POWER, PLURALISM AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF GOVERNANCE IN A ERA DECLINING HEGEMONY

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Prelude
In the introduction to a recently published book with the revealing title Diaspora and Hybridity the authors write in dismay:

“It is not that we have been forced to change our minds, or the ways we work, but the gap between the time of this book’s conception and its context of publication is large. The reassertion of borders and the closing down of multiple perspectives in the current political climate has undone the progressive potential of the terms with which we were to engage. We began this work in 2000, when, given the cultural promises of diaspora and hybridity, it was till possible to discern the beginnings of a transformation in the cultural certainties of the homogeneous, autochtonous nation. A hesitant but real expectation heralded the advent of hybrid forms of culture, working at the point of cultural translation, which manuy believed were going to disturb the settled formations of white supremicist capitalist patriarchy (to borrow from bell hooks). We have agreed to show traces of this optimism, which may still be found in parts of this book, but on the whole, our gauche enthusiasm has been dashed in the face of the global war on terror, the inauguration of new fear-driven security clampdowns, extra-legal detentions and incarcerations, bombing raids and imperial occupations...”
(Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk 2005: 1).

This reactive statement contains the gist of a colossal misunderstanding of the nature of global process that has pervaded what might be called the globalization ideologues of the past decades. But the authors are to be congratulated, at least, for their dismay when suddenly confronted with a reality that clearly has other properties than those entailed by the ideology. From their explicitly normative position, the acceptance that something
seems to have gone world in the world is a gross deception. The direction of the world seems to have changed radically. We were on the way to globalized category busting, cultural miscegenation and suddenly it seems that boundaries are proliferating and hardening everywhere. In the following I hope to show the reasons why certain intellectuals fall into the multiculturalist/hybridid trap as well as offering a model for why the latter ideology emerges and why reality has been and is continuing to move in a very different direction. It is not, from our perspective, a question of the world suddenly changing and whether we should maintain this ideology as a normative corrective to the progressively conflictual fragmenting of the world, as do many intellectuals, and multiculturally oriented governments (such as that of Sweden) in their attempts to resocialize the “dangerous” classes” in the appropriate mentality (Friedman and Ekholm 2006). On the contrary we shall argue that both the volatile fragmentation and the normative attempts to transcend the latter are part of the self-same process. In order to make this complex case we need to provide some of the world systemic background to the issues at hand.

Parallel logics in the global system
The contemporary reconfiguration of the global system is multifaceted and some would say complex. The use of the term complexity is no help, however, unless we can specify the processes involved and the way in which they are related to one another. These processes have definite properties that we refer to in terms of parallel linked logics. They can be enumerated as follows:

1. Hegemonic decline and the decentralization of capital accumulation. This is related to the logic of accumulation itself. the increasing relative costs of social reproduction in the old centers of the world system leads to the export of capital to areas where such accumulation is more “profitable”. This in its turn leads to gradual decline in state revenues as real incomes decline, and as remaining capital shifts to finance and speculation where profits/revenues are highest. The system enters a period of increasing instability and competition in which there is mass export of capital and a geographical decentralization of accumulation, the increasing dominance of financial and even speculative activity, a fragmentation and consequent networking and flexibilization of a formerly vertical economic order.

2. In this situation hegemonic decline is combined with the rise of new global contenders. The contemporary shift in accumulation (Friedman 1996, 1998, 1999, 2005) is clearly in the direction of East Asia and South Asia, new global hegemonic powers that are appropriating ever greater proportions of global growth and especially of total manufacturing. It might be argued that manufacturing is archaic in the contemporary
information economy, but in terms of total real consumption this is simply not the case. While it is also true that value added is primarily located in the old centers of the world system where the major consumption of world goods (still) occurs, it is the relative cheapness of production that is the immediate cause of the global shift. And while the massively rapid accumulation in East and South Asia has led to crises and large scale population displacements, this is what always happens in the process of “development”.

3. Increasing instability is part of the decentralization process itself. For certain zones it implies rapid growth based at first on capital import, then on regional investment. For others, some semi-peripheries in decline and most dependent peripheries, it entails disintegration, conflict and escalating violence a process that produces large scale emigration as well as high rates of mortality and material destruction.

4. Decentralization accounts for phenomena such as flexibilization (disintegration of vertical economic structures), the rise of finance capital, the emergence of network organization including mafias and the illicit trades in arms, drugs, and people. Network society is not in this view a product of technological development (i.e. internet: Castells), but is part of the decentralization process itself, a direct product of hegemonic decline in the world system.

5. Increasing conflict and local/regional crisis generates mass migration often organized by decentralized and mafia-like organizations, the same organizations that finance and provide weapons for conflicts that give rise to such demographic movement. As such the new mass migration can best be understood in relation to the other transformations of global process to which it is connected.

6. Within the territorial or nation state there occurs a double process of polarization; horizontal and vertical. The first is related to the decline of modernist identity and the strongly assimilationist state in which modernism is itself the principal project. In a situation where the future cannot be understood as progress, where there is only downward mobility for a large part of the population, there is a tendency to look elsewhere for identity. There is a proliferation of “roots” and an emergence of alternative identity politics.

Hegemonic decline and cultural transformation

Horizontal/vertical polarization
The broader transformation referred to above is one in which modernist based identities have declined. The latter were based very much on
movement away from cultural roots toward a more abstract sense of development, both of self and society. The cultural was reduced to lifestyle, a question of roles, of clubs, of voluntary association, rather than a deeper sense of belonging. The overriding tendency of this earlier period, one that transformed the cultural order of Western societies during the 19th and 20th centuries, was a distancing from the fixed and culturally embedded, one that was often expressed as a liberation from “tradition” (even though, as Marshall Sahlins has so well put it, this liberation process is a particular Western tradition in its own right [Sahlins 1993]). It was underpinned by real social mobility, not primarily geographical (although urbanization is certainly part of it), but also an increase in life chances often based on class struggle. And it was all dependent upon the increasing economic expansion of the West and its achievement of world hegemony. As the limits of this development approached, modernism began to lose its punch; the evolutionary future began to fade and the past loomed as the more concrete “real” future, hence the rise of the practice of rooting, of religiosity, ethnicization, indigenization. The decline of hegemony that has led to four large scale tendencies to collective re-identification:

a. **Regional:** Regional minorities began to assert themselves from the mid-seventies (Bretons, Occitanists, Catalans, Scots, Welsh, Cornish and numerous others). This is documented in numerous texts and studies of the new movements and in classical studies such as Tom Nairn’s *The Breakup of Britain*. It has continued even today at the highest level with the ambivalence of English identity in relation to “Britishness”. The English can be said do have been forced to deal with themselves as a regional identity within Britain where the former imperial identity is no longer dominant.

b. **Indigenous:** Indigenous populations (according to the UN definition) were hardly an issue until the mid 1970’s but the category has undergone an explosive development since then in large parts of the world. However, it is most drastically pronounced within the declining hegemonic spheres, in the West and Japan and in their internal and external peripheries. From a situation in which such groups were disappearing and by and large ignored, there has a emerged an increasing self-identification (according to some sources almost 500 million) and the institutionalization of global representation within the UN system.

c. **Immigrant:** In periods of expansion there is a strong tendency to vertical integration within host countries, as was the case during a large part of the 20th century where both labor migration and refugee based migration fed into a substantial assimilation or at least ordering of populations within receiving states. The reversals spoken of above are expressed in the declining capacity of states to integrate immigrants.
and a consequent marginalization, enclavization and diasporization of identity, i.e. the maintenance/revival/reinforcement of long distance ethnic identities.

d. National: there is a shift in this period from nationality-as-political-citizenship to nationality-as-cultural-citizenship. The culturalization of nationality in Europe is also an expression of the ethnicization process. This is not a mere reaction, as some have suggested, to globalization nor to mass migration. It appears to have occurred in the wake of a broader transformation.

Figure 1 Hegemonic and cultural cycles in global systems

I have suggested elsewhere (Friedman 1994) that the reason that these “new” identities work is because they are rehabilitating for those who participate in them. This is an important aspect of the process that should not be forgotten. It is not merely about fragmenting, but from the individual subject’s point of view about re-birth. Thus fragmentation at the state level implies simultaneous integration at the sub-national or sub-state level.

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It is important to note that these are always partial statistical tendencies that are themselves filled with variation and conflict. The relation between the cycle of hegemony and the changing practices of identity can be depicted in terms of the graphic in Figure 1, one that was first suggested in the 1980’s but still appears to be suitable as a rendering of this process.

I have referred to this process in terms of horizontal fragmentation or even polarization, since the former often leads to the latter in periods of increasing competition and crisis. Multiculturalism or more generally pluralism can be more or less deduced from this process. It is simply the breakup of larger modernist political spheres into smaller self-identified fragments that compete for “recognition” within those spheres. This is reflected in the intellectual discourses that emerge in the period (late 70’s on) in which all larger formations, whether scientific paradigms or nation states are attacked as Foucauldian sources of homogenizing power. Thus post-modernism and its post-colonial variants perfectly express this change in vision without being able to account for it. In anthropology for example, this is the period of declining structuralisms and marxisms and rising culturalisms. The left that had once identified itself in terms of the overturning of capitalism become something quite different. From having protested against American imperialism, understood in structural and material terms, it turned to the critique of American and then all of Western culture as the very basis of this imperialism, now understood as cultural imperialism. This was an era of class mobility for many academics including those from the upper classes of the Third World (Dirlik...), notably in a period in which real working class wages were on the decline. The mobility of these populations is an essential aspect of what is referred to as vertical polarization. The struggle became relocated within university departments, especially in the United States and thus began the era known for the use of the term “political correctness”. Former leftists who refused to follow suit (such as erstwhile SDS leader Todd Gitlin, and Russell Jacoby who has made an interesting contribution to the issue with his *The End of Utopia: Politics and culture in an age of apathy*) were reclassified by many as reactionary or at least regressive in relation to the new liberal multiculturalism (e.g. Stanley Fish). It is interesting to follow the fate of particular authors as markers of larger changes in the state of the world system. The latter change in state, also described in part by Jacoby, is what can be called the inversion of ideology, represented in part as follows:

Jacoby states quite simply what he sees as an inversion of left ideology.

“We are witnessing not simply the defeat of the left, but its conversion and perhaps inversion” (11).
After noting the rise of multiculturalism and its politics, going back to Horace Kallen who was more pessimistic about the idea because he saw mass migration creating so much opposition, he argues that pluralism has become a substitute for radicalism.

“The rise of multiculturalism correlates with the decline of utopia, an index of the exhaustion of political thinking “ (33).

The linkage between global transformation and the emergence of multicultural ideology connects declining hegemony with the decline of modernism, the inversion of leftist ideology and replacement of material critique by the critique of Western culture, of the national as essentialist and homogeneous. In this process hierarchy also returns as a figure of an alternative future. Among those who have been involved in the recent Balkan conflicts there are those on both left and right (I shall return to this interesting fusion) who have begun to think of something like the Habsburg empire as a solution to such ethnic strife. And among many “postcolonial” authors, the Ottoman Empire has been celebrated for its successful multiculturalism and is defined in opposition to that awful phenomenon the Western nation state, all the while forgetting the actual social order of that empire and its violently oppressive character (which ought of course to be expected from any imperial order). Even the caste order, at least under the Raj has come in for celebratory praise, for compared to contemporary Mumbai with its Hindu nationalism things were better in colonial India which was, perhaps, the true multicultural paradise lost where there was a place for everyone, including the poor.

“The truly destitute were always there, but even they fit into a complex subeconomy of pavement dwelling, rag picking, petty crime, and charity” (Appadurai 2000: 629).

It might be suggested that Hindu nationalism is primarily the expression of a strong nationalization process, typical for periods of hegemonic expansion. It should not be assumed then that it is indicative of the kind of ethnic fragmentation discussed above. In any case the fact that the increasingly obvious identity conflicts that characterize much of the world is seen as a great mistake by many “cosmopolitan intellectuals” is an important linkage between the former and a vertical polarization that has produced a vigorous cosmopolitan identity. Since the 80’s there has been a rapidly increasing class stratification in the West. It is expressed in the divergence between rising middle and upper class incomes and the downward mobility of the lower middle and lower classes. Gini indexes provide some idea of this process which has increased since the mid 80’s and 90’s not least in central Western countries such as the UK, the US and even in Sweden, once famous for its extreme equality and where the Gini
index increased by 25% over a 4 year period in the beginning of the 90's. And it is not merely an issue of the astronomical incomes of certain financial capitalists. There is a new breadth to this process that includes various elites: media, cultural, academic and not least political. In our research on Sweden and France we have noted that this is not just a question of national class identity but increasingly of a cosmopolitanization of the elites, who identify more as citizens of the world than of their particular countries. The former CEO of media giant Bertelsmann, Thomas Middlehoff said concerning his role in the American media world:

“We’re not foreign. We’re international...I’m an American with a German passport.”

But even a Swedish minister of integration, who when asked if he was Swedish, replied, “NO definitely not!”

What can be detected here is an emphatic identification out of the nation state, more specifically, out of the nation. This is not a quirk but a systemic effect of the inversion of Western ideology coupled with the rise of a new “postnational” elite. This is the distinct expression of the cosmopolitanization of the elites of the world system and not the moral imperative of a new class of do-gooders.

**Cosmopolitanization**

Cosmopolitanization is a cultural identification process that tends to create a rather closed group over time, in spite of the usage of words like “open to the larger world”, citizen of the world, etc. Members of this category often associate only with their own “kind” in positional or class terms and often are part of increasingly essential and even endogamic networks. This a not particularly new process. On the contrary it can be suggested that cosmopolitan identity is a structure of the long run, perhaps even longer than modern capitalism, since similar representations of self and world can be found in a great many previous eras, going back at least to the Hellenistic states. What has been referred to as the “cosmopolitan bourgeoisie (Jones 1987) of the pre-corporate period in Europe exemplifies precisely this pattern:

“Those traditional firms were operated by families with Liberal inclinations and a relaxed attitude to nationality. Many of them had moved from one state to another within the past few decades. Now as far as local cultural and political circumstances would permit, they inclined to mix freely with families of their own sort, regardless of origins” (Jones 91-92, my italics).

Recent research on the closed nature of this openness reveals that it is founded upon a genealogical mode of identification which is a crucial aspect of closure itself:
“J’ai le sang ex-patrié”.... Je suis américain, de passeport et de nationalité mais ma famille et celle de ma femme aussi, ont un grand nombre de ramifications dans beaucoup de pays, ce qui fait qu’on a toujours eu en pied aux États-Unis un pied à l’étranger” (Wagner 1999:116).


Here the cosmopolitan is certainly not hybrid as a social category even if it crosses all sorts of national boundaries. It defines a status that is quite distinctive with respect to national categories, whether they are mixed or not. It is noteworthy that it is transformed into terms of blood as is the traditional practice among most aristocrats of the past. In order to share hybrid blood it is necessary to maintain a significant degree of endogamy, thus producing a closed group, now matter how it announces itself to the world. The curious contradiction in all of this for many multiculturalists and self-proclaimed hybrids is the fact that mixture is here associated with roots/blood which is appears to be an impossible combination of openness and closedness, of essentialism and hybridity. Now aside from the fact that this is simply a problem of faulty thinking, it demonstrates a deeper confusion. The fact that people network across national boundaries does not in any way contradict the fact that they live well within other social boundaries. This may sound trivial, but it is exactly the error committed by those who celebrate cosmopolitan hybridity as a New Age, a world without boundaries. On the contrary, cosmopolitanism is yet another example of diaspora formation in which ethnicity may well be transnational, but is nevertheless an expression of social closure. One might add that this extreme embodiment of mixture is a strong form of precisely what the hybridists abhor, essentialism. But this essentialist identity represents itself as the epitome of “ouverture”

“La curiosité, l’ouverture, la tolérance sont des termes souvent employés pour désigner ces qualités” (op.cit 142).

And opposed to this are the others, the people who inhabit the bottom end of the social order and who are represented as “terrestrials”

“Alors le terriens, c’est quelqu’un qui a un espace limité. Son activité se concentre sur la terre qu’il possède. Si l’autre va sur sa terre, il ne l’acceptera pas. Il est attaché à sa famille, à ses enfants, qu’il veut garder chez lui, parce que sa famille cultive sa terre...
“Je crois que la classe populaire est plus attachée à ses origines. Les anglais en France sont plutôt des gens des classes moyennes. En Angleterre les classes populaires sont plus nationalistes que les autres, moins ouvertes” (op.cit. 189).

The nationals, the “people”, the popular classes, the dangerous classes, the indigenes, are all part of a vast process of categorization, a cosmology within which particular categories are positioned but where there is also a great deal of variation.

Concentric dualism, hierarchization and the remaking of political space

The we-they opposition enunciated by these elites might seem to contradict their self-image as world-encompassing, but this is not a logical contradiction, simply a confusion of categories. Dumont noted long ago in relation to the logic of Caste, that encompassment was a form of asymmetrical dualism. This was also a crucial argument of Lévi-Strauss when analyzing the difference between what he called diametric and concentric dualism in kinship based societies. The former is typical for a balanced opposition in which there can only be two groups or multiples of two whereas the latter represents and opening up toward third, or fourth or n groups, but now organized in a hierarchical continuum. This particular relation might be used to tackle the political logics of the state order in transition. If the political elites are a crucial element in this process of cosmopolitan expansion, if they tend to climb to a higher order of identification, European or global, then there are a number of elements that can be combined into a new order of governance in this part of the world. These elements are as follows:

1. The emergence of New Public Management as an alternative to democracy.

   Interestingly it is Bertelsmann that was most deeply involved in this development with their project on better local government in which prizes were given primarily for increasing efficiency of the governmental process via downsizing and outsourcing.

   “The past decades have witnessed the emergence of a new public management discourse, not least in Washington and London think tanks. New managerial philosophy is linked in international networks referred to as transnational discourse communities like the Network for Better Local Government, financed by media giant Bertelsmann. The strategies developed are carry-overs from private sector strategies of effective administration which use techniques of marketing in the reorganization of government. This implies the replacement of such clumsy practices as voting, political debate based on a plurality of ideologies by more efficient market based mechanisms. Governance, in this approach, is no longer an issue of specific political goals but of mere practical solutions to immediate problems....
NPM discourse is constantly confronted with a powerful counter-discourse of ‘public sector values’ stressing democracy, equality, accountability, participation etc. In NPM discourse, the contradiction does not exist; management techniques are said to provide the same benefits as classical democratic institutions: to be responsive to customers is equivalent to democratic control, measuring performance is the essence of accountability, choice is pluralism, etc.” (Bislev, Hansen and Salskov-Iversen 2000: 27)

2. This has entered the debates concerning development of what has been called “organic” democracy, i.e. democracy without the *demos* whose function is reduced to legitimizing the organic process, one that is based on negotiations between principal actors, MNC’s, ethnic and other corporate actors, government itself.

3. In this process of management, the categories of left and right largely disappear, replaced by praxeology. And the latter is expressed by the right in some countries, the left in others, as *la voie unique* giving rise to New Democracy in the US, New Labour in Britain and even better, Neue Mitte in Germany. In this there is a transition away from dependence upon a “people”. That is why Blair could be referred to as “Thatcher without the handbag” and Giddens, referred to by Bourdieu and Waquant as “le messager du prince”, can argue that sometimes progressive can mean something quite different than what one usually assumes. Sometimes the only way to increase welfare is by dismantling the welfare apparatus.

This can be represented as in figure 3:

![Diagram](image)

The *people* become the dangerous classes in this transformation, and quite popular leaders often become the opposite of what is deemed truly democratic, whether they be Ron Livingstone, (“Red Ron”), who became mayor of London against the wishes of the labor party, or Joerg Haider of
Austrian nationalist right who got 30% of the vote in a national election. It makes no difference, as long as they are external to the respectable core. And being not respectable is equivalent to being undemocratic. But in this process the term “democratic” becomes an essence, an embodiment of virtue, defined as respectability itself. Thus when the Swedish Foreign Minister was assassinated some years ago, it was said that she was murdered in the midst of carrying out her democratic practice. She was out shopping at an expensive department store... Is that democratic practice? This would imply that no matter what a certain minister who is an elected representative of the people happens to be doing it is automatically defined as the practice of democracy. Sweden actually had a minister of democracy, a position held by the daughter (Britta Lejon) of a previous minister of justice (Anna Greta Lejon) who said in an interview that it was through her mother that she was awarded the position. Is this part of a redefinition of the political field in which all actions by the “correct” people are necessarily of a democratic nature.

This transition is a mere tendency and is surely contested and incomplete. But if realized it would imply something that is partially accomplished on a fairly broad scale in a set of discourses and practices that elevate the state above those that it represents. This would seem to imply a historical re-transfer of sovereignty from the people to the state. The tendency is evidenced in the recent elections and post-election activities in France where a new centrist “democratic” party has been created and where the new conservative president, Sarkozy, has successfully recruited several famous socialists to participate in his government. In Italy the new “democratic” party is a strange fusion of the Christian Democrats and the Communists.

Vertical polarization is a decisive factor in the logical transition to multicultural states. The distance created by upward mobility toward the cosmopolitan stratosphere creates a situation which similar to the cosmopolitan Freemason elites of the 19th century is one in which a quite particular relation emerges to the governed populations

“The cosmopolitan bourgeoisie in the eighteenth century came to adopt a perspective own society as if it were a foreign one a target for ‘colonial’ exploitation. Freemasonry provided a cover for developing the new identity on which the exploitation of members of one’s own community is premised. By entering the masonic lodges, merchants and those otherwise involved in the long-distance money economy such as lawyers and accountants, realised the primordial alienation from the community which is the precondition for market relations, exploitation of wage labour, and abstract citizenship.” (Ravenstock Huessy (1961:364) in Van der Pijl 99).
This “foreignness” is the basis of the liberation of the elites from the role of representative and embodies the possibility of a reconfiguration of sovereignty. This is exemplified by the attempt in Sweden to constitutionally introduce a multicultural state in place of the former nation state. Sweden is an extraordinary example because of its particular history of being extremely homogenizing and then suddenly declaring itself to have a new organization based on multicultural or even multi-ethnic foundation. In the government proposition of 1997-98 that is the basis for this transition, it is stated that Sweden no longer has a common history and that it instead consists of a number of different ethnicities, including the Swedish. This is a formula for the transformation of the nation state into a plural society, one that has been partially implemented in recent years.

The proposition the following revealing statements:

“The point of departure for a new politics according to the government: Society’s ethnic and cultural plurality should be the basis of the formulation of general policy and its implementation in all the domains and levels of society.”

“As a process, integration concerns the way in which different parts are united in a larger unity.”

“A countries history often serves to integrate individuals in a larger unity. As a large group of people originate from other countries, the Swedish population now lacks a shared history.”

The upward mobility of elites has also been described for France, although here in a situation in which republicanism, i.e. a strong sense of nationality, has been maintained, albeit with numerous conflicts. Work by Juillard and Jaffres has tried to show the way in which a left elite substituted cultural politics for class politics and in which the people have again become a dangerous class. In this process the move to pluralism is again part of the same logic.

“Le constat de l’épuisement du modèle social-démocrate a transformé les militants de la révolution, puis de la réforme, en militants du libéralisme culturel.” (Julliard 1997: 201)

This is expressed in the following shift in politics:

“Aux ouvriers elles ont substitué les immigrés et ont reporté sur ceux-ci le double sentiment de crainte et de compassion qu’inspire généralement le prolétaire. Or l’immigré n’est pas seulement
Indigenization

At the lower end of the social order this polarization provides a mirror image of the cosmopolitanism of the elites. Here also we see the ambivalent relations that develop in an arena in which there is both extreme ethnic fragmentation and class polarization. The indigenisation referred to in figure 4 is a product of the collapse of the recognition of class identity and class politics. The downwardly mobile find refuge in national identity or in a stronger localism in which rootedness is a central figure. The most extreme examples of this process are revealing with respect to the larger structure. There is the example of the Washitaw Indians who inhabit several states of the South who are black, a new tribe, whose name is related to the Wichitaw who may have adopted runaway slaves at one point, but who today represent an emergent indigenous identity. The claim to have come to the New World when Africa was still jointed to that continent, i.e. before the arrival of the Red Indians. They demand sovereignty, have a home page, and empress, and they are allied with the Republic of Texas an extreme right militia group that is racist as well. How can this be on might ask.. The answer is in their common goals and enemies. They want autonomy and control over their own territory as do militias. They do not seek to take over the state. There main enemies are Washington, Rome, the Jews and all other cosmopolitans and the agenda of world rule. The head of the KKK in St. Petersburg Florida was once a local head of SDS. He sports a poster of Che Guevara in his office. But he as well trains together with a local Black power group. Again the two unlikely partners agree to be separate from one another and they have the same enemies as the previous group. These are indigenizing localist movements that cannot be confused with the state-based ideologies of fascism and nazism. They display similarities to the European New Right which is multicultural in some ways, supporting the rights of all culturally identified groups while rejecting mixture. It is worth noting that indigeneity can leave the framework of the nation state at the bottom just as cosmopolitans leave it at the top. Internationalist racism just as the international organization of indigenous populations have their structural position in common.

But this is also related to the general ethnification of lower class mixed zones in the world, where turf wars abound. The process of enclavization, taken as a sign of the double polarization that is typical for this era. There is a fragmentation, grassroots as well state implemented, but this occurs in a situation in which locals are also part of the process, leading ultimately to a state of tension and conflict. In the fascinating book Redneck Manifesto, this discourse from the bottom is quite explicit.
“I tried living’s in the big-city multicultural thingie for twelve years, only to realize that most of multiculturalism’s proponents - rich white people - didn’t want me. So I moved to a neighborhood that is redneck, blue-collar, white trash. Low rent. Low class. Lowlife. Truckers, welders, meth dealers, pit bulls, rotted picket fences...” (Goad 1997: 35).

“St Johns is most notorious for its high white-trash quotient. Yet more blacks and Mexicans live here than in most parts of the city. For economic reasons, the trash - be it black, brown, or white - have always lived side by side in America. It’s the Gold Card whites who’ve always paid to segregate themselves, leaving the rednecks, niggers and spics to fight over day-old cookies” (Ibid).

Here the consciousness that the fragmentation is strongest at the bottom of the social order is salient as well as the fact that the bottom is itself a class phenomenon. Added to this is an explicit aggression against those “cosmopolitans” who are held responsible for multicultural ideology while they themselves live entirely segregated lives with respect to the real problems of these dangerous zones.

Fig 4 The dialectic of cosmopolitanization and indigenization

The polarization addressed here is a global effect within the world system that has had a massive effect on the reconfiguration of territorial states, in this case, nation states, producing rising cosmopolitan elites who identify with a unified globalized world and declining middle and lower classes who engage in a process of indigenization. The polarization generates a complementary opposition between the two so that they each identify themselves by contrast to the others. These are not, as we have stressed, new oppositions, new categories. What has changed is the sharpness of the conflict and the saliency of the categories themselves. The multicultural representations of the elites divide and fragment the earlier representation
of “peoplehood” and even of class while the indigenizing ideologies of the lower reaches of society invest in precisely this notion, now turned into an national-ethnic identification or into sub-national secessionist identities.

Geo-political fracture in the global order
Above we discussed the way in which hegemonic decline was expressed in the form taken by fragmentation as identity politics and the tendency to the formation of minority communities of different kinds: regional, diasporic, indigenous. The diasporic, we argued, was the product, not of demographic movement but of the way identity is practiced in such movement. Thus, in France, where in Paris there were only a handful of Mosques in 1970, the number has risen to well over a thousand in the 80’s and up to today the number has continued to increase. Among North Africans who were once economically integrated into the French Republic, the long economic decline led to increasing unemployment. In a number of interviews, one which I recall that was republished in Le Monde, a women from one of the northern banlieux of Paris recounted how her life had changed since the 70’s in La Courneuve. She was herself white and had been married first to a North African and then a Black African, and had children in both marriages. In the early days, she said, there was a strong sense of class solidarity and generosity, and ethnic differences were marginal phenomena. Today things have become quite the opposite. She is afraid for her children who are often attacked by members of other groups and she longs to live elsewhere with her family. There is a high level of gang violence within the area and any sense of local solidarity is all but gone. In this period many North Africans who were brought up without knowing Arabic are now (re)-learning the language and Islam which was a minor affair in the past has now become a dominant form of identity, not least political identity.

Here there is a further connection to a geopolitical fracture, that which has become evident since the attack on the World Trade Center, one that has again made Huntington’s Clash of Civilizations into a hot issue of discussion and debate. There are numerous accounts of this phenomenon, and without discussing them here, it might be suggested that the model of hegemonic decline is a useful frame of analysis. There is an interesting analysis from within the Muslim world, Zaïki Laïdi, that links the current conflict to what might be called the Ottoman blues:

“Cette idée de déclassement du monde musulman est centrale. Dans l’imaginaire musulman, le fait d’appartenir à un ensemble civilisationnel puissant qui rivalisa, et parfois dépassa l’Occident est essentiel. Si ce fait historique, remontant à plus de dix siècles, ce sentiment de déclassement n’aurait probablement pas cette force auratique” (Laïdi 12-10-01: 14).
There is a geopolitical vision here, one that is similar to that of the West, one that is typical of all imperial civilizations as well. But the fact that it has been mobilized at this point is significant, since it would seem to coincide not with the formation of (American) Empire, but with its decline and failure. This does not necessarily mean that there is a real contention for world power involved, although the idea of an alternative world government based on Sharia is perhaps the only fully developed example of "Alter-globalization". The diasporic connection here is itself plays an important role, since many of those who were earlier recruited to the case of Islamism were themselves immigrants to the West, and often economically very well off, to say the least, but who, at least in some cases, apparently snapped, realizing their ultimate marginalization by what they saw as a decadent civilization whose values were suddenly entirely rejected. The support for acts of terror in the ghetto areas of the urban zones was often based on a similar set of interpretations among a population that was increasingly self-enclavizing. Muslims cannot to be said to have been the least well off in Europe and the US in the years previous to the escalation of conflict, and even today those most discriminated belong to other groups, such as Africans (non-Muslims included) and Rom. What is specific in this "clash" is the mobilizing potential linked to precisely the geopolitical imaginary that is today invoked by those intellectuals and others engaged in Islamist struggle. To deny this and to account for their activities in terms of US aggression, Israeli aggression or to internal corruption in the Middle East is totally inadequate. It is a typical "occidentalist" posture of many Western intellectuals who, ensconced in the inversion of ideology referred to above, forget to see the degree to which they totally pacify the Islamist actors who are reduced to mere re-actors. They are in this way robbed of any project that they might in reality possess and closer examination reveals that there indeed a real project involved here. In identity terms Islamism can be related to the process of indigenization, but it is certainly not a localizing strategy. The similarities are primarily related to the strong form of unitary identity and cultural closure which has made it attractive for a number of actors on the right and especially the extreme right which share the opposition to the cosmopolitan elites. The highly orchestrated reaction to the publication of the Muhammed caricatures in Denmark is further evidence of the consolidation of this identity. It is not so much about the different issues that have occupied so many intellectuals although there are interesting issues involved. Images of Muhammed are not strictly forbidden and there are plenty of historical examples of such images. Some of the caricatures may well have been insulting but certainly not all or even most of them and some were instead critical to Pia Kjaersgård of the nationalistic Danske Folkeparti. Among the images that were taken by a particular Danish Islamic to arouse the issue in Egypt and elsewhere were a number of misrepresentations, including one
drawing from a “pig-feast” in the South of France. Caricatures in Middle Eastern media of bothChristians and Jews have proliferated throughout this century, even before the establishment of the state of Israel. The issue is then not simply a question of insult, but of the political orchestration, quite selective of insult in a historical conjuncture in which occidentalism can be exploited maximally.

The role of the inversion of ideology is crucial here, the notion that all world problems emanate from the expansionist power and the culture of the West. This “occidentalism” (Buruma and Margalit 2003) is not new of course, but its periodicity is interesting in global terms. While the West is totally occupied by the issue of Terrorism, China is busy expanding at an enormous pace in former peripheral zones, such as Africa and South America, where both markets and raw materials are a crucial goal, just as in previous periods of Western imperialism.

Toward a conclusion
It is not an easy task to end what I have started here, an explorative attempt to find linkages between phenomena that are not usually understood as being connected. We have dealt with three complexes in this presentation. First the general process of hegemonic decline in the world system was seen as the foundation for understanding the reconfiguration of cultural identities and economic and political strategies. This process is one of decentralization of accumulation that occurs globally in geographical terms but also within those states that belong to the hegemonic center and their dependent sub-peripheries and peripheries. The second following from decentralization, is the formation of networks of formerly integrated and now fragmented elements. This accounts for the emergence of the three global trades: arms, people, drugs that are linked to one another on a global scale, but also to political units that emerge in this period, whether indigenous, regional, religious or ethnic and which, in their turn, amplify a situation of increasing disorder in the world arena. In Africa, for example, the French oil company, Elf, is directly implicated in the violence in the Republic of Congo, in local processes of governance, and along with other networks, in supplying the arms and private (and privatized) military machines necessary for maintaining a state of war among the fragments of a disintegrating society. Similar examples can be found in other areas, not just of Africa, but of the disintegrating Soviet empire, in the Balkans, in Central Asia etc. In this sense fragmentation is reinforced by the proliferating connections between the fragments themselves and the circulation of people, arms, drugs, reinforced by the decentralizing activities of new states. Finally and linked directly to the other two complexes, vertical polarization supplies elites who either regulate or participate in the former complexes and supplies cannon fodder and a lumpenproletariat as well, populations that circulate at the bottom of the social order. All this may give the distinct impression that we are approaching the age of
Bladerunner rather than a globalized multicultural world celebrated in much of the literature. Even more important, the former can be said to be the actual form taken by the latter.

Multiculturalism in this description is part of a larger process in which hegemonic decline is a central feature and which includes a recomposition of states, a reconfiguration of both class and cultural identity. We do not assume that pluralism in general is a phenomenon of decline. It is, in fact, an aspect of the structure of the great majority of empires in world history and it was early theorized systematically in relation to colonial rule (Furnivall) in which plantation organization or other colonial economies were organized in multi-ethnic terms. At the turn of the last century, the term pluralism, transnational, appeared often in the debates surrounding the mass migration to the United States. In the United States similar discussions emerged in the early 60's in relation to local community control in black neighborhoods in a period in which there was increasing class based protest and which according to some sources, pluralism was used explicitly to divide the working class, as, in more well documented terms, it was used to divide the working class in colonial economies. It is more than noteworthy that the pluralist project was already central to the Ford Foundation’s strategy, and that it was that foundation that financed the new experiment in community control, one that abetted the strengthening of ethnic/racial conflict rather than solving the problem of school failure for Black children (Traub 2002). While “grass-roots” activism played an important role in this development, it is the direct support, both political and financial, that led it to fruition. The idea that multiculturalism is part of an evolutionary globalization that is leading us toward a new open world is, in the terms set out here, a dangerous fantasy at least, and an explicit policy of the “new governance” at most. We have, in fact, argued that cultural pluralism is historically an explicit form of regulation, the governance of difference, even the creation or at least the exacerbation of difference.

We have also argued that these processes of decline are limited to the West and its “weak links” and that in East and to some extent South and Southeast Asia there is an inverse process of increasing integration into larger territorial units, a reflection of the rapid growth and consolidation of these zones within the world arena. As such these areas should reveal a tendency to inverse tendencies to those that we have discussed here. Where there is fragmentation in the West and its dependent zones, in the East there is integration and consolidation, the disappearance of indigenous groups and minorities or at least their incorporation into larger state structures. Where there is post-fordism and the proliferation of networks of crime, trade, investment, in the East there is strong hierarchical organization, often along fordist lines in which increasingly larger units dominate. Where finance capital is dominant in the West, industrial capital is central in the East even though there is plenty of financial speculation, especially
on the part of Eastern capital in the West. Governance in transformation is the theme here. Governance is, however, a tricky term. It is not simply the practice of government. It is rather the contested and contestable result of conflict between social actors in which decisions are made and implemented in a way that becomes systematic but not as the result of a unilateral process of decision making. All of the themes that we have discussed can be interpreted within the framework of governance. The fragmentation of control, the emergence or re-emergence of pluralism, the advent of “neo-liberal” regimes, the proliferation of cultural identities – these are all issues of governance, i.e. of control over one’s conditions of existence, whether as capitalists or indigenous minorities. Our argument has been that there is a systematic relation among the processes of decentralization of capital accumulation, de-hegemonization and shifting hegemony, increasing competition and conflict, mass migration, the emergence of networked based global trades, socio-cultural fragmentation and resurgent cultural pluralism, vertical polarization in the declining areas, and a generally unstable political situation. While this set of processes are certainly multiple, the understanding of their logics and their interrelations should help us understand the global state of the world.