Globalization as the End and the Beginning of History: The Contradictory Implications of a New Paradigm

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Abstract

This paper seeks to understand globalization as a new paradigm. It recognizes that there is much about the discourse of globalization that is ideological, that seeks to cover up the detrimental consequences of globalization for the majority of the world's population. It suggests nevertheless that there may be much to be gained from viewing it as a new paradigm, albeit a contradictory one, that has replaced an earlier paradigm of modernization. It makes an analytical distinction between globalization as historical process, which is at least as old as the history of capitalism, if not older, and globalization as a new way of looking at the world and its past, which is quite novel. To illustrate its argument, the paper contrasts present-day political and intellectual consequences of globalization with the late nineteenth-century, where several observers have identified a level of economic globalization greater than that of the present. It argues that whereas earlier globalization produced nationalism, colonialism and epistemological universalism, globalization presently is postcolonial, challenges the nation-state, and is marked by a break-down of universalism. It follows that globalization needs to be understood not just as global integration, as suggested by its ideologues and in economistic interpretations, but equally importantly as a new mode of fragmentation. An analytical distinction between globalization as process and paradigm is necessary to grasping globalization as a new mode of comprehending the world, but it is nevertheless necessary from a critical perspective to keep in mind the historical relationship between the two; globalization may be viewed as a new beginning in breaking down old hegemonies, but globalization may be viewed also as the ultimate victory of capitalist modernity. The contradictoriness may be perceived in the epistemologies of postmodernism and postcolonialism. The paper suggests that these epistemologies are best grasped

as symptoms of globalization, that seek to break with modern and colonial ways of knowing, and yet are stamped by those very legacies. The discussion turns, by way of conclusion, to the relationship between globalization and history. While globalization is best understood historically, it also has produced new ways of looking at history. Three modes are selected here as products of globalization: world history writing, which is consciously motivated at the present by the idea of globalization, and seeks to understand the past in nonEurocentric ways, but may be understood also as a mode of containing the break-down of universalism; and two different perspectives on the "end of history" as we have known it. First, a EuroAmerican perspective that sees in the end of universalism(and the crowding of the past with incompatible and incommensurate cultural claims) also the end of history. Second, a conscious challenge to history as a modern way of knowing in the name of "alternatives to history." The paper concludes that these conflicts over history, too, point to the present as both an end, and a possible new beginning-but only as a possibility.

The publisher of a volume to which I am a contributor recently insisted that the editors of the volume take the term "globalization" out of the book's proposed title because the term was "too compromised."[1] The publisher's qualms apparently echoed objections from some of the other contributors to the volume, mostly world-system analysts, who felt that globalization did not point to anything that was new, or that the term was "overused" and "boring," and served no explanatory purpose.

There is nothing new about such objections. I count myself among those who have been critical both of the term and the concept since they burst upon the intellectual scene sometime around the turn of the decade of the 1990s. There is by now an accumulation of social science literature that exposes the vacuity of claims to economic, political or cultural globalization. It is also possible that the term "globalization" has lost some of its appeal since the Asian economic crisis of 1997-1999, which raised doubts even among fervent globalizers that perhaps they had been too hasty in proclaiming its arrival. The term has also lost its appeal since the anti-WTO protests in Seattle in late 1999 which revealed widespread public anxiety about the globalizing assumptions of that organization. By the end of the decade which heralded its arrival, globalization seemed to have lost some of the luster and the promise that it conveyed in its entry into the vocabulary of the social sciences at the beginning of the decade. At the very least, globalization does not seem to have the immediate sales appeal that it did only a brief while ago.

None of this means, of course, that the term is about to disappear any time soon from the

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1 The volume in question is Georgi M. Derlugian and Walter Goldfrank, (eds.) *The Changing Geopolitics and Geoculture of The World System* (Tentative title) Greenwood Publishers forthcoming. The title intended originally was “The Uncertainties of Globalization”, followed by the current title as subtitle.

language either of political economy or of the social sciences. Globalizers continue to pursue their goals in the global political economy.[2] Globalization has been institutionalized in academic institutions around the world in numerous centers and programs that carry the term somewhere in their titles as a condition of further funding from foundations and governments. From the United States to Europe to Asia, conferences around the theme of globalization have become a virtual academic industry. The Spring 2000 symposium of the Triangle East Asia Colloquium, of which Duke University is part, is titled "The Globalization of East Asian Cuisines." If there are doubts about the novelty or the reality of globalization, those doubts have

not silenced the discourse on globalization, or even made significant inroads in stemming its diffusion.

From the perspective of critics, the decision to take the term out of the title of the volume to which I referred above may have been a wise one, because even the critique of globalization(which is the case with the substance of that volume) contributes to the swelling of the discourse simply by raising it as an issue. On the other hand, whether or not ignoring the term is the best way to deal with the issues raised by it is an open question. Few would question, I think, that there are certain important

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[2] In his "State of the Union" address on 27 January 2000, U.S. resident Clinton, an enthusiastic advocate of globalization, described globalization once again as "the central reality of our times." His various statements on globalization were also revealing of the uncertainties conveyed by the conference. On the one hand, globalization appeared in these statements as a reaffirmation of American supremacy, and foreknowledge of the future, as when he expressed the hope that "China will choose the right future." On the other hand, other statements betrayed an uncertainty about the future, as when he confessed that the United States had no power to enforce that future, but merely had to do the best it could. He described developing countries not as the objects of but "partners" in development. Most revealing perhaps was his statement that it was more important than ever, in an age of globalization, "to be rooted in local communities," to solve the problems created by globalization.

changes at work in the world; and, more importantly perhaps, in the ways in which we think about the world. The term globalization may be ideologically packed, it may be misleading if taken literally, and some of the processes it purports to describe may not be novel at all. If we decide to avoid the term for some reason or another, we must be careful nevertheless not to ignore the changes that gave rise to it, and give substance to its appeals. If the term in much of its curret usage is found to be wanting in its conceptualization of the world, it is still necessary to confront its claims with the evidence of the world before we discard or seek to improve it.

Having written critically on a number of occasions about the claims made for globalization by its proponents, I am all the more aware of the pitfalls involved in describing it as "a new paradigm." And yet I would like to take the risk, and think through some of the implications of doing so. For reasons that I will try to explain below, it is necessary if only tentatively to distinguish globalization as a descriptive term referring to historical process from its deployment as a self-consciously new way of viewing the world, which is what I have in mind when I refer to it as a paradigm or discourse. It is arguable that globalization as historical process has been under way since the origins of humanity, gathering in scope, speed and self-consciousness over the last few centuries, and entering a new phase in recent decades. But this teleological/evolutionary sense of globalization is not the only one available. Globalization may also represent a recurrent conjunctural phenomenon marked by advances and retreats over the course of time, and derive its meaning not from reference to the entirety of human history but against the immediate past.

Globalization as self-conscious paradigm, it is equally arguable, is a product of the recent past, and represents a departure from ways of conceiving the world that have been dominant for the past

two centuries, and shaped social scientific and cultural thinking over that same period.[3] Fundamental to the shift may be the "spatial turn" in the conceptualization of modernity or, more accurately, the ascendancy of the spatial over the temporal,[4] which is crucial to grasping the inescapable contradictoriness of the very idea of globalization as we currently confront it, and that also distinguishes it from earlier ways of conceiving the world: the recognition that localization or, more strongly, fragmentation, is an inevitable condition of globalization, while globalization informs such fragmentation, and serves as a reference for its articulation. *Globalization* may be a better word for this turn, but it seems to make some sense to stick with globalization which seems to me to be the primary aspect of the contradiction. Receptivity, if not resignation, to the simultaneous fragmentation

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[3] Anthony King, drawing on the *Oxford English Dictionary*, suggests that "the term `globalization' had entered the vocabulary at the latest by 1962." A. King, "Introduction: Spaces of Culture, Spaces of Knowledge," in Anthony D. King (ed), *Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*. Second Revised edition (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), pp.1-18, p.4, fn.8. For the social sciences, their past and future, see the essays collected in Immanuel Wallerstein, *The End of the World as We Know It: Social Science for the Twenty-first Century*(Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), part II: "The World of Knowledge."

[4] For a somewhat celebratory account of the "spatial turn" as a break with modernity, see, Edward. W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*(Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers Inc. 1996). Fredric Jameson was one of the first to draw attention to the "spatial turn," or what he described as "the displacement of time, the spatialization of the temporal" as a characteristic of postmodernity. See, Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*(Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), p.156. Whether in celebration or criticism, all writers on space acknowledge a debt to Henri Lefevbre, *The Production of Space*, tr. from the French by Donald Nicholson-Smith(Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1991)(first published in 1974)

and unification of the world represents a break with modernity's ways of knowing, but it is not a return to some premodern condition either, for different claims to knowledge do not merely co-exist presently in blissful obliviousness to other ways of knowing, but in conscious claims to domains of their own against other claims; which is itself a product of modernity. The implications of such globalization/fragmentation for history is a question I would like to return to by way of conclusion to this essay.

Paradigms and Power: Taking Globalization Seriously

It makes sense to discuss the issue of globalization as paradigm with reference to the work of one of its pioneers, Roland Robertson, who not only has been an enthusiastic and persistent advocate of globalization as paradigm, but also bases his advocacy on premises very similar to what I have proposed above; in his words: "much of globalization theory is interested in accounting for heterogeneity, without reducing it to homogeneity."[5] It is this premise, I think, that prompts him to write that,

> ...the structuration of world order is essential to the viability of any form of contemporary theory and ... such comprehension must involve analytical separation of the factors that have facilitated the shift towards a single world-for example the spread of capitalism, Western

[5] Roland Robertson, "Globality, Modernity and Postmodernity", in Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*(Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), pp. 138-145, p.141

> imperialism and the development of a global media system-
> from the *general and global* agency-structure(and/or culture)
> theme. While the empirical relationship between the two sets
> of issues is of great importance(and, of course, complex),
> conflation of them leads us into all sorts of difficulties
> and inhibits our ability to come to terms with the basic but
> shifting terms of the contemporary world order, including
> the "structure" of "disorderliness."[6]

He writes elsewhere that his is "a cultural perspective on globalization... used to demonstrate discontinuities and differences [of culture?], rather than the traditional sociological view of culture as integrating."[7]

While I find these statements somewhat puzzling in their equivocation over the relationship of globalization as idea to its historical legacy (possibly because they are written too much as part of an in-debate among sociologists), they suggest something similar but not identical to the distinction I draw here between globalization as process and paradigm, and for similar reasons; in order to avoid a functionalist(and tautological) reduction of globalization as paradigm merely to the theoretical expression of processes toward globalization-or of the culture of globality to an integral or integrating expression of the material forces of globalization. Robertson suggests also that he focuses on culture because forces of capitalism and imperialism that have worked to bring about globalization have received too much attention, whereas "the discussion of the disputed terms in which globalization has

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[6] Roland Robertson, "Mapping the Global Condition," in R. Robertson, *Globalization*, pp. 49-60, p.55

[7] "Globalization as a Problem," in R. Robertson, *Globalization*, pp.8-31, pp.28-29.

occurred and is occurring has been greatly neglected."[8] As I hinted earlier, however, and as Robertson seems to suggest in the last line of the quotation above, a distinction between process and paradigm is at best tentative, for analytical purposes alone. To achieve critical understanding of globalization, it is necessary not only to underline the autonomy of the paradigm(or of the cultural in the global), but also see it in its contradictory relationship to the history of which it is a product, and the history it is in the process of producing. I do not think that it is merely a historian's prejudice to suggest that conflicts over globalization-or globalization as a site of conflict-are graspable without reference to its various historical contexts, immediate and long-term.

My point of departure here is that over the last decade, globalization has replaced modernization as a paradigm of change-and a social imaginary. The discourse of globalization claims to break with the earlier modernization discourse in important ways, most notably in abandoning a Eurocentric teleology of change, which in many ways has been compelled by real economic, political and cultural challenges to Eurocentrism. It is rendered plausible by the appearance of new centers of economic and political power, assertions of cultural diversity in the midst of apparent cultural commonality, intensifying motions of people that scramble boundaries, and the emergence of new global institutional forms to deal with problems that transcend nations and regions; which all suggest that institutional arrangements informed by a Eurocentric modernization process are no longer sufficient to grasp and to deal with the world's problems. Globalization has an obvious appeal to a political left that has been committed all along to internationalism, equality and closer ties between

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[8] Ibid. Robertson's desire, as he expresses it here, is to bring into sociology the insights of cultural studies, with which I could not agree more, but I wonder if in the process he does not fall into another tautology, as cultural studies could well be viewed as one of the expressions of an emerging consciousness of globality in the 1980s!

peoples. That the most visible reactions against globalization emanate from the political right reinforces the image of globalization as a move to left or, at the very least, liberal left aspirations.[9]

The euphoria over globalization, however, has served to disguise the very real social and economic inequalities that are not merely leftovers from the past, but are products of the new developments. There is some question as to whether globalization represents the end, or the fulfillment of a Eurocentric modernization. Globalization as a discourse would seem to be increasingly pervasive, but it is propagated most enthusiastically from the older centers of power, most notably the United States, fueling suspicion of the hegemonic aspirations that inform it.[10] Economic and political power may be more decentered than earlier, but globalization is incomprehensible without reference to the global victory of capitalism, and pressures toward the globalization of "markets and democracy" are at the core of globalization as they once were of modernization. Cultural conflicts are played out even more evidently than before on an ideological and institutional terrain that is a product of Eurocentric modernization. Finally, unlike in an earlier period of socialist and Third World alternatives, challenges

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[9] We might also note here that while the proponents of globalization may share certain assumptions in common, there is also a wide range of meanings attached to the whole notion of globalization; especially in the appropriation of globalization in different political and cultural contexts. For a discussion, see, Arif Dirlik, "Formations of Globality and Radical Politics," in Derlugian and Goldfrank, forthcoming.

[10] See the reference to globalization(along with multiculturalism) as one more example of US cultural imperialism in Pierre Bourdieu and Loic Wacquant, "On the Cunning of Imperialist Reason," *Theory, Culture and Society* 16(1)(1999):41-58, p.42. For a view from the United States, see, Walter La Feber, *Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism*(New York: W.W. Norton Co., 1999), where La Feber sees in the combination of corporate media capitalism, consumer culture, sports, and the iconic image of Michael Jordan, a powerful force in spreading US culture around the world.

to Eurocentrism come mostly from those who have been empowered by their very success in making capitalist modernity their own, whose challenges are voiced in the language of that modernity, and whose vision of alternatives is inescapably refracted through the lens of their incorporation into a capitalist world economy. Globalization, for all the new kinds of conflicts to which it has given rise, may well represent the universalization of developmentalism in its capitalist guise(as its socialist counterpart is no longer an issue).

It is not clear, in other words, whether globalization is the final chapter in the history of capitalist modernity as globalized by European power, or the beginning of something else that is yet to appear with any kind of concreteness. What is clear, however, is that globalization discourse is a response both to changing configurations in global relations-new unities as well as new fractures-and the need for a new epistemology to grasp those changes. But globalization is also ideological, as it seeks to reshape the world in accordance with a new global imaginary that serves some interests better than others. A triumphalist account of globalization, as appealing to cosmopolitan liberals or leftists as it is to transnational capital, celebrates the imminent unification of the world, overlooking that the problems which persist are not just leftovers from the past, but products of the very process of globalization with the developmentalist assumptions built into its ideology. That other than EuroAmericans now participate in the process does not make it any the less ideological, or devastating in its consequences, but merely points to changes in the global configuration of classes; in this sense, the preoccupation in globalization discourse with the problem of Eurocentrism is a distraction from confronting new forms of power. The emancipatory promise of globalization is just that, a promise that is perpetually deferred to the future, while globalization itself creates new forms of economic and political exploitation and marginalization. Some problems thrown up by globalization, most

importantly environmental ones, are conceded by its very engineers. Others are represented merely as legacies of the past that will be eliminated as globalization fulfills its promise. Ideologues of globalization may promise plenty for all, but as a number of studies have revealed, the actual forecast of what globalization promises is much more pessimistic: the marginalization of the majority of the world's population, including many in the core societies. Economic marginalization also implies political marginalization as, in the midst of spreading democracy, the most important decisions concerning human life are progressively removed beyond the reach of electorates. The world may be reconfigured, but the reconfiguration takes place under the regime of capitalism which continues to reproduce under new circumstances, and in new forms, the inequalities built into its structuring of the world. Perhaps the most conspicuous problem with globalization rests with the term itself. The term globalization suggests a process that encompasses the entire surface of the globe, which clearly is not the case, because many areas of the world are left out of the process which, as Manuel Castells has argued, is best conceived of in terms of networks rather than surfaces. In this sense, globalization may be a retreat from modernization, which accounted for surfaces if only through the agencies of nationalism and colonialism.[11]

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[11] Among the works that are notable for what they reveal about globalization are, Hans Peter-Martin and Harald Schumann, *The Global Trap: Globalization and the Assault on Democracy and Prosperity*, tr. by Patrick Camiller(London and New York: ZED Books, 1997), Richard Barnet and John Cavanagh, *Global Visions*, and, William Greider, *One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism*(New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), and, Roger Burbach, Orlando Nunez and Boris Kagarlitsky, *Globalization and Its Discontents*(London: Pluto Press, 1997). Martin and Schumann, citing

This is what makes a radical critique as relevant today as it has ever been, perhaps more so. Such critique, if it is to be meaningful, must be informed by a recognition of changed circumstances, rather than a nostalgic attachment to its own historical legacies. It is important, therefore, to begin with a few words about what may or may not be new about globalization as a contemporary phenomenon.

Globalization in Historical Perspective

There is a paradox in arguments for globalization. Its proponents represent it at once as a novel phenomenon of the contemporary world, and as a process that has characterized the human condition

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globalizationists, point out that globalization is expected to produce a "20:80" society sustained by "tittytainment," that is, a society where only twenty percent of the world's population will benefit from globalization, while the rest will be kept occupied by entertainment. The "20:80" figure was originally forecast by the European Union. See, Ricardo Petrella, "World City-States of the Future," *NPQ*(New Perspectives Quarterly) (Fall 1991):59-64. For the "network" image of globalization, see, Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, Vol. I of *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*(Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996). The network image appeared in discussions of globalization from the beginning, in references to a contemporary "Hanseatic League." For a discussion, see, Arif Dirlik, *After the Revolution: Waking to Global Capitalism*(Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994), p.50. The analogy is also a reminder of the reality of globalization as a network of "global cities"(in Saskia Sassen's terminology)in which the rural hinterlands appear increasingly marginal.

since its origins. The latter on occasion takes trivial forms that are not easily distinguishable from earlier diffusionist arguments. It is hardly big news that human beings have been on the move since their origins somewhere in East Africa more than two million years ago. Nor is it a major breakthrough in views of the past that there have been all along interactions among societies, some of them quite consequential. That we should analyze the histories of societies in terms of these relationships rather than in their isolation is an important epistemological argument, but that too has been around for quite some time, perhaps going back to Herodotus and Sima Qian but most conspicuously to Enlightenment views of history. What may be novel about the present, at least in the United States, is the projection of a contemporary consciousness of globality onto the entire past, therefore erasing important historical differences between different forms and dimensions of globality not only in material interactions among societies but perhaps more importantly in the consciousness of globality. It also erases critical consciousness of its own conditions of emergence.

The confounding of these differences also obviates the need to account for the relationship of contemporary globalization and its material/mental consequences to its historical precedents, including its immediate historical precedents. Is it possible that consciousness of globalization ebbs and flows in response to historical circumstances, but that the ebbs and flows carry different meanings at different times, and for different peoples occupying different locations in global arrangements of power? If so, what is the relationship between power and ideologies of globalization? On the other hand, if there is a secular trend to globalization, where in the past do we locate it?

The preferred answer to the last question is the origins of capitalism, because it is with the emergence of capitalism that it is possible to detect a continuing trend toward the globalization not only of economic activity, but of politics and culture as well. This does not mean, as I will suggest

below, that the "ebbs and flows" either of globalization or consciousness of it disappeared, therefore, but aside from culminating in the eighteenth century in the mapping of the world as we know it today, capitalism provided not only a sustained motive force for globalization, but served also as the vehicle for the unification of the world under a new European hegemony. If the origins of capitalism lay in its prehistory in earlier modes of production, that neither negates the unprecedented historical role capitalism was to play in unifying the world, nor does it render the whole of human history rather than the structures of capitalism as the historical context for contemporary globalization. What Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote in the middle of the nineteenth century might have seemed fantastic in their day, but it is an eerily apt description of ours:

> The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East-Indian and Chinese markets, the colonisation of America, trade with the colonies, and increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to industry, an impulse never before known...Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way...The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part...The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionising the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society...The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the

bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere. The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country...All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilised nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the productions of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures there arises a world-literature...The bourgeoisie, by the rapid

> improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilisation into their midst, *i.e.*, to become bourgeois themselves. In a word, it creates a world after its own image.[12]

Both material and cultural globalization is implicit in what Marx and Engels have to say concerning the effects of the expansion of European capitalism. The language of the last few sentences may betray a Eurocentric bias, and is certainly offensive from a contemporary perspective-though even there the irony the authors introduce("what it calls civilisation")should not be overlooked. And the very last sentence is problematic in its assumption of a single bourgeois "self-image," which is blind to the possibility of the emergence of a multiplicity of self-images and interests as the bourgeoisie became more cosmopolitan in content, paving the way for the many internal contradictions that would mark the subsequent history of capitalism. But these are precisely the issues, rather than globalization

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[12] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, reproduction the English edition of 1888(Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1968), pp. 31-36.

as an ongoing historical process, that distinguish a contemporary consciousness of globalization from its antecedents, a point to which I will return momentarily.

As Giovanni Arrighi has argued recently, capital has been globalizing all along, even before there was a structured and structuring entity that could be recognized as a "capitalist world-system."[13] Arrighi in turn draws on the work of Fernand Braudel, which in its analysis of the emergence of a European world-system recognizes the existence of a multiplicity of regional world-systems, with their own interactions, insertion into which enabled the bourgeoisies of Europe first to construct a European world-system, and subsequently to create the economic and political institutions that enabled them to draw all these other world-systems within the orbit of Europe to create a world-system that was global in scope.[14]

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[13] Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Time*(London and New York, Verso, 1994)

[14] Fernand Braudel, *The Perspective of the World*, Vol.3 of *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century*, tr from the French by Sian Reynolds(New York: Harper&Row Publishers, 1986). Braudel himself drew upon Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system analysis, adding to the latter a recognition of other world-systems that predated the emergence of capitalism. He also restricted the definition of capital, identifying it with large enterprises devoted to accumulation. In his case, as in the case of Arrighi, the emphasis is on the role of finance in globalization. Financial expansion required an alliance between the territorial state and a globalizing capital, but also created contradictions between the two because of their conflicting orientations to territorial grounding. The argument is highly plausible, but is questionable in ignoring both production, and issues of culture, especially for the period after the eighteenth century. Accumulation is the goal(and the

While the capitalist world-system as it emerged in the 15th. to the 17th. centuries may provide the historical-structural context for contemporary globalization, however, it is necessary to comprehend the particular features of the latter to account for the history of capitalism itself, and what I referred to above as "ebbs and flows" both in its processes, and in the consciousness of globalization. Globalization may be viewed as an irrevocable process, at least from the time when Marx and Engels penned the *Communist Manifesto*. Consciousness of globality would proceed apace, and not just among EuroAmericans who through imperialism and colonialism compelled it upon increasingly broader constituencies in the world. But the very process of globalization created its own parochialism, including the parochialism of the European bourgeoisie, as Marx and Engels noted in their ironic reference to what the bourgeoisie calls "civilization." If globalization was to become an ever inescapable phenomenon, it was through colonialism, nationalism and socialism which were at once products of globalization and efforts to shape it in some ways, or even to restrain it, as in the case of

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defining feature) of capital, but production may be essential to comprehending both sources of national power, and the foreshortening of the cycles of financial accumulation and dispersion which is important in Arrighi's analysis. On the other hand, it is also important to explain why the creation of the nation-state accompanied mechanisms of accumulation at one stage of globalization, while its dissolution or the qualification of its powers would seem to be a feature of contemporary globalization. Such questions require greater attention, I think, to the relationship between accumulation, production and national markets. It is also important to recognize that national cultures, once they had come into existence, also have played autonomous roles in influencing, if not shaping, the actions of both states and capital.

nationalism and socialism.

Roland Robertson has divided globalization in history into five phases: the "germinal phase"(15th to the mid-eighteenth centuries), the "incipient phase"(mid-eighteenth century to the 1870s), the "take-off phase" (1870s to the mid-1920s), "the struggle-for-hegemony phase"(mid-1920s to the late 1960s), and "the uncertainty phase"(1960s to the 1990s).[15] His depiction as "the uncertainty phase" of the last period, when globalization as paradigm came into its own, is an interesting point to which we shall return; of more immediate relevance here is the coincidence of globalization in this "outline" with the history of "the capitalist world-system," as world-system analysts such as Immanuel Wallerstein would argue, and his identification as the "take-off phase" of the half-century from the 1870s, when "globalizing tendencies of previous periods and places gave way to a single, inexorable form."[16] Robertson is not alone in endowing this particular period with formative significance. Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, in their recent critique of the concept of globalization, point to this same period as a baseline against which to evaluate contemporary claims to globality, and conclude that at least in terms of the volume and intensity of economic activity between nations and regions of the globe, it is difficult to argue that the last quarter of the twentieth century represents more of a condition of globality than the last quarter of the nineteenth.[17] Most interesting may be the conclusions

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[15] Robertson, "Mapping the Global Condition," pp.58-59

[16] Robertson, p.59

[17] Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, *Globalization in Question: The International Economy and the Possibilities of Governance*(Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1996), especially chapter 2. The purpose of this volume, I should note, is not just to draw abstract comparisons between the present and the past but, rather, to deny the novelty of globalization to argue that the

of a *New York Times* article from May 1999, of necessity less thorough in scholarship but quite well-informed in the expertise it draws upon, that suggests that in terms of trade, financial investments and transactions and labor flows, the peak of globalization "occurred a century ago, making the twentieth century memorable in economic history mostly for its retreat from globalization. In some respects, only now is the world economy becoming as interlinked as it was a century ago."[18]

Similar evidence may be found in the realms of consciousness and culture. From the Suez to the Panama canals, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the undertaking of grand projects intended to link together different parts of the world. The American railroad tycoon Edward Harriman visualized a railroad line that would encircle the world, and to that end organized an expedition to Alaska in 1899 to investigate the possibilities of building a bridge across the Bering Straits(with imported Chinese and Japanese labor)that would be a first step in his project.[19] Organizers of world fairs, prominent cultural/commercial phenomena across Europe and the United States for nearly a hundred years following the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London in mid-nineteenth century, viewed the fairs as "encyclopedias of the world" that brought together not just peoples and artifacts

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nation-state, and social policies enacted through the state, are still relevant presently. Hirst and Thompson are careful to point out that their arguments are directed against "extreme" globalizers who see in globalization the end of the nation.

[18] Nicholas D. Kristof, "At This Rate, We'll Be Global in Another Hundred Years," "*The New York Times*, 23 May 1999, "The Week in Review"

[19] William H. Goetzmann and Kay Sloan, *Looking Far North: The Harriman Expedition to Alaska, 1899*(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp.7-8

of the whole world but the world's knowledges as well.[20] It is also to this period that we owe the great museums that sought to bring within their walls for preservation and research the world, its many presents and its pasts.

If such is indeed the case, we might ask, why then did "globalization" have to wait for the end of the twentieth century to emerge to the forefront of consciousness as a new way of comprehending the world? Or, more precisely (if we focus not on the term but its substance), does globalization have the same effect and the same meaning at all times? That globalization has a history does not in and of itself refute the novelty of contemporary processes of globalization. Neither does it prove that globalization is an inevitable evolutionary process, as is recognized by the *New York Times* article which suggests that the twentieth century may have represented a retreat from late nineteenth century globality. Is globalization then a conjunctural phenomenon, that derives its meaning at any one historical conjuncture from the moments that go into the making of the conjuncture, which are not merely technical or economic but also political and cultural? Since globalization at every moment of its history involves not only integration but also differentiation, how does difference, and the conceptualization of difference, enter into the consciousness of globality-which may be the most pertinent question in our understanding of globalization as paradigm?

Comparison with late nineteenth century globality may be quite revealing in dealing with at least some of these questions. But such comparison, to be meaningful, needs to account for forces not

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[20] See, Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939*(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), and, Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*(Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984)

just of integration but also of diffentiation. Comparisons of the kind cited above, while they may serve to refute the claims to novelty of contemporary globalization, nevertheless are limited by the very ideological claims that they seek to deconstruct; namely, claims that presuppose globalization as global integration. Integration, however, is only one aspect of the problem, the other being the particular form in which difference is articulated.

While we may perceive in both periods common globalizing forces of capital, there are nevertheless immense technological differences between the two periods that distinguish the one from the other both in the scope and configurations of globality, and the momentum of its processes. What I would like to take up here, however, are the political and cultural differences. The processes of economic globalization in the late nineteenth century coincided with the global diffusion of nationalism and colonialism, whereas contemporary globalization is not only postcolonial, but also post-national(in the sense both of following upon global reorganization of societies into nations, and also proliferating assaults on the nation-state). Culturally speaking, if we are to characterize the late nineteenth century as a period of intense globalization, we need also to note that this globalization was almost synonymous with the globalization of EuroAmerican norms. It is not that there was no recognition of difference at the time, but difference was hierarchized in a temporality in which EuroAmerican economic, political, social and cultural norms represented the teleological end of history. While these assumptions by no means have disappeared from contemporary conceptualizations of globality, they now have to contend with alternative claims to modernity that draw on alternative historical trajectories. This break-down of Eurocentric hegemony is crucial to grasping globalization as a paradigm.

Nationalism and colonialism in historical hindsight were at once products and agents of a

Eurocentric globalization. This is quite evident in the case of colonialism which followed from EuroAmerican expansion over the world, and also served to bring the colonized within a EuroAmerican orbit economically, politically and culturally. It is less evident in the case of nationalism, especially the emergence of the nation-state which, in its territorial presuppositions, seems to contradict the imperatives of globalization. A number of observers, prominent among them Robertson, have suggested, however, that the nation-state itself was a product of the prior emergence of inter-state relationships, which more or less forced nationhood on a previously diverse set of political systems, ranging from the tribal to the imperial. The global spread of the nation-form from the second half of the nineteenth century in turn contributed further to processes of globalization in two ways. First was the diffusion globally of the juridical principles regulating not only relationships between states but also relationships between states and their constituencies. Second was the erasure in the name of national cultural homogeneity of local differences within the nation. That these processes took different paths in different places, and remained incompletely realized, should not distract us from the revolutionary role that they have played in the course of the twentieth century. Nationalism and colonialism, even as they contributed to globalization, also divided the globe in new ways into national and colonial spaces, which, as the *New York Times* article suggests, represented a decline not just from globality, but, more precisely, a Eurocentric globality. They did not, therefore, undercut the vision of a Eurocentric end to history either among the proponents or the opponents(especially the socialist opponents) of a capitalist world order. The nineteenth century, especially the second half of the nineteenth century, coincides with the emergence of the social and cultural sciences as we have known them, including history. A hierarchical ordering of global differences informed not only the division of labor among the emerging social sciences, but their content as well; as the peoples of the world

were placed in the new order of knowledge according to their presumed distance from EuroAmericans, and their potential for living up to universal political and cultural norms for which the reference was contemporary EuroAmerican "civilization." The price of failure to live up to those norms would be not just marginality but physical and/or cultural extinction.

More than any other realm, it is the world of culture, and cultural assumptions about knowledge, that points to radical differences between the world of the present and the late nineteenth century, that are not to be captured by statistics on trade, investment and labor flows. The scientists and even the environmentalists like John Muir whom Edward Harriman gathered to accompany him on his expedition to Alaska were there to gather botanical, zoological and cultural artifacts because they were convinced that progress (of the kind envisioned by Harriman)would lead to the extinction of much that was in Alaska. The World's Fairs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries gathered peoples from around the world in their exhibits, but there was no question whatsoever about the hierarchies that shaped the exhibits. The organizers of those Fairs were so assured of the supremacy of EuroAmerican capitalist modernity(with colonialism as its most cogent evidence)that it would have been impossible for them to imagine that a hundred years later the descendants of Geronimo and Sitting Bull, who were put on exhibit in different fairs, would be demanding the return of ancestral bones with which the scientists of the age were stuffing their museums. They had no need to think global(any more than they did multicultural), because they were convinced that those around the globe who did not respond to the demands of reason and progress would soon go out of existence.

There is a wide range of answers to the question of the emergence of globalization as a paradigm at the end of the twentieth century; most of them technology driven, and focused on the unification of the globe: from Marshall McLuhan's "global village" to the view of the earth from outer space to the

internet. Answers that address only issues of global unity seem to me to be lacking, however, in their failure to address the simultaneous phenomenon of global fragmentation, and render globalization into little more than an advanced stage of modernization. One answer that is often ignored, that seems to me to clamor for a hearing, is that the awareness of globalization is at once the product of a making of a Eurocentric order of the world, and of its breakdown, which now calls upon our consciousness to abandon the claims of Eurocentrism while retaining consciousness of globality, which would have been inconceivable without that same order. It was necessary, before globalization in this contemporary sense could emerge to the forefront of consciousness, for a EuroAmerican globality to lose its claims to universality as the end of history-which is evident in our day most conspicuously not in the economic sphere where those claims may still be sustained, but in the realms of culture and knowledge, which display a proliferation of alternatives to Eurocentrism. The latter, ironically, are voiced most strongly in societies empowered by success in the capitalist economy, the very products themselves of capitalist globalization. The cultures and the knowledges that they proclaim draw upon native pasts, but by no means point to a return to those pasts, as the pasts now revived are past that have been re-organized already by a consciousness of a century or more of social and political transformation; they are, in other words, not just postcolonial and postnational, but perhaps even post-global, as cultural contention and competition is played out presently on a terrain that itself presupposes an uncertain globality.

In a recent discussion entitled, "Multiple Modernities," S.N. Eisenstadt writes that the idea of "multiple modernities"

> goes against the views long prevalent in scholarly and general
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> discourse. It goes against the view of the "classical" theories

> of modernization and of the convergence of industrial societies prevalent in the 1950s, and indeed against the classical sociological analyses of Marx, Durkheim and(to a large extent) even of Weber...that the cultural program of modernity as it developed in Europe and the basic institutional constellations that emerged there would ultimately take over in all modernizing and modern societies...The actual developments in modernizing societies have refuted the homogenizing and hegemonic assumptions of this Western program of modernity. While a general trend toward structural differentiation developed across a wide range of institutions in most of these societies...the ways in which these arenas were defined and organized varied greatly...giving rise to multiple institutional and ideological patterns. These patterns did not constitute simple continuations in the modern era of the traditions of their respective societies. Such patterns were distinctively modern, though greatly influenced by specific cultural premises, traditions and historical experiences. All developed distinctly modern dynamics and modes of interpretation, for which the original Western project constituted the crucial(and usually ambivalent)reference point.[21]

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[21] Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities," forthcoming as introduction to a special issue of *Daedalus* on "multiple modernities." I am

While quite apart in intention and premise from Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis, the implications of Eisenstandt's statement are not all that different from the latter's.[22] And if we are not too surprised by the statement, it may be because the word has been making the rounds for some time now through the agencies of postmodernism and postcolonial criticism. An awareness of "multiple modernities" might have found its way to the surface of consciousness much earlier had it not been for the division of the world into two camps of capitalism and communism for at least half a century. Noting that "our triumphant modernity is threatened by the resurgence of history," Jean-Marie Guehenno writes that, "the cold war acted like a vast magnet on the iron filings of political institutions. For several decades, the polarization of East and West gave an order to human societies...Today, the magnet has been cast aside, and the iron filings have become sparse little heaps."[23] Guehenno is referring here mainly to political institutions, in particular the nation-state, but an even more interesting facet of fragmentation in the post-Cold War world are the lines of fracture that have appeared in the world of capitalism at its very moment of victory; in the proliferating references to different capitalisms and different cultures of capitalism, which may make it more proper presently to speak of a "pan-capitalism," a conglomeration of capitalisms based on variant social and cultural repertoires, rather

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grateful to Prof. Eisenstadt for sharing this paper with me.

[22] Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1992):22-49, where Huntington argues that the world is in the process of dividing into civilizational areas, with nearly impermeable cultural boundaries, not as an escape from but as a product of modernity.

[23] Jean-Marie Guehenno, *The End of the Nation-State*, tr. from the French by Victoria Elliott(Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), p.x

than a Global Capitalism that is homogeneous in its practises.[24] The simultaneous global sweep and fracturing of capitalism undermines also the spatial order built into neat core-periphery distinctions as in the "world-system analysis" version of globality; bringing the whole world within the domain of capital, but at the same time introducing all the divisions of that world into the very structuring(or de-structuring)of the capitalist world-system. It is this predicament of capitalism that leads Manuel Castells to draw a distinction between the "architecture" and the "geometry" of the world-system, recognizing the persistence of centers of capital in the so-called "triad"societies of Europe, North America and Japan, but also the instability of the whole system due to the constant motions of capital in global "networks."[25] Even the center here is decentered, as it represents not a single center but a multiplicity of centers which themselves, especially in Europe and East Asia, are subject to internal competitions and reconfigurations.

Any account of the emergence of globalization as paradigm needs to recognize an awareness of the simultaneous unification and fragmentation of the world as an important moment in its emergence. It may not be too surprising that the term globalization acquired prominence in the discussions of political economy and culture not just with the ends of the Cold War, but with the increasing attention drawn to the emergence of new capitalist economies in the 1980s, most conspicuously in East and Southeast Asia. No less important is the fact that the emergence of these economies was accompanied by a reassertion of claims to cultural difference that had been submerged so long as these societies remained under the shadow of Europe and the United States. Interestingly,

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[24] I owe this term to Majid Tehranian, and thank him for agreeing to let me use it in a slightly modified sense.

[25] Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, pp. 145-147

their emergence had an impact also on relations between North American and European economies, as they have entered renewed competition to capture trade and investment(or even rich migrants)in the so-called newly-industrializing societies.

Contemporary conceptualizations of globalization base their claims to novelty most importantly on their claims to break with the modernization discourse, grounded in what the (by then predominantly US)bourgeoisie called "civilization," and the alternative to it provided by socialist modernization. While locked in deadly opposition, these two alternatives ironically shared a common commitment to developmentalism, and each sought to draw into its orbit the nations of the postcolonial world, themselves anxious to develop so as to overcome the legacies of colonialism and enhance national autonomy and power. The "three worlds" of modernization discourse, moreover, all conceived of modernization in terms of national units, which disguised the fundamental ways in which both the "three worlds" idea, and the idea of the nation, were premised on prior assumptions and processes of globalization.[26] It is nevertheless important to the distinction drawn here that globality was conceived of under the regime of modernization(capitalist and socialist)as “internationalism” rather than as “globalism.”

The immediate context for contemporary forms and consciousnesses of globality is the breakdown of this mapping of the world, first with the transformations that rendered increasingly questionable the idea of the "Third World," and subsequently with the abandonment and/or fall of the

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[26] For a more detailed discussion, see, Arif Dirlik, "Three Worlds or One, or Many? The Reconfiguration of Global Relations Under Contemporary Capitalism," in A. Dirlik, *The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism*(Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997):146-162. First published in *Nature, Society, and Thought*, Vol.7, No.1(1994):19-42

socialist alternative. Already in the late 1960s and early 1970s important alternatives had emerged that questioned the nation-based, culturalist assumptions of modernization discourse. As a new global situation emerged in the 1980s with transformations within capitalism, most importantly the decentering of economic power with the appearance of competitors to United States hegemony, the analysis of capitalism itself assumed greater complexity. Finally, as the post-Cold War promise of a "new world order" in the early nineties has given way to evidence of new kinds of disorder, drawing upon sources of identity that are as old as, if not older than, modernity, still other analyses of globality have become an urgent necessity. Globalization as paradigm, in short, represents both a recognition of the de-centering of the world(which had to be centered before it could be de-centered), including the world of capitalism, and also the institutions and knowledges that are necessary to manage and contain difference(or, even, chaos).

Why is it that globalization should have produced social and cultural sciences with universalist claims at one stage of its historical progress, while at a later stage we are called upon to question, as a very condition of globality, the claims to universality of those very same social and cultural sciences; nay, the very notion of science, and the claims of the social and cultural sciences to scientificity? The question is worth pondering as a crucial difference between the present and the past. It also qoes to the very heart of the concept of globalization which in its positive claims draws nourishment from earlier traditions of universalism in the social and cultural sciences, at the same time undermining its own claims by exposing the parochialness of its own claims to universalism as it seeks to appropriate alternative ways of knowing. If globalization as "material" process is incomprehensible without reference to the fragmentation that is also its inevitable concomitant, globalization as paradigm is

enabled by its divorce from the universalist aspirations that marked it earlier in its history.[27] Claims to universalistic knowledge under the circumstances are revealing at best of the hegemonic assumptions that continue to infuse contemporary arguments for globalization, also revealing its ties to existing structures of power. On the other hand, to abandon those claims is also to resign to the parochialness- and hence, the relativity-of all knowledge, which not only abolishes all the commonalities that are the products of the last few centuries of global interactions, but also deprives humans of their ability to communicate across societal boundaries(wherever those may be drawn at any one time and place). Is this why the condition of globalization, once it has become self-aware, is also a condition of "uncertainty," as Robertson puts it, or, "the end of the world as we know it," in the somewhat more apocalyptic phraseology of Immanuel Wallerstein?[28]

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[26] Globalization as the end of universalism is a point that has been taken up by Zygmunt Bauman. See his, *Globalization: The Human Consequences*(New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), pp.59-65. We may share Bauman's pessimistic evaluation of this transition. On the other hand, viewed from non-EuroAmerican perspectives, the end of universalism also has opened up spaces for the articulation of "traditions" suppressed under the regime of modernity.

[28] The apocalyptic tone is even more explicit in the diagnosis of the contemporary situation by another world system theorist, Giovanni Arrighi. Arrighi concludes *The Long Twentieth Century* with the lines,

> ...before humanity chokes(or basks) in the dungeon(or paradise) of a post-capitalist world empire or of a post-capitalist world market society, it may well burn up in the horrors(or glories) of the escalating violence that has accompanied the liquidation of the Cold War world order. In this case, capitalist history would also come to an end but by reverting permanently to the

History in the Perspective of Globalization

If globalization is to be subjected to the judgment of history, it seems only fair that history should be reviewed from the perspective of globalization as paradigm, which may reveal a great deal about both history and globalization. "History," Nicholas Dirks once observed, is "a sign of the modern."[29] The emergence of a historical consciousness in Europe was inseparable from the emergence of a consciousness of modernity, that called for a new ordering of the past as Europeans encountered a multitude of new peoples and new phenomena that called for inclusion in the account of humanity, which in turn called for a revisioning of the European past. "In discovering America," J.H. Elliott has written, "Europe discovered itself."[30] Eurocentrism was as much about the invention of Europe as it was about the ordering of the peoples of the world in a temporal scheme in which Europe represented the pinnacle of progress. And history was to bear witness to the European achievement. By the second half of the century, at the hands of German historians, history was rendered into the organizing principle of all the natural and the human sciences. As George Iggers writes of German historicism(which would spread subsequently throughout Europe and North America),

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> systemic chaos from which it began six hundred years ago and which has been reproduced on an ever-increasing scale with each transition. Whether this would mean the end just of capitalist history or of all of human history, it is impossible to tell.(p.356)

[29] Nicholas Dirks, "History as a Sign of the Modern," *Public Culture*, 2.2(1990):25-32

[30] J. H. Elliott, *The Old World and the New, 1492-1650*(Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p.53

> ...the new outlook, later often referred to by the term historicism, was hailed as an intellectual advance. Historicism was more than a theory of history. It involved a total philosophy of life, a unique combination of a conception of science, specifically of the human or cultural sciences, and a conception of the political and social order. It assumed, as Ortega y Gasset formulated it, that "Man, in a word, has no nature; what he has is...history." But it also firmly believed that history revealed meaning and that meaning revealed itself only in history. Seen in this way, history became the only way of studying human affairs.[31]

The late nineteenth century may have been the high point in the dominance of history, and as I have taken this period in the discussion above as a point of reference for the changing meaning of globalization, the contrast in the confidence in history then against the contemporary crisis of history may serve as further illustration of the wide gap between contemporary notions of globality and the global outlook that may have prevailed a century ago.

There is little doubt about a current crisis in history, if more in the cultural meaning than in the professional practise of history.[32] It is commonplace, especially from the perspective of cultural

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[31] Georg G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge*(Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), pp.28-29

[32] I have discussed this problem in a number of places. See the collection, *Postmodernity's Histories: The Past as Legacy and Project*(Boulder,

studies, to associate this crisis with postmodernism and postcolonialism. My own sense is that this crisis is rooted most fundamentally in the intellectual consequences of a consciousness of globality. Indeed, there is much to be gained from viewing postmodernism and postcolonialism themselves as intellectual manifestations of an increasingly globalized consciousness since the 1960s. Postmodernism and postcolonialism, both residual concepts that derive their meaning from their relationship to the past, do not present themselves as viable candidates for a new paradigm that might enable us to grasp the present in its novelty. On the other hand, they make quite good sense as concepts of a transitional period when viewed from the perspective of globalization, which has a good bit to say about the present, but also illuminates the past in new ways. It offers the possibility also, if only as a possibility, to shift our vantage point from First World to other locations-which are difficult to specify because of their multiplicity. Globalization is especially pertinent to understanding postcolonialism, as the latter is in many ways representative of the resurgence of the formerly marginalized.

The contradictions incorporated into globalization as paradigm as it seeks to comprehend a contradictory world are visible in the conflicting visions of the past to which it has given rise, that range from renewed efforts to grasp the past in its totality that also overcome the Eurocentrism of an earlier world historiography, to declarations of the "end of history," to the fragmentation of the past into mutually irreconcilable narratives. What they all share in common might be described, in Guehenno's terms, as "the resurgence of history." Globalization is in many respects about a surfeit of history, both as its constituent and its product.

Robertson, rightly I think, has pointed to a relationship between globalization, and the recent proliferation of interest in world history, as well as its new tendencies in the late twentieth century:

CO: Rowman and Littlefield, forthcoming)

> On the one hand, the fact and the consciousness of rapidly increasing interdependence across the world has sharpened the concern with an understandable trajectory of the whole of humanity. On the other hand, whereas earlier writing in that vein consisted, and to some extent still consists, in variations on one "grand narrative" depicting the rise and the "triumph" of the West, there has been an increasing tendency for world history to be written with respect to heretofore unheard "voices."[33]

To cite one of its foremost contemporary proponents, and able practitioners, "scholars increasingly recognize that, through their interactions, all the world's peoples have contributed to the making of history, and world history represents a particularly appropriate means of recognizing the contributions of all peoples to the world's common history."[34] Others have gone even farther, declaring "world history" to be insufficient to the tasks at hand,
calling instead for "global history."[35]

These concerns provide eloquent testimonial to the differences between a contemporary consciousness of globalization, and earlier conceptions of globality in which, as Robertson observes,

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[33] Robertson, "Globalization as a Problem," p.30

[34] Jerry H. Bentley, "Shapes of World History in Twentieth-Century Scholarship," (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1996), pp.2-3

[35] Bruce Mazlish and Ralph Buultjens, *Conceptualizing Global History* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

history was rendered into an account of the "triumph" of the West, and the Others of EuroAmerica were rendered into "voiceless" remnants of the past without any claims on history; the "people without history," as Eric Wolf put it in his seminal critique of EuroAmerican historiography.[36] Contemporary world or global histories seek to redress this suppression of other pasts in an earlier historiography, but they also seek to address a contemporary situation, which is at once national and international in the questions it raises. Nationally, it addresses the concerns of those groups(from ethnic minorities to women)who had been left out of history earlier; internationally, it seeks to bring back into history peoples whose presence on the global scene can no longer be rendered invisible in a Eurocentric teleology. There is, in other words, something radical about the aspirations of contemporary world historiography.

There are both intellectual and practical reasons for the contemporary turn in world history. As a sympathetic critic puts it,

> Few statements today provoke so little controversy as the claim that human beings today are more in touch with their fellow beings around the world than ever before in history. The list of examples-instant communication of information, a culture of universal styles and experiences, the world-wide reach of markets and trade, the products composed of parts from several continents-has become a litany, and reference to the global village is a cliche that conference-going professors

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[36] Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*(Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982)

can hardly afford to challenge: "Historians no longer have to

invent the world in order to study world history."[37]

The last statement, quoted from an essay by Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, in fundamental ways gives away the show; for it is arguable that for all its pretensions to a greater even-handed comprehensiveness than earlier, contemporary world or global historiography is no more comprehensive in its coverage of the world than the globalization it claims as its inspiration-and legitimacy. It is also based on a partial understanding of globalization, stressing its integrative aspects against the fragmentation that is also built into the very concept of globalization. In both these respects, world or global historiography still represent inventions of the world, something that is recognized at least tacitly in Bentley's reference to the "shapes of world history."

I have no objections to either the writing or the teaching of world history, as I believe with many others that a knowledge of the world is a courtesy that both students and the general public in an imperial society owe to the rest of the world; but this is not to be confounded either with an end to Eurocentrism, or even-handedness in the representation of the past. On the first issue, merely to substitute globalization for the "triumph" of the West in the "grand narratives" of history is insufficient to overcome Eurocentrism, as globalization as we have known it is inseparable from EuroAmerican integration of the world, which is not going to disappear simply because it is disavowed in a globalist historiography. Secondly, Eurocentrism is built into the very idea of a world history with global aspirations, as historically the emergence of world history, as of history in general, was a product of EuroAmerican expansion over the world, which called forth new ways to contain and order the world's

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[37] Raymond Grew, "On the Prospect of Global History," in Bruce Mazlish and Ralph Buultjens, *Conceptualizing Global History*, pp. 227-249, p.228

peoples as well as knowledges. We still need to keep in mind that such histories are produced in EuroAmerica, and if others are now included in the historical process, the inclusion is by invitation. To the extent that this historiography leaves out of the picture pasts that were erased in the process-including pasts that militated against the forces of capitalist globalization, that might have provided alternatives to the contemporary outcome of things-it reproduces the teleological functionalism of an earlier historiography.

Indeed, without an account of the relationship between Eurocentrism and the enormous power of capitalism that enabled EuroAmerican expansion, the criticism of Eurocentrism may perpetuate Eurocentric assumptions in new guises. The preoccupation with Eurocentrism pervades not just cultural studies, but the rewriting of history, most visibly in efforts to produce a new "world history," which, too, may be above all a EuroAmerican preoccupation, that perpetuates earlier hegemonies in new form. I am quite sympathetic to the epistemological concerns of world history proponents; namely, to overcome the restrictions of national units in the writing of history. On the other hand, the representation as Eurocentrism of the stress on modern capitalism promises to erase not only the distinctiveness of modern history, but also to eliminate the capitalist mode of production as a distinct mode with its own forms of production and consumption, oppression and exploitation, and ideology. This is the case with Andre Gunder Frank's "5,000 year world-system" which, in the name of erasing Eurocentrism, universalizes capitalist development in much the same way as classical economics; that is, by making it into the fate of humankind, rather than the conjunctural product of a particular history. Gunder Frank does not explain either why a "China-centered" history constitutes more of a world-

history than a EuroAmerican centered one.[38]

Even more revealing is a recent report on the status of world-history writing in China. Ironically(and to the astonishment of its author), the report observes that, contrary to what one might expect(we are not told who shares in the expectation), Chinese historians continue to write modern world history around capitalism, and, it follows for the author, a Eurocentric paradigm. This to the author is, of course, a product of the continued domination of Chinese historical thinking by the "ideological framework" of "a European-centered, Marxist-imbued world history.".[39] "We are scientific and they are ideological, so we know better," might be the conclusion, which perpetuates the same hegemonic attitudes as in earlier days. No wonder that the author can also state that the large place given to Chinese history in the curriculum(autonomously of world history) issues "from an ethnocentric view not unfamiliar to Western historians. China's self-perception as *Zhongguo*, or the `Central Kingdom,' is well-known."[40] Not only does the author erase Chinese historians as contemporaries, instead of raising questions about her own version of world history, but she also proceeds to erase Chinese history by falling back upon the authority of long-standing cliches in the "Western" historiography of China. Aside from the fact that this Chinese "self-perception" has its own history, other societies, too, teach their national histories separately from world history, which has more to do with nationalist education in the modern world, than some Chinese "ethnocentrism." Whose "ethnocentrism" is the question that jumps to mind once again. World history as an undertaking

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[38] Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998)

[39] Dorothea A.L. Martin, "World History in China," *World History Bulletin*, Vol. XIV No.1(Spring 1998):6-8, p.6

[40] Ibid.

is not to be held responsible for this kind of obscurantism, but the latter is a reminder nevertheless of the need for continued intellectual vigilance in an undertaking that is highly vulnerable to producing the opposite of what it intends. One way to do so is to distinguish Eurocentrism from recognition of the historical role that EuroAmerica, empowered by capitalism, played in the shaping of the modern world. To repeat what I have remarked elsewhere, without capitalism, Eurocentrism might have remained just another parochial ethnocentrism.

The very dialectic of globalization-the dialectic of integration/ fragmentation, is resolved in the globalization paradigm by incorporating difference within a global unity. This is in fact what world or global history seeks to do with reference to the past, to play up those integrative tendencies against tendencies to fragmentation, and erase in the process what may be irreconcilable differences. World historiography as it appears presently is an instance of what Wallerstein has described as "anti-Eurocentric Eurocentrism"-that denies the uniqueness of EuroAmerica, and its centrality to the historical process of globalization, but still imposes upon the past the outcomes of that very globalization; rendering globalization itself into a mystical force without an agency.[41]

The problems that world history presents are not just ideological; they are also narrative problems. World history persists ultimately because of a conviction that differences that mark the world and its past may be contained within a single grand narrative. It has yet to confront the problem that the very crowding of diverse peoples(not their contributions to civilization in the abstract)into history may in fact mean the end of history as we have known it because, if those people are

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[41] I. Wallerstein, "Eurocentrism and Its Avatars: The Dilemmas of Social Science," in I. Wallerstein, *The End of the World As We Know It*," pp.168-184, p.178

recognized genuinely in their differences, they are not to be contained within a single narrative. The problem of narrative has become apparent in a range of historiographies, but the example that is most pertinent to the issue of globalization may be that of different "cultures" being incorporated into a single narrative of world history, which may end up exploding the whole notion of world history and, with it, history itself. Fredric Jameson, who sees in such crowding of the world the impossibility of narratives, and therefore, a state akin to schizophrenia when meaning dissolves into "a rubble of distinct and unrelated signifiers," writes that,

> The apparent celebration of Difference, whether here at home or on the global scale, in reality conceals and presupposes a new and more fundamental reality. Whatever the new liberal tolerance is, it has little to do with the exotic range of the emblematic Family of Man exhibit, in which the Western bourgeoisies were asked to show their deeper human affinity with Bushmen and Hottentots, bare-breasted island women and aboriginal craftsmen, and other of the anthropological type who are unlikely to visit you as tourists. These new others, however, are at least as likely to visit us as immigrants or *Gastarbeiter*; to that degree they are more "like" us, or at least the "same" in all kinds of new ways, which new internal social habits-the forced social and political recognition of "minorities"-help us to acquire in our foreign policy.[42]

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[42] F. Jameson, *Postmodernism*, p.357

Jameson here is clearly describing a novel predicament for EuroAmericans, especially EuroAmerican elites, who have lost control of historical narratives, and of the guarantees they provided for present identity and future direction. The dilemma he poses is a very real one; it faces all the descendants of nineteenth century World Fair organizers and Museum-makers who now face the prospects of returning to the "savages" the skeletal remnants that were supposed to preserve savagery in historical memory, but now face the very same savages as political and legal equals. But what he has to say applies not only to what he loosely describes as liberals, but to radicals as well, including the left radicals with whom he identifies and dis-identifies almost in the same breath. As he puts it further on, "We need to explore the possibility that there exists, in what quaintly used to be called the moral realm, something roughly equivalent to the dizziness of crowds for the individual body itself: the premonition that the more people we recognize, even within the mind, the more peculiarly precarious becomes the status of our own hitherto unique and `incomparable' consciousness or `self.'"[43] What he does not recognize, remarkably in a scholar of his prescience and political concerns, is that this has been the condition for a majority of the world's peoples, especially those peoples who had earlier been left out of history, who now have re-entered history to disturb the First World elites' complacency about self and history.

The pertinent question here may be: does the end of history for one serve as the beginning of history for others and, if so, what does that say about history? It may help demonstrate further the power of globalization as a paradigm, a paradigm at once of integration and disintegration, that what appears as the dissolution of history from one perspective appears as its recovery from another. It is possible, indeed, that globalization appears to a EuroAmerican intellectual as a radical break with the

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[43] Ibid., p.358

past in its repudiation of a Eurocentric teleology, that nevertheless retains in its most basic assumptions the vision of a world of unity, while from other perspectives globalization means release from a hegemonic ideology of global unity, that allows a choice once again of entry into a global stream of history on one's own terms, scrambling in the process the meaning of exactly what such a stream might mean?

In either case, globalization from Third World perspectives at its most radical presently entails a repudiation not just of a Eurocentric mapping of modernity, but of history itself as a fundamental expression of Eurocentrism. The Indian psychologist Ashis Nandy is one such critic who has subjected history to harsh criticism as one corner of the triangular ideology of a Eurocentric modernity along with science and developmentalism. Nandy's critique takes us far beyond the limited questions of who is to be included in history, and how, to confront history and historical thinking as the problem. The argument is deceptively simple, as perhaps a radical critique should be: History, as one mode of thinking about the past, present and future, has been established in the modern world as the *only* way to think them, consigning all other ways of thinking, along with those who thought in those ways, to the realm of the non-historical. The dominance of history "is derived from the links the idea of history has established with the modern nation-state, the secular worldview, the Baconian concept of scientific rationality, nineteenth-century theories of progress, and, in recent decades, development...once exported to the nonmodern world, historical consciousness has not only tended to absolutize the past in cultures that have lived with open-ended concepts of the past or depended on myths, legends, and epics to define their cultural selves, it has also made the historical worldview complicit with many new forms of violence, exploitation and satanism in our times and helped rigidify civilizational, cultural, and

national boundaries."[44] Most available criticisms of history are themselves historical. As in the case of colonial nationalism which assimilates Orientalism in its own self-definition, to be historical in the non-EuroAmerican world is to rewrite the past under the hegemony of an epistemology that has Eurocentrism built into its very structure.[45] On the other hand, from this same perspective, contemporary efforts in EuroAmerica to globalize history by writing everyone into it, even in all their differences, appear as little more than an effort to contain genuine difference by rendering all societies historical. Nandy concedes that "at one time not long ago, historical consciousness had to coexist with other modes of experiencing and constructing the past even within the modern world. The conquest of the past through history was still incomplete in the late nineteenth century, as was the conquest of space through the railways...As long as the non-historical modes thrived, history remained viable as a baseline for radical social criticism. That is perhaps why the great dissenters of the nineteenth century were the most aggressively historical."[46] But such is no longer the case, as the historical way has become the only way of knowing the past, when a critical epistemology has turned into a means of

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[44] Ashis Nandy, "History's Forgotten Doubles," *History and Theory* 34.2(1995):44-62, p.44(abstract)

[45] This, of course, may be even more of a problem in Marxist than in liberal historiography. For a discussion, see, Arif Dirlik, "Marxism and Chinese History: The Globalization of Marxist Historical Discourse and the Problem of Hegemony in Marxism," *Journal of Third World Studies*, 4.1(Spring 1987):151-164. As this journal is not easily accessible, the essay was also published as, "Marxisme et Histoire Chinoise: La Globalisation Du Discourse Historique Et La Question De L'Hegemonie Dans La Reference Marxiste a L'Histoire," *Extreme-Orient Extreme-Occident*, No.9 (August 1987):91-112

[46] "History's Forgotten Doubles," p.46

dominance. The point presently is not to find alternative histories, but *alternatives to history*.[47]

We may or may not agree with Nandy's indictment of history, or with the possibility of "alternatives to history" in a post-historical age. What is most important about his critique, and with other critiques along a similar vein, is that it is the expression of an alternative presence in the dialogue over the past, that no longer waits upon a First World liberal accommodation of other histories, but declares its presence in opposition to the latter-much the same as those native Americans who, against pleas for the preservation of history and science, demand the return of skeletal remains from museums into the safe-keeping of their descendants.[48] Globalization, ultimately, consists of the proliferation of

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[47] Ibid., p.53. For further discussion of some of these problems, see, Vinay Lal, "History and the Possibilities of Emancipation: Some Lessons from India," *Journal of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research*(June 1996):97-137, and, Arif Dirlik, "History Without A Center? Reflections on Eurocentrism," in E.Fuchs and B.Stuchtey(ed), *Historiographical Traditions and Cultural Identities in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Washington, D.C.:German Historical Institute, forthcoming)

[48] While world historiography has sought to claim for itself any open-minded accommodation of alternative histories, there is a world of distance between world history as history of the world, and accounting for different visions of the past, which is exactly the point of Nandy's criticism. If the latter were taken seriously, as it should, world history would be an impossibility. See Vine de Loria, Jr., *Red Earth, White Lies*(Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishers, 1997), for a radical repudiation of all "white" history. Needless to say, these alternatives to history also involve different conceptualizations of "the world." Closer to the writing of world history, in my opinion, are those historians who do not necessarily take the world as their subject, but try to account nevertheless for the different worlds that

subjects who declare their presence, their *contemporary* presence, against the erasures of the past, or the assimilations of the present. In this very concrete sense, it is, at least from a EuroAmerican perspective, "the end of the world as we have known it." From other perspectives, however, the "end" may well signal a new beginning.

Concluding Remarks

Globalization is as much a discursive as a descriptive concept, and how we read it has much to do with our politics. The most obvious reading of it is in terms of the existing *status quo*, where it appears in its globally integrative guise, as the spatial extension of the promise of a capitalist modernity. At the other extreme, globalization appears as the consequence not of the integrative but of the divisive consequences of modernity, where modernity simply has served to strengthen or reify different cultural traditions that are now pitted against one another in uncompromising struggle. It is also possible to read globalization in a third way, as the terrain for conflicting discourses, which both unites and divides in unprecedented ways.

This is the sense in which globalization may best serve as a new paradigm. From a temporal perspective, it is at once an end and a beginning. An end, because it is indeed the culmination of a historical process in which EuroAmerican expansion over the globe(not just materially but also

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human beings bring to their encounters even at their most local and concrete. One example that comes to mind immediately is the Pacific historian Greg Dening, wo has articulated his orientation most explicitly in, *The Death of William Gooch: A History's Anthropology*(Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1995)

culturally) played a crucial part. But it is an end in another sense. The very appropriation of the globe for EuroAmerica brought into the scope of globalization the differences that mark the globe, that are currently as much a part of the global scene as unity. Assimilation, to be sure, but assimilation does not mean identity; only the redefinition of historical trajectories from common points of departure. Modernity provided the commonality; now the different trajectories find expression in postmodernity, or different claims on history. In this sense, globalization is also a new beginning, if only, once again, into uncharted waters. We have all been touched by modernity, but we have been touched differently, and that also is important for considering what postmodernity may bring.

This may be a period, among other "ends," of the "end of utopia," as Russell Jacoby recently has written.[49] But it is not, therefore, the end. The French historian of China, Jean Chesneaux, wrote two decades ago of many

"pasts and futures," sub-titled significantly, "what is history for?"[50] There is every reason to feel presently, that perhaps we face "too many pasts, and too many futures." Depending on political perspective, that may appear as "the rubble" left on the ruins of utopias, or a liberating promise that allows the once voiceless to once again gain their voices. One of the fascinating issues raised by the globalization paradigm is the status of history in human life: how, having invented the past, human beings remain yoked themselves to the very pasts of their creation. Globalization, in pitting different pasts against one another, and the impossibility of any future to be predicted from such a proliferation

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[49] Russell Jacoby, *The End of Utopia: Politics and Culture in an Age of Apathay*(NY: Basic Books, 1999)

[50] Jean Chesneaux, *Pasts and Futures: Or What is History For?* tr. from the French by Schofield Coryell(London: Thames and Hudson, 1978)

of pasts, may put to rest this fetishism of history.

One thing is for sure. As history ceases to provide a compass for the future, human agency in creating the future acquires greater weight than ever before. And our visions of good society have to confront a multiplicity of competing visions that need to be accounted for, and not simply relegated to the past or to oblivion. Isn't that what Marx had in mind, if only rhetorically, when he observed that with socialism, human pre-history would mark the turn to history? What is history, but the product of choices we make, and the uncertain outcomes that they produce. Globalization, to paraphrase Stuart Hall, is about histories without guarantees. And that may be a new beginning of history as humankind wakes up, after a century of slumber, from a century of the EuroAmerican dream, perhaps better off for having dreamed it, than not to have dreamed at all, or maybe worse? That, too, depends on how we read the dream.