the role of the intellectuals.* Martin argues that the political views of academics show much more variation between disciplines than any difference between academic attitudes and those of the general public (Martin 1998). This becomes vital for the fact that some professionals are not even regarded as true intellectuals. Thus, for Gouldner the specialists or the technical experts are the

“intelligentsia” and not “intellectuals”. Nozick (1998) summarily dismisses the numbersmiths and visual media-persons from his consideration as intellectuals.

## V

Such distinctions are necessary because it is generally assumed that some intellectuals, the generalists, humanist or literary critics, the “wordsmiths”, play more of a public role either in favour or in opposition to this or that political issue and seek to transform public opinions. They are the “public intellectuals”. The scientists, the specialist, the technician or the numbersmiths, are mostly indifferent to the social and political issues, indeed, often apolitical. Thus it is their domain of work as much as, if not more than, their earlier class location in the family or their schooling (Brym 1980; 2001) that are seen as determinants of the role the intellectuals play in public life and is the key to their political opinions and ideologies.

Historically the intellectuals have played an oppositional role in Europe and America and are, thus, expected to continue to play a similar political role. They were the critics in the Dreyfus affair; they were the critics that Benda laments about in his 1927 essay, *The Treason of the Intellectuals*. They were the radicals and later the Left in most societies. According to Sartre “the duty of the intellectual is to denounce injustice wherever it occurs.” The domain of the intellectual is “to write and speak within the public sphere, denouncing oppression and fighting for human freedom and emancipation.” (Kellner, see website below).

Indeed, for many, the real intellectual is the one who plays a political role. Bookchin (1991), though he used the term intelligentsia, to identify the ‘true intellectuals’ argues that intelligentsia is a concept of Russian origin where it referred to the “people who thought and still lived in a public arena, and who tried to create a public sphere.” For him Denis Diderot is an example of the intelligentsia “who wrote - virtually in poverty for much of his life - who read and was creative, who walked the streets of Paris intoxicated by the life of the people, who played chess and was involved in the discussions in the cafes, acting as a ferment, challenging authority everywhere along his way and going to prison for a period of time.” Thus for Bookchin (1991) the intelligentsia are the people who not only engaged in thinking and writing but also “engaged in confrontations with the system instead of shying away from them.” The intelligentsia, (in Russia) went with others to Siberia (on exile) and created enormous social ferment, they worked outside the institutions and would rather create institutions for the masses that needed to understand the real issues of the time.

But in recent times it has been felt by many that not all intellectuals are engaged in building ideas and ideologies or participating in politics in equal measures. *There are many among the intellectuals who do not so much as concern themselves with politics or even the public realm.* Since the advent of universal education the number of people who would be considered as intellectuals or those who work in the intellectual professions have increased phenomenally, definitely over the past century. As a result there are literally hundreds of thousands, even millions, within any country, or society, who may be identified as intellectuals. It would be only futile to expect that all those hundreds of thousands of intellectuals be involved in public life or even to have strong political opinions. Brian Martin feels that most intellectuals have conventional views and lives. There is little inherent radicalism in being an intellectual. (Martin 1998) . Thus, only a handful of the intellectuals may be involved in shaping the public sphere and the others simply as passive as the rest of the public, while some may even be apathetic to the public need or be truly *apolitical*. This explains why some find the intellectuals as not meeting the ideal typical expectations. The number of such uninvolved ones may actually be overwhelmingly large and frustrate any attempt to define the "true intellectual".

Starr (1995) sees this apathy as the result of two major factors, first is the rise of the academia, and the research institutions and the absorption into the government bureaucracies, second the rise of the market; the culture of the academy and the culture of commerce. Russell Jacoby lamented the fact that most intellectuals have become professors. The academia kills the intellectuals. Pierre Bourdieu argues that since the intellectuals are employed by the bourgeois, who hold the real economic and political power, they remain loyal to the order. What this means in practice is that institutional intellectuals may profess any number of "radical" ideas but are curiously passive vis-à-vis the system itself (Marjorie Perloff 1997). Marjorie Perloff finds the intellectuals as a vanishing species so far as "public voice" is concerned. Olivier Mongin, editor of the *L'Esprit* recently argued that "the notion of the intellectual is today a useless one" (quoted by David Tresilian 2000).

Therefore, an attempt is often made to identify the public intellectuals and to distinguish them from those who do not perform such roles. It is in this search that some have come up with a distinction between the intellectuals and the intelligentsia or the technical experts and the humanist intellectuals or those from the institution as opposed to those who work as freelance intellectuals and those who work as researchers as opposed to those who are mere teachers. We have also made a further distinction between the intellectuals who work for the global

organizations and who work at the local levels and between those who work within their own country and society and those who work outside.

## VI

We are now in a better position to understand the political roles and ideologies of the intellectuals. As noted above the assumption that the intellectuals represent a position in the social structure and that their political opinions and ideologies are a mere reflection of that position is no longer tenable. Analysts from Marx on ward have tried to identify this ideology and in most cases the intellectuals have been seen as occupying a position away from those of the basic classes, the proletariat and the capitalists, and they were seen as mere deputies of the capitalists and serving their interests, although some have seen them as classless or even belonging to the ruling class, if not forming the ruling class in itself.

All these have been argued in relation to a capitalist economy, often a socialist and not-so-capitalist third world economies, but they have always been seen in a nation-state context. It has been shown above that neither the nation state nor the capitalist economy, we were so familiar with, exist today in a manner that a Marxist would find comfortable to relate to. Although the economy is yet to become totally global, whatever that may amount to, there is today in existence at least two sets of realities that confront the intellectuals as much as it confronts the rest of the world. One is the economy based in the nation state with its political and social settings affecting the day to day life of the most while the other, the global one, which is supranational and far removed from the local level, almost an abstract entity for many. However, between these two extremes are many corporations and organizations, including state governments that deal in various intermediary capacities between the two settings so that there is no clear demarcation and that one set of reality gradually merges with the other.

For the intellectuals, therefore, their work settings are also varied beginning with one at the local to the other at the global level with various intermediary locations. At the local level the intellectual is engaged in the academia as teacher and researcher, in the state administration, various research positions in the corporations and as journalists, critics, free-lance writers etc. At the global level the intellectual workplace includes the research corporations, managerial and administrative work in the transnational corporations and supranational organizations and, as Robinson and Harris (2000) note, in various think tanks of the global organizations. In the intermediary positions are the administrators, technical experts, consultants with various

organizations and corporations, and the whole army of expatriate intellectuals working from the local to the global levels.

The political opinion, ideology or the political role of this diverse group of people cannot be similar in any manner. Nor is it possible to estimate the political ideologies or their political involvement on the basis of the variables used for estimation in the now fast fading nation-state based capitalist society alone. In the global system the social location and the arena of possible political involvement have all changed. It is no longer the state boundaries, often not even national identities that demarcate his location vis-à-vis the economic system of which he is a part. What can be the possible mode of political involvement or political ideology or even political opinion of a Bangladeshi economist born to a rural peasant family in Bangladesh receiving higher education in the USA and working for a Japanese corporation in Brazil for a six-figure salary? What defines his social location or what would define his arena of political involvement? On the other hand, while it may be possible to identify the social / class location of a freelance writer contributing to a local newspaper in a small town in the USA, what would define his political position on the degradation of the natural environment in a far off third world country by a multinational corporation which has its head office in his own county?

So that, *a simplistic model based on the social location of the intellectual at birth, or any time after, as fixed cannot be the basis of estimating political ideology or opinion.* Various authors earlier pointed out that the intellectual's social location in the family, his chances of social mobility (Mannheim), and his actual career, in terms of his affiliation with various institutions etc.(Brym) affect his political ideology and opinion. Recently it was argued by Islam and Islam (1988), that the prospect of his involvement with the multinational organization and the very fact of the incorporation of the intellectual or his country into the world system redefines his social location further. It has now been shown that *the global system similarly redefines intellectuals' social location afresh in that the intellectuals, or a large part of the community, cannot be viewed in terms of any national unit only as they become global both in terms of their involvement in the multinational and supranational organizations and because many of them are dispersed all over the globe and not tied to any national unit.* It would be futile to expect any clear-cut political opinion from this community vis-à-vis his country or the global system, unless he is directly involved either in his national politics, which too is influenced by numerous global factors, or in the promotion of the global system itself as a member of the think tanks and the supranational organizations promoting the globalization.

We have noted further that there is a qualitative difference among the intellectuals in terms of their fields of training or occupation. *The scientific and technical fields are not conducive to the*



*production of the public intellectuals, nor are the various research and academic institutions, including the universities, which employ the largest number of intellectuals. Most of these intellectuals are likely to be apolitical or passive in terms of their involvement and are simple recipients and not creators of ideas or ideals and political opinions.*

It must also be noted that *most intellectuals are today simply “wage earners”* working for this or that institution and are tied to their institutions for their future development and cannot be expected to voice opinions contrary to those held by the institutions. Although they do not dependent on patronage of the rich or the powerful as had been the case throughout the past, he is not the owner of immense property either and independent enough to voice a strong opinion on any issue as would have been possible for a 19<sup>th</sup> century intellectual. Although, theoretically, the professor may be independent to voice an opinion in or outside the classroom few, if any, institution would tolerate opinions contrary to its stated or unstated positions on an issue. Peter Levine, however, likes to blame the intellectuals themselves for not becoming public voices. He argues that theoretically the tenured faculty are among the society's freest and most secure employees, so it is their own fault that they do not become public intellectuals.

In any case, *in this age of universal education the number of the public intellectuals as a ratio of the total number who are trained as intellectuals is very small*, so that the sheer number of the uninvolved ones drown the voices of those who try to speak out and this is often translated as the 'death' of the intellectual as a community or their failure to perform in their age old expected role of opposing the system. As noted above, *it would not be practical to expect even a small fraction of the hundreds of thousands who may be counted as intellectuals to perform as public voices. Most intellectuals lead a life much like the rest of the public. Nor is there anything inherent in their career that would automatically make them radicals or the followers of this or that ideology*, except may be to the extent that, as a study (Nakhaie and Brym 1999) of over fifteen thousand Canadian professors suggests, social science education may make them more left leaning than an education in the natural sciences and that a tenured job may prompt them to be more politically inclined. However, very little of these translates into public voices and is mostly confined to “campus radicalism” promoting personal or community benefits.

## VII

Much of what could be translated as the public role of the intellectuals was in the past confined to radicalism and later identified with the Left. The recent demise of the Left has, thus, created a void in the public sphere. For much of the past century the most important public issue that the intellectuals concerned themselves with was the debate between capitalism and socialism. The

vary interest in the study of intellectuals and their political opinion originated from this debate. Starr (1995) notes that, "for much of this (20<sup>th</sup>) century, the principal debate among intellectuals took place between liberals and the left. The overriding question was socialism versus capitalism, revolution or radicalism versus reform". Similarly, Ignatief (see website below) argues that for most of the twentieth century intellectuals enlisted on behalf of the "great narrative" battle between communism and capitalism. The battle gave point to their polemics and meaning to their lives, with the loss of the "grand narrative" of communism the intellectuals of today are lost.

*Thus, the end of the Soviet era has meant for the intellectuals, more than anything else, the loss of an alternative. For all through the past century one could debate over the prospect of an alternative process of development, could visualize an alternative to capitalism and imperialism under its sway. Suddenly that alternative is gone. This loss has produced an immense vacuum in the psyche of the intellectuals in general, and particularly among the Left, who suddenly find themselves without a cause. Very suddenly the Left is gone so are the Left intellectuals.*

The loss of the Left and the Left intellectuals has direct and very important consequences for the intellectual community in general. First, *the end of the Left has also meant the rise of the Right all over the world. The intellectuals seem to have taken a step to the right as the number of conservative intellectuals increase across the world.* Starr (1995) has very aptly demonstrated the building up of this general trend in the USA in the recent decades. He notes that "where liberal intellectuals once found themselves engaged in a debate with the left, they now find themselves in a running debate with the right" He shows that during the past several decades, the number and vitality of conservative intellectuals have enormously increased, and many of them, contrary to the conventional picture, flourish outside the academy in the foundations, think tanks and research organizations and the media. Thus he feels that the decline of intellectuals on the left and the rise of intellectuals on the right have dramatically changed the politics of ideas in the USA. So has it in most countries all over the world. In the past "Conservatism did not figure as an intellectual force in the same way; liberal intellectuals did not worry about their relation to conservatives". To day they are competing with the liberals for the center stage. The vacuum created by the exit of the Left has, thus, opened the prospect for the rise of the Right all over the world.

Second, *this loss of the Left has unfortunately also meant loss of the universal intellectual.* Starr (1995) notes that today there is a general lament about the loss of the intellectual. At the center of this lament is the fact that the intellectual in this conception is a wide-ranging moral and social critic, uncorrupted by the culture of the academy or the culture of commerce (Starr 1995), the type Jacoby would identify as the "universal" intellectual. These were mostly the intellectuals from

the Left. Thus, the end of the Left intellectual generally implies the end of the “universal intellectual” as well, the ones who would be concerned with the universal human values and decencies.

Third, *the disappearance of the intellectual as a universal voice has heralded in the rise of the intellectual who is concerned with the immediate and deal with these on an ad hoc basis.* Thus, Foucault (quoted in R.C. Thomas 1988) talked about the coming in of the “specific intellectual” as opposed to the intellectuals who championed universal values. The universal intellectual was represented by personalities such as Sartre and Voltaire, who were jurists and notables while the “specific intellectuals” are the savants or experts. Similarly Bauman (quoted in Kellner) distinguishes between those intellectuals who wish to legislate universal values, as opposed to those intellectuals who work as interpreters mostly at the state level. Ignatiev, more to our point, similarly draws the distinction between the “globalist” and the “particularist intellectuals”.

Radicalism among the intellectuals in the past almost always pushed them to the Left, to oppose capitalism and the establishment. These were the very hallmark of intellectualism. *With the Left gone and without the socialist reservoir to flow into, the radical intellectuals have very little to oppose today except to vent their energies at fragmented issues arising out of the globalization process, such as is launched against the meeting of the WTO or for the promotion of environmental concerns like “Green Peace” or in favour of issues like the women’s movement. That’s as far Left that anyone can go these days, which also defines the end point of universal intellectualism.*

Thus, *with the end of the Left intellectual and the consequential decline of the universal intellectuals we come to an impasse in which the radical bent among the intellectuals faces a dead end.* Mostly because in these days of mass communication the issues or events on which one would deliberate have become either supranational or, in quite the opposite situation, are rarely meaningful beyond the local settings. The supranational issues and events are addressed at the supranational levels or as multilateral issues dealt with by state governments or supranational organizations. There is hardly, if ever, any scope of these being influenced by individual intellectuals, the vast majority of whom are confined to the local settings as in the universities or other such local institutions.

The comparatively few who can be identified as the “global intellectuals” associated with the supranational organizations, the foundations and the think tanks are hardly concerned with issues of universal values. On the contrary, their main concern today is the promotion of free trade and

consumerism, as one sociologist (Ritzer) calls it, the McDonaldization of the world or in the words of Ignatiev achieving "sameness" throughout the world.

But, *Globalism is in itself a conservative force, seeking to keep the world under the firm control of the West and big business, keeping intact the pre-World War II advantages of the West over the rest.* The big businesses and particularly the US government have built research institutions in the form of foundations and think tanks to find ways and means to achieve these. Some of the best brains from the developed world are involved in these think tanks and foundations, which remain the abode of conservatism. Paul Starr (1995) in a recent study suggests that at least since the 1970s conservative intellectuals have influenced the business community to invest in the foundations and the think tanks as a result since the 1970s, conservatives have built an intellectual counterestablishment outside the academic world that includes foundations, think tanks, communications networks, and publications. These think tanks, foundations and the communication and publication networks along with the supranational organizations such as the World Bank and the IMF are the champions of globalism today, promoting a world suited to the tastes of the conservatives.

Intellectuals associated with these organizations are far better off financially compared to intellectuals outside and are likely to promote the interest of the organizations. As would also be the intellectuals working for organizations run by funds from these global or supranational organizations. It was noted earlier how intellectuals, bureaucrats and politicians, including from the third world, are linked to these global organizations. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Right is becoming stronger by the day.

While at the same time, the intellectuals' location in the multinational corporations and supranational organizations hardly merit any political opinion or role vis-à-vis their own nation-states as noted earlier. This would be particularly true of the expatriate intellectuals all over the world. But even for the ones working with the multinational corporations and living in their own countries there is very little possibility of political participation as little, if at all, would be tolerated by the multinational employers.

Also to be noted is the fact that most of the intellectuals working for the multinational corporations and supranational organizations are from the sciences and technical vocations, the ones who are not even considered as intellectuals. Thus, they are more likely to be apolitical, definitely are less politically inclined than the ones working with the national and local institutions. Therefore, *the further away the intellectuals are from their nation-state based institutions, in multinational and supranational enterprises, the less politically inclined they are likely to be. While those who are*

*directly a part of the global system (like working in the foundations and the think tanks or are direct beneficiaries), are more likely to be conservatives in their political ideologies.*

## VIII

*Conversely, those who are farthest from the global system or the supranational and the multinational corporations or with little or no possibility of being a part of these or ever moving out of their local situations are more likely to be highly political, focusing on numerous petty issues which criss-cross their everyday lives.*

Although some may find the global stage as a befitting place for opposition in general there is a clear decline in the radical ideology at the supranational level. There is no Soviet Union or a socialist state to support them or an ideological utopia to which the present radical mind can identify with and draw inspiration from and to unite with others through these. The intellectual's opposition to any issue today is hardly defined clearly as is the extent of his emotional or physical involvement with these. In the same way the venues for practical demonstration are dispersed all over the globe.

Thus the issues, which relate to the process of globalization are supranational in character and are similarly critiqued or opposed by supranational voices, including those of the intellectuals. For example, a meeting of the WTO becomes the focus of opposition of radical intellectuals from all over the world congregating at the meeting place. Though their numbers are pathetically small they are truly supranational for as soon as the meeting is over these intellectuals depart for their own countries to get ready for another showdown at another part of the world on another such issue. For the rest of the intellectuals, as for the rest of the world, these demonstrations are almost surrealistic in nature, too abstract and too far removed from their own lives, to mean little more than another newspaper headline.

However, the issues and events at the supranational or global levels also have their local counterparts. So that terrorism, environmental degradations or feminist movements become more important at the local levels where the intellectuals can raise their voices more directly. But the problem with this is that each of these issues at the local levels, often some at the global level, are so entangled with other issues like religion, ethnicity or regional antagonisms and political ideologies and opinions, that they do not attract a common voice from the intellectual community as each intellectual has his or her own particular issue which he or she can or cannot attend to because of some other issues that affect his/her position on this particular one. Thus, *the intellectual's position on any issue is compromised by her/his position on other issues as s/he is*

*separated from the others by race, religion, ethnicity, culture, language, political affiliations etc.* So that the intellectual response to any issue becomes very personal and selective, they respond to a particular set of issues and not another and remain ever divided as a community with each to his own.

Similarly, the issues themselves have lost their universality and are abstract at the global level or they are very real and focused at the local levels where the intellectuals respond to them in isolation of other intellectuals of other parts of the world. Rarely is there any issue to which the intellectuals as a world community can react in a unified manner or they can do so in close physical proximity. The issues do not affect them equally nor in the same way and with the same intensity as the intellectuals face these issues primarily in their local settings and respond to these as they unfold at a given time and place and are severely limited by their own affiliations as religious, ethnic, regional or some such communities. Often the only issues that are left for them to raise their voices against are merely at the campus level.

Therefore, Ignatief (visit website below) argues that the only “grand narrative” available to the intellectuals to respond to today is the conflict between “globalism” and “particularism” “between forces of technology, capital and science, which are sweeping us towards global sameness, and the traditions of language, culture, religion, and identity, which maintain our differences intact”. In this battle some are globalists but most, especially the “former left wing” intellectuals are particularists, leading an opposition to a world dominated by McDonalds and Microsoft. But by focusing more and more on our identities we are opening up our old wounds and unleashing age old rivalries among religious factions, cultural and linguistic groupings as among national, tribal or ethnic communities or petty political affiliations. Thus, although the global change “is scouring the face of the planet” the particular is “as tenacious and resourceful” and is fighting back with equal strength while in the process we are “retribalizing” and the more globalism makes our consumption patterns converge, the more intently “we defend the particularities of national difference which remain.” (Ignatief).

More importantly, as we defend our trivial distinctiveness we loose sight of our greater concerns as human beings and our responsibilities to other human beings. Globalization is forcing us to defend our identities at various levels, where the national, religious and ethnic, political and other differences become more meaningful and we get separated from each other and from our concerns as human beings so that our universal concerns get replaced by our concern for the petty differences and personal wants. Thus, according to Ignatief, while trying to protect our trivial differences “many are sacrificing the intellectual’s historical function of defending universal human

decencies against the violence and closure associated with the tribal, the national, and the ethnic”.

Thus as the intellectuals’ concerns shift to these petty issues, like the ethnic, gender, religious, national or regional differences and even to the personal issues of promotion or funding, they get isolated from each other and are forced to cling more closely to their institutions of affiliations or the political parties or groups which appear to echo their opinions on these issues to the extent that their political ideologies get identified in favour of these groups or political parties. The political affiliations of the intellectuals, thus, also get tribalized in the sense that the intellectuals, as individuals and as a community, “belong” to this or that group or party and consider the “others” as enemies! These groups or political parties have little ideological leanings as these have lost their meaning in the global era, and are themselves more likely to be issue oriented.

Intellectuals in such a scenario have little or no personal opinions of their own they simply take sides on the issues of the day. So that the intellectuals end up as merely voicing their opinions in favour of this or that group or a political party. They become Republicans or Democrats rather than conservatives or liberals. Therefore, *today the intellectual neither stands alone against the world (as the universal intellectual would) nor alone in his independence from the world.*

More importantly the process of globalization is pushing us all towards the same end. Leading one group of intellectuals to become conservative defenders of the global system and apathetic to politics, the other group towards emphasizing our inherent, often inconsequential, differences, raising these to a heightened level of awareness and, hence, to conflicts of various magnitudes. And while we defend our negligible differences doggedly, we nonchalantly relinquish our universal values, moralities, principles and ideologies. Therefore, while the local level may sponsor heightened level of political activities, these do not relate to universal human concerns or even to clear-cut political ideologies of the Left, Right or the Centre. If anything, the involvement in the national, religious, ethnic etc. issues by its very nature is also a conservative defense and hence belonging to the Right too. *So that globalization is promoting the Right at both ends!* Therefore, if one seeks to identify the intellectuals in terms of their ideologies, if these have any meanings today, one may find mostly apolitical ones and those of the Right. The rest would be, more by default, the liberals among whom would also be the former Left.

## IX

Thus, the nature of their work and the institution of their affiliations are such that their involvement in social and political causes can vary from substantial to zero involvement. The intellectual working outside his country for a multinational research corporation would have hardly anything to

contribute to the political or even the social life of the host country, nor would he be even concerned with the such. While on the other hand the local level intellectuals, such as a freelance columnist, would be in the thick of things and a political opinion would be a normal expectation from him. We may thus seek to arrange these affiliations on a continuum based on the kind of political involvement of each of these intellectual positions at one end of which would be placed the local level jobs and the opposite end the global level jobs, and at the center of which will be the zone which merges into one another.

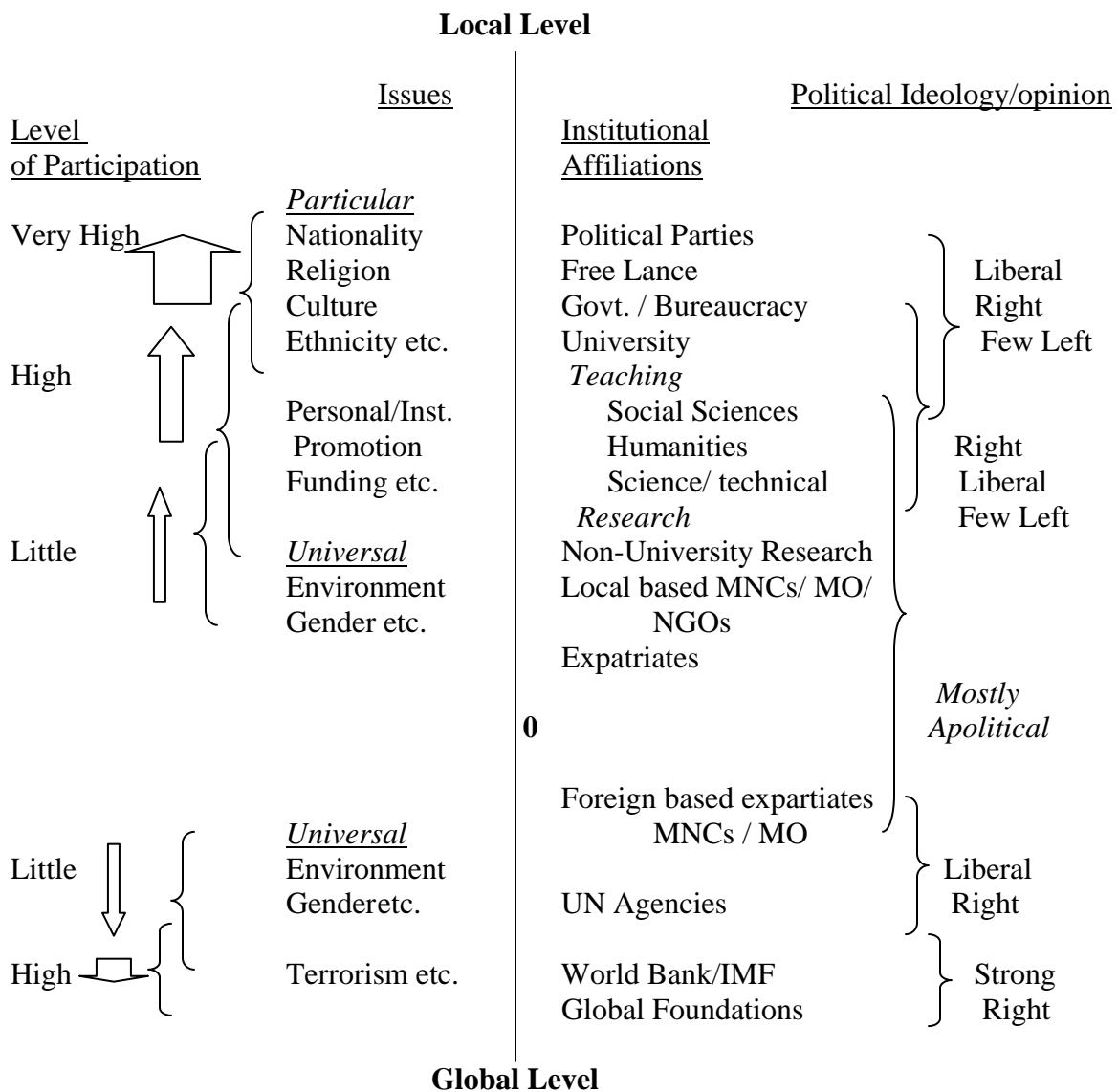
In terms of political affiliation or expected political opinions the center point of the continuum represents the apolitical or zero political involvements moving to both ends of higher involvement and stronger political opinions. The global end of the scale will represent lesser of political involvement, mostly apolitical or closer to that, except at the extreme end where the organizers and the promoters of the global system and the members of the think tanks, the class of people Robinson and Harris (2000) would like to identify as the global block. On the other side of the scale shall be a gradations from zero involvement to very strong commitments at the local level. The global scenario would thus move from being apolitical to barely political most of the way up the scale occupied by the scientists working in multinational research organizations to expatriate administrators of the transnational corporations, to somewhat political in terms of promoting globalization and perhaps the global state of Robinson and Harris (2000). On the local end there is the scientist involved in various research organizations and universities and a large number of academicians who are apolitical to increasingly political state administrators and more and more political groups of columnist, ideologues and free-lance critics. Thus one may be highly political at the local level but have little to contribute at the global level.

In the past the continuum on which the political ideology of the intellectuals was measured ran from the radical to liberal to conservative or from the left to center to the right. Today such branding would hardly have much value. *The only meaningful branding of the intellectuals today is whether one is at all political or not.* So that the continuum may run from the apolitical, even anti-political to highly political. However, they also need to be separated in terms of the local or the global settings. The intellectuals at the local settings may range from the nonpolitical to somewhat political to highly political depending primarily upon the institutions that harbor them and their potentiality to prosper in these. Outside of the institutions the petty differences of nationality, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic variations etc. may fuel very strong political opinions based on the happenings at the local level. Global level incidents concerning the same issues may also trigger heightened political opinions, which may often be rather very temporary and lose its edge as soon as the incident passes into history. These would rarely get organized



into universal concerns or turn into major movements. They are more likely to remain confined to personal opinions or as the “affected group” based ideological issues (see Figure 1 below).

### Political Ideology, Institutional Affiliation and the Level of Participation of the Intellectuals in the Post-Soviet Global Society



## Figure 1

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