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Globalisation, Fragmentation, and Modernity

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Globalisation, Fragmentation and Modernity

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Introduction[1]

Everybody talks about globalisation. For some it is the highest stage of economic development, where goods, services, money and knowledge have become highly mobile on a world-scale, where the entire world will participate in and benefit from. For others, it is a 'disorganized capitalism' (Offe 1985) that looses its moral embeddedness, taking a brutal form of exploitation and being the most recent stage of western imperialism, where not only western goods, capital and knowledge, but also western culture undermine non-Western economies and societies, their cultural heritage and values. Particularly in countries like India with a colonial past and a long anti-colonial struggle, scholars take a very critical stance towards globalisation and its cultural and social impact. This stance is comparable to the specific Indian view of modernity.[2] But there are also a number of critics from Western countries, where globalisation impacts upon social structure and fundamental values such as equality and equity. Various Third-Sector movements, often organized on a higher than the national level and themselves an outcome of globalisation, raise their voices and take action against globalisation.

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[1] This paper is an outcome of lively discussions at the University of Mumbai about globalization and multiple modernities. During these discussions it became clear to me that perceptions of globalization and modernity are culturally embedded. While liberal Western scholars celebrate globalization as a success story, and left-wing scholars complain about the social disembeddedness of the economy in a globalized world, many Indian scholars perceive it as a the most recent form of neo-imperialism, thus taking an anti-global (and often anti-Western) stance.

[2] Modernity cannot be thought without its antonym: tradition. Contrary to the western perception, in which tradition and modernity constitute two different points in time on a development path or, as Lerner (1958) described, segregated into two different personalities in dual societies, the ubiquitous Indian position is according to Deshpande (2003: 35), that tradition and modernity are even found within the same personality (as Srinavas (1971: 54) argued, calling this specificity a 'cultural schizophrenia', although not a pathological one (ibid: 57)). Already Srivanas raised an important question concerning modernization, which is equally applicable to globalization: Is modernization the same as Westernization (Srinavas 1971: 50-52)?

However, globalisation is not only a concept - it remains a fact. In India, the "New Economic Policy" of Rao after 1991 opened the domestic market for foreign products and companies. This changed the life styles of middle- and upper class people. In particular fields like software production India is among the leading nations in the world, and her experts are in high demand in the international labour market. Social structure is in a process of change, the old, rigid caste structures begin to weaken, human-rights movements like the Dalit movement articulate their claims against caste privileges. Simultaneously we observe a very strong anti-western and anti-global, nationalist and often racist rhetoric from both right-wing and left-wing parties, campaigns against Western products or commercialised festivals like Valentine's day, which made their way from America around the globe. Outraged masses burn American flags, loot shops with western products and destroy Western cars.

The phenomena just described, are not only anti-global, but themselves an inherent part of globalisation and modernization. These two terms are twins (Giddens 1990). Modernisation provides the structure and periodisation of globalisation.

> "Together globalisation and modernity make up a ready-made package. Ready-made because it closely resembles the earlier, well established conceptualisation of globalisation: the Marxist theme of the spread of the world market. The time and pace are the same in both interpretations: the process starts in the 1500s and experiences its high tide from the late nineteenth century. The structures are the same: the nation-state and individualisation" (Nederveen Pieterse 1994: 162).

In this article I will describe the multifaceted processes of globalisation being linked to modernization as an originally western thought that expanded around the world. I will address the question of how far the concept modernity is universal or specific to western culture and its history, and take up the discussion of non-western modernities as attempts to modernize in a culturally grounded way by achieving the technological benefits from modernity and avoiding the related painful social and cultural restructuring. If such non-western modernities emerge they may impact on globalisation and its conceptualisation.

Globalisation Processes

Ronald Robertson, one of the pioneers of globalisation theory,[3] described globalisation as the compression of the world and rapid increase of consciousness of the world as a whole (Robertson and Khondker 1998: 29). This is how we experience the world in the global age. Its rotation seems to have speeded up. Cosmopolitans and businessmen have to be accessible at every place (even the most private one) during 24 hours a day, and once this connection is disturbed,[4] they get nervous. Compression of the world means that it has come into our living rooms by satellite TV, has been discovered by intercontinental mass tourism, and is easily accessible by email contacts and mobile phone.

Globalisation theory emerged during the late 1980s and early 1990s. A particular invention during the 1970s: the semiconductor and computer chip had revolutionized the world and pushed it into another dimension. Globalisation theory analyses these revolutionaries change. The technical invention was a turning point that marks the beginning of a new age (no matter how this age has been called: post-industrial, informational, post-modern, global, or network age). Robertson, however, rightly emphasizes that globalisation itself is a long-term and continuous process of technological revolutions that caused economic and social change, and therefore globalisation theory is an analysis of these processes of long-term global change. According to this perspective also long-distance trade before colonialism (Chaudhuri 1990), as well as colonialism itself (Wallerstein 1980; Schrader 1997a) belong to this long-term process. Within this process the dimensions of time, space and distance changed (cf. Giddens 1990): the world itself has become a village[5] – we are familiar with it, and everything is in rather short distance.

Globalisation constitutes a bundle of parallel processes, and exactly this parallelism of seemingly unconnected issues makes the matter so incomprehensible. According to

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[3] Well-known is Robertstons classical book *Globalisation. Social Theory and Global Culture* (Robertson 1992).

[4] This happens quite often, e.g. when the server is down or we travel through a mobile net hole.

[5] Here I refer to Marshall McLuhan's metaphor of 'global village'.

Archer these processes engender a 'growing world-wide interconnectedness of structure, culture and agency' (Archer 1991: 133).

This multifaceted bundle concerns the economy and technology, politics, ideology, culture and environment, and I will consider these spheres one after another.

The Economic Dimension of Globalisation

Economic theory relates globalisation to the model of a free world market without restrictions of competition and mobility, a global mass culture and a world-encompassing information society. According to neo-liberal thinking the world market efficiently fulfils its allocation function to guide flows of goods, services, capital, information and labour to that places wherever they are needed. Transnational competition, processes of selection, and economies of scale will single out those enterprises that are not fit enough to survive. Consumers benefit from this competitive market by availability of products with low prices. This approach shows that the neo-liberal market model of domestic economies has simply been shifted to the world market level. While in the course of Western Liberalism a mere condition for the emergence of market society was a successful individuation: the liberation of people from communal and hierarchical constraints, globalisation means that in addition to these processes people (and enterprises) have to be liberated from nation-state constraints (e.g. taxation on foreign goods, subsidies to national industries, etc.) that hinder the free flow of goods, services, finance and knowledge. In the course of revitalization of modernization theory redressing internal development constraints with a policy of structural adjustment and deregulation solves the problems of the periphery, so that market forces can take over self-regulation. However, with the world financial crisis this neo-liberal 'market-fundamentalism' (Evers and Gerke 1997: 4) of the 1990s has been scrutinized, and the call for regulating international institutions of the world economy and particularly the financial sector, as well as for protectionist policies has become louder. Faced by a rapid decline of social security systems, people in continental Europe doubt a self-regulation of the market within a socially acceptable dimension, but also they do no longer believe in an efficient state interventionism on

behalf of socially disadvantaged people (Schrader 1997b). Communitarians[6] therefore proclaim to reconstruct communities (neighbourhoods, families) as helping, as well as controlling entities (Selznik 1995).

The economic dimension of globalisation refers to an increasing interconnectedness and interdependence of enterprises via the world market. This interdependence results from world trade, foreign and joint venture investments, worldwide consumer markets, processes of concentration, international financial speculation, international labour migration, computer networks, etc. Labour intensive production processes are shifted to economies with low salaries (or non-wage labour production forms), while the headquarters with their planning, marketing and financial divisions remain in the Western and some East Asian global cities. A certain consumer or luxury product is nowadays rarely national, because most of its inputs consist of imported goods[7] (therefore certain nationalist campaigns to buy only 'national' products are far from reality). The top capital- and knowledge-intensive service enterprises (i.e. banking and insurance companies and certain professional 'producer services' (Sassen 1994)) are located in 'global cities' – a hierarchical network of business centres that are more closely connected to each other than to their immediate environment within the cities. In these business centres those jobs receive top incomes that are particularly valuable for the global economy. Former production centres and manufacturing jobs, on the other hand, have been downgraded. Global cities, however, require an infrastructure: various low-paid service jobs from the sweeper to the taxi driver, which are often organized according to ethnic lines. An outcome of this development is a bi-polarization of societies.

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[6] The communitarian movement started in the 1980s from Northern America. It is basically a debate between liberals, pursuing a democracy with maximum individual freedom, and the communitarians, who consider democracy as being based upon community: citizens are embedded in societal relations and constraints. Communitarians claim that a individualist liberalism is socially so uncommitted that it threatens the foundation of democracy. The sharp discourse between the two positions is to my mind typically Anglo-Saxon, because the right to individual freedom in continental Europe is much more subordinated to social interest.

[7] This becomes obvious when we consider the labels on certain products. The label *made in...* that for certain products was a quality marker, has now often been exchanged by *assembled in...* or *designed in....*

A common argument in the globalisation debate is that globalisation smoothens difference and income disparities. Poor countries and poor people can benefit from information that is freely available via Internet. Such a view is a myth. If such a freedom exists, it is only a formal but no substantive one (cf. Weber 1968). Indeed, not the Internet restricts access of the poor, but their limited wealth. Access requires computers and electricity, and even the equipment of universities with high-tech is meagre compared to western universities.

The Technological Dimension

The technological dimension in the field of information technology and tele-communication has already been addressed. The future post-industrial firm is ‚virtual’, no more a localized physical entity, but a flexible network of temporary contracts and cooperative relations that functions via computer net and mobile phone, often on a world scale. Large parts of production in a global age concerns information. Castells (1991: 13f.) talks about ‘the new technological paradigm’ that is characterised by two important features: (a) firstly, the technologies are directed towards information processing. The raw material as well as the outcome of the process is information. (b) Secondly, they affect processes (or more precisely, the transformation of such) rather than products. These two major characteristics of the information technological paradigm have fundamentally changed society with regard to its material basis. The new technological paradigm engenders an increased flexibility of organisation in production, consumption and management and thus minimises the distance between economy and society.

Large corporations that required and developed these new technologies, have themselves become obsolete now as an organizational form. With these new technologies, vertical hierarchies are no longer necessary and even inefficient compared to more flexible network structures. Characteristic to the global age is the ‘network society’ (Castells 1996).

The Political Dimension

Of particular interest for sociologists is the political dimension of globalisation. It is closely connected to the discipline’s historical points of reference: society and nation-

state in early modernity. Scholars prognosticated the coming of a 'world society' (Luhmann 1971; Stichweh 1996), being represented by supra-national political structures. They argue that governance has become much more dependent on international organizations, bi-lateral and multi-lateral contracts, so that sovereignty has decreased. So what happens to the nation state in the course of globalisation? Is its importance decreasing and is the nation-state as the governing body finally becoming obsolete, being replaced by world governance? Certainly not; according to Bamyeh (1993) in spite of globalisation processes governance is still represented and expressed in the interstate system, while transactional forms of political organization have been comparatively less successful. The reason is that also international organizations such as the UN are made up by nation-state representatives and quota, while non-state organisations and associations (such as citizen groups and NGOs) are excluded from participation. An important source of legitimacy of a state in the international arena is its recognition by other states (Taylor 1993). A nation-state is very often more important from the international than from the domestic perspective. The internationalisation of this interstate system was related to the spread of standard rules of representation according to the nation-state model as an offspring of Western modernity.

> „The idea of the nation-state gained popularity not due to its inherent appropriateness in terms of collective representation, but rather due to the pressures of model emulation (...) The idea of such a state, emanating from 19th-century European developments and schools of thought, did no have the same socio-cultural and historic foundations in contemporaneous, or even contemporary, Africa, India, Central Asia, or the Middle East. In all such regions, an *added effort*, be it a colonial conquest, post-colonial dictatorship, disruptions of old linkages, etc., was required to *force* such regions into adopting a representational discourse to the European nation-state" (Bamyeh 1993: 7).

Let us consider the discussion about the nation-state in the course of globalisation a little bit closer. 'Nation' comprises people of common culture (and often language), history and tradition in a political system (the German model), or by will (the French model). Cohesion is achieved by difference between "Us" and "Others". "We"- this is the citizens, who have certain rights and obligations that distinguish them from "Them" – the foreigners. While ascriptive relations constitute the glue of traditional communities ('mechanical solidarity' according to Durkheim 1964), a feeling of brother- and sisterhood among citizens is not natural and has to be imagined. Solidarity has to be extended from ascriptive to ethnic, cultural and political 'relatives' to engender a close feeling of commonness ("We"). This will be achieved by symbols

(hymn, flag, passport, etc.) and a clear-cut delineation of strangers.[8] Anderson (1983: 16-17) therefore rightly considers the nation-state as an 'imagined community'. The imagination of common ethnic or cultural heritage engenders horizontal solidarity and joint effort for the common good: well-being of "mother nation". Furthermore, the European model of nation-state, which is based on values of Enlightenment, liberalism, individualism, humanism, state monopoly of violence and democratic structures, separation of powers, rule of law, protection of privacy, freedom of press, social security systems, participation, freedom of coalition, etc., is usually associated with good governance (Walzer 1995) in difference to despotic command states of 'the South'.

The notions of community, society and nation-state are morally grounded. While in traditional societies, human beings were enmeshed in a close network of social relations and had neither the consciousness, nor the possibility to act as individuals, in modern societies moral action, which is beneficial for community and society, is always in competition with egotism and individual benefits at the expense of others. Only a moral foundation can explain why people are willing to die for their nation, and to be cowardly is morally reprehensible.

While the process of nation building in the course of modernization was quite successful in Western Europe, a copy of this model to a number of former colonies was not and has not reached beyond a symbolic level. Particularly post-colonial states that are often an artificial entity of colonialism and have no long tradition of joint origin or civil society, are threatened by an incongruence of national and ethnic/religious identities. Like national identities ethnicity is a construct (Barth 1969), which not always determines action, but becomes important as a means of inclusion and exclusion. National and ethnic identities can compete with each other. Separatist processes are characteristic to weak nation-states (i.e. states with a weak monopoly of violence) and have caused a number of nation-states to collapse. Warlordism grows, genocides occur against other ethnic groups (Rwanda) or other believers (Gujarat). Autocratic ruling dynasties misuse their political power to appropriate for themselves and their clans

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[8] In early 20th century Europe the German sociologist Simmel (1908) made a path breaking analysis of 'The Stranger'. This term is not only personified, but also a metaphor for all what is different to what we are used to. This means when something new enters society of culture, it affects our self-understanding and identity. We can either adapt it to make if familiar, or we can reject it.

instead of pursuing a common good, the bureaucratic functioning is undermined by corruption, everybody will personally appropriate as much as possible until being replaced by a similar actor. This type of nation-state is very weak and vulnerable and does not fit the European nation-state model. But in the process of globalisation nation-states, which are still the leading political agents, are expected to become intermediaries between global and regional entities and requests. And this is, what many nation-states cannot fulfil.

> "Globalisation can mean the reinforcement of or go together with localism, as in 'Think globally, act locally'. This kind of tandem operation of local/global dynamics, or *glocalisation* (emphasis added)[9], is at work in the case of minorities who appeal to transnational human rights standards beyond state authorities, or indigenous peoples who find support for local demands from transnational networks. The upsurge of ethnic identity politics and religious revival movements can also be viewed in the light of globalisation" (Nederveen Pieterse 1994: 165).

Global dynamics caused by world economic crises or state politics can reconstruct ethnic identities. The paradox of the global age is that the world drifts into two distinct directions: on one hand nobody will deny processes of globalisation of the economy, civilizing of world policy, secularisation of culture and value systems, or changing roles and gender relations. The boundaries of nation-states, national economies and national identities become permeable, a world economy, world society, world political system and world culture develop. On the other hand, we may observe a process of fragmentation, renaissance of nationalisms, splitting up of nation-states and re-tribalisation, re-fundamentalisation, ethno-procetionism, cultural relativism and regression of civility (Holm and Sörensen 1994; Menzel 1998: 46). Globalisation may engender unification and fragmentation, common identity and awareness of political difference. It can reinforce both supranational and subnational regionalism.

These fragmentation processes caused several scholars to develop scenarios,[10] which constitute just the opposite to a peaceful coexistence in a 'global village'. Samuel Huntington (1993), inspired by nationalist rhetoric, prognosticates the 'clash of civilizations' between the western-Christian culture and a coalition of 'oriental' despots or theocrats of the Islamic, Hindu, Confucian, Shinto or Eastern-Orthodox cultures – not

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[9] Roland Robertson (1995) shaped the term of 'glocalization'.

[10] Here I follow Menzel (1998: 46ff.).

necessarily in the shape of armed confrontation, but certainly in form of economic competition, brand faking, an East Asian work ethics of blood, sweat and family relations (Oxfeld 1993) and a rejection of Westerns values as being appropriate to non-Western countries. It is self-evident that Huntington's scenario is based upon Europe's ancient fear of invaders from the East: the Huns, Mongols, Turks, Russians and Chinese.

Another scenario based upon fragmentation is Rufin's (1993) clash of rich and poor along the world's poverty line:[11] the Eastern Border of the extended EU, the straits of Gibraltar, the border between Texas and Mexico, the boundary between rich and poor East and Southeast Asia, but also within the megapolises of the South like Mexico City, Rio, Lagos or Bombay, where the living quarters of the rich that occupy disproportionate city space, defend their wealth and living standard against the poor, and in well-secured tourist enclaves along the African coasts – far away and protected from poverty, but within reach of the next international airport.

James Kurth (1994) therefore identifies 'The Real Clash' between civilizations in the megapolises of the West themselves – places of barbarism, where entire city quarters like South Bronx or Lower Eastside in New York become islands beyond law and order, where the state monopoly of violence does not count, where policemen refuse patrolling, where violence dictates life, where life expectation is low and illiteracy and poverty high. Kurth argues the real clash takes place between the values of modernity (such as equality and equity) and multiculturalism of real life, taking the shape of fight for survival. Migration waves into America sooner or later make the white become a minority against Asians, Black and Hispanics. The American melting-pot ideology has failed. The conservative reaction is a step back to Christian and pre-modern values. According to Kurth this also constitutes a form of fundamentalism.

The Ideological Dimension

The ideological dimension of globalisation is what has been called 'Triumph of Liberalism/Capitalism' or, what Francis Fukuyama addressed when he talked about the

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[11] A TV science-fiction film described how masses from Africa, affected by a hunger disaster, began '*The Long March*' (film title) to Gibraltar, where they aimed at stepping into rich Europe. Military caused a massacre by trying to keep this migrants out.

'End of History' (Fukuyama 1992): lack of an alternative to Liberalism and the economic order that Liberalism requires: a world-wide Capitalism. During the Cold War era Socialism provided a promising alternative modernization path that was steered from above.[12] Reasons that made Socialism attractive were that it aimed at establishing a more just society with regard to distribution, that the Soviet Union had no colonizing past (at least not outside Soviet territory) contrary to the leading capitalist countries; that Socialism itself was considered to be a transgression to Communism with a dictatorship of proletariat that legitimised authoritarian governance and failures; that the Socialist block provided a counter power to the capitalist world; and that statesmen could outlive their personality cults. With the collapse of Socialism as a serious alternative to Capitalism the opportunity of the non-Western World to take advantages from the Cold War by getting military and financial support from either of both sides has also ceased. Instead, as already mentioned in my introduction, international organizations like World Bank and IMF force national governance into structural adjustment and deregulation, opening up these countries for Western products and capital. No wonder that an anti-Western rhetoric grows, because this is seen as an expression of neo-imperialism.

The Cultural Dimension

Globalisation is tied up with modernity. Most commonly it is assumed that it is spreading from the West and produces uniformity and standardisation through technological, commercial and cultural synchronisation. Nederveen Pieterse (1994) holds against this simplistic view that globalisation of culture is not the same as Westernisation or Americanisation. Cultural communication exposes the communicators to foreign influences. Not that only non-Western societies were infiltrated by an American way of life being supposed to cause a loss of cultural values, customs and manners; also America and Europe adapted elements of foreign civilizations: Eastern philosophies and management styles, music or food, and the cuisine. The two-sided permeation of cultural influences engenders a new global hybrid culture: a mélange.

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[12] An essential claim of the Soviet model was its supposedly higher rationality and efficiency in a planned economy and society. Modern was Socialism with regard to production and organisation of labour, but not with regard to civic structures (Schrader 2003).

> "With regard to cultural forms, hybridisation is defined as 'the ways in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices' (Rowe and Schelling 1991: 231) quoted by Nederveen Pieterse 1994: 191).

There are other arguments against the view of an emergent global American culture with certain mass-cultural symbols like McDonalds, Coca Cola and fast-food culture. To remain on this level of symbolism does not yet tell us about the symbolic meaning of these symbols. To put it another way, a McDonalds network around the globe and the McDonalds special international weeks with Mexican Burgers or Chinese McRibs are not yet indicative to a global McDonalds culture, because for an understanding of this culture we have to consider the reasons and motives of the guests visiting these fast-food restaurants and the life-styles associated with. Not only that the taste of the products is culturally adapted; the target group of this fast-food chain and other chains is different. While in America and Europe McDonalds is a lower middle- and lower class phenomenon, in a number of non-western countries, the visitors are primarily upper- and upper-middle class families and youth, who consider themselves to be modern (and perhaps also Western), and many young people use these places as meeting points to escape rigid family control. Here McDonalds is not at all a mass phenomenon. As sociologists we have to transcend the presence of certain signs and symbols, and we have to understand their social meaning (Douglas and Isherwood 1996).

The Environmental Dimension

The environmental dimension of globalisation refers to the world being a highly fragile ecological system. An imbalance will cause effects on both local and global levels. This dimension is an outcome of reflexivity of late modernity (Beck, et al. 1994). People have realized that technical progress and production of risks for the environment are closely related to each other.

As Niklas Luhmann (1988) argues, risk itself is a product of modernity. In pre-modern times all what happened was explained by fortune and destiny - the will of supernatural powers - but not caused by mankind. The dangers of the middle ages were external in nature: enemies, animals, weather, gods and demons. Enlightenment that replaced God by reason, engendered a self-responsibility of man. The world became man-made and future could be planned and formed and aimed to be better than the past. The belief in economic and technical progress became one of the key issues of modernity. In addition

to wars the coming industrial age engendered risks that were related to people's occupations (occupational diseases) and lack of work and environmental protection. The risks, however, were mainly local. Those suffered who had such an occupation or who lived in the close neighbourhood of certain industries.

According to Ulrich Beck (1986) who calls the contemporary western societies 'risk societies', global risks are quite different. Western people and educated people in non-Western societies are aware of these risks due to reflexivity of modernity, spread of information by news and Internet, scientific warning, ecological movements and first visible effects on the globe like changing weather conditions. We know about global warming and greenhouse effect. Since Bhopal and Chernobyl we are aware of the danger of poison gas factories and nuclear power stations. But changes in pollution outputs or consumption of non-renewable resources, particularly in the most advanced industrial societies having a disproportionate share of energy consumption are too slow. The severe problem of global risks is that they cause enormous, cumulated effects on the entire globe.[13]

While the risks of industrial society were mainly class-specific (money had an upward mobility, risks a downward mobility), Beck believes that global risks have an equalizing effect. They are usually beyond our immediate recognition (feeling, seeing, tasting), but they are nevertheless in our surrounding (air, water, food, etc.) and have caused a latent feeling of insecurity. Ecology and economy seem to contradict each other. Producers of these risks externalised the costs.

What Beck describes here is certainly true for western societies, in which most people achieved a high living standard and have got the feeling that wealth cannot substitute happiness. In such societies we can observe a change in values away from material to post-material values (Inglehart 1998). However, Beck totally neglects that both with regard to local and global risks the rich are in a much better position to protect themselves. The recent analysis of Indian bottled drinking water shows that there are certain brands meeting international standards, but these are quite costly for the majority. The poor, on the other hand, cannot afford buying even the cheapest bottle and take their water from the pipe or wells. The rich have access to information and early

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[13] When we imagine that every Indian and every Chinese family would have an automobile, this would cause an immediate consumption of world natural resources, air pollution and a speeding-up of greenhouse effect.

warning by satellite TV, Internet, mobile and newspapers, whereas many poor are not at all informed. Rich people imported secure beef from New Zealand after the BSE scandals. But when you have little money and have an opportunity to cheaply acquire beef, you do not ask about BSE. Rich people can even build their private shelters against nuclear fall-out as in Switzerland, while the poor live next to the nuclear power station and even do not know why so many people starve of cancer. And also rich countries can better protect themselves against global risks such as the rise of the sea level as a consequence of global warming. Contrary to the Maldives or Bangladesh the Netherlands has the capacity to build higher dikes against the tide.

To sum of the dimensions of globalisation: all these dimensions are closely connected to each other and happen more or less at the same time. This is why for many people globalisation is so incomprehensible and therefore disastrous.

Multiple Modernities or a Single Universal Modernity in a Global Age?

One way to cope with the problem of modernisation is to talk about multiple modernities as characteristic to a global age. Appadurai and Breckenridge (1996: 1) believe argues that 'most societies today possess the means for the local production of modernity'. To perceive non-western or Third-World societies as traditional, is therefore inadequate, and very often tradition is invented,[14] a 'claim-to-difference'. "Thus, in a very general sense, everything and everybody is modern today" (Deshpande 2003: 42)

The most famous theoretical proponent of this approach is Shmuel N. Eisenstadt (2001). He considers modernity as an offspring of one of the Great Axial Civilizations: the Christian-European one.

> "It crystallized as a transformation of the heterodox visions with strong Gnostic components which sought to bring the Kingdom of God to earth and which were often promulgated in medieval and early modern European Christianity by different heterodox sects. The transformation of these visions as it took place above all in the Enlightenment and in the Great Revolutions, in the English Civil War and especially the American

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[14] The idea of invented tradition originates from Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983).

and French revolutions and their aftermaths, entailed the transposition of these visions from relatively marginal sectors of society to the central political arena" (Eisenstadt 2001: 321).

He considers the emergence of modernity as the begin of a "Second Axial Age, in which a distinct, cultural, political and institutional program crystallized and expanded throughout most of the world encompassing all the 'classical' Axial Civilizations, as well as pre- and non-Axial ones" (ibid.). From Western Europe it expanded to other parts of Europe, to America and later throughout the world. This caused tensions and challenges, which were responded in different ways, and engendered different civilisation premises of modernity, or, as he later writes, an emergence of multiple modernities. It is worth to have a closer look at his argumentation.

What were the characteristics of modernity? The basic conception scrutinized the existing social, ontological and political order and gave way to political and social change. The reflexivity of this 'Second Axial Age' far exceeded that of the Axial Age, which had focused on different interpretations of the transcendental visions. Now reason began to question these visions. As Inkles/Smith (1993) and Lerner (1958) described it, people began to experience that they could take a great variety of roles and not only prescribed and ascriptive ones. This emancipated them from the grip of traditional political and cultural authorities and expanded institutional and individual freedom.

A tendency that is particularly important for emergent multiple modernities in the present is the "recognition of legitimacy of multiple individual and group goals and interests and of multiple interpretations of the common good" (Eisenstadt 2001: 323-324).

The civilization of modernity was beset by internal antinomies and contradictions, which gave rise to a continuous critical and communicative discourse (cf. Habermas 1990) between totalising and pluralizing visions and ideologies and their political representation. In Western modernity key issue of the Enlightenment was the sovereignty of reason, which subsumed substantive rationality under formal rationality. Already Max Weber (1950; 1968) referred to the contradictions between the basic premises of the political and cultural programs of modernity, and real institutional developments. The disenchantment of the world engendered an 'iron cage of bureaucratization' and routinization, a fragmentation of the common vision in different institutional areas. This is what systems theory developed further under the topics of autopoiesis and self-referenciality (cf. Scherr 1994). A central antinomy is the

incompatibility of individual freedom and restrictive control by institutions in modern societies.

Of particular importance in this Second Global Axial Age were social movements, protest movements (the liberal, the socialist, the communist, the nationalist, and the fascist), which constituted the transformation of some of the heterodoxies. Even if they were related to particular national histories, they were nevertheless international from their *zeitgeist*.

With Western military, economic, technical and ideological expansion the cultural program of modernity spread first to the Eastern Christian, Islamic and the great Asian (Confucian, Hindu and Buddhist) civilizations and then to various non-Axial ones. Eisenstadt interprets this worldwide expansion as the first wave of modern globalisation (ibid: 328). It raised the question of whether its outcomes were a homogenized world with universal values that were originally an offspring of one particular, namely Western civilization, and which became hegemonic in the course of history. However, the actual developments in various modernizing non-Western societies are far beyond homogenisation and the original European program of modernity.

> "A general trend to structural differentiation of various institutional arenas – economic, the political, that of family, to urbanization, extension of education and modern means of communication, and tendencies to individualistic orientations - developed in most of these societies. Yet the ways in which these arenas were defined and organized varied among them in different periods of their development, even if not in endless ways, giving rise to multiple institutional and ideological patterns. But these patterns did not constitute simple continuations in the modern era of the respective traditions of these societies. *They were distinctively modern* (emphasis added, H.S.) even if their dynamics were greatly influenced by their cultural premises, traditions and historical experiences. Within all of them developed distinct modern dynamics, distinctive ways of interpretation of modernity, for which the original Western project constituted the crucial starting and continual – usually ambivalent – reference point. Of special importance in this context was the fact that the social and political movements which developed in the non-Western societies, even while they often promulgated strong anti-Western or even anti-modern themes, were distinctively modern" (Eisenstadt 2001: 329).

This holds true for various nationalist and anti-colonial, traditionalist movements as well as for contemporary fundamentalist ones. Crucial to these movements are the confrontation between 'traditional' sectors of societies and modern sectors and centres,

between the culture of modernity in these modern ones and the supposedly 'authentic' cultural tradition of society, the continual ambivalence to these modern centres and their premises and symbols expressed by a simultaneous denial and attraction. Modernizing elites and intellectuals belong to the driving forces of social change; however, at the same time they reject certain aspects of western culture and hegemony. This is an expression of the search for a distinct, culturally based modernization, taking up certain universalistic elements of modernity, which are required for a construction of a modern, collective identities, without giving up particular components of the traditional identities or without taking an affirmative attitude towards the West (ibid: 331).

The concrete contours of different cultural and institutional patterns of modernity as being engendered in different societies were continuously changing due to changing tensions and an inherent dynamics of modernization, as well as changing attitudes towards the West due to political change, changing hegemonies of the world, changing elites within the particular countries, and changing consciousness of contradictions and antinomies in the program of modernity. In this way Eisenstadt considers the history of modernity as a story of continual development and formation, constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs of modernity and of distinctively modern institutional patterns, and of different self-conceptions of societies as modern – of *multiple modernities* (emphasis added, H.S.)" (ibid: 332).

While the divergent modernities emerged in the 'classical' age of modernity during the 19th until the 1970ies, they have changed drastically in the course of globalisation under the impact of growing capitalist hegemony, intensified international migration and an emergence of international social and environmental problems (international prostitution, international criminal networks, ozone hole and its regional consequences, etc.) that demonstrate the powerlessness of nation states on their allegedly 'national' affairs. At the same time, as already discussed under the political dimension of globalisation, the state has lost its legitimacy of violence to peripheral ethnic and/or religious movements, aiming at coups d'états, separatism, or destruction of the nation-state by terrorist acts.

In this global age particular social movements emerged: ecological, feminist, and fundamentalist; all of them on national, supra-national and sub-national levels.[15] All this

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[15] Of particular importance are also trans-local diasporas like the Muslim, Chinese, Indian or Russian diasporas.

indicates a process of de-Axialization: that the 'secondary Axialization' came to an end, "being manifest both in the development of both multiple post-modern and in seemingly anti-modern and anti-western, possibly non-Axial movements and identities" (ibid: 335). The movements have distinct visions of modernity and try to appropriate modernity on their own terms and to bring about a reconstruction of personality and individual and collective identities. Characteristic is the tension between totalitarian and pluralistic movements and their relation to the West and western modernity, both laying claim to having the better program to cope with economic and cultural globalisation. Of course this also occurred in the course of western modernization, deeply rooted in Western civilization. However, what happens now is not just the repetition with time-lag in non-western nations, because in all of these movements universalist and seemingly traditional and primordial tendencies are constructed by typically modern ways, articulating the antinomies and contradictions of modernity. For India I already addressed the nationalist and anti-global movements like the *Shang*-family and its *Hindutva* concept or the *swadeshi* movement (cf. Omvedt 2000), but there are also a number of proponents of globalisation and liberalization, among them the Dalit movement, that sees an opportunity to overcome the caste system.[16] For the latter the local is the potentially and really dangerous. Also Amartya Sen supports globalisation by simultaneously claiming to extend social expenditure for education and health services.

There is no 'end of history' (Fukuyama 1992). Rather,

> "all these developments and trends constitute aspects of the continual reinterpretation and reconstruction of the cultural program of modernity; of the construction of multiple modernities; of attempts by various groups and movements to re-appropriate modernity and redefine the discourse of modernity in their own new terms. At the same time, they entail a shift of the major arenas of contestations and of crystallization of multiple modernities from the arenas of the nation-state to new arenas in which different movements and societies continually interact and cross each other" (Eisenstadt 2001: 338).

Thus, Eisenstadt concludes modernity has not been transgressed by postmodernity, but is 'on endless trial' (Kolakowski 1990).

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[16] According to Omved (2000) contrary to Gandhi as a galleon figure of *swadeshi*, the Dalit hero Ambedkar has a western outfit with coat and tie.

The debate of multiple modernities was intensified with the Asian values discussion that Mahatir, Lee Quan Yu and other Southeast Asian politicians took up. Nederveen Pieterse (1994) rejects this, because a renouncement of universal standards and ethics gives rise to legitimise social and gender inequality, authoritarianism, or religious and ethnic oppression of minorities with cultural values, customs and manner. Therefore, it does not make sense to create other centrisms such as Indocentrism, Sinocentrism or polycentrism. Also Senghaas (1995) argued that there is nothing particularly 'non-western' to the supposed 'non-western values', but that they are identical to the European values of yesterday, which are associated with Toennies' (1964) ideal type of '*Gemeinschaft*' (community) as opposed to '*Gesellschaft*' (society). The other way around, what Asian politicians or Islamic religious leaders conceive as 'western', are not traditionally 'western values' but they are outcomes of modernization: individualism, pluralism, majority principle, participation, and the like. Traditional European values were similarly collectivist as the assumed non-western ones, but they lost importance or changed in the course of modernization.

And exactly the same happens in the course of modernization and globalisation in non-western societies. To bemoan this change as an increasing hegemony of Western values to Asian ones does not solve this antinomy of modernity. Non-Western modernities, if they really emerge, will probably take a different form than presently assumed: pre-modern values, attitudes and power and gender relations cannot be kept in this rapidly changing world, but I nevertheless believe that influences of Asian religion and philosophy may impact on such modernities.

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