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Salman Rushdie has gone underground ! From 1970 to 1980 the population of North American Indians increased from 700,000 to 1,4 million including the creation of several new tribes. The world network of stock markets is overcapitalized and lodged on the fluctuating brink of the threatening crash of 1990. The governments are there to stem disaster, by means of massive credit, whatever problem that may solve. In the East bloc, large-scale ethnic mobilization threatens the monolithic face of empire while presenting new and even less manageable problems. The same T-shirt designs from Acapulco, Mallorca or Hawaii; the same watch and computer clones with different names, even Gucci clones; the nostalgic turn in the tourist trade, catering to a search for roots, even if largely simulacra, and the Western search for the experience of otherness. Ethnic and cultural fragmentation and modernist homogenization are not two arguments, two opposing views of what is happening in the world today, but two constitutive elements of global reality. The dualist centralized world of the double East-West hegemony is fragmenting, politically and culturally, but the homogeneity of capitalism remains as intact and as systematic as ever. The cultural and by implication intellectual fragmentation of the world has undermined any attempt at a single interpretation of the current situation. We have served everything from post-industrialism, late capitalism and postmodernism (as a purely cultural phenomenon expressive of an evolution of Western capitalist society), to more sinister traditionalist representations of the decline of Western civilization, of creeping narcissism, moral decay, etc. For years there has been a rampaging battle among intellectuals concerning the pros and cons of postmodernity, while imperialism theorists have become addicted admirers of all sorts of social movements, and the development elites have shifted interests, from questions of development to those of human rights and democracy. And if the Ferdinand Braudel Center continues to analyze long waves, there has been a growing interest in older civilizations, their rise and fall, and in culture and identity. The intensive practice of identity is the hallmark of the present period. Rushdie's confrontation with fundamentalism highlights the volatile nature of this desperate negotiation of selfhood; the very consumption of modernist literature is suddenly a dangerous act. Global decentralization is tantamount to cultural renaissance. Liberation and self-determination, hysterical fanaticism and increasing border conflicts, all go hand in hand with an ever-increasing multinationalization of world market products.

Every social and cultural movement is a consumer or at least must define itself in relation to the world of goods as a non-consumer. Consumption within the

bounds of the world system is always a consumption of identity, canalized by a negotiation between self-definition and the array of possibilities offered by the capitalist market. The old saying 'you are what you eat', once a characterization of a vulgar ecological view of humanity, is strikingly accurate when it is understood as a thoroughly social act. For eating is an act of self-identification, as is all consumption. Proteins and calories aside, consumption, the libidinous half of social reproduction, is a significant part of the differential definition of social groups and individuals. The act of identification, the engagement of the person in a higher project, is in one sense an act of pure existential authenticity, but, to the degree that it implies a consumption of self-defining symbols that are not self-produced but obtained in the market-place, the authenticity is undermined by objectification and potential decontextualization. Thus, while engagement authenticates, its consumption de-authenticates. The only authentic act inside of such a system is an act that encompasses both the authentic and its commodification, that is, an engaged cynicism, a distancing that is simultaneously at one with the world.

Endo-sociality versus Exo-sociality

Endo-sociality assimilates the world by eradicating its original qualities or changing its signs. Hawaiians, for example, practice the forceful assimilation of the world to their own categories of existence. Whatever artifact, concept or interest from outside is concerned, its local usage is quite different. Another example is modern Greece, where endo-sociality imports much more elements from the outside view and nonetheless transforms these into local authenticity. Exo-sociality is founded on the opposite strategy, the assimilation process is meant to bring the outside qualities so that local needs are fulfilled.

The contrast is one of symmetrical inversion:

consumption of modernity versus production of tradition;

other-centered versus self-centered (pilgrimage to Paris versus struggle for land rights). The contrast in strategies of identity, I would suggest, is a question not simply of cultural difference but of global position. Bourdieu might perhaps be invoked here in referring to the way in which different conditions of existence generate different structures of *habitus*. The specific properties of these different strategies are, of course, clothed in cultural specificity, but I think it might well be argued that the strategies themselves can be accounted for by the particular local/global articulations within which they emerge. This does not imply that local cultural strategies are not crucial, but that to understand the strategies themselves it is necessary to account for their historical emergence.

The other-centered consumption of modernity is well exemplified in neo-colonial environments such as in the Congo, the self-centered production of traditions appears for example in Hawaii. The purpose of the contrast is not to establish

an interesting comparison but to suggest a global systemic connection, an articulation between local and global processes in a definite temporal dimension. The particular aspect of Hawaii in global structural terms is that Hawaiians are focused on their own cultural selfhood and do not look to the outside world as a source of strength or identity. This is especially true of members of the movement and it is perhaps a logical outcome of the strategy of construction of a specific cultural identity. But even in a village, where the outside world is invoked as a source of power, it is represented in strictly modern terms as political power or money. And if Hawaiians are to identify with this outside, it is because it represents progress with respect to Hawaiian conditions. The African case is quite the opposite. Here the outside is not only source of power but the very condition of existence of the inside. Money, medicine and development, as it is manifested via the state that channels it downward, are life-force, and in the Congo its source is usually Paris.

The tourist in Congo, and there are a few indeed, confronts a real, if transformed, Congolese society that he must live inside of during the time the he is resident. It is only in the hotel lobby and certain night-spots that he is entirely at home. The white post-colonial society is indeed an enclave in the larger black world. The tourist in Hawaii does not leave home. It is the Hawaiians who are the enclave, surrounded by a white world saturated with images of the former. In order to get to the Hawaiians one must leave the surrounding world and enter into one of the enclaves. The visitor to the Congo is a superior being in a position of potential patron. The visitor who gets through to the Hawaiians finds himself in a position of suspect equality. Hawaiian identity lies at the center for the Hawaiian, whereas Congolese identity is intimately bound up with Paris.

Identifying the past

Self-definition does not occur in a vacuum, but in a world already defined. As such it invariably fragments the larger identity space of which its subjects were previously part. This is as true of individual subjects as of societies or of any collective actors. The construction of a past in such terms is a project that selectively organizes events in a relation of continuity with a contemporary subject, thereby creating an appropriated representation of a life leading up to the present, that is, a life history fashioned in the act of self-definition. Identity, here, is decisively a question of empowerment. The people without history in this view are the people who have been prevented from identifying themselves for others. Similarly the current challenge to Western identity and history and the rapid increase in alternative, ethnic and sub-national identities are an expression of the deterioration of the conditions that empowered a dominant modernist history. The latter entails the liberation of formerly encompassed or superseded identities. I shall be arguing that the

dehegemonization of the Western-dominated world is simultaneously its dehomogenization.

Comparing constructions of identity

In the *Greek* case, a past defined by outsiders is used to forge a viable cultural identity in the present. In the *Hawaiian* case, the past defined by outsiders is denied, and cultural identity of the present is employed to forge a viable past. At one level this is simply a question of positioning and strategy. The *Greek* elite was working its way into the West and extricating itself from the Ottoman empire. The *Hawaiian* movement represents an attempt to extricate itself from the West and establish a self-centered autonomy. This is a difference between a politics of integration and a politics of disintegration. While neo-Hellenism discovered its identity in the gaze of the other, *Hawaiian* nationalists seek theirs within themselves, in reaction to the other's gaze. As a play of mirrors, the two strategies would appear to be opposed to one another: the former assimilating another's image of its own past to become what it is not, the latter