Chapter 9

THE DIALECTIC OF COSMOPOLITANIZATION AND INDIGENIZATION IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD SYSTEM: CONTRADICTORY CONFIGURATIONS OF CLASS AND CULTURE

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Introduction

I first met Maurice Godelier in the late 1960s when as a student I had the good luck to attend a quite fantastic summer seminar which was informally held at the Collège de France and in which the participants were Claude Meillassoux, P.P. Rey, E. Terray, Maurice Godelier and a number doctoral students. It was an exciting occasion to say the least. Whatever the disagreements, and there were plenty at a theoretical level, this was a period just before things became more tribalized, not only on the left, of course. This was also the tail end of an intellectual period in which debate was, no matter how vicious, not linked to embodied intellectual identities. There were long sessions with some quite ferocious debates, a long lunch at a local couscous restaurant with plenty of wine, and then a return to business for a few more hours in the afternoon. The emergence of
a synthesis between Marxism and structuralism implied a shift in perspective, one that was implicit in Maurice Godelier’s work, while the more Althusserian influenced researchers had a tendency to fall back on the kind of functionalism that was characteristic of cultural materialism and cultural ecology in the United States. Here it took the form of ‘determination in the last instance’ where no matter what seemed to be organizing a material reproductive process it was, in the last analysis, a mere substitute or extension of the forces of production. Thus if political relations were understood as dominant in feudalism they were interpreted as a functional response to a material base in which there is a disjuncture between possession and property, making it necessary for political intervention in the very organization of the economy. The fact that what had begun in open debate had ended in ideological retrenchment became clear to me when I tried to publish an article on fetishism in La Pensée that was rejected on the grounds that I had the audacity to suggest that the latter was an autonomous social operator rather than a function of the infrastructure (later published in Critique of Anthropology 1 in 1974).

The Marxist model that I have grown up with, one very much inspired by my encounter with the juncture of structuralism and Marxism, is based on certain minimal characteristics and principles. A social order is a system in the sense that it is ordered by systemic properties that are discoverable via a process of hypothesis and falsification, not by mere observation. This order is a contradictory order insofar as it consists of a set of tendencies that are relatively autonomous with respect to their internal properties but nevertheless joined together in the process of social reproduction. The notion of relative autonomy in this approach referred to the fact that particular sets of relations contained their own intentionality, not deducible from that of the larger whole. The fundamental totality in this approach is social reproduction rather than ‘society’ as such or some form of technological causality. Reproduction implies a temporal dimension as well as a necessary historical dynamic. And it provides a perspective on the social that embraces the contradictory nature of the latter, and the transformational nature of all social orders. This general approach works just as well for the study of kinship as for capitalist based worlds even if the specific logics involved are radically different. In an era pervaded by a postmodernist effort to fragment rather than grasp unifying logics, where globalization is understood as a new evolutionary era, ‘millennial capitalism’, neoliberalism, all of which can only be described in terms of contingent, fragile ‘assemblages’, it is useful to attempt more systemic alternatives. The following is one such attempt.
Class Structure, Elite Formation and Social Polarization as Cultural Process

The study of class became a very unpopular subject in the 1980s and 1990s in many quarters of anthropology and other social sciences. This was an era in which culture became a dominant mode of understanding the world even though in principle there is absolutely nothing contradictory about considering the two together. For many, class has been associated with other vulgarities such as exploitation and a whole array of material things which are not considered sufficiently sophisticated for the culturally oriented social scientist. Some of the critique of class analysis is well taken. There was in many approaches a tendency to reduce the basic structures of social life to relations of exploitation, to ‘relations of production’ understood as technological organization. The notion that there were general cultural features of modern capitalist society, for example, that were not class based, was rejected by Marxists and other social determinists. According to this perspective, culture was the reflection of class position and as such had to be entirely dependent upon such a position. Commercial mentalities, cultural distinctions related to lifestyle, such as housing, interior decorating, clothing and all forms of ‘taste’ (Bourdieu 1979), were understood as direct products of social position (i.e. including sub-class differentiation). It should be noted that there was a serious critique of such models even by those who were very much focused on the issue of class. Distinctions were indeed being made all the time, but there was no clear way to determine their content. And, of course, statistical results of the correlation between class position and cultural form were not convincing. Another failure of explanation is a better expression of the decline of class analysis. The Birmingham school, which began its career by examining the relation between popular cultural forms and class, punks, mods and skinheads, discovered that the class relation did not really work and that popular culture was not firmly based on social position. The development of this school away from class analysis to the study of cultural forms in themselves, the movement from class to ‘the politics of pleasure’ (Harris 1992) and the dispersal of its members to the United States, from Yale and Harvard to Hollywood, is indicative of the changes that occurred in the 1980s.

The shift away from issues of class cannot, of course, be reduced to the failure of models of distinction and style. On the contrary, it is related to a broader reconfiguration of identity and power in Western societies. An excellent attempt to diagnose the shift can be found in much of the sociological work on the advent of the information society, globalization, new social movements etc. The shift is one of
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the cornerstones of the writings of Alain Touraine over the past few decades. The argument, oversimplified, is that capitalist modernity was based on a class polarization of society that pitted capital against labour in a political struggle for relative advantage. Since the 1980s that modernity, or at least the opposition on which it was founded, has disintegrated. The power of labour has decreased, the working class has fragmented, and as a result the working class movements are being replaced by more locally or simply more generalized issues such as environment, feminism etc.; all of this announces the advent of movements based on cultural identity rather than class.

Within anthropology there has been a parallel shift of interests since the late 1970s towards issues of culture and cultural identity. This is clearly the case in the United States but even in Europe there have been similar tendencies. The use of the term culture, which was quite uncommon, became increasingly popular in the 1980s. In France, where the notion of culture was a peripheral concept at least in the social sciences, as there were an array of notions, from collective representations, to symbolic structures which covered much of the same ground, the same shift can be clearly observed in the emergence of such terms as ‘idéologiques’ and ‘mentalités’ in France and semantic anthropology in England. The latter emerged from a period characterized by a more materialist and social determinist anthropology, reflected in the work of Sahlins in the United States, as the role of culture became increasingly dominant in the same period. I have suggested that this change in perspective might be related to the decline of modernism, understood here as the decline in an orientation to the future, to abstract rationalism and a development ‘away’ from the ‘traditional’. It is a period characterized by the decline of some of modernism’s primary vehicles – Marxism, developmentalism, rationalism, followed by an intensifying critique of science, and of universalism that are typical of an emergent ‘post-modernism’.

Much of the discourse produced in the past couple of decades of cultural studies and even anthropology have been based on this former turn to culture. One well-known anthropologist of globalization, echoing in perverted fashion, Franz Fanon, is said to have remarked, ‘when I hear the word class I go for my gun’.

It is clearly the case that class is not an adequate term when analysing many of the social forms that anthropologists have dealt with, but since the absence of class was assimilated to a more general culturalism its more recent application to the world of the modern global system poses a serious hindrance to an adequate understanding of reality.

The purpose of this contribution is to suggest a set of relevant links among phenomena that are quite salient today but which are
not often connected. It requires a rethinking of what has often been referred to as globalization without serious analysis, especially in the human sciences. I feel that it is impossible to dissociate questions about the structure of state societies from those of class and cultural identity and from the larger context within which states are constituted and reproduced. This is not to argue that there is a higher order of determination, the global, above all the rest. On the contrary, it is to argue that the global is simply the emergent properties of the articulation of numerous local processes. There may well be hierarchies of control, but these are part of the nature of formal organizations themselves. UNESCO and the IMF should not be confused with global social processes. They may well have as their objective the regulation of international and interstate relations, but they are constituted in the same social reality and they are, in social terms, small worlds of their own, even where they span large geographical distances. Our purpose then is to work toward an understanding of class formation in what has come to be known as the ‘era of globalization’. This requires a reassessment of the usage of the term globalization itself (Friedman 2007).

Globalization has become a pop term in the media, since its original introduction in business economics. It has made the tour through economic geography, cultural sociology and sociology, and is increasingly to be found in postcolonial studies and anthropology. I shall not go into detail here, but shall instead briefly summarize some major tendencies in this discourse and its underlying assumptions. There is, of course, a literature on the issues that has emerged in political economy informed works in economic geography, critical economics, and sociology. Much of this work is quantitative and is argued in empirical terms. It documents a number of changing realities: the rapid increase since the 1970s of capital export in the form of foreign direct investment, the asymmetric distribution of these flows toward East Asia and to a lesser degree to countries like India and Brazil, the increasing salience of multinational companies (sometimes called transnational to stress what is in fact a false notion of deterritorialization), the enormous increase in financial and speculative transactions relative to total production, the development of new speculative markets such as derivatives which are greater than the entire world economy measured in terms of goods and service transactions.

This development has often been interpreted in technological terms, as the product of the computer and internet revolutions that have totally transformed productive activity as well as speeding up transaction times. Such accounts are not new of course (Bell 1973) and it is interesting for an anthropologist who has been through the
long critique of technological determinist evolutionism to encounter it yet again. It should, of course, be taken seriously, but for most of these otherwise empirically based researchers, the technological connection is simply assumed. Castells (2000), one of the most recent advocates of this kind of evolutionism, has been cautious in his use of the arguments, but in the second edition of his *Network Society* he is at pains to account for the argument proposed by one of the US’s major economists and specialists on productivity, who has painstakingly argued that productivity has not changed significantly since the advent of the ‘new economy’ (Gordon 2000). It is only in the actual production of chips that we can speak of a real revolutionary increase in productivity, but this sector is minute in relation to the rest of the economy and has not offset the general downward trend since the 1970s. The answer is, ‘Wait! Things will change’. This is similar to an answer supplied by one neo-evolutionary anthropologist to another in a seminar when questioned why the enormous demographic densities in Highland New Guinea had not led to the development of stratified societies, according to the then popular demographic determinist theory. ‘Wait!’ he said. Well, we are all still waiting, and the IT sector is not in terribly good shape. Of course all kinds of things can change in the future, but it is not clear that this kind of evolutionism is capable of accounting for the desired results. And desire seems to be an essential component in this discussion. Many want to believe that we have entered a new world, whether good or bad, and the tendency is to think of it as basically good, which is progress after all. The advent of the network society is part of a complex of terms that includes globalization, as if the latter were simply another expression of this colossal transformation of human society. I am not, it should be noted, arguing against the reality of globalization, but of its world historical status, and while clearly it might well be argued that there is something new happening here, it is important to be able to challenge what appears to many as self-evident. In fact it is the self-evidence itself that should make us wary. While the globalization literature among those dealing with empirical realities is certainly important and exciting, if sometimes informed by ideologically based desires that have found their way into anthropology it remains grounded in the analysis of processes of capital export, outsourcing, as part of the decentralization of capital accumulation (Dicken 1998).

**Models of Global Systems**

The difference between globalization and global systemic perspectives in anthropology is worth reviewing here, since the results of the two
approaches are quite divergent. I have suggested that globalization, especially its anthropological variant, has been proposed as a stage of world history and that it is very much based on an experience or a fantasy of a world on the move. In anthropological terms this takes the form of the transition from roots to routes and a struggle against localism contained within the celebration of movement itself. As I have dwelt upon this issue in several other publications, I shall only indicate some of the most general characteristics of the argument here. These are reducible to three. Firstly, is the necessary movement from smaller to larger units and from simpler to more complex organizations. Secondly, and following the first, there exists the notion that globalization is about the global era that we are now entering, an era fraught with conflicts perhaps, but one which promises a new diasporic way of life which ultimately promises to supersede the nation state (Appadurai 1993). The latter is understood as the source of most of the evils of modernity, especially essentialism and its offspring, nationalism and racism. Thirdly, the new world is a world of border crossing, hybridity, experimental identification, but also (for some) of hypercapitalism, the network society, and increasing exploitation, at least in its initial stages. The latter is sometimes referred to as millennial capitalism (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999). Much of the discourse produced in the cultural globalization literature, of which the former partakes, is saturated with a terminology of the trans-x and post-x sort. Such terms concern the transcendence of existing borders. They may be borders of the body and I have suggested that the root metaphor for much of this discourse can be found in the post-feminism of writers such as Judith Butler. A feeling of wanting to escape from all forms of fixed or grounded identity and a profound desire to belong to something higher, more expansive are common characteristics of this discourse, one that finds cosmopolitans in the most dubious places and is want to trash indigenes as redneck enemies of the world society to come (Malkki 1992; Kelly 1995). One might ask: What is the problem? Why is it necessary to take sides in such issues? I have suggested that this is the product of a cosmopolitan agenda, one that harbours a moral classification of the world into dangerous classes/locals and liberal/progressive world citizens. This popular and proliferating discourse is not, I suggest, an internal theoretical development within any particular social science. On the contrary, it is the spontaneous self-understanding that is generated in a certain position within the contemporary world system in transformation. This is why I have referred to the way in which people talk on the intranet in certain multinational consultancies, in many of the media and among top officials in diplomatic, international political and economic arenas, and the way in which the managerial
New Age conceives of the New World (Barnum 1992), as some of the true sources of contemporary imaginings of globalization in more sophisticated circles. In sum, my assessment of globalization is that it is the expression of a positional identity within the global system rather than a description of or theoretical perspective on the contemporary world. The conversion of the former into the latter consists in a practice of labelling the world rather than attempting to comprehend it.

The global systemic perspective is vastly different, not least with respect to the notion of globalization itself. The latter is seen not as a world historical stage, but as a phase phenomenon in the cyclical development of hegemonic expansion and contraction. Globalization, in the Braudelian perspective, is the expression of hegemonic decline in which a decentralization of capital accumulation creates chaos as well as a shift in investment from old to new centres or potential hegemons. Arrighi argues on the basis of historical research that massive financial expansions have accompanied all the major hegemonic declines in the history of the European world system:

To borrow an expression from Fernand Braudel (1984: 246) – the inspirer of the idea of systemic cycles of accumulation – these periods of intensifying competition, financial expansion and structural instability are nothing but the ‘autumn’ of a major capitalist development. It is the time when the leader of the preceding expansion of world trade reaps the fruits of its leadership by virtue of its commanding position over world-scale processes of capital accumulation. But it is also the time when that same leader is gradually displaced at the commanding heights of world capitalism by an emerging new leadership. (Arrighi 1997: 2)

This kind of approach has been fully developed in the work of Arrighi (2003) but is also present in much of the literature on world systems. Our own work led to the suggestion, as early as the 1970s, that civilizations were all examples of such expansion and contraction processes and that modern ‘world’ systems were simply a continuation of much older processes. The similarities in this process can be expressed graphically as a set of cycles that tend toward a limit. The individual cycles express shifting hegemony within a larger systemic arena while the larger cycle expresses the ultimate limits of expansion of the system as a whole. Globalization, in this kind of a systemic process, corresponds to periods of crisis and hegemonic transition. Globalization as a phenomenon of transition has been well documented for the major shifts in hegemony in the Western dominated world system. The hegemonic shift from Italy to the Iberian peninsula and from there to Holland and then Britain is accompanied by major changes in investment flows from old to new potential hegemons.
The most recent such shift was at the end of the nineteenth century. The major themes of this period are similar enough to the present to warrant investigation. There was massive globalization of capital, on a scale easily comparable to the present. Foreign direct investment, which was a minor phenomenon relevant to portfolio investment, reached nine per cent of world output in 1913, a proportion was not surpassed until the early 1990s (Bairoch and Kozul-Wright 1996: 10). Openness to foreign trade in 1993 was not markedly different to that in 1913 (Briggs and Snowman 1996). There were massive British investments in the United States, and Germany was rapidly becoming an industrial giant. Britain was no longer the world’s workshop: its share of world manufacturing declined from close to fifty per cent to fourteen per cent in 1913 as the United States increased its relative industrial dominance. The decline of hegemonic Britain occurred in a situation of increasing competition and crises of overproduction and recurrent depressions at the end of the nineteenth century. There was also mass migration in this period. Expanding trade occurred parallel with large-scale migration. In a recent comparison of the end of this century and the last, the Economist stated the following:
As in the late 20th Century, trade was booming, driven upwards by falling transport costs and by a flood of overseas investment. There was also migration on a vast scale from the Old World to the New.

Indeed, in some respects the world economy was more integrated in the late 19th Century than it is today. The most important force in the convergence of the 19th Century economies was mass migration mainly to America. In the 1890s, which in fact was not the busiest decade, emigration rates from Ireland, Italy, Spain and Scandinavia were all above 40 per thousand. The flow of people out of Europe, 300,000 people a year in mid-century, reached 1 million a year after 1900. On top of that, many people moved within Europe. True, there are large migrations today, but not on this scale. (*Economist*, 20 December-2 January: 73 2001)

Many of the current debates concerning immigration and ‘multiculturalism’ were already prevalent in this period. This was also an age of technological revolution. Stock markets were connected by cable and investment could flow between continents at revolutionary new speeds (Hirst and Thompson 1996: 3). There was an enormous celebration of new technologies: electric lighting, telephones, automobiles and even airplanes and x-rays. This was a period that witnessed the rise of contradictory ideologies that are prevalent today. At one extreme there was the Futurist religion of technology and, at the other, cults of tradition, *Gemeinschaft* and the local.

Even more important is the fact that this phase of globalization came to an end in the 1920s and was followed by a long period of de-globalization that lasted until the 1950s and involved a major world war. It is only in the 1950s that globalization began again and intensified from the 1970s until the present.

This does not imply that nothing has happened in world history, but simply that some properties of historical processes have remained invariant if not identical. Even in recent times, the similarities between the current end of millennium crisis and that which occurred in the period from 1870 to 1920 does not vitiate the equally important fact that there are crucial differences in structure as well. The previous globalized era was characterized by stronger national states and by a much lower ratio of direct foreign investment to portfolio investment. While there were equivalents to today’s multinationals, they were fewer in number and not nearly as complex. Much of this difference has to do with technological developments that have made the internationalization of productive processes a more profitable possibility.

It is often argued that today’s global financial economy is a new phenomenon, but here as well, there are clear precedents. The very notion of Finance Capital in such well-known works as that of Hilferding (1910) dealt with what appeared to be a massive expansion.
of the financial sector with respect to industrial production. This is a crucial issue, because it is a structural rather than an historical phenomenon. The relation between the accumulation of money capital and the accumulation of productive capital, i.e. the capacity to produce commodities and productive services, is a fundamental contradictory relation in capitalist reproduction. This is simple in situations where capital shifts from productive to non-productive activities, a shift that usually occurs simultaneously with capital export (globalization). The latter process is simply the expression of the uneven distribution of profitability in the world arena. The fact that a rapidly increasing percentage of direct investment in the late 1990s consisted in mergers and acquisitions is a product of a situation in which such activity is more rational than investment in new production. An important aspect of the cycle of expansion and contraction described graphically above is the increasing divergence of ‘fictitious’ versus real accumulation as production becomes increasingly unproductive in relation to other activities.

Of course Figure 9.2 is an oversimplification of a complex process but the tendencies to which it points are important. It implies that in hegemonic declines there is not only a tendency to the massive export of capital in the form of globalization, but also to a shift from productive to non-productive forms of investment, to real estate, stock market speculation, derivative markets, a process that increases the commodification of the world as the pressure on accumulation

Figure 9.2. The relation between fictitious and real accumulation
accelerates. Commodification consists in the fragmentation of reality into clusters of property rights that can be sold on the market. The creation of private titles is a practice of capitalization that creates wealth out of named categories. And for those Marxists who interpret Capital and the theory of value as a reduction of the latter to labour time or even to the cost of reproduction of labour, it should be noted that Volume III of that book deals primarily with the divergence between real value and fictitious value as the primary contradiction of accumulation. It is in periods of globalization that international capitalist classes become most salient, according to this model. This is not to say that they emerge only in such periods. On the contrary, we argue below that they are permanent features of capitalist civilization. What might be said to be specific to such periods is the rapid elaboration of such elites and of the discourses that they produce or that are produced around them. The reason for this is in part the availability of funds to support such populations, populations who represent and struggle for a particular perspective on the world, one that can be summarized as cosmopolitan.

Structures of the Long Run

Categories such as globalization, cosmopolitan elites, national elites, social classes, immigrant minorities, regional minorities and indigenous populations are not restricted to a particular historical era. They are basic structural features of the capitalist state system, and more specifically the nation state system. Their salience may vary over time, but they exist, at least potentially, throughout the history of the system. It might be argued that the nation form is a product of capitalist state organization. This is, however, a mere potential that depends upon a number of different processes, some of which are strongly connected to the commodification of social relations within the state. The process by which local sodalities and institutions are dissolved by the joint action of the state and commerce and by which the individual is liberated from dependency on lower order social relations to become dependent upon the wage relation, whether high or low, is a process that gradually empties the social space between the self and the state. This is a variable process that only approximates an ideal type in social democratic states which in the contemporary period have sought to sever all bonds that are not themselves state organized. Thus the family may be replaced by a string of socializing agencies, from day care to university, at the same time as the wage labour-tax nexus becomes generalized to such an extent that the individual becomes totally independent, economically, on former social networks. This is a
process that has been described in terms of individualization and is a principle characteristic of ‘modernity’. It is in a highly atomized social field that identification with the state can replace other collective identities, if national socialization is practiced. The space is then filled with propositions about reality, about relations to nature, to destiny, to history. This, of course, can occur without the dissolution of lower-level structures as has been proven throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The nation state form is not merely a relation between individualized subjects and a larger collectivity. It is also an organization that both envelops and cuts across class relations. This is a complex affair with plenty of variation of course, but it is crucial to understanding the dynamics of interstate relations as well as the transformation that we have come to know as the welfare state. As this is not an essay in history but in structure, I do not intend to delve into the variations of national identity within modern states. I shall focus on a single phenomenon, the relation of a self-defined people and the state as the focal point for a practice of self-identification, in either positive or negative terms, depending on the particular social position from which actors practice their identifications. Thus the fusion of state and people in Sweden earlier this century can be contrasted with what appears to be a radical opposition between nation and state in Australia (Kapferer 1988). It has been argued that class struggle has been organized in terms of a We, a self-identified people, against capital, with or without the support of the state. The state has been ‘captured’ by certain working class movements, at least ideologically, transforming the former into an extension of peoplehood. Sweden is certainly a prime example of this, but it is to be noted that the fusion thus imposed has a strange past. The notion of ‘people’s home’ (in Swedish folkhemmet), a society equivalent to a family, is not an invention of the left but of the conservatives, a not uncommon variation on the paternalist ideology of the conservatives. This was assimilated into social democratic ideology and has played a crucial role in national politics, allowing elites to impose a total restructuring of working class lives, from racial hygiene to housing, in the name of a union of a national population under the aegis of a single social project. It is not then so extraordinary that the word ‘society’ commonly substitutes for state in political and even everyday discourse. While the Swedish case is something of an extreme one, the same parameters can be found in most nation states. They relate to the role of the state as an instrument of the people and to the need to pronounce broadly social goals that indicate the self-evident responsibility of the state with regard to the people’s welfare. This ideology concerns the rights of the working class as well as the responsibility of capitalists. While there are clearly liberal interpretations of the nation state in which
the market is said to ensure the welfare of all, it is necessary that the welfare of all is stressed, i.e. that the capitalists also wish the best for their workers. The ‘good’ in this model is welfare itself, the wellbeing, well financed, of ordinary people. The taming of social elites is part of the process of welfare development, the submission of all to a common project. The logic of this process of consolidation, in which people and state become joined if not fused, generates the category of the ‘we’, a ‘we the people’. And this occurs under the umbrella of the territorial state itself. It is bounded and tends toward the assimilation or at least integration of differences within a larger core of a project. It is also riven with contradictions in the real interests of those involved. These account, for example, for what is called the neo-liberal project as an attempt to re-establish the dominance of capital and capitalists (Duménil and Lévy 2004; Harvey 2005).

It might well be argued that the nation state as such is not a constant in the history of the modern world, but that a certain tendency in class formation has been more of a structure of longue durée. Here I would like to suggest something along these lines, but the structure to which I refer is not a particular set of class categories. Instead it is a tendency to the distribution of positions with respect to local populations and the larger regional, or global, arena. This is a structure which distributes a number of categories with respect to one another, from interstate or cosmopolitan elite relations to localized relations to limited territories. It is similar to the notion of an elementary structure as in the ‘atom of kinship’ insofar as it entails that the state order is defined at its summit as an external relation to other states that in this way constitute one another in the larger relation. I have previously represented the structure as in Figure 9.3 which portrays the contemporary order of the nation state, one that is historically specific with respect to the valences of the categories. Thus the culturally cosmopolitan category in that graphic would have been something more akin to modernist internationalism a hundred years ago, rather than the hybrid cosmopolitanism of today. Similarly migration would not be maintained in the form of diasporas but integrated into the body of the nation state as territorial minorities at least and assimilated at most.

The graphic representation in Figure 9.3 applies to a global arena organized into nation states, but the categories are similar in fundamental ways even in previous state formations. In earlier eras, for example, the state elites were at the same time cosmopolitan elites, aristocrats that participated in an interstate realm in which royalties and aristocracies were joined in marriage and political alliances, in which they sent handicraft specialists, architects and artists from court to court in generous gestures. The variant of this structure at
Figure 9.3. The dialectic of cosmopolitanization and indigenization
the turn of the eighteenth century could have been depicted as in Figure 9.4.

These states were not nation states in any sense. They were aristocratic/royal domains linked by marriage and political alliances as well as by conflict and warfare. Territorial populations were not integrated into the larger territory as a mass of individuals. Instead there were numerous regional and local political structures. Migration was certainly an integral part of the dynamics of such states, the product of royal policies and demands for specialized labour. But insofar as ordinary people were subjects rather than citizens, they were essentially pawns in a larger set of strategies. National or ethnic identity was limited primarily to local groups and regions or to diasporic populations. There was clearly identification with larger units on the part of warriors and those who could gain by becoming attached to royal courts. What is important for this discussion is the continuum from the local to the interstate level and the potential oppositions that developed among the levels. However, it should be clearly noted that the very praxis of the absolutist state created a social field of national identity. Long before the French Revolution there were letters of ‘naturalization’ offered to foreigners who came to live in the country. This was a hotly debated issue surrounding the imposition of taxes on foreigners in 1697. There was a great deal of migration and aristocratic tourism following the war against the Augsburg coalition. As one contemporary described it:

After peace had been established, there had been such a great number of arrivals of foreigners in Paris that one could count fifteen to sixteen thousands of them in the suburb of Saint-Germain alone... at the beginning of the following year, one found out that there were thirty-six thousands of them in the same suburb alone. (Annales de la Cour de la Ville, 1697–1698, in Dubost and Sahlins 1999: 15)
And the word ‘nation’ is used to identify individuals throughout the period, such as Anne Sauvage, ‘anglaise de nation’ described as ‘not married in France, not following the customs of Paris and not naturalized’. Or Jacques Lieurard, a protestant convert from the North of France wrongly taxed as ‘son of a foreigner native of Holland’, or again the use of the expression ‘Français imparfaits’ (Dubost and Sahlins 1999: 378–80).

Immigrant status was also inherited for three generations for those arriving after 1600, that is, it was defined in terms of descent from specific national origins. The author Fénélon expresses in his *Aventures de Télémaque* a clear opposition to what he associates with the urban, commercial, foreign merchants and the international realm from a position that can be interpreted as Christian and agrarian (idem: 391). There is a twofold set of representations generated in this division between the peasant and the urban sectors of the larger territory. The latter is implicated in the royal strategy of the state elites to increase the base of their wealth, demographically and especially in terms of capital, the former identify with an increasingly salient notion of a national population, sedentary and exploited by the latter. It might be suggested that this growing opposition is the foundation for the French Revolution in which ‘peoplehood’ is established as a sovereign body within the confines of the territorial state, already the foundation of the nation state. As the Abbé de Sieyès stated the case, it is the sovereign people and not the king that incarnates the nation. The ‘Third Estate’ is a ‘Corps d’associés vivant sous une loi commune et représentés par le même législateur’ (Sieyès 1789, in Noiriel 2001: 89).

It is also noteworthy that there is a clear notion of a larger interstate world in opposition to the local and the parochial that also has a historical continuity. This is more clearly expressed in the elite sector than in the popular sector. It accounts for the early appearance of religious doctrines that are clearly global in scope. In the early seventeenth century there are fairly clear expressions of a notion of a single humanity, of the need for the establishment of a world order, not in fact, foreign to the Catholic Church’s interpretation. The Rosicrucians published a pamphlet in 1614 entitled *Fama*, in which it is proposed that all learned men throughout the world should join forces towards the establishment of a synthesis of science. Behind this effort stood, allegedly, an *illuminated* brotherhood – the children of light, who had been initiated in the mysteries of the Grand Order. This ‘Brüderschaft der Theosophen’ was said to have been founded by Christian Rosencreutz (1378–1484), who had become an initiate during his travels in the Middle East in the fifteenth century. He founded a brotherhood which was supposed to have operated in secret ever since.
Now it is somewhat less clear to what extent there were indigenizing or nationalizing tendencies in the early history of Europe, but it is widely accepted that the nation state was very much the project of state oriented elites with the caveat that the latter produced an opposing project rooted in the exploited classes to capture the state and make it an instrument in the service of its own needs. The various regional and local resistances that proliferated within emerging absolutist states are evidence that there were and are numerous sub-state identities of varying strength right up until the present. It is necessary to find the resonance bases for the different collective identifications that characterize our history in order to avoid falling into the trap of envisioning such identities as mere intellectual constructs that people have somehow been seduced into accepting.

The cosmopolitanism of certain elites is apparently a well-established European habitus or even tradition. This is clearly evident in the history of the Freemasonry. The latter, after being taken over by aristocrats and then wealthy financial capitalists, clearly expressed a set of values that are equally visible in today’s world. Thus the New Age managerialism that is so common in the contemporary world of elites has its more aristocratic forerunners in the Freemasonry of the past. These themes can be outlined as follows:

1. An opposition to organized religion in its Western form.
2. An attraction to Oriental religious philosophy, not least its holism.
3. An interest in primitive and ancient religions.
4. The individual as the centre of spirituality and a direct link to the sacred or godhead, understood in pantheistic terms.
5. The superiority of the elect who can attain this relation to the sacred.
6. In political terms, an orientation to the world as a whole, to Mankind
   A. this implies opposition to the nation state or any other subnational units except as sources of spirituality
   B. the internal differentiation between leaders and followers, or the elect and the rest.
7. In class terms this is the formation in ideological terms and identity terms of an international elite.
8. A millennaristic view of the future – the New Age which is to come.

The latter incorporate notions of holism and of being chosen by higher powers. The elite is the ‘chosen few’, chosen to lead all of humanity to the promised land. It implies distance rather than identity with the populations that are under its rule and this provides a link to the pluralism that is so prevalent in older and newer versions of multiculturalism.
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 1998: 99

Another aspect of this particular global position is its association with finance rather than industrial production, so that finance is associated with the cosmopolitan as opposed to industry which is understood as vulgarly localized:

By being expressly non-manual, divorced from actual labour, British masonry reproduced the aristocratic preference for arms-length control over direct entrepreneurial involvement. The English gentleman preferred to sit above the commercial fray, pulling levers, dangling rewards and applying sanctions. (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1994: 321)

This is an important logic, one that connects finance with the cosmopolitan, and in turn with a sense of a higher power and even of a mission. The values of the humanism that emerged in the enlightenment are very much woven together with this particular version of cosmopolitanism.

The Small Worlds of Cosmopolitanism

One of the outcomes of the continuity of the category – cosmopolitan elite – as a constant category of the modern state is the production of social worlds that are more or less bounded socially even if unbounded with respect to the territorial unit. Cosmopolitan identity commonly represents itself as world encompassing as opposed to the smaller worlds of national and other more localized populations. This is a significant misrepresentation of reality, one that confuses geographical with social closure. It has led to absurd assertions that, for example, diasporas are instances of cosmopolitan openness, a notion that flies in the face of practically all that is known of such transnational groups where boundaries must absolutely be maintained if the diaspora is to survive, implying high levels of endosocial relations including endogamy and, consequentially, strict control over children. It is, in this respect, enlightening to investigate the life of transnational elites,
which display some of the characteristics of diasporas. An interesting study of what has been called l’immigration dorée in France (Wagner 1999) reveals a number of interesting properties of the social life that has developed in such transnational elites. Focusing on foreign elite communities via their relation to international schools and other associations, she depicts a two-layered structure, one newer, the product of the recent emergence of a transnational managerial class, and the other the old more aristocratic cosmopolitan elites. Although Wagner has concentrated on a relatively limited time period, it appears that almost a third of all transnationals in her sample marry other transnationals, though not necessarily of the same nationality. They send their children to a limited number of schools where education consists in learning to be international. The students play at representing the world, at being a United Nations devoted to a celebration of cultural difference and they often have official connections with these international organizations. But, there is more than culture here as they also identify themselves in the idiom of blood, even where it is mixed:

I have expatriated blood ... I am American, in passport and nationality, but my family and that of my wife as well have a great deal of ramifications in numerous countries, which means that we always had one foot in the United States and another abroad. (Wagner 1999: 116)

My father was somewhat a vagrant, and we had that in our veins. My brothers, it’s the same: I have a brother in Austria, one in Finland, a sister in Spain. My father moved a lot, and I must have taken that. (idem: 116)

The very expression ‘ex-patriot blood’ expresses a combination of roots and routes of the kind announced in much of the post-colonial cultural studies literature. The transnational is concretized in biological terms. The self-definition of a cosmopolitan ethos, which is common to both aristocratic and managerial groups, is an essential part of their self-understanding. The idiom of blood translates cultural difference into a common denominator, one that is sometimes referred to as ‘blue blood’, no matter what the nationality. Thus the cosmopolitan world is an ethnic world as well, one that crosses national borders, but which is distinctive and thus quite closed and bounded. However, it expresses itself in terms of the transcendence of national borders rather than in the creation of new, class-based borders: ‘La curiosité, l’ouverture, la tolérance sont des termes souvent employés pour désigner ces qualités’ (idem: 142).

This is the ethos of the world traveller – always open to new adventures, to new kinds of experience and different kinds of people. But it should be noted that the actual social arenas of these
cosmopolitans is limited to a number of associations, clubs, schools where they constantly meet and are able to identify one another by their common interests, tastes, but also differences regarding national origins and cultures.

The ethnic-class aspect of this identity is also the expression of the opposition between themselves and the more terrestrial ordinary nationals. They are even referred to as terrestrials in some comments.

So, the Earthling is someone who has a limited space. His activity concentrates on the land that he owns. If someone else comes into his land, he won’t accept it. He is linked to his family; to his children he wants to keep around him, since it his family that farms the land... The German is industrialist and commercial. For him, the world is big... (idem: 204)

And there is the opposition including the usual classification of the local ‘other’:

I believe that the popular class is attached to its origins. English people in France rather belong to the middle classes. In England, popular classes are more nationalists than other classes, they are less open. (idem: 189)

If the cosmopolitan is a constant structure in the modern territorial and nation state, it becomes increasingly salient in periods of globalization. One may even speak of an unstable opposition between the local, national and the international in which ideological dominance shifts markedly over time.

At the very top of the social hierarchy are the families that have been designated the grandes fortunes. This group keeps its distance from the others, with its own clubs and associations, listed and ranked in journals like Le petit mondain, and in terms of their places of residence (Pinçon and Pinçon-Charlot 1996: 120).

Cosmopolitanism of relationships, multiterritoriality extended to foreign countries, these are the two essential components of the high society. (idem: 120)

Wagner presents the example of the comte de Chatel. His genealogy is mixed due to marriages among the elites from Italy, England, Belgium and Argentina. The family’s capital is directly linked to the family’s international segmentary structure. M. de Chatel is never an expatriot when he travels. He is always on his own property somewhere in the world. But he is also a professional chameleon in cultural if not class terms.

Yes, people believed I was English in England, just as they believe I am an Argentinean in Argentina. This is one of the sole gifts Good has provided
me with. I imitate accents with great facility (he imitates the accent of Marseilles). It isn’t of much use, but nevertheless! (Wagner 1999: 122)\(^9\)

The differentiation between the upper crust and the managers, besides being socially marked in very clear terms, is also a difference between a cosmopolitan identity in which an aristocratic world tends to be homogeneous, and a more multinational world in which cultures are compared and ranked. This may be more of a variation than a true difference since there is a strong overlap in perspectives. But Wagner’s findings suggest a difference in the two spheres:

The two relationships with the foreign remain nevertheless distinct. The international defines itself in an opposition to the cosmopolitan. Cosmopolitanism rests on the cohesion of a small elite aristocracy, and does not really engage relationships between different cultures. Quite the opposite, the international culture of executives precisely rests on the valorization of the diversity of national cultures. (idem: 212)\(^10\)

This is related to the degree to which the ethnicization of the elite overrides its transcendence of national borders, but in both groups there is a tendency toward a distancing from the local and the national and identification with the international or transnational:

The capacity to be at home, in the material as well as the social and symbolic sense, in several countries, the incorporation of a cosmopolitan identify that produces effects on all dimensions of the person, define the model towards which the international culture of executives drives. (idem: 212)\(^11\)

**Cosmopolitanization and Globalization**

In the graphics above I suggest that there is a tendency towards the cosmopolitanization of elites in periods of strong globalization such as we have today. This can be understood as a product of the convergence of social and spatial mobility, one that situates its adherents above the world where they can encompass the diversity that lies below without being part of it, except in the sense of being able to consume it in the form of products. This distinction creates an opposition to the local as something which is decidedly lower in status and conflates immobility with cultural poverty. It is a mistake, however, to assume that the encompassing self-representation of the cosmopolitan implies a real engagement with the world. Geographical mobility, yes, but this is within a narrow sphere of class in which relations established are
bounded and often highly segregated, in which identity is strong and homogenous with respect to status and position.

The recent generalization of cosmopolitanism to all transnational domains appears in this light to express a kind of struggle for ideological hegemony. This generalization is what tends to equate cosmopolitanism with globalization itself and to argue for the evolution from local to global referred to above. Locals are not merely at the bottom of this process, they are also represented as precursors to the present. They are in this sense primitive, but in a way that conflates the Freudian primitivity, libidinous and inhabiting all of us with a temporal sense of being backward and the two are of course strongly associated. It is this which, ultimately, makes the local dangerous, as in the expression ‘classes dangereuses’. ‘Primitive’ culture, of course, is perfectly wonderful, but it needs to be extracted from its lived context and transformed into objects that can be consumed without danger. The museological understanding of culture that has become increasingly popular in recent years expresses this sublimation or even displacement of the libinous of otherness into objects of consumption/contemplation and celebration. It is this transformation that enables diversity to be collected and displayed in the salons of the elites. This is also essential to the identification of such elites with diversity and multiculturalism. The strength of this ideology depends on the balance of forces within which it is produced.

Cosmopolitanism tends to emerge simultaneously with and in dialectical relation to localizing ideologies, with nationalism, indigenism and regional identities. This is happening today just as it occurred in the most recent previous period of globalization between 1870 and 1920. It is interesting to compare the two periods in this respect. The British Empire contained a core of cosmopolitanism that is quite central to developments later in the century. The strategy of Cecil Rhodes and his Society of the Elect was to set the agenda for the continued success of the Empire. The League of Nations, one of the strong international developments of this period, may well have been conceived by this group as was the Union of South Africa and the Commonwealth. One of the members of the group expresses the flexibility of this particular elite:

Milner was not really a conservative at all. Milner had an idea – the idea that he obtained from Toynbee and that he found also in Rhodes and in all the members of his Group. This idea had two parts: that the extension and integration of the Empire and the development of social welfare was essential to the continued existence of the British way of life, and that this British way of life was an instrument which unfolded all the best and the highest capabilities of mankind. (Quigley 1981: 29)
But the group was perfectly capable of forsaking internationalism for reasons of expediency and, after 1931, it embraced the model of national economic regulation (idem: 248). While this all sounds like the extension of empire, it must be understood as part of hegemonic decline. The turn of the century witnessed the fragmentation of empire, not least of a formal empire, the Habsburgs. That empire was understood as traditionalist, religiously orthodox, rigid and yet its ranks were swelled by a new liberal class of cosmopolitans, many of whom were Jews and who were protected by the imperial court. Thus what is today considered progressive could easily be associated with the past, with absolutism, while nationalism was understood as the way of the future. While the situation was obviously more complicated than this, since there were other powerful cosmopolitanisms in Europe, the emerging conflict in the world system was spurred on by national competition, all of which led to the Great War. The configuration of the period is brilliantly captured in Gellner (1998):

Hence the deep irony of the situation: an authoritarian Empire, based on a medieval dynasty and tied to the heavily dogmatic ideology of the Counter-Reformation, in the end, under the stimulus of ethnic, chauvinistic, centrifugal agitation, found its most eager defenders amongst individualist liberals, recruited in considerable part from an erstwhile pariah group and standing outside the faith with which the state was once so deeply identified. (Gellner 1998: 12)

This was an arena that plunged into a war and strengthened existing nation states as well creating new such entities, and which also established the League of Nations. It was riddled with all of the contradictions referred to above. In the end, however, the cosmopolitan was by and large defeated. In the current situation there are clearly similar tendencies, but political organization seems to have a stronger tendency towards empire formation, however fragile. Thus it might appear that cosmopolitan tendencies are on the rise.

**Cosmopolitanism as Ideology**

International organizations, such as the United Nations, UNESCO, the World Bank and the World Economic Forum, have all converged on a similar set of representations of the world. And there is also the heritage of the Rhodes group style as hegemony shifted to the United States, one that is visible in the post-Second World War clubs such as the Bilderberg, the Trilateral Commission and the Mount Pelerin
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society where overlapping membership is pervasive and which goes public with Davos and the World Economic Council. Global media such as CNN also partake in this ideology which is significant given the force of repetitive imaging and moral framing in the creation of everyday reality, however virtual. It is also significant that a large number of intellectual elites, academics and politicians have been socialized into this worldview. I have tried to detail the way in which academic anthropology has been influenced by this trend (Friedman 1997, 1999, 2000), partaking in the ‘postcolonial aura’ that celebrates movement in itself as ‘the good’ along with an array of trans-x identities, the transnational, translocal, transsexual, bordercrossing etc. as opposed to the dangerous redneck locals who are associated with nationalism, racism, roots and that greatest of all evils, essentialism. This has even become a critique of what is assumed to be the general anthropological perspective, and can be summed up in expressions such as the following:

…anthropologists’ obsession with boundedness is paralleled by the ways in which the people they study try to deal with seemingly open-ended global flows. (Meyer and Geschiere 1999: 3)

What a pity that the people we study have got it just as wrong as ourselves. We are obviously all in need of re-education.

It should be noted that cosmopolitanism is not equivalent to internationalism. This is an important distinction that even attracted the attention of Marcel Mauss who discussed it as ‘deux sortes d’attitudes morales bien distinctes’ (Mauss 1920 [1969]: 629). He chose to define cosmopolitanism as a set of ideas and tendencies oriented to the destruction of the nation, while internationalism was merely against nationalism as such but not opposed to the nation state. Thus the socialist international struggled with these two concepts and eventually chose the international rather than the cosmopolitan. But there is another difference as well. The cosmopolitanism of the turn of the last century was largely modernist in the legacy of Kant. It identified itself with universal, moral, rational and scientific values. Contemporary cosmopolitanism is the descendent of aristocratic transnationalism discussed above. It is a self identified status position and one which is quite the contrary of Kantian universalism in that it celebrates and encompasses difference rather than opposing it. This is why the notion of hybridity is a logical consequence of the formation of such identities. The cosmopolitan today is not rationalist-universalist but primarily an expression of the fusion of all cultures and peoples, expressed in the song title ‘We are the world’.
Empire, Globalization and Academic Discourse

The large volume by Hardt and Negri is an interesting example of the continuing reinforcement of a particular ideology of the global. This can be found in some of their major thematic statements. For them, there is no question that we are entering a post-imperialist world, one revealed by the end of the Vietnam War, by the disappearance of the Wall and by the globalization of the world economy. They understand all of this in evolutionary terms even if they are aware of the previous existence of empires and that such structures are themselves fragile in the long run. The main changes that they signal are:

1. There is a rhizomatic transformation in the sense of the development of networks of power and economic relations replacing state and other vertical forms, including Fordist economic organization.
2. There is a Foucauldian totalization of power which emerges as everywhere and nowhere, therefore not in any one hegemonic place such as the US or in a governmental institution.
3. Openness is extended to the extreme so that there is no longer any 'outside'.
4. The nomadic emerges as dominant figure, at least in discourse.
5. The ‘multitude’ formation begins to replace the proletariat.

The United States is the forerunner in this development. Europe is still based on territorially strong national sovereignty while the US has transcended all that. In the US model we already have a tendency towards Empire. Unfortunately the Indians had to go as they could never really be inside, but the project remains an open one, the frontier that has always to be confronted and transcended and therefore incorporated. This is the self-representation of American pluralism and is therefore positive for very many both right and left who vote for the immigrant nation which is the basic identity of the United States. Empire is also an inevitable evolutionary trend, which explains the largely felicitous attack on Arrighi’s theory of cycles. More consistent with current globalizing ideology is the treatment of the nomadic as the wave of the future. The latter is defined as revolutionary whereas the local is relegated to the backward, even harbouring fascist potential. Here is the strongest argument for the globalists. Not only do they represent the good and progressive, but their very existence is enough to perform their historical task and pave the way for the final revolution of the multitude. Where Hardt and Negri place themselves in all of this is unclear, but the totalizing and prophetic style of the presentation is clearly something that
produces resonance. The book in its sixth printing and has been hailed from many quarters. It is an extraordinary text, praised by reviewers in such disparate publications as *Foreign Affairs* and the *New York Times*, lauded by authors close to journals such as *Public Culture*. The text has a ring of radical chic, perhaps, transcending a number of former perspectives. No longer is there a class issue. The latter is fast becoming a ‘multitude’ whose principle characteristic is its lack of a single unifying identity or strategic goal. The resistance to emergent Empire is simple the essence of all multitude activities since they express projects that are not the dictates of higher powers. The world to come is one that is totalized under the sign of Empire in the same sense as globalization is assumed to make the world into a single place. For both, there is no longer an outside. The empire is defined as all-encompassing, without boundaries, and the multitude are characterized as migrant/nomadic, not because they are forced to be so, but because they are the essence of global desire, the desire to be on the move, to deterritorialize. It is this which makes movement in itself, geographical movement, which is progressive while immobility is reactionary. The same underlying perspective can be found among anthropological adepts of globalization, who see a future in a diasporic world of transnationals (Appadurai, Kelly) who express a higher stage and higher status than the apparently potential rednecked homebodies who make up, unfortunately for these authors, more than ninety-eight per cent of the world’s population. Both globalization discourse and Empire represent the same set of basic themes. The major difference between the two is that Empire includes a more holistic, political image of the future than can be found in most of the globalization literature, since the latter is almost entirely focused on lateral relations of transmission and movement. Hardt and Negri take on the state and they also reformulate the issue of class relations within their vision. But their totalizing perspective, the holism referred to above, is of the same order. This is why Foucault is so important in characterizing power, which is no longer a verticalized relation, but a generalized structure of total control. If the multitude threatens this structure, it is because it expresses in essence the same properties – openness, nomadism and multiculturism. So perhaps the revolution has already occurred? If the projects of the multitude are an extension of those of empire then it is basically all the same.

There are interesting points of similarity and overlap here between this supposedly radical thinking and cosmopolitan ideology. They are products of a real ideological shift or inversion that can be summarized in the following terms:
Table 9.1. Ideological shifts in the cosmopolitan ideology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1968</th>
<th>1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The national</td>
<td>The post-national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The local</td>
<td>The global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social(ist)</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homogeneous</td>
<td>Heterogeneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monocultural</td>
<td>Multicultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality (sameness)</td>
<td>Hierarchy (difference)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These terms are meant to capture the transition of self-identified progressive thinking over a period of thirty years. These terms form sets of dualist oppositions and they are of course somewhat oversimplified, but not enough to miss the nature of the shift. The post-national is today seen as the royal road to the future of mankind whereas the national is a horrible leftover from a nationalist past, including essentialist and therefore racist tendencies. In both types of texts there is an expression of this new nomadic desire to transcend the prison of locality. Individualism has increasingly replaced the former collectivist ideology and has managed to associate the latter with Foucauldian totalistic control. Similarly the liberal has successively cannibalized the socialist from the inside, producing a great deal of confusion of the kind expressed in ideologies such as New Labour and contemporary social democracy in general. The heterogeneous has become a goal in itself, a generalized cultural pluralism of different identities – ethnic, religious, territorial, gender – and of political projects (all based on such cultural identities). This is a paradox in conditions where the advocates of such a position are also liberal individualists since the cultural identities in question are collective. The multicultural quandary is an expression of the same shift toward heterogeneity. The only consistent way out of the contradictions of this position is in the transformation of culture from a structure of existence to a mere role set, so that the individual can practice culture by choice, by elective affinity, like joining the golf club instead of the Wahabists, at least on Monday. In the process of this transition, equality is increasingly replaced by hierarchy via an emphasis on difference. This is the key to pluralism as a political form, one in which elite rule is essential. Difference becomes the dominant value while equality is seen as an ugly result of totalitarian rule.

It is significant that a work that is so clearly marked by the radical politics of at least one of its authors can become a Harvard University Press bestseller in the United States, and enthusiastically welcomed in the pages of *Foreign Affairs* as by authors connected to *Public Culture*. This book provides a kind of political framework in two ways. It
enables the cosmopolitans to reinforce their progressive identities by mere association (e.g. to Negri), eliminating the relevance of class and pointing the way towards a structure of global power in which the nomadic is defined as the wave of the future revolution.

**Finale: The Transformation of Governance?**

*Empire* is a fine piece of ideological fusion, one that provides a kind of *raison d’être* for the hegemony of the new cosmopolitan elites. If there is a tendency or at least a conscious effort at establishing global governance, it is one that is also borne within cosmopolitanism as indicated above. It is one that places an elite above the masses rather than being imprisoned as their representatives. This disjuncture is one that may indeed be worth analysing today as its salience increases. In political terms the transition captures a process of hierarchization-centralization that is evident in the recent political evolution in Europe where a former left/right opposition was partly replaced by what is referred to as the ‘Third Way’ or perhaps more revealing, the German *Neue Mitte*, in which there is a fusion of social democracy and neo-liberal politics, in which social democracy is the shell and neo-liberalism the core. Similar tendencies were evident in American ‘New Democracy’ (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000). The hierarchic and encompassing theme is also expressed in the discourses of international organizations such as UNESCO, to say nothing of the already mentioned World Economic Forum. *Empire* is an almost uncanny expression of many of these tendencies in globalizing discourse and its ambivalent reference to Foucauldian global governance, without a physical centre, yet all encompassing, is an excellent concentration of what seems to be ‘in the air’ among certain globalizers. The popularity of the book among certain elites might well be due to the resonance of its message for those who are already tuned in. The existence of ‘empire’ or of a ‘global elite’ might be said to generate the conceptual transformation of the working classes into a ‘multitude’, a process that is clear in the emergence of elite multiculturalism as expressed in many countries in Europe. The relation between globalization, the reconfiguration of class relations and the production of hegemonic representations is both a viable and important subject to which an anthropology endowed with a clear sense of structural transformation should be able to contribute.

In discussions back in the 1970s on the nature of the ‘Asiatic’ state, to which Maurice Godelier (Godelier 1964; Friedman 1994) made such important contributions, some of the same issues were taken
up. What is the nature of theocratic rule? On what grounds can one discuss the transition from a situation where a chief performs rituals for the community with respect to the gods, to one where he is himself the god, in other words where the relation of representation of the people to the gods becomes a relation of representation of the god to the people? This is no mere symbolic game or ritual text, a magnificent drama. Rather, it is the very form taken by the material existence of political power. A similar inversion would return popular sovereignty to the state in the above discussion, this time by transforming the (sovereign) people into peoples, a multitude or what was once referred to as *les classes dangereuses* and the state into a cosmopolitan absolute ruler, a representative of pure virtue and even of ‘democracy’, now incorporated into the bodies of the rulers themselves. It is interesting to consider the way in which this representation can be mapped in structuralist terms as a transition from diametric to concentric dualism. If this kind of analysis can be applied to contemporary political change, it reinforces the need to combine structural analysis with an account of material process, a synthesis that has been the core of Maurice Godelier’s research.

**Notes**

1. Lévi-Strauss’ article on the “atom of kinship” argued that the local kinship group was dependent for its very definition and existence on a wife-giving unit, represented by the Mother’s Brother, thus defining the external relation of determination with respect to group formation (1945, 1958 in *Anthropologie structural I*). This was opposed to Radcliffe-Brown and other functionalist definitions of the lineage group and the foundation of his *Elementary Structures of Kinship* (1969, 1949).

2. ‘Depuis que la paix était faite, il y avait eu dans Paris un si grand abord d’étrangers que l’on en comptait quinze à seize mille dans le faubourg Saint-Germain seulement… au commencement de l’année suivante, on trouva qu’il y en avait trente-six mille dans ce seul faubourg.’
3. ‘pas mariée en France, qu’elle ne suit pas la coutume de Paris et qu’elle n’est pas naturalisée’.
4. ‘fils d’un étranger originaire de Hollande’.
5. ‘“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 un pied aux États-Unis un pied à l’étranger’. ‘Mon père était un peu vagabond, et on avait ça dans les veines. Mes frères, c’est pareil: j’ai un frère en Autriche, un en Finlande, une sœur en Espagne. Mon père se déplacait beaucoup, et j’ai dû prendre ça’.
6. ‘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… L’Allemand est industriel et commercial. Pour lui, le monde est grand…’
7. ‘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.’
8. ‘Cosmopolitisme des relations, multiterritorialité étendue aux pays étrangers, ce sont là deux composantes essentielles de la haute société.’
9. ‘Oui on me prenait pour un Anglais en Angleterre, comme en Argentine on me prend pour un Argentin. C’est un des seuls dons que m’aît donné le bon Dieu. J’imite les accents avec énormément de facilités (il imite l’accent marseillais). Ça ne sert pas a grand-chose, mais bon!’
10. ‘Les deux formes de rapports à l’étranger restent néanmoins bien distincts. L’international se définit aussi par opposition au cosmopolite. Le cosmopolitisme repose sur la cohésion d’une petite élite aristocratique, et ne met pas reellement en jeu des relations entre des cultures différentes. À l’inverse, la culture internationale des cadres repose justement sur la valorisation de la diversité des culture nationales.’
11. ‘La capacité d’être chez soi, au sens à la fois matériel, social et symbolique dans plusieurs pays, l’incorporation d’une identité cosmopolite qui produit ses effets sur toutes les dimensions de la personne définissent bien le modèle vers lequel tend la culture internationale des cadres.’
12. ‘Thus being primitive in the temporal sense as in the sense of the human life cycle and primitive in the geographical sense of being out there are joined. Being before and being out there are thus logically linked to a concentric understanding of the self and society. The libidinous refers to the lack of control over basic desires that Freud interprets as paramount for the infantile situation.

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