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Introduction: Globalisation, Diversity and Citizenship

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Eberhard's (1973) notion of *world time* provides a useful conceptual handle for explicating the character of current globalisation as a phase of a historical process punctuated by continuity and change. World time refers to a juncture of structures, trends, patterns and processes that connect and pervade the global system and constitute the defining elements of the particular period of world history. Although the concept says little about the historical linkages between a particular world time and other world times, the centrality of an integrated world system to globalisation implies that different phases of the latter (imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism) as well as its organizing or connecting concepts (development, modernization, post-modernity) are linked. Also, although interdependence, diffusion and flows characterize a world time, this cannot be taken to mean mutuality or equal exchange; we need to interrogate the pattern of global currents to see whether they are unidirectional or mutual and which parts of the world are at the producing end and which are at the receiving end. Unless this is done, the temptation to imagine globalisation as unqualifiedly positive for and beneficial to developing countries especially—a temptation into which popular commentaries of present-day globalisation have fallen—is difficult to resist.[1] Giddens' (1990:64) definition of globalisation as involving 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa' suggests mutual flows. This is however at variance with perspectives from the South which argue that globalisation flows are not mutual, but are more of one-way traffic from the global centres (North, around whose interests the world system was created in the first place), to the periphery (South) which was integrated as an appendage. It is this element of unequal exchange and dependence, which has bred resistance and contestations in the developing countries, that has historically characterized globalisation (cf. Rodney 1974; Wallerstein 1974; Amin, Arrighi, Frank, and Wallerstein 1982; Allen and Hamnett 1995; Ihonvbere 1996, 2000; Aina 1997).

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The foregoing gaps do not however reduce the analytical value of the concept of world time. It is particularly helpful for the interrogation of specific phases of world history including, for our purpose here, the current post-Cold War juncture of globalisation which has presented more inter-connectedness, diffusion and convergence of structures, trends and processes than any other period. The time-space compression of the juncture is encapsulated in the aphorism of the world having become a *global village*. Factors commonly adduced for the compression have to do with 'new communications [and information] technologies and the 'postmodern condition" (Kiely 1998:3), but there can be little doubt that the hegemonic character of the world system following the triumph of Western liberal capitalism in the aftermath of the Cold War explains the convergence around the commonalities, especially liberal democracy, market forces and security. The latter underscores the point already made about the uneven pattern of global flows. This time, the regime of bilateral and multilateral donor conditionalities ensured that the full weight of 'globalisation' was felt throughout the world. But globalisation is not all or only about the diffusion and bringing together of structures and processes; it also simultaneously strengthens localisms and nationalisms both at the level of society and that of states. This is what has been described as the twin process of 'universalization of particularism' and 'particularization of universalism' (Robertson 1991). A major consequence of the contradictory trajectories is that globalisation has reinforced 'geographical difference and diversity' (Allen and Hamnett 1995:235) and elicited 'new dynamics of re-localisation' (Morley and Robins 1995:116). It is for this reason that Kiely (1998:4) differentiates between time-space compression and time-space destruction and concludes that in spite of its defining commonalities, globalisation is experienced in different ways throughout the world.

Indeed, the defining elements of the post-Cold War world time are a mixed bag. The dominant themes include political liberalism, democratization, 'rolling back of the state', market forces, free trade, human rights, terrorism, increased role of non-state actors, including transnational corporations (or 'transnationalization'[2]) and civil society, environmentalism, upsurge of state-challenging ethno-nationalism and especially minority nationalism, citizenship contestations, virulent armed conflicts and wars, problems of refugees and internally displaced persons, astronomical rise in cross-border migration of people,[3] goods and services, regional integration, and the rise of a hegemonic international community that acts to ensure compliance with so-called global (but actually self-serving) standards. As a number of studies have shown, the developments have mostly been contradictory. To cite two examples: while (trade) liberalization engenders the movement of persons, goods and services around the world, boundaries are being closed by affluent societies to so-called economic migrants and refugees from poorer societies thereby increasing the pressure on the poorer states; and while increased democratization and pluralism has opened new vistas of diversity and accommodation of difference, exclusion, inequalities and repression have increased.

Not surprisingly Third World states have been at the receiving end of these processes, pressures and contradictions (for different dimensions of the effects of globalisation on the state in Africa, see Nabudere 2000). The states were stretched to the limits by the complexity and intensity of demands and conflicts and there was no telling how they were going to be able to cope—in fact, state collapse and dissolution remained a distinct reality/possibility in the post-

Cold War era. However, to ensure compliance with the world time, which was an accelerated process of guided modernization, most Third World states were forced to swallow the bitter pill of structural adjustment/economic reform at the same time they were implementing pre-packaged programmes of political liberalization and democratization. The contradictory pulls of the two processes produced unprecedented levels of poverty, state repression, state weakness/collapse, counter-state mobilization, identity-redefinitions, citizenship contestations, rising tension, violence, conflict and war, which in turn exacerbated the push and pull factors that precipitated massive withdrawals and flights from the state to swell the ranks of the new internally disadvantaged, marginalized and alienated persons[4] and global Diasporas.[5]

The foregoing provides a useful backdrop for the articles in this special issue of *Identity, Culture and Politics*. Originally presented at the Afro-Asian Dialogue held in Pretoria, South Africa, in January 2003, the articles interrogate various strands of the post-Cold War world time as it affected Asia and Africa in terms (i) of how global currents have transformed—or in fact deformed—social, economic and political formations in the regions and produced new structures, processes and demands; and (ii) the responses and interventions that have so far been elicited. Questions are raised about identity and diversity re-definitions and crises, violence and survival, human rights, citizenship, migrations and the search for global citizenship, new developmentalism, disintegrative tendencies, and the changing character of political society, civil society and the state and its capacity to cope with rapid changes and challenges. The opening article by C. J. W. L. Wee reminds us that although post-Cold War globalisation has engendered far-reaching transformations in Asia, it has also presented a great deal of continuity with previous moments of globalisation. The next article by Jean-Christophe Boungou Bazika presents a comparison of the African and Asian experiences of national economic development, with an emphasis on the trajectories of the post-Cold War world time. As was pointed out earlier, development and modernization which basically are processes by which developing non-Western countries are expected—some would say programmed—to become more like the developed capitalist countries of the West, are key connectors between the different world times. It is this old theme of becoming 'modern' (more rational) following the conventional wisdom that capitalism/globalism would destroy cultural differences that Lee examines in the light of the Singaporean experience. This was exactly what the ruling elite in Singapore, acting through the ruling PAP party, sought to do: to foster a rationalist capitalist culture. The project did not quite succeed, as the contradictory developments of the 1980s and 1990s especially encouraged the reassertion of suppressed culture and the emergence of Asian identity and 'modernity'—a 'look East' policy as the 'other' to Western individualist modernity. Finally, the economic crisis that hit the Asian Tigers between 1997 and 2000 gave the Singaporean governing elite the template for rethinking the paradigm of development.

The article by Francis Nyamnjoh also acknowledges the historical continuities between the present world time and previous times, but argues that post-Cold War globalisation has given greater impetus to extant structural inequalities and the processes of setting and resetting exclusionary and marginalizing boundaries. He then discusses the 'creative strategies' employed by various categories of African 'victims', depending on how they have been affected, to appropriate, gatecrash, subvert, cushion, or resist the effects of globalisation. Emigration to more affluent countries such as South Africa in Africa represents one of the more notable

survival strategies. What is central to most of the strategies and the emancipation of 'victims', however, is the quest for universal citizenship and the question of human rights. But, Nyamnjoh notes, rights are not given and cannot be taken for granted partly because 'claiming rights often entails denying [others] rights': 'the degree to which we enjoy the rights we claim…very much depends on how successfully we are able to keep firm the boundaries we create or inherit'. Moreover, to what extent can rights realistically promote or ensure (legal) equality, and what does this mean in practice? Are rights simply paper guarantees? Is cosmopolitanism (or universal citizenship) the antidote to exclusion? Nyamnjoh attempts to answer some of these questions elicited in the process of boundary redefinitions by focusing on the rise of a xenophobic culture in South Africa.

The rights problematic runs through virtually all the other articles. And for good reason. In a world where state capacities have generally been unable to match the demands of diversification, politicised identities, cultural liberties and recognition, and where exclusion and discrimination have become desperate and paranoiac almost to the point that suggests a relapse to the Hobbesian state of nature, the importance of rights as weapons of survival, emancipation and empowerment for members of marginalized and weak groups has also increased (Shivji 1989; Osaghae 1996; UNDP 2004; and Horowitz and Schnabel 2004 for the evolving culture of rights in transiting societies). The various dimensions and nuances of the problematic are addressed in the other papers from three perspectives: violence; citizenship contestations, including workers rights; and the perspective of the state. Anup Dhar and Ebrima Sall interrogate the perpetration and survival of violence as consequences of the fundamentalist differentiation of selves that has been on the upsurge in the present world time.

Can the rights discourse respond adequately to the contradictions that produce and in most cases justify violence? If right is essential to the survival of the individual and the group as is commonly assumed, does a perceived threat to survival justify the violence of survival? Are survival and annihilation of the other two sides of the same coin? Where does this leave the statist impulse, defined by Dhar as an impulse that reduces 'all differences, all unassimilated 'others' to the logic of the one and the same through law and legality', which remains the greatest obstacle to the accommodation of difference and diversity? Dhar searches for answers to these fundamental issues that go back to Darwin's survival battles in terms of an ethics of survival that emphasizes what is, one that is not cannibalistic and is about living rather than surviving, which thrives on the extinction of the other. Ebrima Sall's examination of the violence perpetrated by rebels of the RUF, 'one of the most nihilistic rebel movements in the world' during the civil war in Sierra Leone, shows other sides of violence which suggest that the survival of violence is structurally embedded in the inequalities, social injustices and mismanagement of conflicts by partisan state actors.

The next set of articles interrogates the rights discourse from the prism of citizenship contestations. The contests are some of the inevitable consequences of diversification, expansion of identity space and redefinitions, within which marginalized and excluded groups have found the voice to assert their 'selves'. Swati Ghosh examines the struggles by prostitutes in India to assert their rights as workers—who have a right to work—and constituents of civil society. The

pivots of the struggle included nomenclatural redefinition of 'prostitute' to 'sex worker' and of 'criminals' to 'victims'. The relative success of the struggle was evident in the efforts by the government and NGOs to mainstream sex workers in 'healthcare delivery' programmes. Rossana Favero-Karunaratna's article on mixed marriages and nation-building processes in Sri Lanka and Malaysia continue along the lines of genderized redefinitions. This time, it is the case of women with foreign spouses and how they have struggled to ensure the extension of (even if subaltern) citizenship rights to their husbands. Finally, Ogoh Alubo analyses the aggravations of contested citizenship in Nigeria as these have manifested in virulent and deadly ethnic, communal and religious conflicts which have increased astronomically since the country's return to civilian democracy in 1999. Like the other authors, Alubo identifies the hegemonic orientation of nation-building as a key factor in the rising wave of recognition and rights (protection)-seeking groups, of which ethnic minorities constitute an interesting category.

The third cluster of articles address the ways in which African states have responded to evolving modes of diversification and the challenges and threats posed by the new regime of demands. They belong to the new school of rethinking the state in Africa (Clapham 2001). Eghosa E. Osaghae opens with a consideration of the continued tenability of the federal solution to the management of diversity, and argues that federalism is not a rational choice option to be introduced or ditched by state power holders at will, but a device to be negotiated and bargained by state and non-state elites. This is more consonant with the dictates of diversity and explains the attraction federal solutions have for weak, marginalized and excluded groups (and elites). Godwin R. Murunga traces the roots of state nationalism in Kenya to the necessity for state power holders to curtail and control popular nationalist forces mobilized in the era of anti-colonial struggles, and analyses how the conditionalities of state reforms have both strengthened and weakened the ability of the state to deal with matters of ethnic justice and legitimacy. The final paper on the state in South Africa by Michael Neocosmos problematizes statist domination and hegemony which find resonance in (neo)liberalism and state nationalism. He criticizes post-modernist discourse of difference for celebrating inclusion rather than challenging the hegemonic state, and makes a case for an alternative trajectory of emancipatory politics that is democratic at the same time. The objective is not necessarily to capture state power—supposedly one of the limits of civil society—but the alteration of relations between state and society in a genuinely democratic manner.

The post-Cold War world time has engendered new and evolving forms of state and societal politics in Africa and Asia. What the papers in this volume show quite clearly is that while these forms may bear the mark of globalised currents and flows, they can only be properly understood if greater attention is paid to the local contexts within which they take place. With particular reference to the question of citizenship, whose conjunction with the rights discourse is the common theme in all the articles, the point is that notwithstanding the evolving modes of and concern with global and cosmopolitan citizenship, citizenship remains a within-state variable. It is within states that equity, universality and inclusion are sought and struggled for and the survival of the state remains as important as the survival and living of its (equal) citizens and constituents.

Notes

1. If the assumption is true, how does one explain why, despite being more integrated into the world economy than ever before, African economies that have embraced the liberalization therapy in particular have experienced increased marginalization, with per capita GDP levels being as low as they were in the early 1960s?
2. As used by Khor (2001:10), transnationalization refers to a scenario in which fewer transnational corporations are gaining a large and rapidly increasing proportion of world economic resources, production and market shares.
3. More than 130 million were estimated to be living outside their native countries at the beginning of the twentieth century, most of them migrants from poor developing countries in developed countries, and the number was said to rising by about 2 per cent every year (World Bank 2000)
4. Internally disadvantaged and marginalized persons are those who belong to groups that suffer systemic exclusion, discrimination and suppression within states, and have not crossed boundaries to seek refuge in other countries.
5. The new global Diasporas comprise economic refugees, political refugees, asylum seekers, brain drainers, human traffickers and their human commodities, trans-national commercial sex workers, all of whom have exited from their countries to seek the ‘comfort of strangers’ (Adisa 1995). Global Diasporas present a special category of problems with respect to human rights, citizenship and the management of difference.

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