



**HAL**  
open science

# Deconstructive Globalization. Universalism, globality, diversity

Alain-Marc Rieu

► **To cite this version:**

Alain-Marc Rieu. Deconstructive Globalization. Universalism, globality, diversity. Taipei, Institute of Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences Newsletter, Taiwan National University, 2009, 2009, pp.10-22. hal-00701252

**HAL Id: hal-00701252**

**<https://hal.science/hal-00701252v1>**

Submitted on 25 May 2012

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

【宏觀視野】

# Deconstructive Globalization: Universalism, Globality, Diversity<sup>+</sup>

Alain-Marc Rieu<sup>\*</sup>



## Double Process

Since the late 1980ies, two major processes have been transforming the world and opening a major transition. The first process is identified as Globalization, it concerns political, social and economic systems. The second process is a cultural, philosophical and epistemological movement identified as Deconstruction. These two trends develop in two different spheres, which apparently have nothing in common. In fact, they might be the two sides or two modes of the same transformation.<sup>1</sup>

What is properly called "Globalization" is a process, which started at the end of the Cold War. This process has been deconstructing the world order established at the end of the Second World War with the victory of the USA and its allies on

Fascism. The 1945 world order has until today a strong influence on East Asian people and nations. China became a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations Organization. Korea, Japan and Taiwan were under US control and military protection. This situation induced their fast economic development and the integration of their industry into the world economy. The deconstruction of the USSR in the late 1980ies and of the 1945 world order since the late 1990ies has further transformed East Asia. In that sense, Globalization has been and still is a massive deconstructive process: it is redistributing wealth and power at the world level. It also creates new uncertainties, instabilities and dangers. The end of the Cold War was first understood as an American victory: the USA became the sole super-power, a "hyper-power."<sup>2</sup> But in the US,

<sup>+</sup> 本文係二〇〇八年十二月十三至十四日「全球化時代東亞研究的新取向」國際學術研討會圓桌論壇部份內容。

<sup>\*</sup> Professor, Department of Philosophy, Jean Moulin University Lyon 3 / Senior Research Fellow, Institute of East-Asian Study, Ecole Normale Supérieure Lettres et sciences humaines.

<sup>1</sup> This paper proposes a critical analysis of Globalization alternative to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's perspective in *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

since the late 1990ies<sup>3</sup> and obviously after 9/11/2001, the globalization process was understood as detrimental to American interests, security and power on world affairs. Today, in the middle of a global financial and economic crisis, at the moment when Barack Obama has been elected President of the United States, it is clear that the Bush administration was unable to master and control the Globalization process. On the contrary, Globalization has weakened the US hegemony and partly deconstructed the US society and economy. The election of Barack Obama is part of this deconstruction. Globalization is still at work but it has also deeply changed. An historical transformation is taking place but it is impossible for the moment to fathom the world order<sup>4</sup> emerging from this transition. The Deconstruction project adequately expresses the world evolution since the 1980ies.

Globalization and Deconstruction are therefore closely associated. They interact with each other. Globalization needs to be deconstructed and Deconstruction needs to be situated within the Globalization process. Globalization is a concept as well as an ideology. It is a set of policy decisions as well as an understanding of this historical moment. To analyze this concept and this ideology is to question and criticize their related policies. Two main discourses are structuring the debate on Globalization. The first one focuses on economic globalization, discussing and evaluating its positive and negative consequences. In the present economic crisis, Globalization is considered by some as the source of the sickness and by others as its cure. The second discourse insists on

"balkanization," i.e. the conflicting diversity of the world and its related dangers, nationalism, civil violence, terrorism and war.<sup>5</sup> The time has come to evaluate the philosophical presuppositions through which issues concerning the world order and its evolution are understood and debated.

From a philosophical perspective, two schools have dominated and organized thought in this period of transition and growing insecurity: the Deconstruction project and the search for a common public philosophy. The Post-modernist project was at its peak in the 1990ies. Its main sources are the works of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard and many others. The project to build a common public philosophy is a denial, a criticism and even a rejection of post-modernism's assumptions and consequences. Its goal and purpose can be identified with the work of Jürgen Habermas. A public philosophy was and is still supposed to establish what post-modernism is denying: a ground for morality, political and civil life for the present and future of Humanity. The rejection of any universalistic illusion, of any common ground, requires finding an antidote in the search for universal values. But today, this endless opposition has become repetitive and sterile. A solution can be imagined, based on these debates. The solution I propose retains the meaning of the Deconstruction project: the absence and impossibility of any universal ground. But this absence should be understood not as failure and danger, with nostalgia or anxiety, but as a philosophical challenge typical of the Globalization process, as a search for a theoretical opening: the common construction of a public philosophy or the joint conception of a

---

2 See Hubert Védrine (former French Minister of Foreign affairs), *L'hyperpuissance américaine* (Paris: Fondation Jean Jaurès, 2000) and *Face à l'hyperpuissance* (Paris: Fayard, 2003).

3 See Condolezza Rice, "Campaign 2000: promoting the National interest," *Foreign Affairs* (Jan. / Feb., 2000).

4 Order is here understood beyond the opposition between "order" and "disorder."

5 The third discourse is probably the most important one on the long term. It concerns the role of science and technology in international relations. It is beyond the limits of the papers. I refer to my Web site where several papers on this topic, in English and French, are available.

common theory.<sup>6</sup> This opening is a new frame for designing a common social and political philosophy.

### Diversity and Globality

My objective is to open a debate for the construction of such a theory. The first step is to deconstruct Globalization by showing what Globalization is deconstructing. The field of inquiry is philosophy and political theory.

Globalization covers many different issues. But the key issue is to analyze the opposition between "diverse" and "global." These two notions express two different ways of understanding and ordering reality, two opposite ways of organizing the social experience, two different sorts of power and power relations. Two models or principles of thought should therefore be distinguished, a principle of globality and a principle of diversity.<sup>7</sup> Globalization and diversity are the basis of two different conceptions of the world. Globalization supposes "something", a being or an entity, which assembles, encompasses and encloses all phenomena into one whole. From this perspective, it is urgent to clarify what is a global or globalized world, what can be globalized in a "world." Is it a real process or just a way of representing a process in order to make it real? First of all, there is a major difference between a "world" and a global entity. Globalization is just one particular conception of what the world is or should be. Therefore in the present reordering of societies and civilizations, of their relations and interactions, it is necessary to distinguish between two different processes: a process of globalization and a process of

"worldization", of being or becoming a world. In French, "mondialisation" and "globalisation" are not usually distinguished, but these two notions clearly mean two different perspectives. Globalization is the name given to a particular reordering of international relations since the end of the Cold War. It is both a conception of a "new world order" and a way to implement this type of order.

This reordering turns around the Nation-State, which has been the political norm since the European Renaissance. It also concerns the relations between Nation-States and the "International" level. The Nation-State is both the modern model of political organization and the norm of an ideal historical evolution. Globalization raised one major problem: the present and future role of the Nation-State. This is a controversial issue and a problem, which has not yet found a clear solution. At the end of the 1990ies, the question was: does Globalization weaken the Nation-State? Many American thinkers and strategists (not only Neoconservatives) expressed the idea that Globalization was indeed weakening the capacity of Government and the State to enforce sovereignty, i.e. to control a given population on its territory. Until today, States are classified according to four criteria. In a "weak State", some groups on some part of the territory escape the control of the Government and of security forces. In a "failed State", the basic functions of a sovereign State are not enforced anymore. In a "rogue State", the political institutions enforcing sovereign functions do not respect the sovereignty

6 This approach is similar to the perspective developed by Mrs. Delmas-Marty, professor at the Collège de France in Paris. See *Les forces imaginatives du droit*, Volume 3, *Le pluralisme ordonné* (Paris: Le seuil 2006). Her goal is to solve "the enigma of a world community, which, in order to become inter-human instead of inter-national, needs to build itself without any preexisting or universal ground" (2008 seminar, my translation).

7 This idea of diversity is quite different from the notion of "multitude" by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri in *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004). In modern political philosophy (including Marxist), "multitude" covers notions identifying collective entities and behaviors situated between individual subjects and the State: populace, people, proletariat, masses, crowd, etc. This "multitude" is both what cannot be controlled and what political authority should controlled.

of other States. According to this classification, a "well-formed State" is the typical Nation-State, a norm and model for all States. It is democratic in order to associate the whole population to the political process. It has a free market economy in order to achieve a degree of economic prosperity such that the great majority of the population finds its interest in preserving and increasing its well being and social stability. The role of the Nation-State is therefore the core of Globalization: the increased economic development resulting from opening a world-wide market ideally creates the conditions for the sustainability or implementation of well-formed Nation-States, for deconstructing authoritarian governments. This explains why, concretely, Globalization is supposed to be economic and commercial, based on international relations conceived as reciprocal relations between sovereign Nation-States, which are respecting and implementing similar legal systems and values.

As a political ordering, the Nation-State was superseding a former type of collective organization called "Empire" in European political thought. An Empire was composed of different peoples, tribes, fiefdoms, etc, organized according to various vertical and horizontal hierarchies. Historically, in empires, sub-entities tend and still try to emancipate themselves. In order to succeed, each sub-entity (people, nation, etc) had and they still have to find and justify their unity, to assert their identity by referring to a common ground. This ground has been a religious belief, some traditions, customs or social structure, which are supposed to be embodied in each individual and the whole group as their common "blood," "race," "nationhood,". In other cases, a common history or culture are considered the principle of a Nation.<sup>8</sup> Nations are supposed to be born from a

common origin or by designing common political institutions in order to unify different peoples.<sup>9</sup> All these cases are instances of the globalization principle: Nations globalize populations, people, individuals and groups on a given territory. The principle of globalization is therefore the source of the modern conception of sovereignty. Ernst Gellner has shown for instance how nationalism was the construction of ideologies or philosophies designed to define the identity and assure the sovereignty of modern Nation-States.<sup>10</sup> Even today, their formation against the power of Empires is still a major political and cultural process in the present world, in the case of the former Yugoslavia, in the former USSR and present Russia, in China and other nations. At their smaller scale, Nation-States are also based on different institutional arrangements historically implemented in order to control and manage diversity: from a highly centralized State like France to federative models like the US, Germany or Switzerland.

In some parts of the world, former conflicts between Nation-States are leading to a higher level of organization alongside inter-national institutions built in the 20th century. This higher level is still recent and its long-term consequences are still not clear. It introduces new levels of diversity within each nation and between nations. It has not yet established its own proper institutions. It takes different shapes, which can be classified in four types:

1. The first type is a free regional association of Nation-States in order to eliminate conflicts and generate economic growth. The most advanced and complex example is the European Union. Another example, built on different premises, is the ASEAN in East Asia. Twenty-two instances of such regional associations are presently being

<sup>8</sup> As a typical case of an "imagined" principle of community, the "*kokutai*" (national body, collective being) in Japanese thought and history is the best (or worst) example.

<sup>9</sup> This is traditionally the "republican" model.

negotiated in the world. At different levels, they all are economic alliances, "free-trade zones."

2. The second level is the resurgence of "territories" historically divided by modern political borders.<sup>11</sup> "Regions" are nowadays often defined as transnational: they generate a dynamics, which directly challenges the capacity of the Nation-State to control economic growth, its population and territory. From an historical and local perspective, different territories exist within Nation-States. In Europe, old territories are resurrected and new ones are emerging. Regions and territories are challenging the borders of Nation-States.

3. The third level directly challenges the Nation-State and the inter-national order based on the Nation-State. This evolution comes from a contradiction within the United Nations Organization between its legal basis, Human Rights, the reciprocal sovereignty of each Nation-State and the sovereignty of each Nation-State on its populations. Since the 1970ies, Human Rights have slowly introduced the right of the international community to protect individuals, groups, people and populations against natural disasters or political oppression beyond their official governments. This "droit d'ingérence" (Right of Interference) is the beginning of a major evolution. The International Court of La Hague, the formation of a "European legal space," are

similar evolutions.

4. The fourth level is characterized by the search by two free trade organizations, the EU and the ASEAN, to go a step further and to conceive models and methods leading toward political coordination, convergence and even integration. There are many conceptual problems to solve. The most important one is to avoid inventing a new type of "empire,"<sup>12</sup> exemplified in Europe by the search for a border, for a demarcation between what is European and what is not. The second problem is a question: is a common ground needed in order to converge? Is this ground *something*, which already exists or is this ground *something*, which has to be "imagined" and established in common? If a ground already exists (i.e. is recognized as given), then it is a type of globality principle. This "root" opposes "us" and "the others." But such a ground can never be so well established and commonly accepted as to enclose or repress differences. The diversity principle is more efficient, economical and productive for coordination and cooperation.

These are well-known facts. This is also a complex situation. The principle of globality is challenged by the diversity principle. In some parts of the world, the Nation-State is still a goal to achieve but in other parts it is a political structure to overcome. Different temporalities and adverse processes can be observed.<sup>13</sup> There is not

10 Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

11 Again, one can observe a Flemish and Hanseatic economy and culture. There are talks about an "Alpine economy" from Lyon to Milan, through Geneva and Torino. Old territories are re-emerging, new ones are taking shape. In France, part of Alsace's future is found in increased collaboration with South-Western Germany and Northern Switzerland as much as with France. The Rhône-Alpes Region understands itself as situated between Bad-Wurtemberg in South-Germany and Catalonia in North-Eastern Spain. The American "new economy" is itself a local phenomenon: it concerns maximum twelve "regions."

12 The book by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* interprets Globalization as a new form of imperialism, a new stage in the advancement of Capitalism.

13 For instance, the Nation-State was a goal and ideal in South-Eastern Europe, in Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, when Western European nations thought it has to be overcome in a European Union. Until today, the Nation-State is criticized in Europe by various populations in Ireland, in Scotland, in Spain (the Basque question), in Corsica in France. These populations aspire to their own Nation-State or to a greater autonomy within the existing National entity. For Germany, the European unification should be based on a Federalist pattern. For France, for the Left and the Right as well, it should be based on collaboration and negotiation between independent Nation-States. Major emerging nations like Russia, India or China have not yet fully raised these disturbing issues.

one global history today, but different and conflicting histories constituting a world. Until today, diversity has mostly been considered as dangerous, as a source of national desintegration, as an erosion of sovereignty. But in fact the diversity model is more efficient and reliable. Unity and coherence never existed: they were a representation of the world having for a goal the implementation and justification of a given order. Today, studying and admitting diversity are a prerequisite to organize and manage diversity. This has become the main task of Human and Social Sciences. Governments and bureaucracies of modern States thought for a long time that the role they played and the power they had accumulated, were producing the institutions, the expertise and the policies required to control diversity and reduce to uncertainties. They relied on the Globality principle. This is not justified anymore. Governments and bureaucracies are surpassed by the world evolution, which is deconstructing their control and power. To accumulate more power in order to control more and manage better has become counterproductive. It generates more resistance, it liberates more diversity. This historical transition might take time to understand and admit. But the present world shows a general evolution toward diversity. It does not provide any proof of an evolution toward globalization. There is no "convergence" as it was thought during the 1950ies according to Modernization theory. What we observe is a growing divergence. This divergence needs to be analyzed and managed in order to avoid an evolution toward conflicts. But the power to accumulate in order to stop and master this evolution toward diversity is too costly, destructive, oppressive and dangerous to be undertaken with any predictable success. The

world is in a dynamic toward multiplicity and complexity. The collective construction of a common framework is a response adapted to this conjuncture and its unpredictable consequences.

In these conditions, the opposition between the principles of diversity and globality becomes fully relevant. The world is still dominated and managed according to the principle of globality, when it is in fact constituted by a diversity of people, institutions, behaviors, values and histories. This entails two opposite representations of the world. The world is not a whole, a global entity in which things are ordered into hierarchies according to a norm or a model.<sup>14</sup> This is why the world is and remains infinite and open, something to be thought and acted upon, changed or reformed, etc. The world is nothing else but this diversity. What I propose to call "worldization" (*mondialisation*) is not only a post-modern experience preaching for the recognition of differences. It is the analysis of the complex orders woven by these differences. Diversity cannot be reduced to "balkanization," to confusion, danger and finally war. To describe and explain these differences is not to *globalize* them, to classify them into political and economic entities, to refer them to national entities or national characters (French, German, Chinese, Japanese, etc) based on a common ground found in culture, history or religion. The world is not composed of Nations: it is a network of minorities, of subjectivities, life styles and collective behaviors, modes of production and consumption, development trajectories and markets. This is quite another perspective on Society and Humanity.

Globalization is a conceptual mistake. It is a perspective inducing conflicting practices, institutions and power relations. This concept teaches to manage differences as conflicts. It

---

<sup>14</sup> This norm was the paradigm of the pre-modern world in Europe. It was still playing a major role in the 17th and 18th century. See Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard university press, 1936).

relies on the Nation-State and its modern attributes. The Nation-State supposes and imposes a norm (moral or legal, political institutions), a ground (a common racial, linguistic, cultural or historical origin) or a creed (a religion, an ideology). The goal is to master diversity and to transform it into a whole, to establish the unity of a people as a Nation against internal forces and external influences, which are supposed to endanger its coherence and unity. Differences are reduced to the identity of a sovereign political entity. To globalize is to totalize. This unifying entity is defined as "the political," the principle and ground of any political order. The extreme, but typical, example is Carl Schmitt's conception of the political<sup>15</sup> as the power to decide between the "friend" and the "enemy," "us" and "the others." Totalitarianism is the extreme version of the Globality model. Therefore, as a cognitive attitude and domination technology, globalization is nothing new. The principle of diversity opens on the contrary a major change.

### Deconstructing Globalization

The next step is to apply the distinction between globality and diversity. Globalization is the principle of modern and contemporary political thought, international order and social organization. It does not ignore diversity. But multiplicity is controlled and managed by the distribution of identities and differences under a definition of sovereignty. Globalization is nothing new in world history, but it has taken a new form in the last twenty years. It has become a substitute for modern universalism. It does not refer anymore to a moral norm or a political ground, but only to commercial rules and economic

rationality. This new conception does not replace the former one but it has become its basis as well as a new norm. On the surface, this unifying process is becoming more and more independent from the political level. Economic modernization is supplanting differences between political regimes and conflicts between States. A globalized economy is reputed the only way to solve all problems, the road leading to peace and in the end to democracy. Indeed globalization is being reduced to a uniform logic of industrial production and model of commercial consumption, from China to Ghana, from France to America. This logic and this model are now in crisis. They were the source of the present crisis and they provide no real solution.

This conception of globalization does not hide obvious differences in performance and achievement. But these differences are explained by "civilization" and "culture."<sup>16</sup> At the age of globalization, "culture" is what constitutes and also distinguishes nations. Nations, regions, etc, are supposed to be closed in their "cultures" or "civilizations." This explains why the age of globalization is also the age of multiculturalism. Culture is the present version of the principle of globality. Culture is reduced to the behaviors, values, attitudes and prejudices, which are resisting economic globalization. Globalization transforms cultures into national identities and this destroys them. People who resist economic globalization in the name of their culture are at the end losing what they are fighting for. They just close themselves into an illusion and are being dominated by those who build their power on this illusion. Serbia is a recent example on a long list. The globalization principle becomes at the

15 See for instance Carl Schmitt, *Der Begriff des Politischen* (The Concept of the Political), trans. by George D. Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); see in the French edition, *La notion de politique* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1972), preface by Julien Freund.

16 The conception and explanation of the world order by Samuel Huntington have been quite influential. See "The clash of civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 72 (1993), fn. 3. Concerning this conception of "culture," see also his book edited with Lawrence Harrison, *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).



national level a unifying principle identified a "culture." At the international level, it leads to economic homogenization and convergence.

The opposition between culture and economy raises a deeper problem. Globalization dissociates the economic and the political spheres. States are all different according to their national culture and history. But the economic logic is supposed to be or to become everywhere the same. It is a norm for all contexts, for all management methods, criteria and objectives. To be and remain "competitive" is the law of all things economical. To adopt this economic norm is supposed to emancipate the economy from all cultural, historical and sociological constraints. Indeed, numerous historical examples prove that in each society a change in the degree of autonomy of the economy generates a strong dynamic. This is what has been happening since the 17th century in Western Europe, in the world since the 1980ies. But research in Human Sciences<sup>17</sup> proves that this dissociation is based on strong historical, cultural and social conditions. Economic development does not escape from these conditions. On the contrary, this dissociation happens within a given historical context and is strongly conditioned by this context. Therefore, cases of such dissociation need to be analyzed within each context in which it happens.<sup>18</sup> It is itself a social and historical phenomenon and it requires to be studied as such.

The problem is therefore more complex than the common idea of globalization. This apparent process is nothing new: a increasing disconnection between the political and the economical has been the source of economic development in Western Europe since the late Middle Ages. This dissociation created the conditions of the

formation of liberalism, of market capitalism and democracy. It has been the source since the 17th century of the "modernization process." Modernization is a much wider and deeper process than Capitalism, than the slow dissociation between religion, politics, society and the economy. Anthropology, philosophy and history have repeatedly proven that the transformation of an economy cannot be separated from political and social change as well as from scientific and technological progress. On top of it, it is clear that economic development was achieved in countries like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and China through strong internal relations between the State and the economy. This has led to remarkable economic results and also to social and political tensions and abuses. Still the fact that this alliance did not work elsewhere proves that economic development cannot be reduced to it.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore the disruptions introduced by industrial development in Europe have generated political movements to counteract their impact on society. Either these movements were attempts by the ruling class to reinforce its control on the population. Or other movements pretended to protect the "people," its culture and identity, against social changes induced by industrialization. Both cases were always strongly opposed and closely related. In the 20th century, Fascism and Communism were two political, social and economical movements born to oppose Capitalism and its social impact. Fascism pretended to restore a former social order based on race, culture or tradition. Communism tried to construct a new and different society in order to overcome the contradictions, conflicts and exploitations inherent to modern societies. They

17 I mainly refer to the works of Max Weber, Karl Polanyi, Louis Dumont and many others.

18 On the formation, failure and criticism of the "development theory," see Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

19 On these questions, see Alain-Marc Rieu, *Savoir et pouvoir dans la modernisation du Japon* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2001).

both relied on a strong relation between the State and the Economy. Both were based on the globality principle.

This point makes clear that the globalization process needs to be situated in its proper factual and theoretical contexts. It cannot be reduced to a separation between politics and the economy. It is wrong to suppose that politics and economy are two independent levels or types of activities in a society. Still, as an ideology, globalization presupposes either a growing opposition between politics and the economy or the reduction of politics to the conditions of economic performance. Three main types of relation between these two functions are observed nowadays:

- 1 Politics should not interfere with the Economy.
- 2 Politics should organize Society according to an economic logic, in order to stimulate or sustain economic development or growth.
- 3 Politics should define Society outside the economic world, for instance on a spiritual, ideological, religious or cultural ground.<sup>20</sup>

There is apparently a fourth relation: the role of politics is to reach an equilibrium between economic development and social cohesion. But the goal of this equilibrium is to stimulate economic development. It is therefore a variation of the second type. The first two types are the liberal and neo-liberal ideologies. The fourth is mostly the socialist or social-democratic discourse. The third type is the source of contemporary fundamentalism and nationalism. It was historically the source of different sorts of fascism.

Since the end of the Cold War, the globalization process has apparently enforced a new degree of autonomy of economic activities in each society engaged in this process. But this

process cannot be separated from US political, economic and military hegemony, including its cultural industries. To forget or repress the historical conditions of economic globalization during the 1990ies generates distortions. The worst distortion is to situate political institutions beyond the economy, as the ground of all economic progress, with the duty to control the social and even cultural basis of economic growth. Political regimes are then considered as the "private life" of a people as well as the ground of State sovereignty. In this conceptual frame, the economy is considered public, "free" and it can be globalized: everybody should participate in economic development, each nation should have access to each "market" whatever the "nation." But, according to this ideology, Politics is private. It is considered the "private life" of each nation. It belongs to each State, to each Nation and nobody should interfere. How the State is organized, how the Government is elected are not questions to be asked in relation to the economy. The relations between the Government and the population, the level of social protection, of salaries and access to education, are supposed to be the internal affairs of the State. They are considered the responsibility of the State beyond the economy and the core component of its sovereignty. Globalization is then reduced to the following principle of international ordering: "Let's not talk about politics. Let's trade and make profit. Let's not ask how goods are produced, how the population is treated for this economy to be competitive."

In this perspective, the Nation-State becomes immune of all questioning and criticism as long as economic development is achieved and sustained. Society is reduced to infrastructure. The population is not ignored but it is reduced to economic parameters of productivity and its various social factors: demography, health, legal

<sup>20</sup> This is not only true of Islamic States. It can also be found in each religion and nation.

system, Industrial Property enforcement, tax system, levels of instruction, of revenue and consumption. When and where this fails, the State's responsibilities are supplemented by calls to Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid. In these cases, the population is still disconnected from its political, social and economic contexts and institutions. People are considered as refugees in the own country (this is indeed what they are) and not as its citizens. Therefore, in these extreme situations, the failure of the Government does not empower the population. On the contrary: the poor and hungry are simply feed and cured. Advice on political institutions (on "Nation building") is provided and financial help is promised in exchange for economic reform. Economic liberalization is the norm: the goal is to free an economy from its social context in order to make it participate to the globalization process and then share its expected benefits. This increased autonomy of the economic sector is apparently an efficient way to develop it. But it requires precise social conditions in order to be achieved. It does not change at the world level established hierarchies between Nations and between social classes at the national level.

Until now Globalization has obviously been thought and managed in order to prevent any major conflict with the Nation-State and interference with State sovereignty. It has been organized and managed in order to remain under its institutional and ideological control. But 2008 economic crisis has demonstrated that these limitations and controls by national and international institutions can fail. For many, the solution to this crisis is to be found in a reinforcement of the State. Globalization has deeply transformed the nations at the source of this process. It is challenging American economic, political, military and financial hegemony. It created the conditions for the economic development of "emerging nations," mainly of

China, India and Russia, but also of Brazil, Mexico or South Africa. The 2008 financial crisis is the unwanted (not unpredictable) effect of a globalization process reduced to economic globalization. The globalization process is deconstruction in action. It is a type of "creative destruction." It has opened an historical transition toward a new world, a new world order.

The process was fast and deep. In the early 1990ies, it was an ideology and propaganda for expressing the present state of power relations in the world. The opposition between Politics and Economy was designed to open markets for the most powerful economies, to enforce and enlarge the 1945 world order by extending it to emerging nations, which were supposed to share the economic growth, the financial burden and political responsibility of this world order. The Nation-State was and is still supposed to remain the political norm. Globalization is supposed to reinforce the power of the Nation-State on the populations it controls as a consequence of the economic prosperity it is supposed to bring and distribute. But this global strategy leads to a contradiction. Because of the growing role of the economic sector in each society, the capacity of each Government to control its economy is weakened. Governments can only adapt, manage, control or even repress their populations. The Nation-State tends to solve this paradoxical situation by regularly voicing nationalist or protectionist claims. Nationalist and populist political parties are prospering, on the Right and the Left. Still Globalization is deconstruction leading to transition. Populations want to profit from economic growth but they are not ready anymore to take economic goals and models as Laws of Nature and their only future.

The main danger is globalization's double bind. Politics is weakened and is not supposed to interfere with the economy. But in case of a deep

crisis like today, the State becomes the only recourse for the population and for the economy. But it is too weak (corrupted, ill managed, badly organized, etc) to respond to this situation. This situation opens a political crisis. This crisis prevents the State from developing and implementing the policies adapted to this economic and social situation. The economy is in return further weakened by the political and social situation. It cannot pick up. When a Government has to choose between the economy and the social situation, it is forced to choose to restart the economy. Before any results can be felt, social and political unrest is likely. The only solution is an advancement of democracy.

#### **Conclusion: toward a world in common**

My objective is to open a frame for deconstructing the notion of globalization. The problem is not to criticize Globalization in order to limit and restrain this process. The problem is to free globalization from globality or globalism, in order to understand this process from the perspective of diversity. The goal is to interfere with this ideology in order to change the concepts, theories and practices behind it. I am not the first one to try. The results can be summarized in five points:

1. The idea of globalization is a false conception of a larger problem: Modernization. Modernization cannot be reduced to industrialization, urbanization and the formation of the Nation-State and its bureaucracy. The present situation cannot be reduced to a new level of autonomy of the economy.

2. As an ideology, globalization hides the power relations on which it is based, in particular its political, social and cultural conditions. As a notion and ideology, Globalization weakens the

political process and it reinforces the Nation-State, its bureaucracy, its control over the population and its territory.

3. Globalization is a dangerous ideology. From Globalization perspective, societies are reduced to a work force, to an economic system, plus a national identity, a moral or legal norm or a religious identity. Political institutions are reduced to the role of keeping equilibrium between these parameters. This is an empty conception of society, a meaningless conception of life in society as well as a project to empty society of anything beside economic behaviors and activities. The site effect is that other societies are filled by ideology or religion. In situations of severe economic crisis, globalization is dangerous because the political institutions are too weak to play their expected role. The only political recourse is nationalism, oppression, fundamentalism or fascism.

4. Globalization is both the cause and the consequence of recent economic development. The 2008 financial and economic crisis proves how difficult it is to accept Francis Fukuyama's idea that economic liberalization leads to political emancipation and democracy. It might deconstruct Empires. Parliaments and elections can be implemented but this is not enough to generate a democratic society and a democratized world order.<sup>21</sup> The solution is to investigate and reach the presuppositions of the globalization process. Globalization does not explain the situation of the world today, neither the disappearance of the 1945 world order, nor the present experience of diversity.

6. It is wrong to criticize Globalization from the point of view of the 1945 world order as if it was a norm to be saved and simply enlarged. Globalization is a moment within a larger deconstructive process, which has already

21 See Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2004).

changed the world and opened a transition toward a still unknown world order. As a concept, Globalization is an obstacle for understanding this deconstructive process, its sources and consequences.

In order to overcome Globalization's ideology, the concept of diversity needs to be further developed. Until now, it was more a post-modern philosophy than a cognitive attitude producing accurate knowledge. Until today, the appeal to diversity is more a counter-ideology, a type of cultural resistance than a form of knowledge. At least three steps are needed to progress further in this direction. The first one is to develop a theory of Modernization capable of explaining on the same pattern the formation and evolution of different regions and nations in the world.<sup>22</sup> The goal is to provide a comparative knowledge of development trajectories, to understand why this process happens in certain conditions or does not take place in others. Differences need to be analyzed within Europe as well as between East Asia and Europe or other parts of the world. The second step is to conceptualize what is a "world". The third step is to imagine a theory of democracy based on the principle of diversity. This requires a conception of democracy beyond its present presuppositions and limitations.

---

22 A joint research on this topic has been launched in 2008 with Eastern China Normal University, Shanghai, in association with Professor Yang Guorong. The theme is "Multiple Modernity: knowledge, culture, theory" (soon to be published). For another aspect, see my paper "Modernisation: démocratisation et individualisation. Le cas japonais" dans Alain-Marc Rieu and A. Antoine (ed.) *Individualisme et démocratie: France, Etats-Unis, Japon*, revue *Circé*, special issue (May, 1998), pp. 55-72.