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'Ethnicity is Everywhere': On Globalization and the Transformation of Cultural Identity

What can your nation do for you that a good credit card cannot do?' In posing this not wholly unironic question, anthropologist Ulf Hannerz is touching on a basic premise characterizing the contemporary discourse on globalization, namely the belief that, in the face of the transnationalization of commodity markets, financial markets and cultural markets, the 'national' is increasingly losing its significance as the master frame for the construction of collective identities and has become overlaid, undermined, or even replaced by deterritorialized identity formations. The stakes, however, are much higher, since the 'national' represents not only identities but our dominant form of sociation as nation-state organized societies.

It is in theses proclaiming the end of the nation-state (Appadurai, 1996a, 1996b; Bauman, 1995, 1996; Castells, 1996; Ohmae, 1995; Robertson, 1992; Ruggie, 1993; Rosencrane, 2001) or at least a significant loss of national sovereignty (Hannerz, 1996; Mathews, 1997; Sassen, 1991, 1996b) that theories of globalization find their common ground. Bearing in mind David Harvey's influential definition of globalization as a new round of 'time-space compression', we can note that this discussion is predominantly marked by spatial categories and scales, as well as by a general point of view that interprets 'globalization' as an inwardly contradictory dynamic of in essence spatially defined reconfigurations of politics, culture, society, gender, race and ethnicity. The range and depth of these ongoing processes of spatial reconfiguration are highly controversial. But to perceive the radical shift of all spatial scales and the corresponding organizational forms of social relations, we need only bear in mind that, in relation to the 'local', the 'regional' and the 'national', the 'global' is first of all and foremost a socio-spatial scale. Referred to as the 'spatialization of social theory' (Featherstone and Lash, 1995: 1; Soja, 1996; Massey, 1999), this 'geographical turn' in the

social sciences has made itself felt in the categories and concepts which not too long ago seemed quintessential to mainstream social thought.

Against this background, the aim of the present article is to seek, in some measure, to reconstruct the globalization-related reconfiguration of social spaces, in particular, as far as a relocalization of national space is concerned. The consequences of the idea of territoriality and territorial enclosure can best be studied with reference to the nation-state. First, I focus on the relational rearrangement of national space due to 'globalizing' forces. After briefly reviewing the principle of territorial sovereignty on which both nation-states as nationally organized societies and their depiction in the social sciences are based, I go on to describe some basic processes of globalization which directly relate to the form of organization of the nation-state, and are relevant to it, to the extent that they subvert the unity of territoriality, sovereignty and identity. Finally, I link these reconfigurations of national space with constructions of cultural identities which no longer appear to be set in an exclusively national frame but seem more and more to rely on and to play with strategies of 'ethnicization'. The question, then, is whether or not there is in fact a particular relationship between ethnicization and globalization.

I

The fact that we imagine the world we live in as a world of states points to the hitherto undisputed dominance of the 'nation form' (Balibar, 1991). What began with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and seems to be finding its preliminary climax in the postcolonial world of the beginning 21st century is the paradoxical universalization of an essential particularism (Wallerstein, 1996: 92; Robertson, 1995), namely the partition of the world into territorially bounded, in principle sovereign nation-states which tolerate neither a God above nor stateless zones below. The history of territoriality and the enforcement of the state's monopoly of legitimate violence is a history of wars between states and – often violent – colonization processes within nations.

The modern state is at once the most exclusive and quasi-natural framework, or as Immanuel Wallerstein (1996: 92) terms it, the 'primary cultural container', in which time passes and life happens, where people love and live, work and die, a container in which society, politics, culture and economy, each have their specific place and a specific history. The modern state constitutes the only form of a social-spatial organization of social relations in which all aspects of sociability, from the institutions of cultural hegemony to civil rights, from the mechanisms of redistributive justice to the monopoly on physical power, rest on the principle of *territorial sovereignty*. At the same time, the territorial model of the state established itself as the dominant

epistemology, as a categorical state centrism, via a basic tenet of modern social sciences, namely that social relations are both organized and reproduced exclusively in territorially defined and spatially isomorphic entities (Brenner, 1999). State territory is thus the conceptual spatial unit which the social sciences use to constitute their objects: the economy as national economy, a sociology which analyses not 'society' but nationally organized society, a political science which perceives the nation-state as the main collective actor, and so forth.

Theories of globalization break with this categorical state centrism that regards the cartography of the global as identical with territorially bounded defined borders of nation-states. They seek to escape the dilemma, which John Agnew (1994) so succinctly designated as the 'territorial trap', by radically separating the 'global' and the 'national' as sociospatial scales, and by pitting global space as a deterritorialized 'space of flows' against the traditional 'space of places' (Castells, 1996: 378). What deterritorialization means is that we are increasingly faced with spaces not bound in territorial terms (the space of flows) and with forms of sociation defined in terms other than territorial (diasporic public spheres and translocalities) (Appadurai, 1996a, 1996b), the global effect of which is a systematic subversion of the principle of territoriality on which states, local cultures and collective identities rest.

II

Typical arguments adduced as evidence of the loss of meaning of the nation-state are based on three interlocking processes, mediated by the media-centred technological revolution of electronic communication: (1) the globalization of the economy, (2) the institutionalization of new transnational legal regimes and (3) the globalization of media and motion, of mobile images and people in motion.

The globalization of production, commodity markets and financial markets, thus the widely held thesis, eliminates the economic governance capacities of nation-states. Transnational corporations that are in possession of a global infrastructure are increasingly breaking their territorial links and seeking autonomy from national regimentation. In addition, they find themselves in a geostrategic position that, ironically, permits them to hold national governments to a declared policy of non-interference. As the logic of politics is reduced to the logic of the market, governments are no longer the masters in their own houses. 'The more that national states implement deregulation to raise the competitiveness of their nations and localities within them', Saskia Sassen (1996a: 42) points out, '... the more they contribute to strengthen transnational networks and actors.' State deregulation, however, goes hand in

hand with the institutionalization of new regulatory regimes. The space of the global economy is structured both hierarchically and territorially. One need only think here of the concentration of global governance structures – corporate headquarters and the 'corporate service complexes' associated with them – in the so-called global cities (Sassen, 1991; King, 1990; Eade, 1997), or the invention of new tax and tariff regimes in the form of 'export-processing and free-trade zones'; or the worldwide integration of the stock and financial markets, to fully realize the extent of only a limited number of structural innovations whose paradoxical feature is that they are all 'grounded in national territories' (Sassen, 1996a: 13), without being exclusively subject to the principle of national sovereignty. To understand this reconfiguration of social spaces within territories defined by nation-states and the way in which the decentralization of state sovereignty is bound up with it, we need only cast a quick glance at the new legal regimes that are being used to regulate and control these spaces (see Sassen, 1996a: 12–13).

Even transnational corporations are in need of rules, iron-clad property rights and contract security. In short, they need a legal system that matches the spatial extension of the global economy and compensates for the territorially limited power reach of national sovereignty. Among the institutional innovations that appear essential for the operation of the global economy, there are two forms of organization that play a key role: private-sector arbitration boards (international commercial arbitration) – 'the leading contractual method for the resolution of transnational commercial disputes' (Sassen, 1996a: 14) – and, once again, private, bond-rating agencies like Moody's Investors Service and Standard and Poor's Ratings Group, which now steer both capital flows and the investment strategies of both transnational corporations and national governments alike (Sassen, 1996a: 14–15). The power resources of these organizations are not only beyond the reach of national territorial sovereignty, they are also crystallization points for non-national sovereignties, which again put on the agenda the basic motives of the theoretical discussion on democracy: accountability and legitimacy.

However, the picture of the transnational configuration of regulatory regimes, tentatively described by Rosenau (1992) as 'governance without government', remains incomplete so long as we fail to consider the active geostrategic roles played by leading industrialized countries as authors of various globalization scripts (see Panitch, 1996). They write scripts directing the action of international institutions, among them the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. They have formulated the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, set up the World Trade Organization, vigilantly watching that the outcomes remain controllable. To speak against this backdrop of the end of the nation-state seems to be as absurd as it is dangerous. But still, this 'internationalization of the state' (Panitch, 1996: 85) affects the pillars on which territoriality

and sovereignty rest, inasmuch as it sets the stage for institutionalized forms of the articulation of sovereignty in denationalized spaces. In short, not only is the unity of territoriality and sovereignty identified for centuries with the nation-state breaking apart, the elements and sources of power of what we imagine to be national sovereignty are being reallocated and rearranged in sociospatial terms. Or as Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1995: 63) puts it: 'Thus, state power remains extremely strategic, but is no longer the only game in town.'

The second central line of argument concerning the decline of the nation-state refers to new trends towards transnational jurisdiction. While the economic dimensions of globalization are primarily spelled out in terms of a division between territoriality and sovereignty, the discussion over new legal regimes focuses on the relation between sovereignty and identity.

For the last two decades, a new development has been taking shape that sees the institutional formulation of international human rights regimes colliding with legal institutions typical of the nation-state. Since human rights, in pointed contrast to the legal category of citizenship, can neither be conferred nor distributed on the basis of criteria of affiliation, such rights cast a shadow of doubt on the principle of national sovereignty. At the same time, human rights are also bound up with a gradual devalorization of civil rights as the decisive material substrate and legal space on which national identities are institutionally based. Since citizenship and the civil rights it entails, define a privileged space of legitimate membership, human rights, which are enforced by the same institutions of the nation-state, necessarily deflate the hierarchical distance between 'us' and 'them'.

Though already conceptualized in the founding documents of the American and French Revolutions, the international career of human rights guarantees began only in 1948 with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was followed two years later by the European Convention on Human Rights. Ratification and supplementary protocols were another few decades in the making, and only then was an effective corpus of legal instruments actually available. All these are, like deregulation agreements, international treaties whose paradoxical effect is that they strengthen the hand of non-governmental actors. In the case of human rights regimes, this means that the principle of individual rights is incorporated in an international legal system hitherto regulated by guarantees of national sovereignty and self-determination. 'The concept of nationality', Sassen (1996a: 97) writes, '... is being partly displaced from a principle that reinforces state sovereignty and self-determination ... to a concept emphasizing that the state is accountable to all its residents on the basis of international human rights law. The individual emerges as the object of international laws and institutions.' And, in this arena, too, the state is no longer the only game in town. Individuals and groups, even illegal immigrants, now possess rights that they can claim from

the state in which they live, or in any other state as well. In terms of basic economic, social and cultural rights, citizenship has lost much of its significance. Among other things, this is graphically illustrated by diasporic transnational communities: the services and rights guaranteed by states are due no longer only to citizens but to all people – which, not accidentally one must add, feeds the hate and the xenophobia of those who see themselves as the better citizens. Loyalty and national identity, it might be argued, no longer pay, and the implementation of values based on a normative acknowledgement of institutionally defined goals is becoming a risky business for the state.

The third line of argument, not only relevant for the 'new geography of power' (Sassen, 1996a: 5), but also especially important to the 'new geography of identity' (Yaeger, 1996), we are interested in here is based on concepts of cultural globalization. Theories of cultural globalization share with the earlier described, more or less political-economy-oriented approaches, a critique of categorical state centrism, and an emphasis on sociospatial reconfigurations, which are primarily conceptualized as deterritorialization processes. These approaches are coming more and more to see national space as a 'leaking container' (Taylor, 1994: 157), too, but without attributing any exclusive explanatory value to economic dimensions of globalization. Of equal central importance, moreover, are motion and mediation, migration and media (Appadurai, 1996a, 1996b; Hannerz, 1996), inasmuch as they make globally available both deterritorialized images, scripts, identity options and deterritorialized forms of community.

Neither the global flow of cultural artefacts, nor worldwide population movements stop at the borders of nation-states. *Baywatch* finds its devoted audience in Kyoto no less than in Moscow, or Mexico City. Asian martial arts, popularized by the movie-industry, deliver a new framework for reshaping images of western masculinity. *Evita*-Madonna runs through gender-specific imaginations all over the world; the voices of Islamic fundamentalism can be heard in Berlin as clearly as they can in Istanbul or Karachi.

III

But there are not only images and scripts but people: immigrants, refugees, UN Blue Helmets, specialists of every colour, managers and tourists, who in the global here and now are transcending the borders of local cultures. The interplay of migration and mediation evokes those translocal and transnational communities, which in the form of 'diasporic public spheres' (Appadurai, 1996a: 10) are radically challenging the unity of national territoriality, sovereignty and collective identity as we once imagined them to be. To the concept of diaspora (Hall, 1990; Safran, 1991; Gilroy, 1993; Cohen, 1997; Clifford, 1997; Anthias, 1998; Mitchell, 1997), originally restricted to

classic cases of violent expulsion and territorial resettlement, first of the Greek, then the Jewish and finally the Armenian communities. We have to attribute special importance, inasmuch as this concept is now applied more or less to all ethnic groups living outside their original territory. This semantic shift from ethnic group to diaspora implies three different changes of meaning. Unlike the informal communities known from ethnic neighbourhoods, some of which vanish over time into the melting pot, diasporas are (1) intentional political and cultural organizations, which (2) are dedicated to special interest policies, i.e. a struggle for recognition of their identity at the transnational and subnational levels, and (3) whose particular sociospatial quality is that they are located simultaneously within particular states and outside any state; in short, diaspora means forms of community not defined in territorial terms as well as a source of power emerging out of transnational spaces that are no longer fixed within the boundaries of nation-states. 'Diaspora', Khachig Toeloelyan (1996: 4) notes, 'are the exemplary communities of the transnational moment'. Cuban exiles, for instance, represent a sociocultural formation that extends from Madrid to Miami and beyond, and uses its distinct cultural and political institutions to seek to directly influence politics in Havana (see Toeloelyan, 1996: 4–28). The Indian diaspora extends from Sydney to the Silicon Valley. It is in a diverse and direct way implicated in the political-religious disputes of both India and its host countries. Moreover, without the Jewish diaspora in the United States, the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East would definitely look very different. One could go on with these examples, but what is more important is that within these diasporic public spheres, we can glimpse an articulation of the silhouettes of a transnational form of sociation which offers a good point of departure for a study of the crisis symptoms besetting the nation-state.

The end of the nation-state, so the thesis goes, is first of all, the end of the hyphen between nation and state (Appadurai, 1996b). The reason why, in the global here and now, these two terms are diverging, is the fact that for the first time in the history of the modern state, they are developing distinct relations to territoriality and territory. While the state, and only the state, remains insolubly bound up with its original territoriality and sovereignty, the close alignment between territory and national identity appears to be losing force. States are no longer exclusively able to guarantee the territorial organization of markets, life-worlds, identities and histories. In the global 'market for loyalties' (Price, cited in Appadurai, 1996b: 48), they are forced to compete with a bewildering diversity of providers of ethnic, racial, scientific, feminist, fundamentalist, spiritualist identity options, and among these, religious formations are only the most significant examples of deterritorialized identity constructions that now form the basis of transnational loyalties (see Appadurai, 1996b: 49).

As state and nation diverge, or more precisely, as the holy unity of

state-bounded territoriality and territorially defined collective identity dissolves, relations between state and society are shifting. Power, responsibilities, and scopes of action once monopolized by the state, are now being bestowed on and demanded by individuals and groups. This gives rise to new self-regulatory regimes within societies. This is a dynamic which potentially makes possible both 'gains' and 'losses' in civility (Berking, 1996a) – although under present conditions, its connotations appear to be primarily negative. We are faced with an arbitrarily expandable number of mini-ethnicities that design their cultural identities via the ethnicization of social conflicts. In this historical moment in which the modern state is – by no means totally voluntarily – backing off from the inner colonization of society, the internal ethnicization of society seems to become the most promising mode available to society to self-regulate its identity problems. It is not only Mr and Mrs Everyman that are 'searching for a center that holds' (Bauman, 1995: 140–1), but the social sciences suddenly discover their predilection for communities as a (postmodern) form of sociation, one which, only three decades ago, they had self-confidently doomed to oblivion as a regressive historical relict.

But what is it that makes ethnicization so attractive as a strategy of power and identity politics? Why are we so eager to gamble away these civilizational gains that might result from reflexive 'self-relations' and alterations in stocks of cultural knowledge? Under what circumstances are narratives of exclusion framed in the light of a 'cultural fundamentalism' (Stolke, 1994) which damns the other by recognizing its difference that permits to maintain their definitional power of the actual? The conventional wisdom we are faced with here is a typical reaction to increasingly bitter struggles for a piece of the economic pie. But such explanations do not shed any light on the problem why these reactions, and not others, are seen as holding a promise of success.

IV

Confronting these questions, I would like to offer some cultural-sociological conjectures, guided by the background premise that the ethnicization of social conflicts is merely a byproduct of a larger trend of cultural globalization as a process which affects the very mode of identity constructions inasmuch as it appears to encourage *the ethnicization of cultural identities*.

The global circulation of cultural artefacts is leading to a permanent de- and recontextualization of spatially bound cultural knowledge, lifestyles, etc. This means that while integrated in global circulation, they are at the same time permanently (re)defined by an incorporation of images and scripts from this field. However, when belief systems, worldview structures and identities come to function as mirrors of all other belief systems, worldview structures and identities, the symbolic universe of local cultures loses its ontological

aura as an unquestioned fact. This may entail the spread of cultural relativism and necessitate the generation, protection and stabilization of inner convictions against competing interpretations; the inner spaces of social groups, once kept together via strong identifications and the internalization of collectively shared values, all of a sudden appear as fragile, as those categorizations of the 'other' which in-groups inevitably need in order to secure identity and difference. In short, cultural identities and cultural difference are more and more experienced on an everyday level, as socially *constructed*, which means they become consciously accessible and extremely useful as power resources in the daily struggle for social advantages.

These attributions guaranteeing difference that potentially transform every single other into the Other, are at present assuming the guise of politics (Neckel, 1994: 48). This applies for the traditional arenas of power struggles in which governments, parties and political entrepreneurs more and more often mobilize (and form) 'their' audiences through 'ethno-national' invocation; this, however, also applies to those arenas of subpolitics in which cultural identities are politically constructed in the first place.

The demands of moral, cognitive and ethnic minorities for recognition and legitimate representation of their particular feature, presented in the framework of 'nationality', 'ethnicity', 'race', 'gender' and 'sexuality', supply the potentially mobilizing motivational dynamics for group conflicts, which are currently increasingly overlaying the class-related problems of capitalist societies (see Berking, 1996b). It is not by chance that 'politics of identity' constitute a form of symbolic mobilization which, consciously and in an emancipatory manner, breaks with seemingly universal demands for justice and equality in favour of the particular. What is at stake for these forms of emancipatory politics are fundamental experiences of injustice, contempt and cultural – i.e. ethnic, gender-specific and sexual – stigmatization, and, therefore, a strategy which aims at transforming the dominant model of cultural representation. The risk inherent in this mode of universalization of the particular, strengthened by 'the global valorization of particular identities' (Robertson, 1992: 130), is not only that it systematically undercuts sociostructurally induced disparities; what appears even more momentous is the tendency to create new 'totalizing fictions' (Somers and Gibson, 1994: 55), in which a single category, for instance 'gender', determines all other attributions signifying identity. Totalizing fictions run counter to the logic of identity constructions, which appears to be infinite.

There seems to be a self-contradictory dynamic at work here: the clearer the contours of the project of identity, the lower the chances of mobilizing people; this causes a predicament for collective actors, who may want to guarantee at the same time the space needed for inner differentiation, and to mobilize the greatest possible external consensus. Presupposing that identity policies, emphasizing primarily reflexive self-relations and changing stocks

of cultural knowledge, both mirror and represent a mode of being in the world which demands of individuals and groups permanently and constantly to perform the enormous feat of *convincing themselves that they are convinced*, we can easily understand the use of these totalizing fictions as an emergency brake against incessant expansions of contingency. Acknowledging the constructed character of cultural identities, however, constitutes the *emancipatory potential* of these protest formations, which are reversed into their opposite exactly at the moment in which this knowledge is negated in favour of chances for political mobilization. The ethnicization of cultural identities that then takes place, has to do with the psychologically enigmatic process of 'forgetting something deliberately' (Offe, 1996: 268). Ethnicization in this context needs to be understood as the process of the affirmation of difference, a process in which ascriptive features are (re-)essentialized and the reflexive mode of constructing difference or identity is consciously abandoned, 'deliberately' forgotten.

In the struggle for recognition, the advantages of ethnicization seem self-evident. Ethnicization promises a continuation of categorical belonging and creates islands of identity in the sea of contingency while also opening up political space for the construction of foe images of the highest intensity. An increase in intensity can serve as an affirmation of identity. Yet, the risky dynamic involved in constantly having to convince yourself that you are convinced does not cease at this point. What is deliberately forgotten is always in danger of being remembered by third parties, and it is exactly this precarious psychosocial situation in which, as soon as 'second-order' essentialisms come into play, violence enters the stage as an ultima ratio against failing permanence.

Let me briefly report on the construction of a totalizing fiction which will shed some light on the local conditions under which problems are contextualized which, at first glance, have no significance for the local actors themselves. The data are taken from a group interview with seven boys and eight girls – ninth graders of a high school in an East German village – that I conducted in June 1992 as part of a community study. The study focused on everyday life experiences before, during and after the fall of the Wall; on the way in which these students were dealing with German unification. The interviewees talked about the awkward feelings that their first visit in West Berlin evoked; they complained about the cultural desert that shaped village life once socialist youth organizations had collapsed; they reported on the dramatic changes of their family lives due to extraordinary unemployment rates; on their own resignation in view of their job situations, etc. Once the issue of foreigners was addressed, the discussion immediately became excited. Russians and Poles, literally the only foreigners these students might have been in contact with over the years, were of no interest. 'The Russians, they are really pathetic, they live in caves nowadays.' Instead the 'Turk' became

the emblematic figure of all kind of ascriptions. 'The Turks', shouted Paul, 'they come over here, file their application, which takes five years, and while they're waiting, they produce another seven kids; then they have to stay here and get all their money from the state.' 'Okay, I'm not only talking about the Turks, but about all these jerks, these fucking asylum-seekers.' The fact that there was not a single 'real' Turk to be found within at least 90 kilometres did not change the power of imagination, which was kept going by rumours – street traders who cheated their way into the homes, criminal offences by foreigners who did not even exist, rapes that never took place, etc. 'You never know whether you're going to get home safe. The fear . . . the fear is about the girls', Marcel explained, and he was right. The construction of the 'Turk' is a male topic. The female interviewees either withdrew from the discussion, or answered back at the boys: 'Hey, man, you look like a Turk yourself, so you'd better shut up.' Group dynamics play on adolescent gender wars and male fantasies over threatened masculinity. 'I don't know how you can talk like that as a girl, how you can say that they [Turkish boys] look sweet; I don't really know how you can say that, man, they'll take you down to the taiga and sell you off into the desert.' To add some authority to this narration, one youth, Olaf, attributed it to the local pastor: 'He told us so, and therefore it must be true.' Nicole heard a similar tale: 'After their marriage, my aunt and her husband travelled to Turkey and they met there one of these camel traders, who wanted to buy my aunt for about 10 camels.'

Taiga, desert, camels, Turks, rape, prostitution – here we have images, rumours and second-hand information that owe nothing to personal experience or to the local life-worlds of those who entrap themselves in an imagery of adolescent adventure literature. The consequence, however, is that this makes of the very far, the very near: the Turk is already knocking at the front door.

The devaluation of local experience articulated here is one of the typical effects of what John Durham Peters (1997) has characterized as our mass-media-related 'bifocal' worldview. Mass media, these totalizing-image-representation machines, offer access to a world which would otherwise, and in view of our limited local experience, not be available. But these totalizing images archive a kind of coherence that systematically devalorizes local knowledge and experiences as in some way fragmentary. 'I may see blue skies, but the satellite picture on the TV news tells me a huge storm is on its way' (Peters, 1997: 81). Totalizing images undermine the authority of the local. The images of the Turk, which East German kids constructed, expresses one of the local variations of the general discourse about the xenophobia of that time. The obvious absence of any coherence in this local narration shows the efforts that have to be made before you become familiar with a completely unfamiliar theme. And indeed, this topic was put on the agenda and kept going mainly from outside, as I learned later. The two male group leaders

were weekend 'rightists', who were heavily engaged in a youth club in another town, which was taken over by the FAP, one of the most militant right-wing organizations at that time. The Turk these former East Germans encounter is exactly the representation of the Turk which the rightists had brought to the east of Germany. The Turk becomes *the Turk* only by identification with those who while representing the Turk as *the Turk*, represent themselves as the only true Germans.

V

Once ethnicized cultural identities have reached the institutional level of collective actors, the struggle for recognition turns into a merciless fight for territorial presence. Then we find, as in the new German state that once constituted the German Democratic Republic, 'liberated national territories'. Public spaces are symbolically sealed off, and violence serves as the means of last resort to enforce entrance and exit rules. Meanwhile, the politicization of ethnic enclosure, the politics of ethnicity which – at least until now – is in Germany mainly focused by the ethnic majority, has, in the US, reached its highest point of fragmentation and segregation in the society as a whole. Anyone can play! Indeed, everyone must play.

Furthermore, we have binding linguistic rules which encourage narratives of exclusion of a quite different manner, since they concur with potential sanctions. In art and literature, in science as well as in the inner spaces of ethnic groups, the rule applies: only in the self-representation of your own group can you expect to receive the seal of legitimate representation. Cultural artefacts of whites on blacks, of men on women, of heterosexuals on homosexuals, and vice versa, seem to stigmatize racially, or sexually, or both (see Heller, 1994). African-Americans are better off avoiding white friends and white neighbourhoods; women who do not identify with/reveal themselves to be feminists have almost no chance to be hired at an institution of higher learning; Hispanic youngsters are pushed into educational and second-language programmes irrelevant for their social existence as Americans; Indian immigrants are considered white in some school districts, while being categorized as an ethnic minority in others – a difference substantial in terms of 'entitlements'; Asian-Americans fight for a curricular recognition of a tradition that was created by the efforts of the American Census Bureau; and I, myself, had to sign a US labour contract to learn that I belong to the race of Caucasians, a taxonomic location that is of no effect in my Westphalian home town, but which has many, quite different consequences in American society.

The institutionalized forms of racism that Agnes Heller (1994) has referred to as 'biopolitics' are at once a precondition and a result of this identity-related mobilization unfolding around territoriality and sociospatial

control. The Italian Lega Nord (and certainly the breakup of Yugoslavia) is one of the most significant examples of ethno-regional identity politics in the European realm (see Schmidtke, 1996). Chicago, an agglomeration consisting of about 67 ethnic neighbourhoods – and which enjoys the reputation of being the most segregated US big city – has recently contributed another variant. Since the beginning of August 1997, the area around North Halsted Avenue has been presenting itself as the first officially recognized gay neighbourhood in America. Symbols and flags in the universal colours of the ‘gay pride rainbow’ mark and redefine social space, according to the sexual preferences of some of the area’s inhabitants, which leads to a situation of not only new lines of conflict with the religious right, but also with traditionally ethnic neighbourhoods such as Greektown, Chinatown, Pilsen, Germantown and so forth, who vehemently polemicize against being put on the same footing with a mere sexual lifestyle (see *New York Times*, 27 August 1997).

At the other end of the ethnic reconfiguration of urban spaces, we have the ghetto, a sociospatially fixed, place-bound institution of racist exclusion which is kept up not through the expression of ethnic affinity or ‘choice’, but through outside pressure and violent defence of the ‘colour line’. Economic destitution, endemic violence, drug abuse and antisocial behaviour are only a few of the typical features condensed by the majority of American society almost emblematically in order to form the figure of the black man as a rapist, as the drug dealer or gang-member, and of the black woman as ‘a teenage welfare queen’. And do not the facts themselves speak the language of moral decay?

Such interpretations and images of decay, which take up an important space in public discourse, make us forget that these enclaves of poverty and terror are a product of urban planning, local politics and government programmes (Venkatesh, 2000). Loic Wacquant (1994) has shown with reference to Chicago’s South Side, that ghetto inhabitants are systematically barred from access to the job market and to basic institutions of urban infrastructure. But what connects the enclaves of poverty and terror with those typical identity-motivated redefinitions of urban spaces? Until now, we have been talking about tendencies of the ethnicization of cultural identities and a context in which the ghetto apparently does not fit. As a ‘place of decay’, the ghetto represents for mainstream society the outmost outside. It is this imagination of a territorially limited evil, a ‘locus of evil’, that forces its exclusion. Thus, it is no accident that the ghetto has simultaneously become the exemplary frame of reference for a discourse which is gaining social power, that on the ‘new urban underclass’ (Wilson, 1987; Jenks and Peterson, 1991; critically: Gans, 1996; Katz, 1993; Aponte, 1990), even in Europe. What is at stake in this frame of reference is no longer an uncovering of the interplay of race, class and poverty, but motivations, the deficient norm and value orientations of those who live there (Wacquant, 1994: 232–3); what steps into

the place of the analysis of those social and power-structural context conditions is the thesis of the context-generating power of individual failure. Were one to accept the perspective of its constructors, the new underclass would now have to be seen as populated by those who have been marginalized, because of their habitual incapacities and social pathologies, which means that they must rightly be excluded and kept apart from participation in the social intercourse of mainstream society; they are 'misfits', who finally can be treated with no reference to the basic standards of civilized behaviour (see Offe, 1996: 275).

The construction of the new underclass – a concept that meanwhile appears to have been given up by the social sciences because of its theoretical poverty – is still given a lot of attention in public and social policy discourses and feeds a social imagery that goes beyond the ethnicization of cultural identities by reaching into communally shared knowledge. And it is this *wahlverwandtschaft* geared to subjectivization and particularization among the taxonomies and identity constructions dear to the social sciences that now provides politicians, scientists, managers, the average Jills and Jacks, with motives and justifications to undermine ethnically the institutionalized standards of civilized behaviour. We cannot contradict those who object that internal ethnicization, as a self-regulatory mode of modern societies, represents no more than a cynical variation of a globally induced multiculturalism, seen as gaining the day *à la longue* without alternatives in sight. But we must assume that the sociospatial reconfiguration of national space in ethnic terms does not necessarily result in social relations of recognition, but instead goes hand in hand with narratives of exclusion which do not at all strengthen the self-regulatory potentials of societies still organized around the principle of the nation-state.

VI

That all three dimensions of globalization described here affect the form of the modern nation-state is beyond doubt. Equally beyond doubt, however, should be the conclusion that what we are faced with here is not so much the end of the modern state but rather a significant reconfiguration process of the relation between state, territoriality, sovereignty and identity. This new geography of power is inclusive and yet rediversified in a sociospatial way. This geography knows many agents who act simultaneously in local, regional, national and global contexts and organization structures. This geography necessitates not only elementary deterritorializations, but equally elementary reterritorialization processes with respect to cultural identities and local and transnational forms of communities. Thus, the new geography of power lies neither completely outside nor below the modern nation-state, even though

the latter is increasingly losing its social-integrative functions, and it is turning from the nation-state to the state. This state, unburdened by its mode of implementation of values, one could argue, still functions, but no longer integrates. Were this the case, we would be dealing with a constellation unanticipated in the literature of the social sciences; states, then, may survive as formal organizations, but without having to fulfil the primary condition of their own functioning, namely to be recognized by their specific social base as a meaningful and practical institution (Offe, 1991). The power source for this outcome is, and will remain for the time being, the state monopoly of legitimate violence.

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