The Shaping of World Images

Periods and Current Events

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Abstract: Two developments challenge the symbolic representation of societies in the last decades; (1) the enlargement of societies from smaller and familiar horizons to macro-regional and global ones. (2) In the last years the daily stream of events reveals the glocalisation; local events react to global stimuli as well as global trends are locally driven. (3) Crises and cataclysms like the financial disaster, 11-9, Tsunami, Katrina, Chernobyl, climate issues generate a worldwide increase of insecurities; the shaping of future images about global society is under stress. Despite of complexity the world society's imagery reveals significant periods shaping its images. It seems that this process follows cycles of chaos opening outlooks and including new players and cycles of closure or obsessions imposing ordering categories and excluding actors.

The periods are stored as modules of a collective memory. The stream of current events overwrite it not also but change the emerging memory of global society. On its background images and models of global society are produced and diffused.

Images in face of large societies

„Culture is a part in the senseless infinity of the worldwide stream of events, which is acknowledged with sense and relevance by a human point of view." Max Weber lived in a period, when globalization was not a first ranked issue in research. But he focused substantially the power of images as a part of culture. The "glass palace" was, for instance, one of the impressing images he used as a metaphor for the total rationalization of societies. Indeed this topic emanated from the streams of modernization, which transcended natio-nal borders, ideological systems (libera-lism, socialism, colonialism as well as
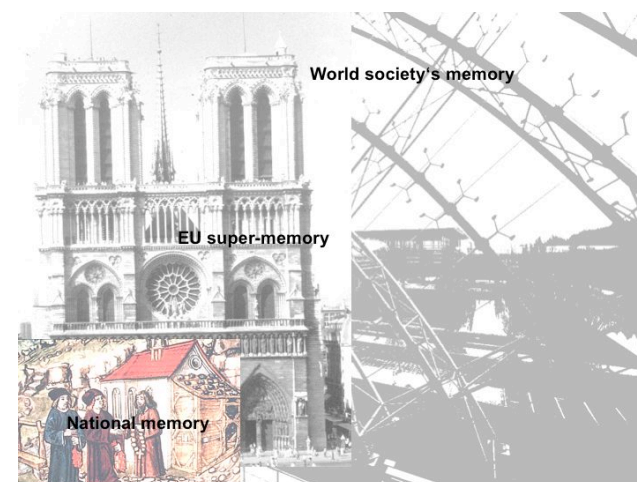
Figure 1 Societies are building active memories of its past. But from national to European and global society the quality, density and functions of memories decrease. Images of world society are shaped by memory of past periods summarized and discussed in the paper. But this global memory is continuously overwritten by the stream of daily events. Memory and events impact the images. We mark the challenges of the past periods by a selection of current events from World_ Observatory.

fascism) during the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century.

Is a culture capable to enumerate all facts, to measure the states and dynamics of its "real societal subjects" and "stream of events"? Evidently there are restrictions in such a "tangible" approach; collecting all facts and constructing an encyclopedic order to explain the sense and the meanings of a period finds its limits. There is the imagery inherent to a culture, which fills the deficit beyond the confined knowledge of the facts. One can summarize it as the principle of symbolic filling the deficient knowledge relying on facts and data.

This law became a dramatic actuality since individual societies are reflecting themselves as parts of a larger unit – the global society. The range of small and familiar societies, the villages, regions or nations, is embedded into macro regional and global society. The smaller ones are increasingly challenged by these enlarged societal horizons. An ocean of unknown occurrences, deficiencies of the positivist knowledge about facts, challenge the symbolic culture, i.e. the mapping of new emerging, large societal units as well as smaller and more familiar ones[1].

Evidently social sciences and humanities are biased by its focus on Europe. Indeed Europe looks back to a rich history of building realms, nations, and states. In contrast to the worldwide extension of the global society, Europe is shaped by a long tradition of its imagery. The fall and rise of empires through history was a favored objective of social science. Scholars addressed it in earlier studies (Anderson 1974/96; Braudel 1987) and broadened the topic to a stream of research in face of globalization (Münkler 2005). Most of these studies concentrate on explaining the transformations by the real factors of politics and economy[2]. Evidently it is much more feasible to collect facts and data about the societal change in previous periods. But nonetheless, the imagery of the agents of these periods played a significant role as well. They

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[1] A pioneering role played Heintz (1982) trying to define theoretical as well as empirical approaches to world society.

[2] Are there general laws of evolution? Modelski (2005: 39-52) tries to highlight the evolutionary pathways in history focusing on factors of innovation in economy, political organisations and interactions.

*"**Kultur ist ein vom Standpunkt des Menschen aus mit Sinn und Bedeutung bedachter endlicher Ausschnitt aus der sinnlosen Unendlichkeit des Weltgeschehens";** Max Weber 1973: 223. The German tradition of "Kultursoziologie" could substantially contribute to the topic, if it would be reviewed under the perspective of world society. Simmel (1918: 28-98) offers basic reflections on the symbolic construction of "eine Welt" (one world) and on the dynamics of objective and subjective cultures. Cassirer (1923: 1- 41) identifies essential elements of symbolic practices and processes in societies. His concept of space and time (1918: 146 – 179) is of special interest since both topoi are challenged by the international enlargements of society. Durkheim (1885) elaborated the sociological approach to consciousness (conscience collective): memory and images are those societal facts explaining the integration and functional dynamics of society. In current synthetic approaches the global culture is one of the basic dimensions of connections ("Verknüpfungen") constituting the global society (Bornschier 2002: 100-119). The image production seems to be an ambiguous medium; it can be very independent from power as well as strongly related to power agencies.*

tried to fill the vacuum by dreaming, imaging and modeling their „worlds" under the point of a given or aspired "own" culture.

Nations have been generated as imagined communities (Anderson 1991). The rise of empires was accompanied by political and societal models and by imagery, which should legitimize hegemony. Generally this observation has reached a consensus, but nonetheless the symbolic frames of images and models remained at the margin of interest, for instance, reduced to the political-ideological sort of power, besides the military, the political-administrative and the economic one (Münkler 2005: 35-78; Bourdieu 1982).

There are several reasons for the restricted interest on symbolic processes going hand in hand with the fall and rise of empires. Firstly, the processes of imagery seem to become enormously chaotic and complex. One reason is that the media and information sectors offer a steady flow of events, materials, pictures, signs and words in the modern global arena[3]; there is an understandable doubt whether it makes sense to deal with images or societal models, which seem to lack order. Doubts are evidently reinforced by the assumption that the era, when coherent "ideologies" predominated, has ended[4]. On the other side, actually used terms like "societal models or images"[5] are created as constructs for public relations targeted to specific actors and audiences, for policy makers, managers, firms, amongst others. Such concepts tend to remain mostly on the surface and accordingly are unattractive for scholars; so an in-depth pre-occupation with these terms is still missing. Nevertheless, the lacking concern is astonishing, taking into account that there is a rich tradition of analyzing the social and political history through the lenses of fall and rise of ideas, the

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[3] The reflection of these processes is a topic since Benjamin to Baudrillard; see Lorenz Engell et al. (Eds, 1999).

[4] It was the period of "high ideologies (Hochideologien), which shifted to that of "contaminated ideologies" (kontaminierte Ideologien): Meier-Dallach 1974.

[5] The term "image" elucidates the facets of the more general term "social consciousness", so it can be applied in empirical research (Meier-Dallach 1988). Moreover the concept of image opens the ways to link the more fundamental aspects of consciousness with visual phenomena, for instance with the culture of artefacts or architecture (for instance globalization of urban space in Warsaw, see p 4).

World observatory registers the daily event stream and interprets them as trends and dynamics in six scenarios of evolution:

Civil *World: trends shape the international society as civil society, the dream and vision of Immanuel Kant.*
One *World: trends shape the international society as one world, the dream and vision of Adam Smith.*
Domesticated *World: trends shape the international society as order based on power, the vision of Thomas Hobbes.*
Negotiated *World: trends shape the international society as society of "round tables" and successful negotiations, the vision of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.*
Own *World: trends shape the international society as coexistence of nations, imperia and regions based on identities and the own traditions, the vision of Konstantin Leontjew.*
Threatened *World: trends lead the international society towards unsolvable problems, catastrophes; it is the vision of Cassandra.*
See: http://www.culturprospectiv.ch/de:world_observatory

streams of thoughts and moods or as the Germans say the "Zeitgeist".

In this essay the concepts of societal models and images will be emphasized. It is assumed that the creation of symbolic frames is basic for understanding the shifts, trends and scenarios of development. Three questions are raised: How these images have been developed since the last World War? Which rules are steering its rise and fall? How are the images correlated with the power plays and its underlying structural positions?

First an outlook will be summarized on how the imagery of the worldwide society can be characterized as patterns since the 2nd World War.

Lineages of world society's imagery

In order to illustrate the modern challenges for building images an outlook into transition countries, for instance Poland as a special laboratory, is helpful. In Warsaw the 'Pałac Kultury' tells about himself: "mam 50 lat" (I have 50 years). In the last decade it became encircled by new skylines of towers constructed from glass and steel. These try to dominate Stalin's gift designed as a symbol for the panorama of socialist societies after the 2nd World War. The contrast is most impressing when the sun rises and the towers of glass, the new palaces welcome the light, reflect and diffuse it over Warsaw. The new buildings are the dominant players with extraverted ambitions. They celebrate a worldwide imagery, visions of the "one-world" as an economically fit metro pole to the global society, the new master-model for Warsaw and Poland. – The windows of the old palace seem to look inward, the former panorama survives by an introverted gesture. The sunlight is mutated into a yellow grey by the cubic stones of the walls. The square windows, countersunk in themselves, absorb the sunlight rather than to reflect it. The palace of culture remembers to a weeping willow; could this be the reason that Polish people accept it currently as a national symbol, although they strongly hated it before? Evidently the former top palace shifts from a former panorama to a "dark hall"; its function is to preserve a past, which is outshone by the new generation of towers.

Warsaw is a site to illustrate the change of paradigms. An old symbolic national image of an empire, the socialist one, enters into that of the EU.

Figure 2 Global whirl in Warsaw. New buildings and towers dominate the palac kultury, a monument from the period two worlds at the time of Stalin.

But this is not the whole story. Before and immediately after the entry into the EU, Poland has been immersed into the worldwide symbolic space. Polish people tried to participate in all those places where a part of worldwide society seemed to be accessible: by providing the pope, by the solidarity movement (Solidarnosc) as the most successful breakthrough to a new society, by the missionary role within the EU in regard to the rest of the Eastern hemisphere. Last but not least: by sending soldiers to Iraq as a small co-player with the world's hegemony.

Let's have a look on the chaotic plays between the solidarity movement and its agents, and the stakeholders of the old socialist regime twenty-five years ago. The chaos was hardly to describe; dependent and excluded workers became autonomous players. During a long period of interregnum the hopes for a regime change and the fears to become occupied described a stressful zig-zag curve[6]. One expression was

predominant in this situation: negotiation (negocjacja). Overnight, formerly acrimonious enemies sat at a round-table; they discussed and looked for solutions. – This picture illustrates the dynamics at the chaotic zone of symbolic cosmos. Poland demonstrated and explored them since the 80ties. The world imagery is basically triggered by chaotic events, its liberties, uncertainties, risks and insecurities.

The next picture is typical for the present state of Poland. In summer 2005, a group of young Polish students was bound for a congress in Poznan in the Warsaw-Berlin Express. The topic of the congress was a special one: „normalizacja". The Polish society has to define and harmonize all norms to the standards of the EU. The travel to this congress didn't seem highly motivated. Conference papers fell uncared down and some of the youths became sleepy. Others changed to pleasant talks. In fact, the imagination of society is currently under the pressure of the matrix-pattern, the opposite to the chaotic zone. This image of Europe and that of the world – the prescriptions of norms by new global

Figure 3 The lineages of world society's imagery: six periods.

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[6] The phenomenon of post-socialist ambivalence is a crucial feature in order to understand transitions and situations in post-socialist countries (Ryabczuk 2004: 99-146). An impressing illustration of the phenomenon of floating minds in Eastern European contexts is

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observed in Georgia (Meier-Dallach, Pachulia 2005).

agencies like WTO, World Bank, EU – is rather a cold issue in a nation trained for the hot and chaotic style in symbolic expression.

The Polish example illustrates the "agora-model", one of the stages of the lineages of world society's imagery. Everywhere on earth the imagery of the own nation is exposed to the symbolic frames shaping the largest society of the possible ones – the world society. The lineages of world society's imagery can be described as a sequence of six patterns (see figure 3).

I   The acknowledgment of diversities

After the 2nd World War mankind acknowledged its diversity. It opened the frame of perceiving, assessing and treating the world as a corporate multitude of cultures and communities. Thereby, not the fact of diversity was new: black people built the (slavery) working class worldwide visible since 300 years. The Indians and original inhabitants have been abolished or expelled to reservations. Important expeditions inside to Africa and its descriptions have been nearly completed at the end of the 19th century.

New was the normative power for the worldwide diversity model; the right to build nations and nation-states for those guarded and domesticated as annex-societies by the colonial powers. The culture of the former dependent ethnic groups was not only a diversity for ethnologists, but it was also supported by the civil right for autonomy as a nation. The native cultures defined the worldwide diversity cosmos on the basis of civic norms – the integrity as nations and states accepted by the world community, the civic world model.

People experienced this period as dissolving of old borders and orders – as part of a chaotic experience in every day life. In the metro poles the colored workers discerned that they were simultaneously hidden citizens of their new mother-nations. White people had to learn to read these new definitions of borders and orders. The own world was duplicated by the other. Last but not least in nearly all conferences people of different colors and cultures increased the diversity all over the world.

This period formed one of the most relevant shaping of world society and can be used as illustration to show how imagery is generated. The world-

Figure 4 The period after the 2nd world war enriched the global diversity of cultures. The peoples of the South became independent and parts of the global society. It was a period of optimism.

as-diversity model was driven by chaos, i.e. as dissolution of old borders and orders. Its genesis was strongly supported by emotional moods of optimism and trust to a progressive line of history and the future of mankind. The image gained the status of a panorama view for mankind. Sanctioned by important authorities, for example by the UNO and its bodies, it is one of the master models of world society. It is openly or latently attracting people until today.

However, each period of learning from chaos evokes fear, threats and interests around and between the borders and orders. The gained freedom in a first short period is responded by containment in the following one. Chaos tends to be controlled by centres of gravity. These have been found in the concept of new spatial borders – the nations (Meyer 1980). The birth of numerous new nations and states followed the logic of a „matrix". The new nations were often constructed according to virtual borderlines. The rediscovered and revitalized historic „organisms" of the pre-colonialist countries became part of a „world-matrix-model". Surely, the diversity model remains a positive metaphor, but the shadows of the new border regimes could not be absorbed by the euphoric feelings at the beginning of the period. The old nations imposed to the freed newcomers of the world the „nationality and statehood" defined by their code of civil coexistence.

The image of world society profits from the drives for chaos. In these situations diversity is taken at its word, at the details. Vice versa: the image of world society gets into difficulties, when the drives for gravity[7] increase or become predominant. The centres lose the capacity to free themselves from own images. They take along their obsessions and they project own national concepts on to others. They follow the world from the prospect of an elephant in opposition to that of a butterfly. This approach can be called the "obsessive-acquiring" style, since it is an effort to subdue the whole world, the others, under the own world, which is taken as a centre of gravity.

The first obsession of the new world order was the pressure to be

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[7] Understanding societies in Eastern Europe is facilitated by the use of five driving forces as a guiding code; drives for chaos, drives for interactions, drives by self-help and self-organization, drives by rebuilding the past for the future and drives for gravity (Meier-Dallach, Walter 2005; Meier-Dallach, Pachulia 2005).

An essential aspect of the world society's image is its endless diversity. How to map it? In order to do this, social science should enrich its cognitive fields to the cultural sciences including highly competent writers. Kapuscinski, for instance, is an ingenious combination of a historian, sociologist, writer and journalist. He works as an explorer of the imagery of world society. He describes the passing of a border as sequences of peculiarities, unknown features, events and hidden narrations. In Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe the generalized images of the continents and countries became mosaics for him and hardly understandable as models.

Passages through borders demand a kind of purification: forgetting the own images for getting ready to read the new situations behind the limits and to become sensitive to the chaos, to the dark sides of borders and orders. By including this, the world society's image would get the richest one, if it could be possible to explore it by „Herodot's style" (2004). The world as "diversity model" or "cluster" demands the approach from a butterfly's angle. The chaos of details is to be emphasized everywhere.

acknowledged as nation state. Nation states became the first ranked agencies for activating people mainly in the acquitted parts of the world. The nationalism of the new nations offered the frame to see and construct the world. From Asia, to Africa, to South America and Southern Europe a series of charismatic leaders illustrate this model and its symbolic power to mobilize the masses. An enormous energy was freed all over the world. Was it too explosive? Or was there a lack of time for learning from diversity by real interactions between the new and old nations, the own and the foreign worlds?

II   Diversities mutate into polarity: two worlds

The imagery of world society underlies deficits of time. A long time span is needed for coping with diversities; interactions, contacts and exchange are necessary to find the new defnition of the "WE" and the "THEY"[8]

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[8] These categories can be used in the sense of an every day code for structures and polarisations, as a popular reflection of structural cleavages; they often were used in socialist countries.

within the cleavages and structural disparities of global society. The forming of models of society, the own as well as the foreign, needs to re-build the past. How will it be changed in face of current global situation and developments? The image of world society needs time to become a "ripe" symbolic frame. But time is compressed through players who put themselves as centre of gravity. They cut it, aiming to reduce diversity radically and to substitute it by polarity: the "two-world-model" of a capitalist against a socialist hemisphere is probably the most relevant example of this rule. The whole energy inherent to the diversities became absorbed by two competing obsessions: there was no alternative between the two models. Mankind should not have the time to learn transcending them. The Cold War was a blockade of interaction time for learning outside of the strict obsessions. It was one of the strongest pressures on social capital to create a world society's imagery adequate to the new global diversities. Evidently the movement of the Non-Aligned Nations tried to seek for a third way between the two big obsessions but did not success at the end.
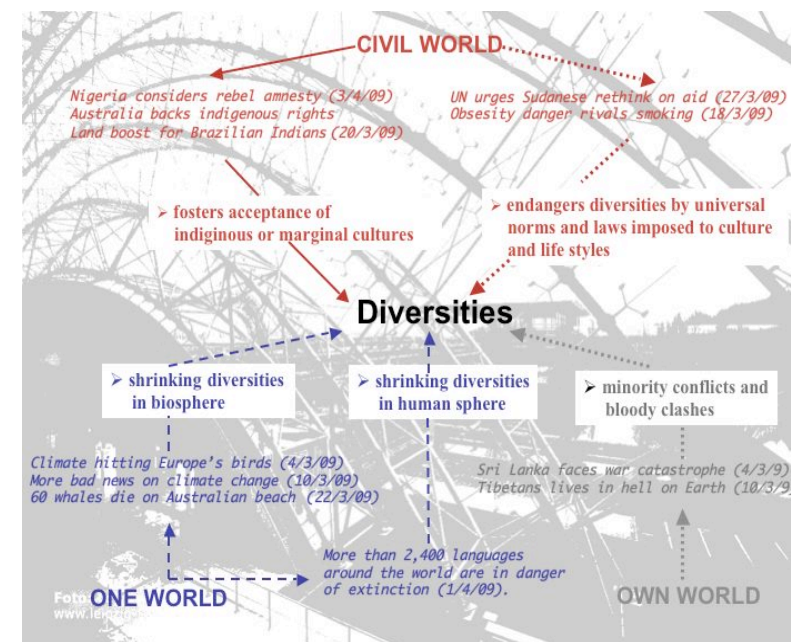
The second rule is linked to the

Figure 5 The period diversities is impacted by current trends in civil society's scenario, positively by events supporting the acceptance of indigenous cultures. But such acceptances remain often "work of mourning". Rather ambiguous are influences of universal norms, laws and moral appeals, which are imposed on national, regional or local cultures and conditions of life. A strong enemy of diversities are the destroyed or endangered beings of biosphere and the loss of cultural variety in human sphere, for instance of languages. Diversities trigger minority conflicts and clashes between identities of groups. Own world provides, for instance, feelings of being a distinct ethnic group against an imposed central nationality; a current example is the conflict between Tibet and China's centralist philosophy of national unity. But the relation is ambiguous since by conflict resolution ethnic or minorities become abolished (negative impacts) or by resistance articulate the own identity as an aspect of worldwide diversity.

deficit of time. National images contain a history of sequences, a beginning, a flourishing period, decline and maybe an end. The time follows to a progressive line or to a regression one. But the image of world society is timeless. It is characterized by simultaneousness. Herodot is a theoretician of world society as well as a modern scholar. The world society's image contains all histories of communities since the beginning of history. Even if there would be an endless time reservoir to learn the diversity of historical forms, it remains endless, chaotic and a blank sheet. A world emperor finds himself in a very privileged situation: he is expected to create his world history freed from a historical code, from tradition as well as from empirical insights. Going hand in hand with his mission, he invents the world since it seems to be an endless, chaotic flow of events, narrations, contingency. Timelessness means that he may link each period to any other. Napoleon has embedded his mission into the Roman obsession of the world. The possibility to create a world image in an arbitrary mode explains the naïve pictures used by imperators until the current history everywhere in the world.

The second period of world society's images describes a backlash from the chaotic zone of diversities to the frame constructed and controlled by the two centres of gravity, the USA and the Soviet Union. Energy was addressed to install the capitalist model as well as the socialist one as panorama, light towers over the world. Diversities have been a problem for the new states in the peripheries since the liberation. Hence the socialist world model could become attractive there, because it joined the new nation's mobilization to a class outlook of the own and the international societies. However, diversities always were autonomous energies and hardly suppressible by a collective class perspective. Within the polarity diversities prevailed, releasing multi facet types from the two modally centers. This is also evident in the more modernized parts of the world. In the Eastern European hemisphere the national individuality of the socialist model was much higher than estimated and conceded by officials. Diversities were blocked by strict restriction for interactions between the socialist members – even between regions within a country.

In sum the shift from diversity to polarities shaped a significant period of

Figure 6 After the first period the world society mutated more and more into a two-world model. The global images became strongly polarized between a socialist version against the liberal capitalist model. It was a period of strong "orders".

the world society's imagery. Nearly in all parts of the world, the societal models of this period reflect still its influence. The socialist spatial imagery polarizes, for instance, Russians and Ukrainians until today. A Russian citizen still feels to be in "his" world, when crossing the border to the Ukraine, while the latter experiences the border to Russia increasingly as diversity. The empirical research of "post-communist man" illustrates such influences in all countries of Eastern Europe. But it is nearly unexplored how this period shaped the image of world society in other parts of the world.

One abbreviated conclusion can be summarized. On the one hand, the exigency for a world society image was created and strengthened. This vision was not primordially induced by the two "obsessive" models, the capitalist and socialist one, but by the fears of a fatal atomic war. The world society was enforced to develop an image, which embraces the value of security for all. It was now learning in face of fear and not by a positive vision like for instance the mankind of diversities. On the other hand, the period of polarization stressed the global society as a system of disparities, centers and peripheries. The unity

of the world is a source of tensions and horrible risks; its control favors Hobbes' point of view[9].

It seems possible to proof the hypothesis that the world society's imagery describes specific cycles. To a chaotic period responds a time of order. In the first period the image of world society becomes freed from the obsessions of powers. It is stimulated by interactions and communications between actors; they invent new societal models for the own and the international societies. To such an open period a more shut one responds. The centers of gravity become more attractive; they offer worldviews derived from their own imagery. Symbolic power means to impose the own obsessions on others. It seems that the free periods are shorter than the following periods of order. This will be made evident by looking to the third period.

III   The world as round tables

The events during the late 80ties in Eastern Europe embarrassed social scientists holding deterministic concepts

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[9] This analogy is often notified reflecting the global society under a historical and philosophical perspective: Kohler 2005: 159.
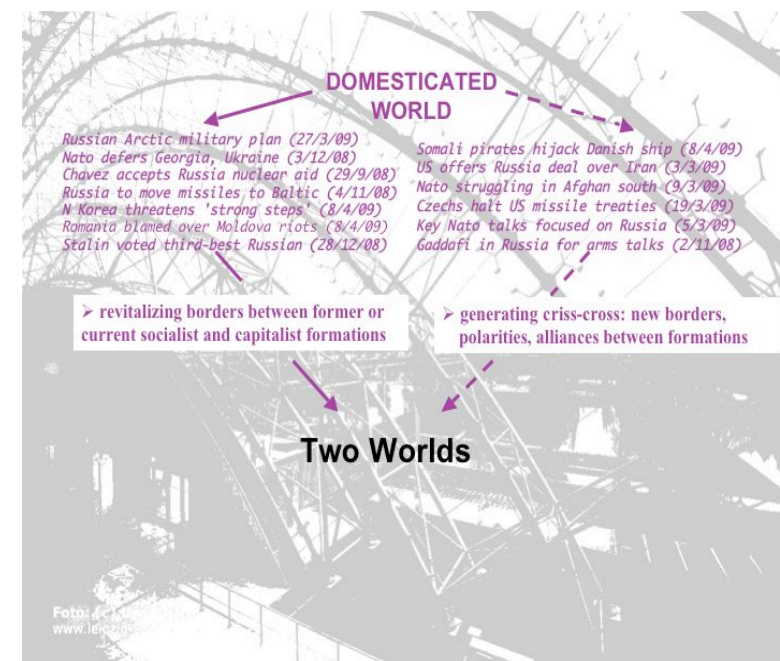

Figure 7 Two worlds' period was that of power plays between capitalist and socialist formations. Are they dissolving in following periods? Current events illustrate that former hegemonic rivalries are still relevant even if they change the character. One can observe a stream of events revitalizing former borders under new geopolitical conditions. Although not at the foreground of world events the memory remains active: in people's mind, for instance Stalin is assessed a third-best Russian. At the other hand a series of events document the current change of two worlds' memory. New parts and players of global society, newcomers like Iran, generate new options. The former hegemony needs new alliances and acceptance of other players, from Latin America, Africa, Europe or Asia. The power play becomes more complicated since the one axis, civil versus failed states and terrorist groups, seems to lose its dominance (under Obama).

of societal change[10]. The paradoxes surprised the world public; instead of occupations the control powers, police and military, did not leave their caserns; expected bloodsheds did not take place; instead of loudly riots people installed round tables, while the power hierarchies have been silently dissolved. The matrix of bureaucratic controls and the routines to cope with them in every day life disappeared over night. The dark zones, protected by the former power, have been admitted to discussions.

Hopes overwrote fears. But an alternative vision didn't exist yet, neither for the own society's pathways to the future nor for the global society. The consciousness and models of society floated. The post-socialist ambivalences became the relevant force in symbolic practices and debates. The shaping of the own images and of the models of the larger and the international society started from the chaotic zone; it was like a zero-point for finding new images and models for the future. The paradox is astonishing: While Fukuyama (1992) declared this zero-stage of mankind as the end of history, its completion by the liberal and capitalist market order, the Eastern European people experienced it as an endless circle of question marks.

Like in stage I, the world as "diversity model", the international community was again on the cusp of an opportunity. In Eastern Europe a rich pool of country-specific and regional diversities was freed, arising from the dark zones to the surface. How could it be utilized for interactions, contacts and exchanges between the Eastern and the other parts of the world? The same dilemma showed up, which has been observable before in the diversity model: the open period seemed to be too dangerous. Western or Southern parts of the world could be affected by the new ambiguities in a subversive manner. For the stakeholders of the gravity principle in the centers the situation appeared too explosive to give time instead of fixing the floating minds in Eastern European countries. The open period was ended before it could develop its potential for finding new definitions of "WE" and

Figure 8 The institution of round tables was important to find peaceful roads to the post-soviet and post-socialist future in Eastern Europe. Opposite to Fukuyama's end of history, the global society will be influenced substantially by the outlooks of Eastern European countries to the global future.

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[10] The period is an impressing testimonial of the hypothesis of Chase-Dunn (2005) that semi-peripheries can play the role of innovative forces for the building of a world system. People in Eastern European countries created interesting anti-systemic forces, especially at the early 90ties – and in Poland since 1980.

"THEY" within the new world, of images how to rebuild the past in Eastern[11] as well as in Western parts of the world. The imagery of world society missed again a real chance for developing a riper symbolic frame. – Three further stages describe what happened since this zero-zone in the early nineties.

IV   Flat World and high-speed-economy

Since the 80ties the production of symbolic signs combined with brand marketing has been succumbing a series of revolutions. This process regards predominantly the technical production and diffusion of signs, the content itself is rather secondarily. It is a revolution of technologies and not of culture. While the first jump ahead, it seems even that the latter falls back[12]. But the globalization-push by the new communication agents has strong impacts on the economies; any communicable material can reach at least the metro poles of the world by multimedia communication. Bank transfers, management information of firms and the virtual productivity change the time- and space-relations of economy. The top sectors of economy change to the high-speed form: the survival of companies is defined by the minimum of invested time for a successful product on the markets. The one-world vision is emerging and becoming complete: each company of a society is a cluster of virtual and physical locations through the international markets. And the companies are the heroes of this new world vision. They land and leave where they wish like UFO's (Unidentified Flying Object)[13]. The political agencies and powers, relevant in former stages,

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[11] In Eastern European societies situations and trends can be described by civil cycles triggered by the drives of chaos, of new interactions and of self-organization on the one hand, which are countered by hegemonic cycles, i. e. the predominance of a past-orientation and the drives for gravity, on the other hand. In each country these drives and forces are very specific and individual. But mainly in Russia the force of gravity predominates regularly (Vorozheikina 2002), while in the smaller states the civil cycles seem to be stronger.

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[12] This is a typical case of a techno-euphoric push stimulated and transported by the internet and the enthusiasm for the free market; an excellent report about this process is Friedman's book "The World is flat" 2005.

[13] The change of companies to "network enterprises" (Castells 1996) are experienced by managers, staffs and local people.
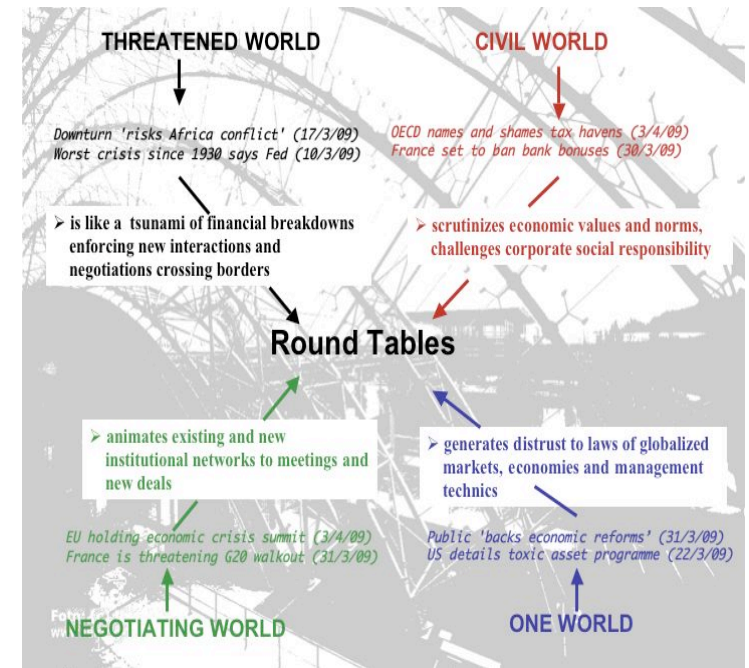

Figure 9 Four streams of events support the round table period, the negotiating between society and state facing critical situations. The first trigger is Cassandra, the crisis as threat for economies. Secondly, events affect the civil cluster; economy is challenged by new civil values visible in face of crimes, bad conducts of former elites. Thirdly, events motivate to round tables since the optimistic outlook on one world as a self steering system is damaged. Fourthly negotiation (Rousseau scenario) is mobilised: existing and new actors try to find joint solutions, deals as well as regulations. The current reinforcement of round table period is evoked by the catastrophic impacts of financial crisis. However the scenario Cassandra directly activates the three other clusters. In last time round tables mutated into platforms where regulation is more and more linked to power. So the domesticated world (Hobbes), the question of who regulates what, plays is tacitly or openly a significant role.

withdraw their responsibility, since they acclaim the national portfolio of globally potent companies as the best way for solving most problems, even that of unemployment caused by the abolishment of "time-using" work places.

This vision of simultaneousness fascinates since the beginning of modernization. Mainly the young generations experience this stage as enormous freedom of choice: to be and to go everywhere[14]. The "one-world model" has chaotic tendencies and triggers new visions and models of society. The physical extension of the earth is not longer a substantial problem, since it can be overplayed by virtual facilities. Timelessness, the basic feature of world society's imagery, can be experienced by switching between all offers of symbols available in the world's virtual hyper engines.
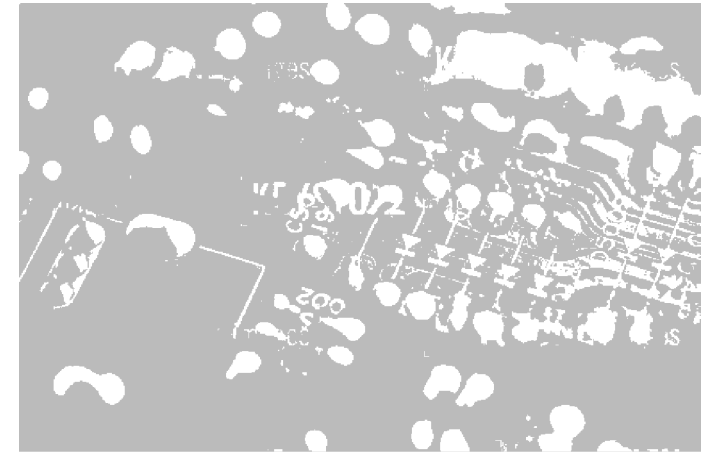
For the first time in the genesis of the world's society imagery the backlash to order is not made by an obsession of a political power agency. It is the cutting of time produced by the high-speed-economy, which re-installs the order in the chaos. While people feel that they have captured the global space they lose more and more the time for themselves, the right for to be non touchable, the right to work and think on one self. The one-world scenario is also an experience of limits. And these do not concern only the life style options but the substantial good of societies – the access to work and labour markets.

One of the rules stated that the image of world society needs some spans of time. Again its development is hindered by the destruction of time required for a mature image. A look on the practice can illustrate this. The best human-adopted engines demand the facilities for a matrix-like world defined by running through endless chains of links. This is the new obsession. It excludes more ascetic or mystic approaches to gain experiences for making images and models.

V   Competition of new orders

In the future oriented parts of societies a significant change of concepts and

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[14] A recent investigation among the youth verifies the group of accelerators against the stationary one; both groups show empirically significant differences in modes and contents of images and attitudes about society, history and future; also access to the internet is a predictor of attitudes about societal issues and perspectives (Meier-Dallach et al. 2003: 9-11/109-140).

Figure 10 The trends towards the paradigm of flat world are strongly determined by an evolution of expectations to participate in the global markets and developments. Evidently one of the pushing force of the global imagery of this period is the digital revolution and the IT-wave.

modes highlights the fifth period. During the last years terms like "corporate governance" got ahead in big companies. The players of the former stage, one-world and high-speed economy, seem to rethink their role in the world[15]. Not only the companies, but also the national and international agencies seem to be in search for new orders – for societal models. The essentials of these new orientations are the linking strategies of sectors, which have been specialised before, – companies, governments and even NGO's. The new orders still have a diffuse form. The chaotic pole of the world society's imagery gains significance again. Worldwide there are debates, researches and consulting activities concentrated on the question who will offer the best practice in "corporate governing". Will it be the American model, the British, the Japanese, French, German or the Scandinavian one? This competition of "linked

orders" could be an enriching approach to the world society's image[16].

And again the trends to close the exploring period before the development and test of the best models could be completed, are observable. It is paradoxical yet typical for a period of new orientation. The UNO, the world policy agency, installed an economic and financial superstructure. The diversity of the different governance models has been taken under the protection of the World Bank. This institution defines – like the colonialists in earlier periods – the matrix-model of the global societies imposing it on each member. An enormous set of fact sheets tries to measure the performances and deficits of each country. A gigantic framework of norms and prescriptions is defining the world.
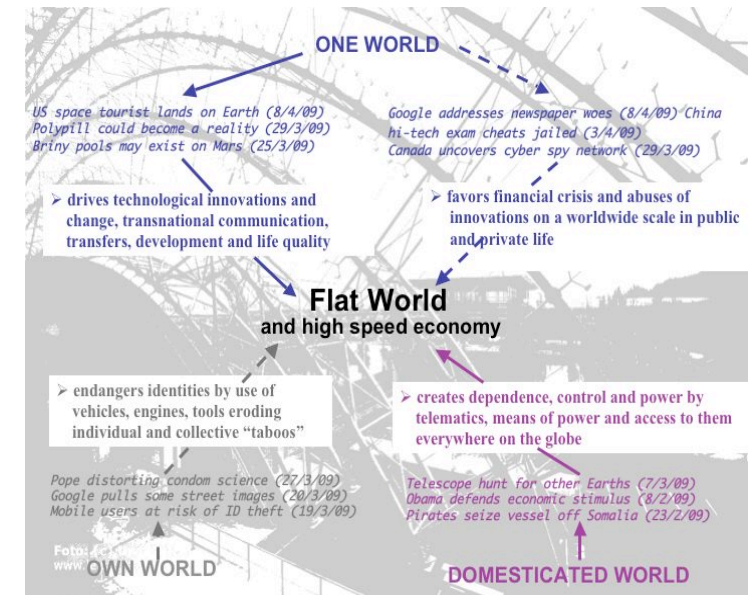

Figure 11 The period flat world is currently under the stress of three clusters (scenarios). Evidently the positive drivers of one world, innovations, gaining in short time world wide expansion and diffusion remain first ranked. But flat world evokes critical events caused by high speed economy. An enemy of it are events illustrating of how identities are abolished in face of physical and virtual hyper-mobility. But also power games profit from high speed economy and its diffusion: technological lead means chances for dominance, not only for legal and open power but also for non-legal and hidden forms.

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[15] Instead of competition the learning by networks is claimed and in companies the search for labels becomes a quality criterion (Ruggie 2002). After the rise of the term 'corporate social responsibility' a shift to 'social performance' and terms like 'diversity' (as a positive norm and resource) can be observed.

[16] The transnational companies are seeking to upgrade their profile; they want to be more than shareholder-players but stakeholders within the world culture (Boli et al. 2001), which is often blamed as image- or branding-strategy. There are a lot of activities illustrating this process for searching new norms and orders between companies, societies, organizations and stakeholders (see for instance the various approaches across the different contexts of Europe, US and Latin America: Savall et al. (Ed.), 2005).

Does the world society's imagery end with this outlook? It seems not to be the case. The new obsession is rejected in many regions, mainly by the newcomers[17]. In fact, the competition of orders has been strongly challenged during the last years. New "disorders" are entering the system: mainly China, India, Iran, Brazil are new competing players on a global scale. How to domesticate them in addition to the further probable runners from the Eastern parts, mainly Russia? The newcomers are very difficult to define in terms of the "one-world" paradigm. They behave strangely as dissidents and they generate a new type of chaos.

VI   Janus Worlds

Newcomers are not anxious to accept the given world structure. They feel as probable new centres of the future world society. They enter the arena of the world, accounting the expectations of huge populations. China represents an excellent example. Its investments in African oil resources are done in defiance of any governance norms (installed for instance by the World Bank), while the Confucian tradition at home has regained importance as one of the holy worlds relevant for mankind[18].

The newcomers are Janus-faced and liking syncretism: To be fit for the competition in the one-world economy, they stress to be a particular society, a holy world, not touchable by norms imposed by the Western and Northern hemisphere of the world. They reject the civic model of the Western type or replace such norms; they refer to ultimate values inherent to the "own", rooted in the past. They rebuild the past for the future by looking back to the own symbolic patterns and traditions and by looking forward to the economic performance in the arena of world markets. Some years ago, the new-

Figure 12 A new generation of global images arises from the norms and societal models set up on the agendas of states, NGO's, the UNO and international organizations. The question is whether these normative approaches will shape new understandings and strategies on a global level.

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[17] Although some universal elements seem to be evident the societal models are hardly to be "cloned" (Labhom 2002).

[18] These observations suggest that the well-known concept of prismatic society (Riggs 1964), where specific traditions, values and practices contrast to modern orientations, gains a new meaning and a very relevant place for rethinking the evolution of images as well as of societies. In Russia a new trans-disciplinary stream addresses the double minded Russian culture under the umbrella of "centaurism". It is interesting that Fukuyama since his famous "End of history" emphasizes in his recent publication (2004) the institutional traditions of states as basic elements for learning efficiency and modernity.

comers have been perceived as islands in this arena, currently the fear in Western and Northern countries is rising that the islands become the oceans.

Diversity returns back to the world society, but it has changed its face radically. Ultimate or essential values replace the need to convert from a traditional to a modern society. Profits and progress on the world market have ceased to contradict to traditional values and identities or regressive imaginations of history. These double faced nations and powers define the new chaotic era. They even endanger the hegemony of the Atlantic model led by the USA.

At this point another rule becomes evident. A cycle of increasing chaos and uncertainties can be accelerated or multiplied by cataclysms or catastrophes. One of the most significant examples was the crash of the power plant in Chernobyl in 1986. This big catastrophe produced a chaotic period in the state members of the former SU. Recently political catastrophes like the terrorist raids at 9-11th in the USA have been as well significant multipliers for change. Terrorist acts illustrate the new period: terrorists attack the symbols and values of modernity and affluence without scruples to kill people living in these centres and they articulate at the same place the relevance of ultimate values. Terrorism manifests the double faces of the world society created by the newcomers as well as by the loser nations at the bottom. Hence, terrorists are fighters for the new era of world society's imagery: the modern "one-world" is basically an arena of holy-worlds.

The newcomers could profit from the terrorist image of the double-faced world that modern and ultimate fundamental values can be fused to an explosive mixture at any place of the world. That is the reason of why the presidents of the Northern and Western states, supported and welcomed by the President of Russia, induced the strongest obsession since the 2nd World War, the anti-terrorist campaigns. An antiterrorist action in Iraq is a symbolic demonstration sent also to China, Korea, Pakistan and the rest of the world. The image of world society loses again its chaotic character. It is going to be transformed into a strict matrix of risky situations on the one hand, and risky measures on the other hand. The new image of world society equals to a caste-like picture discerning between bad and good societies and switching ones.

Figure 13 Four clusters produce significant events: evidently threatened world, Cassandra demonstrates the necessity to find new orders. Negotiating world is active and currently an optimistic wave of expectations for finding new orders are visible. However insights into events show that domesticating is (tacitly or open) often the motive, that is to preserve or to embetter the position in power relations. One world seems to be in a ambiguous relation. At the one hand the crisis evocates new orders, on the other hand, the crisis opens the field for gaining new power in world markets.

Behind this polarised mapping lies a further implication. It is difficult to create such a strong obsession like the anti-terrorist mobilisation by addressing the world without perceiving the deficits of the own culture. The Western and Northern countries are confronted with basic questions. Are their societal models, liberty (of speech), free market, welfare, individualism really the ultimate values? It doesn't seem casual that the actual President of the USA founds the leading model of USA for the world also in religion. In many societies of the "secularised" hemisphere the references to own values seem to have increased. The search for diversities, having been lost in the euphoric stages of world society's imagery, is evident in Eastern Europe, Western and Northern parts of the world[19].

Generally, the actual period of shaping a world society's image is characterised by explosive chaotic situations and obsessive manners to deal with them. The image has to learn that diversity is not dead and much more than an exotic or obscurant aspect. In this period ultimate values enter the play on a surface where the modern values have been hold as the final ones for the whole mankind. – This stage of forming the world society's image is still open. One rule again is crucial; the formation of the world society's imagery underlies the principle of timelessness and therefore simultaneity. The three last phases, global high-speed economy, competition of new orders, revival and radicalisation are merging. They challenge the symbolic capacities of mankind in an extraordinary manner.

Figure 14 In this paradigm the Janus-minded competition on the world markets and global power space started. The collective memory of traditional values and identities does not contradict to the bargaining in the modern markets. International norms, for instance, human rights opposing to these traditions are obsolete. The own tradition is a centre of gravity despite the aspirations to participate in the modern parts of global society.
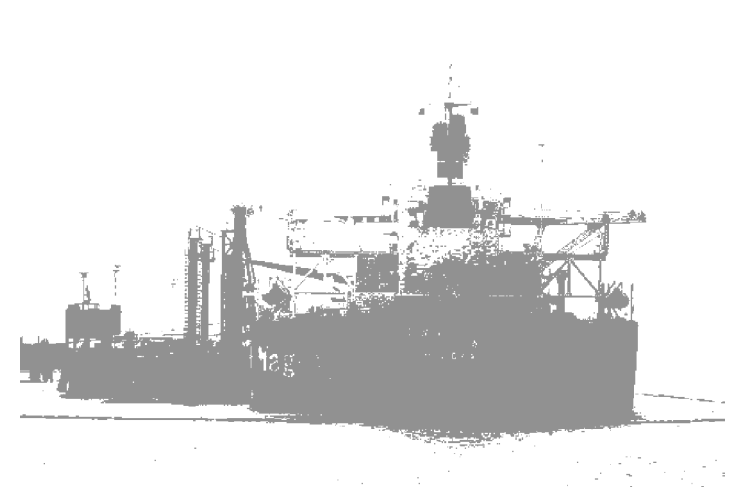
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[19] "Back to the future" was the comment of the media on the observation that "isola elvetica" (Schweiz als Sonderfall) gained a revival even among the youth, some years before in France the European constitution has been rejected (Meier-Dallach et al. 2003: 61-103). Reviews of the literature illustrate that turn backs to traditional values are observable in most contexts and nations. The one-way perspective to a modern or civil world has lost its consensual strength. This is supported by scholars like Boli (2005: 246-248). In his overview of the various trends describing the dynamics of modern world culture he refers to the essential of global developments: its antithetic developments; this corresponds to our observation of cycles opposing each other by various modes in different regional and local contexts.

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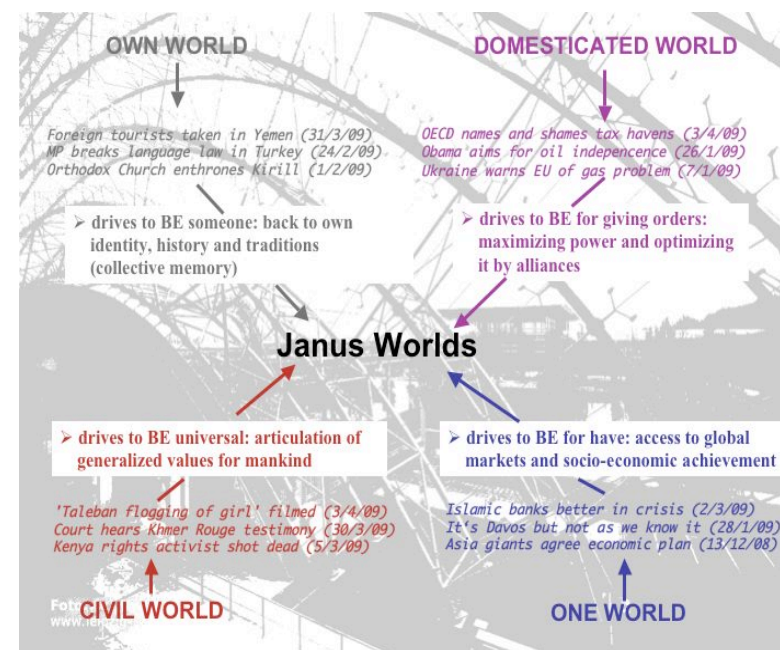

Figure 15 Own world is the leading cluster of this period, which is currently confirmed by significant events. It describes the backward looking face of Janus world, the recovering or inventing identities available in memories. Other events from civil world document the other face turned to mankind and universal norms. The selected examples demonstrate this face drafted by violations of human rights in the South declared and controlled by the rich north. But Janus world has two other faces: there are drives to create identities in order to get the best access and influence in one world, global markets. Linked to such interests identities are mobilised for maximizing power and influence. All four streams of events document that world society will not follow one scenario. Its members are rather merging their efforts exploiting the potentials of the clusters: own, domesticating, one, civil world (and negotiating) world. Last but not least: they undertake efforts to combine them and to behave as simultaneous player.

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