

ON GLOCALIZATION: OR GLOBALIZATION FOR SOME, LOCALIZATION FOR SOME OTHERS

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ABSTRACT Globalization cuts both ways. Not only does it valorize the local in a cultural sense, it constructs the local as the tribal. Processes of geopolitical fragmentation give those in power even more room to manoeuvre. Glocalization involves the reallocation of poverty and stigma from above without even the residual responsibility of *noblesse oblige*. Geographical and social mobility are dichotomized; populations are refigured as tourists and vagabonds. Globalization thus reinforces already existing patterns of domination, while glocalization indicates trends to dispersal and conflict on neo-traditional grounds. The privileged walk, or fly away; the others take revenge upon each other.

KEYWORDS fragmentation • globalization • glocalization • nation state • tribalization

‘Order matters most when it is lost or in the process of being lost’, thus James Der Derian, who explains why this matters so much today by quoting American President George Bush’s declaration, after the collapse of the Soviet empire, that the new enemy is uncertainty, unpredictability and instability (Derian, 1991). We may add that in our modern times order came to be identified, for all practical intents and purposes, with control and administration, which in their turn came to mean an established code of practice and ability to enforce obedience to the code. In other words, the idea of order related not so much to the things as they are, as to the ways of managing them; to the capacity of *ordering*, rather than any immanent quality of the things as they happened to be by the themselves and at the moment. What George

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Bush must have meant was not so much the dissipation of the 'order of things', as the disappearance of means and the know-how needed to *put things in order* and keep them there.

The present-day 'New world disorder' (the apt and felicitous title of Kenneth Jowitt's book) does not refer, therefore, to the state of the world after the end of the Great Schism and the collapse of the power-block political routine. It reports, rather, our sudden awareness of the essentially elemental and contingent nature of things, which before was not so much non-existent as barred from sight by the all-energy consuming day-to-day reproduction of balance between the world powers. By dividing the world, power politics conjured up the image of totality. That world was made whole by assigning to each nook and cranny of the globe its significance in the 'global order of things' – to wit, in the two power-camps' conflict and equilibrium. The world was a totality in as far as there was nothing in that world which could escape such significance and so nothing could be indifferent from the point of view of the balance between the two powers that appropriated a considerable part of the world and cast the rest in the shadow of that appropriation. Everything in the world had a meaning, and that meaning emanated from a halved, yet single centre – from the two enormous power blocks locked up, riveted and glued to each other in the all-out combat. With the Great Schism out of the way, the world does not look a totality anymore; it looks rather as a field of scattered and disparate forces, sedimenting in places difficult to predict and gathering momentum impossible to arrest.

To put it in a nutshell: *no one seems to be now in control*. Worse still, it is not clear what 'being in control' could, under the circumstances, be like. As before, all ordering is local and issue-oriented, but there is no locality that could pronounce for humankind as a whole, or an issue that could stand up for the totality of global affairs. It is this novel and uncomfortable perception which has been articulated (with little benefit to intellectual clarity) in the currently fashionable concept of *globalization*. The deepest meaning conveyed by the idea of globalization is that of the indeterminate, unruly and self-propelled character of world affairs: the absence of a centre, of a controlling desk, of a board of directors, a managerial office. Globalization is Jowitt's new world disorder under another name. In this, the term 'globalization' differs radically from another term, that of 'universalization' – once constitutive of the modern discourse of global affairs, but by now fallen into disuse and by and large forgotten.

Together with such concepts as 'civilization', 'development', 'convergence', 'consensus' and many other terms of early- and classic-modern debate, universalization conveyed the hope, the intention and the determination of order-making. Those concepts were coined on the rising tide of modern powers and the modern intellect's ambitions. They announced the will to make the world different from what it was and better than it was, and to expand the change and the improvement to global, species-wide

dimensions. It also declared the intention to make the life conditions of everyone everywhere, and so everybody's life chances, equal. Nothing of all that has been left in the meaning of globalization, as shaped up by the present discourse. The new term refers primarily to 'global effects', notoriously unintended and unanticipated, rather than the 'global undertakings'. Yes, it says, our actions may have, and often do have, global effects; but no, we neither have nor are likely to obtain the means to plan and execute actions globally. Globalization is not about what we all or at least the most resourceful and enterprising among us wish or hope *to do*. It is about what is *happening to us all*. It explicitly refers to the foggy and slushy 'no man's land' stretching beyond the reach of the design and action capacity of anybody in particular.

How has this vast expanse of man-made wilderness (not the 'natural' wilderness that modernity set out to conquer and tame; but the post-domestication wilderness that emerged *after* the conquest and *out of it*) sprung into vision with that formidable power of obstinacy which is taken to be the defining mark of 'hard reality'? A plausible explanation is the growing experience of weakness, indeed of impotence, of the habitual, taken-for-granted ordering agencies. Among the latter, the pride of place throughout the modern era belonged to the state (one is tempted to say the *territorial* state, but the idea of the state and the 'territorial sovereignty' have become, in modern practice and theory, synonymous, and thus the phrase 'territorial state' turned pleonastic). The meaning of 'the state' has been precisely that of an agency claiming the legitimate right and the resources to set up and enforce the rules and the norms binding the run of affairs over certain territory; the rules and the norms hoped and expected to turn contingency into determination, ambivalence into *Eindeutigkeit*, randomness into predictability – in short, chaos into order. To order a certain section of the world meant to set up a state endowed with the sovereignty to do just that. And the ambition to enforce a certain model of preferred order at the expense of other, competitive, models could be implemented solely through acquiring the vehicle of the state or occupying the driving seat of the existing one. Max Weber *defined* the state as the agency claiming the monopoly of the means of coercion and their use.

Order-making requires huge and continuous effort, which in turn calls for considerable resources. The legislative and executive sovereignty of the state was accordingly perched on the 'tripod of sovereignties': military, economic and cultural. An effective order-making capacity was unthinkable unless supported: by the ability to effectively defend the territory against challenges of other models of order, from both outside and inside the realm; by the ability to balance the books of the *Nazionalökonomie*; and by the ability to muster enough cultural resources to sustain the state's identity and distinctiveness. Only a few populations aspiring to state sovereignty of their own were large and resourceful enough to pass such a demanding test. The times

when the ordering job was undertaken and performed primarily, perhaps solely, through the agency of sovereign states, were for that reason the times of relatively few states; and the establishment of any sovereign state required as a rule the suppression of state-formative ambitions of many lesser collectivities: undermining whatever they might possess of inchoate military capacity, economic self-sufficiency and cultural distinctiveness. Under the circumstances, the 'global scene' was the theatre of inter-state politics, which through armed conflicts or bargaining aimed first and foremost at the drawing and maintaining ('internationally guaranteeing') of the boundaries that set apart and enclosed the territory of each state's legislative and executive sovereignty. 'Global politics' concerned itself mostly with sustaining the principle of full and uncontested sovereignty of each state over its territory, with the effacing of the few 'blank spots' remaining on the world map, and with fighting off the danger of ambivalence arising from the overlapping of sovereignties. The meaning of the 'global order', consequently, boiled down to the sum-total of a number of local orders, each effectively maintained and efficiently policed by one, and one only, territorial state.

That parcelled-out world of sovereign states was superimposed for almost a half-century and until recently with two power blocks, each promoting a certain degree of coordination between state-managed orders within the territories of their respective 'meta-sovereignty', coupled with the assumption of each state's military, economic and cultural insufficiency. Gradually yet relentlessly a new principle was promoted – in political practice faster than in political theory – of supra-state integration, with the 'global scene' viewed increasingly as the theatre of coexistence and competition between blocks of states, rather than states themselves. The Bandung initiative to establish the incongruous 'non-block block', and the recurrent efforts to align non-aligned states, was an oblique acknowledgement of that new principle. It was, though, consistently and effectively sapped by the two super-blocks, which treated the rest of the world as the 20th-century equivalent of the 'blank spots' of the 19th-century state-building and state-enclosure race. Non-alignment, refusal to join one or another of the super-blocks, sticking to the old-fashioned and increasingly obsolete principle of supreme sovereignty vested with the state, was the equivalent of that 'no man's land' ambivalence which was fought off tooth and nail, competitively yet in unison, by modern states at their formative stage.

The political super-structure of the Great Schism era barred from sight the deeper, and – as it has now transpired – more seminal and lasting transformations in the mechanism of order-making. The change affected above all the role of the state. All three legs of the 'sovereignty tripod' have been broken beyond repair. The military, economic and cultural self-sufficiency, indeed self-sustainability, of the state – any state – ceased to be a viable prospect. In order to retain their law-and-order policing ability, the states had to seek alliances and voluntarily surrender ever-larger chunks of their sovereignty.

When the curtain eventually was torn apart, it uncovered an unfamiliar scene, populated by bizarre characters: states which, far from being forced to give up their sovereign rights, actively and keenly sought surrender and clamoured for their sovereignty to be taken away and dissolved into the supra-state formations; long deceased yet born again, or never heard of but now duly invented 'ethnicities' much too small and inept to pass any of the traditional tests of sovereignty, but now demanding states of their own and the right to legislate and police order on their own territory; old nations escaping the federalist cages in which they had been incarcerated against their will, only to use their newly acquired decision-making freedom to pursue dissolution of their political, economic and military independence in the European Market and NATO alliance.¹ The new chance, found in ignoring the stern and demanding conditions of statehood, has found its acknowledgement in the dozens of 'new nations' rushing to add new seats in the already overcrowded UN building, not designed to accommodate such numbers of 'equals'. Paradoxically, it is the demise of state sovereignty that made the idea of statehood so tremendously popular. In the caustic estimate of Eric Hobsbawm, once the Seychelles can have a vote in the UN as good as Japan's, 'the majority of the members of the UN is soon likely to consist of the late 20th-century (republican) equivalents to Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and Schwarzburg-Sonderhausen' (Hobsbawm, 1977).

Two books have appeared recently in France which trace the overwhelming impression of 'global chaos' to the principle of *territoriality*: one that served for the duration of the modern era as the major regulative norm in the on-going struggle for law and order, but – as their authors, Thual and Badie, indicate – which proved to be a major source of the contemporary world disorder (Badie, 1995; Thual, 1995). The authors point to the present practical impotence of the states, which, however, remain to this day the only sites and agencies for the articulation and execution of laws; devoid of all real executive power, no more self-sufficient, in fact unsustainable militarily, economically or culturally, those 'weak states', 'quasi-states', often 'imported states' (in Badie's expressions) keep nevertheless claiming territorial sovereignty, capitalizing on identity wars and invoking, or rather whipping up, dormant tribal instincts. It is easy to see that the kind of sovereignty which relies on tribal sentiments alone is a natural enemy of tolerance and civilized norms of cohabitation. But the territorial fragmentation of legislative and policing power with which it is intimately associated is also, in Thual's and Badie's view, a major obstacle to the effective control over forces that truly matter, but which are all or almost all global, extraterritorial, in their character.

Thual's and Badie's arguments carry a great deal of conviction. And yet their analysis seems to stop short of unravelling the full complexity of the present plight. Contrary to what the authors suggest, the territorial principle of political organization does not stem from the natural or contrived tribal

instincts alone (not even primarily), and its relation to the processes described under the name of economic and cultural globalization is not just of the 'spoke in the wheel' kind. In fact, there seems to be an intimate kinship, mutual conditioning and reciprocal reinforcement between the 'globalization' and the renewed emphasis on the 'territorial principle'. Global finance, trade and information industry depend for their liberty of movement and their unconstrained freedom to pursue their ends on the political fragmentation, the *morcellement* of the world scene. They have all, one may say, developed vested interests in 'weak states' – that is, in such states as are *weak* but nevertheless remain *states*. Deliberately or subconsciously, such inter-state institutions as there are exert coordinated pressures on all member or dependent states to destroy systematically everything that could stem or slow down the free movement of capital and limit market liberty. Throwing wide open the gates and abandoning any thought of autonomous economic policy is the preliminary, and meekly complied with, condition of eligibility for financial assistance from world banks and monetary funds. Weak states are precisely what the new world order, all too often mistaken for the world disorder, needs to sustain and reproduce itself. 'Quasi-states' can be easily reduced to the (useful) role of local police precincts, securing a modicum of order required for the conduct of business, but need not be feared as effective brakes on the global companies' freedom. As Michel Crozier pointed out many years ago, domination always consists of leaving as much leeway and freedom of manoeuvre to oneself as possible, while imposing as close as possible constraint of the decision-making of the dominated side; to rule, said Crozier, is to be close to the 'source of uncertainty'. This strategy was successfully applied once by state powers, which now find themselves on its receiving end – it is now world capital and money that are the focus and the source of uncertainty. It is not difficult to see that the replacement of territorial 'weak states' by some sort of global legislative and policing powers would be detrimental to the interests of the extraterritorial companies. And so it is easy to suspect that far from acting at cross-purposes and being at war with each other, the political 'tribalization' and economic 'globalization' are close allies and fellow conspirators.

Integration and fragmentation, globalization and territorialization are mutually complementary processes; more precisely still, two sides of the same process: that of the world-wide redistribution of sovereignty, power, and freedom to act. It is for this reason that – following Roland Robertson's suggestion – it is advisable to speak of *glocalization* rather than globalization, of a process inside which the coincidence and intertwining of synthesis and dissipation, integration and decomposition are anything but accidental and even less are rectifiable.

The intimate connection between the ostensibly world-wide availability of cultural tokens and increasingly diversified, territorial uses made of them has turned by now into one of the staple topics of the present-day

social-scientific study and discourse. By common agreement among the analysts of contemporary scene, 'globalization' does *not* mean cultural unification; the mass production of 'cultural material' does not lead to the emergence of anything like 'global culture'. The global scene needs to be seen rather as a matrix of possibilities, from which highly varied selections and combinations can be, and are, made; through the selection and combination, from the global yarn of cultural tokens, separate and distinct identities are woven; indeed, the local industry of self-differentiation turns into a globally determined characteristic of the late 20th century, postmodern or late modern, world. The global markets of commercial goods and information make the selectivity of absorption unavoidable – while the way the selections are made tends to be locally, or communally, selected to provide new symbolic markers for the extinct and resurrected, freshly invented or as yet postulated only, identities. Community, rediscovered by the born-again romantic admirers of *Gemeinschaft* (which they see now threatened once more by the callous, disembedding and depersonalizing forces – this time, however, rooted in the *global*, world-wide *Gesellschaft*) is not an antidote for globalization, but one of its indispensable global corollaries – simultaneously products and conditions.

But the *Gemeinschaft–Gesellschaft* opposition/connection is not the only dimension of the interplay between globalizing and localizing trends. It is not even the most important and seminal of dimensions – though the emphases common in the mainstream 'globalization' literature, which habitually present it as the main line of confrontation along which the most consequential battles are fought, would suggest just that. Glocalization is first and foremost a redistribution of privileges and deprivations, of wealth and poverty, of resources and impotence, of power and powerlessness, of freedom and constraint. It is, one may say, a process of world-wide *restratification*, in the course of which a new world-wide socio/cultural self-reproducing hierarchy is put together. That difference and communal identity, which the globalization of markets and information promotes and renders 'a must', is not a diversity of equal partners. What is free choice for some is cruel fate for some others. And since those others tend to grow unstoppably in numbers and sink ever deeper in despair born of prospectless existence, one will be right to perceive of the glocalization as the concentration of capital, finance and all other resources of choice and effective action – but also, and in the first place, as *concentration of freedom* to act.

Commenting on the findings of the latest UN's *Human Development Report*, that the total wealth of the top 358 'global billionaires' equals the combined incomes of 2.3 billion of the poorest people (45% of the world's population), Victor Keegan of *The Guardian* called the present reshuffling of the world resources 'a new form of highway robbery' (22 July 1996). Indeed, only 22 percent of the global wealth belongs to the so-called 'developing countries', which account for about 80 percent of the world

population. This is by no means the end of the story, as the share of current income received by the poor is smaller still: in 1991, 85 percent of the world's population received only 15 percent of its income. No wonder that in the last 30 years the abysmally meagre 2.3 percent of global wealth owned by 20 percent of poorest countries fell further still, to 1.4 percent. The global network of communication, acclaimed as the gateway to a new and unheard of freedom, is clearly very selectively used; it is a narrow cleft in the thick wall, rather than a gate. Few (and fewer) people get the passes entitling them to go through. 'All computers do for the Third World these days is to chronicle their decline more efficiently' – so says Keegan. And concludes: 'If (as one American critic observed) the 358 decided to keep \$5 million or so each, to tide themselves over, and give the rest away, they could virtually double the annual incomes of nearly half the people on Earth. And pigs would fly'.

In the words of John Kavanagh of the Washington Institute of Policy Research, reported in the *Independent on Sunday* 21 July 1996,

Globalisation has given more opportunities for the extremely wealthy to make money more quickly. These individuals have utilised the latest technology to move large sums of money around the globe extremely quickly and speculate ever more efficiently. Unfortunately, the technology makes no impact on the lives of the world poor. In fact, globalisation is a paradox; while it is very beneficial to a very few, it leaves out or marginalises two-thirds of the world's population.

As the folklore of the generation of 'enlightened classes', gestated in the new, brave and monetarist world of Reagan and Thatcher, this opening up of sluices and dynamiting all dams will make the world a free place for everybody. Freedom (of trade and of capital mobility, first and foremost) is the hothouse in which wealth would grow faster than ever before; and once the wealth is multiplied, there will be more of it for everybody. The poor of the world, both old and new, the hereditary and the computer-made, would hardly recognize their plight in that folklore. The media are the message, and the media through which the establishment of the world-wide market is being perpetrated are such that they preclude the promised 'trickle-down' effect. New fortunes grow in the virtual reality, tightly isolated from the old-fashioned rough-and-ready realities of the poor. Creation of wealth is on the way to finally emancipating itself from the old, constraining and vexing connections with making things, processing materials, creating jobs and managing people. The old rich needed the poor to make and keep them rich. They do not need the poor any more. At long last, the bliss of ultimate freedom is nigh.

Since time immemorial, the conflict between rich and poor meant being locked for life in mutual dependency; and dependency meant the need to talk and seek compromise and agreement. This is less and less the case. It is not quite clear what the new 'globalized' rich and the new 'globalized' poor would talk about, why they should feel the need to compromise and what sort of agreed *modus coexistendi* they would be inclined to seek. The globalizing and

the localizing trends are mutually reinforcing and inseparable, but their respective products are increasingly set apart and the distance between them keeps growing, while reciprocal communication comes to a standstill.

These worlds sedimented on the two poles, at the top and at the bottom of the emerging hierarchy, differ sharply and become increasingly *incomunicado* to each other, much as the 'no-go areas' of contemporary cities are carefully fenced off and bypassed by the traffic lines used for the mobility of the well-off residents. If for the first world, the world of the rich and the affluent, the space has lost its constraining quality and is easily traversed in both its 'real' and 'virtual' renditions, for the second world, the world of the poor, the 'structurally redundant', real space is fast closing up – the deprivation made yet more painful by the obtrusive media display of space conquest and the '*virtual* accessibility' of distances unreachable in the non-virtual reality. Shrinking of space abolishes the flow of time; the inhabitants of the first world live in a perpetual present, going through a succession of episodes hygienically insulated from both their past and their future; those people are constantly busy and perpetually 'short of time', since each moment of time is non-extensive – an experience identical to that of the time 'full to the brim'. People marooned in the opposite world are crashed and crushed under the burden of abundant, redundant and useless time they have nothing to fill with. In their time, 'nothing ever happens'. They do not 'control' time, but neither are they controlled by it, unlike their clocking-in, clocking-out ancestors, subject to the faceless rhythm of factory time. They can only kill time, as they are slowly killed by it.

Residents of the first world live in *time*, space does not matter for them, since spanning every distance is instantaneous. It is this experience that Jean Baudrillard encapsulates in his image of 'hyperreality', where the virtual and the real are no longer separable, since both share and miss in the same measure that 'objectivity', 'externality' and 'punishing power' which Emile Durkheim listed as the symptoms of 'reality'. Residents of the second world live in *space* – heavy, resilient, untouchable – which ties down time and keeps it beyond the residents' control. Their time is void; in their time, 'nothing ever happens'. Only the virtual, television time has a structure, a 'timetable'. The other time is monotonously ticking away, it comes and goes, making no demands and leaving apparently no trace. Its sediments appear all of a sudden, unannounced and uninvited. Immaterial, time has no power over that all-too-real space to which the residents of the second world are confined.

Glocalization, to sum up, polarizes mobility – that ability to use time to annul the limitation of space. That ability – or disability – divides the world into the globalized and the localized. 'Globalization' and 'localization' may be inseparable sides of the same coin, but the two parts of the world population seem to be living on different sides, facing one side only, much like the people of Earth see and scan only one hemisphere of the moon. Some inhabit the globe; others are chained to place.

Agnes Heller recalls meeting, on one of her long-distance flights, a middle-aged woman, who was an employee of an international trade firm, spoke five languages and owned three apartments in three different places.

... she constantly migrates, and among many places, and always to and fro. She does it alone, not as a member of community, although many people act like her... The kind of culture she participates in is not a culture of a certain place; it is the culture of a time. It is a culture of the *absolute present*. Let us accompany her on her constant trips from Singapore to Hong Kong, London, Stockholm, New Hampshire, Tokyo, Prague and so on. She stays in the same Hilton hotel, eats the same tuna sandwich for lunch, or, if she wishes, eats Chinese food in Paris and French food in Hong Kong. She uses the same type of fax, and telephones, and computers, watches the same films, and discusses the same kind of problems with the same kind of people. (Heller, 1995)

Heller finds it easy to empathize with her companion's experience. She adds, *pro domo sua*:

Even foreign universities are not foreign. After one delivers a lecture, one can expect the same question in Singapore, Tokyo, Paris or Manchester. They are not foreign places, nor are they homes. (Heller, 1995)

Jeremy Seabrook remembers Michelle, a girl from a neighbouring council estate:

At fifteen her hair was one day red, the next blonde, then jet-black, then teased into Afro kinks and after that rat-tails, then plaited, and then cropped so that it glistened close to the skull... Her lips were scarlet, then purple, then black. Her face was ghost-white and then peach-coloured, then bronze as if it were cast in metal. Pursued by dreams of flight, she left home at sixteen to be with her boyfriend, who was twenty-six... At eighteen she returned to her mother, with two children... She sat in the bedroom which she had fled three years earlier; the faded photos of yesterday's pop stars still stared down from the walls. She said she felt a hundred years old. She was weary. She'd tried all that life could offer. Nothing else was left. (Seabrook, 1985: 59)

Heller's fellow-passenger lives in an imaginary home which she does not need, and thus does not mind being imaginary. Seabrook's acquaintance performs imaginary flights from the home she resents for being stultifyingly real. Virtuality serves both, but to each offers different services with sharply different results. To Heller's travel companion, it helps to dissolve whatever constraints a real home may impose – to dematerialize space. To Seabrook's neighbour, it brings into relief the awesome and abhorring power of a home turned into prison – it decomposes time. The first experience is lived through as postmodern freedom; the second, as the postmodern version of slavery.

The first experience is, paradigmatically, that of the tourist (and it does not matter whether the purpose of tourism is business or pleasure). The tourists become wanderers and put the dreams of homesickness above the realities of home – because they want to; because they consider it the most

reasonable life-strategy 'under the circumstances', or because they have been seduced by the true or imaginary pleasures of a sensation-gatherer's life. But not all wanderers are on the move because they prefer being on the move to staying put. Many would perhaps refuse to embark on a life of wandering were they asked, but they had not been asked in the first place. If they are on the move, it is because staying at home in a world made to the measure of the tourist is a humiliation and a drag. They are on the move because they have been pushed from behind, having been first spiritually uprooted from the place that holds no promise by a force of seduction too powerful, and often too mysterious, to resist. They see their plight as anything except as a manifestation of freedom. These are the *vagabonds*; dark vagrant moons reflecting the shine of bright tourist suns; the mutants of post-modern evolution, the unfit rejects of the brave new species. The vagabonds are the waste of the world which has dedicated itself to tourist services.

The tourists stay or move at their heart's desire. They abandon the site when the new, untried opportunities beckon elsewhere. The vagabonds, however, know that they won't stay for long, however strongly they wish to, since nowhere that they stop are they welcome. The tourists move because they find the world within their reach irresistibly *attractive*; the vagabonds move because they find the world within their reach unbearably *inhospitable*. The tourists travel because they *want to*; the vagabonds, because they have *no other bearable choice*. The vagabonds are, one might say, involuntary tourists, but the notion of 'involuntary tourist' is a contradiction in terms. However much the tourist strategy may be a necessity in a world marked by shifting walls and mobile roads, freedom of choice is the tourist's flesh and blood. Take it away, and the attraction, the poetry and, indeed, the liveability of the tourist's life are all but gone. Globalization is geared to the tourists' dreams and desires. Its second effect – its *side-effect* – is the transformation of many others into vagabonds. The first effect breeds and inflates the second – indomitably and unstoppably. The second is the price of the first. The question is how to force that price down.

Let me repeat: once emancipated from space, capital needs no more itinerant labour (while its most emancipated avant-garde needs hardly *any* labour, mobile or immobile). And so the pressure to pull down the last remaining barriers to the free movement of money and the money-making commodities and information goes hand in hand with the pressure to dig new moats and erect new walls (variously called 'immigration' or 'nationality' laws) barring the movement of those who are uprooted, spiritually or bodily, in the result.² Green light for the tourists, red light for the vagabonds. Enforced localization guards the natural selectivity of the globalizing effects. The widely noted, increasingly worrying polarization of the world and its population is not an alien, disturbing influence in the process of globalization: it is its effect.

The poor will be always with us, and so will the rich, according to the

age-old popular wisdom, now unearthed from the abyss of oblivion in which it was kept during the brief romance with the 'welfare state' and the process of sponsored or assisted 'development'. The rich/poor split is neither a novelty nor a temporary irritant which, with due effort, will go away tomorrow or some time later. The point is, however, that hardly ever before was this split so unambiguously, unequivocally, a *split*; a division unredeemed and unrelieved by mutual services or reciprocal dependency; a division with no more underlying unity than that between the clean typescript and the waste-paper basket. The rich, who happen to be at the same time the resourceful and the powerful among the actors of political scene, do not need the poor either for the salvation of their souls (which they do not believe they have and which at any rate they would not consider worthy of care) or for staying rich or getting richer (which they gather would be easier if not for the calls to share some of the riches with the poor). The poor are not God's children on which to practice the redemption of charity. They are not the 'reserve army of labour' which needs to be groomed back into wealth production. They are not the consumers who must be tempted and cajoled into 'giving the lead to recovery'. Whichever way you look at them, the poor are of no use; the vagabonds are but the ugly caricatures of the tourists – and who would enjoy the sight of one's own distortions? This is a real novelty in the world undergoing the deep transformation which, sometimes due to an optical error, sometimes to placate the conscience, is dubbed 'globalization'.

The unity/dependency which underlay most historical forms of the rich/poor division used to be in all times the necessary condition of that – however residual – solidarity with the poor, which inspired the – however half-hearted and incomplete – efforts to relieve the poor's plight. It is that unity/dependency which is now missing. No wonder the pollsters of both competing camps inform their respective candidates for the US presidency that the voters want the benefits of the poor to be cut together with the taxes of the rich. No wonder both rivals do their best to overtake each other in their proposals to cut the welfare assistance and to lavish the saved funds on building new prisons and employing more police.

As Pastor John Steinbruck, the minister at Luther Place Memorial Church in Washington, recently summed it up in *The Guardian*, 28 July 1996: 'This nation has as its symbol the Statue of Liberty, with the message carved at its base 'give me your poor, your homeless, your huddled masses'. But here we are now in this damn country, the richest in history, and we've forgotten all that'.

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Notes

1. As could be expected, it is the ethnic minorities or, more generally, small and weak ethnic groups, incapable of running a state independently according to the standards of the 'world of the states' era, which are as a rule most unambiguously enthusiastic about the gathering might of the supra-state formations. Hence the incongruence of claims to the statehood argues in terms of allegiance to the institutions whose declared, and even more often suspected, mission is to limit it and in the end annul it altogether.
2. Saving the affluent part of Europe from the flood of war refugees was, by the Secretary of State's admission, the decisive argument in favour of the US involvement in the Bosnian war.

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