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Globalization and the Evolution of Membership

> *Damit, daß wir immer und überall*
> *Grenzen haben, sind wir auch Grenze.*
> Georg Simmel

I. Functions of membership and borderlines of social systems

Nation states, families, ethnic groups, villages, and economic organisations – every collectivity – need to draw a line between what or whom is, or is not, permitted within it. Lacking the determination of such lines of discrimination, namely the production, reproduction and stabilisation thereof, the collectivity disappears. Today, we find ourselves in a global world-system which has begun to show its own dynamic. It is a system without any centre. It is not controlled by goals, norms or political directives, and its own dynamic is not focused within geopolitical borderlines or by the locality in general. In the following I sketch the deconstruction and reconstruction of borderlines and the emergence of new membership conditions within global settings in the context of the evolution of codes of membership. Also, one needs to mention an essential change in contemporary social sciences as a theoretical consequence of the analysis of the process of globalization. The subject of theorising social process is not society as a regional or territorial marked unit, not the *societas civilis*, or like Parsons (1966, 9) has argued: 'A society is a type of social system, in any universe of social systems, which attains the highest level of self-sufficiency as a system in relation to its environment.' The realm of the social are the inter-societal communication networks, that is world-systems as Chase-Dunn and Hall (1998) referred to it in the plural, which have restructured all local social structure (on the concept of world-systems, see Wallerstein 1998, Chase-Dunn and Hall 1998, Chase-Dunn 1999).

All borderlines are fixed by membership in social systems and its types of operations. Without any such condition, there is no social field and no communication. The communicative ascription of actions, or of omissions, also establishes the prohibitive or exclusive structure, is only possible, if a social system is able to program its code of membership. In this respect social systems are closed systems, that is elements and structures can only exist in such systems if there is a continuation of pattern maintenance of its code of membership. The process of closing of these systems is given at the level of decision regarding membership (see Preyer 1998a and b.) Yet borderlines are not to be conceived as breaking down when contacting an environment. On the contrary, they can only be seen in a relationship to a particular environment.

From this assumption we can conclude that there are three universal functional requirements of continuation of social systems in general:

1. *external* borderline maintenance, that is the stabilisation of the external boundaries

2. maintenance of *internal* organisation, that is the stabilisation within the established boundaries

3. *crossing* and *changing* of borderlines in confronting the functional requirement of the restructuring of these processes.

It is the dual closing of social systems on the basis of programming its code of membership which opposes social systems to their environment. The evolutionary variation of inclusion and exclusion are determined by the differentiation of conditions of membership on the basis of codes and systems of orientation – so-called *Leitorientierungen* – of factual social action systems. Comparative evolutionary studies deliver significant evidence for this assumption. We also have evidence for the problem that codes of membership are confronted by inflationary and deflationary processes. The expansion of membership to different groups of people in the economic system does not induce an inflation, but in the case of the increase of members in the university, political, and societal systems there is evidence for inflationary processes. In the system of modern society the differentiation of conditions of membership takes effect of the following set of inclusions of people in the societal system (on inclusion-exclusion see Luhmann 1997, 618–634):

1. *political* inclusion: increasing equality of opportunity in the case of political decisions

2. *economic* inclusion: increasing equality of opportunity in the case of the participation of economic exchange

3. *social* inclusion: formal rights and citizenship, pluralism, associations

4. *cultural* inclusion: increasing equality of opportunity in the case of the participation in the educational system and the higher education (see also Münch 1984, 261–301).

These inclusions have developed some of the social problems of contemporary Western societies, for which there are no simple solutions to handle the consequences of the so-called "logic of inclusion". In the global world-system emerges big regions of exclusion. Yet per definition there are no inclusions without accordant exclusions. Inclusions are also limited in the system of modern societies by ascriptive solidarities, for example membership in regions, businesses, kinship, neighbourhood, etc. But the decline in exclusionary ascriptive solidarity, for example of kinship system and social stratification, is partially compensated by secondary associations (*Selbsthilfegruppen*) which have emerged in connection with the crisis of the welfare state (Hondrich and Koch-Arzberger 1992). In sum, evidence shows that there are conflicts, but also a growth of solidarity, in the developments of Western societies. For an evolutionary characterisation of membership one can establish three levels of analysis: the societal action system and its differentiation, systems of organisations, and systems of elementary interactions.

A. The societal action system and its forms of differentiation

The societal system is a point of orientation for all members of social systems. This enables us to begin, continue, and end with interaction. Thus, the societal is maintained. Should someone ask the question why he knows that there is a societal system, in those cases when the episodes of communication are ended, the answer is simple: communication only exists within a societal system. It is a point of orientation for the interaction process and its structuring. In retrospect, it is beneficent for the evolutionary research to distinguish levels of membership in order to characterise forms of differentiations. In a structural characterisation of processes of inclusions it can be shown that there is not only a differentiation of the conditions of membership, but also a process to make the membership variable.

In contrast to some sociologists, yet inspired by others such as Max Weber and his concept of *Verband*, I describe the forms of differentiation in a structural manner as differentiation and variations of membership in general. The strategy is helpful particular in the analysis of the structuring of the membership code in a global world-system because it is *one* of its dynamics that globalization and particularisation go hand in hand. We have evidence – excepting the center-periphery differentiation – to distinguish four forms of differentiation:

1. The *segmentary* differentiation: there is consensus among most sociologists that one finds the kinship system as the basis of the differentiation of situations and its functional requirements at the lowest level of social evolution. Kinship is the primordial code of membership. Clan eldership as well as chieftainship are generally associated with the social status within the system. Inclusion and exclusion are determined by this status. It is significant for this form of differentiation that all members can only be in one social unit. It is obvious that the social system of this kind is of low complexity. Segmentary differentiation is characterised as an determination of membership by the kinship system, clan, or tribe.

2. The *stratificatory* differentiation: the membership of this form is defined by the stratification of social units. Also in this case the member can only be in one unit (cast, nobility). As result of this restriction, non-similar social units exist. Membership is determined by the social status within the social system of stratification which limits the extension of reciprocity of its members. Complexity is higher than in the case of segmentary differentiation but is limited by the form of differentiation. In this case, we characterise the condition of membership in respect to the units of stratification ordered according to the religious status, nobility, or the various types of bureaucratic civil and military organisations.

3. The differentiation of *political* and *legal* organisation from the ascriptive properties of the kinship system is a process in which the condition of membership has been variable, and whose features are a higher order of inclusion of common people. In connection with this form we find the tendency to develop complex bureaucratic structures. The essential feature of stabilisation of this structural component of social organisation is the office (*Amt, Stelle*). In particular, this makes possible a higher allocation of resources and is evidenced in the broader scale of tasks such as the military, irrigation, canals of the river valley civilisations. In consequence, the problem of loyalty of the common people, the balance of conflicting

interests and the rhetoric of political ideologists was born. In the development of the modern market system in "old" Europe, the national state was of protectional and innovative significance. In Great Britain, in contrast, the state was protectional but not innovative.

4. The *functional* differentiation: the specialisation of social action systems with their own codes and orientation, for example the modern economic and political action system (democratic constitutionalism), is a late consequence of social evolution. Functional differentiation means the abstraction of analytical functions from concrete social units. This process is being reinforced in a global world-system. For the system of modern society, a high degree and growth of complexity is typical. This emerged as a result of the differentiation of the societal system, the system of organisation, and the system of interaction. The conditions of membership are determined by the functional action system and by formal organisations. The differentiation implies that codes of membership are determinated by the particular social systems. Functional differentiation is not to be misunderstood. It is true that we also find in this social universe forms of segmentary and stratificatory forms of differentiation in what Parsons called "diffuse prestige". Social stratification exists in all differentiated social systems but these forms do not structure the action system in its entirety. At the level of functional differentiation, the development towards a global world-system has begun. In this sense this evolutionary level is a prerequisite for globalization.

B. Systems of organisations

The differentiation of formal organisations regarding membership in a social action system is of a higher order because there is an explicit determination of entry into and withdrawal from the social unit as well as an established hierarchy of positions (*Stelle, Amt*). Formal organisations are a warrant and connection of action and thus they are also a mechanism of selection and stabilisation. It is an essential feature of formal organisations to reduce expectations by its formal line of positions (*Stellen*) and to regulate membership. One of the main features of this social unit is: the formal positions are constant but the candidates (the possible members) are contingent. They are part of the environment of the system of organisations.

In a global world-system the operation of organisation is structured by the technology of new media. This basis of its operations generates new

formal line of positions in general. The new prototype of these organisations is not characterised by fragmentation but by segmentary structures. In the process of this development, new conditions of membership in organisations emerge. Foremost, there is the requirement that all members are trained to work in a team system of the network of organisational structure and acquire "computer literacy". The latter is a new feature of the working system in all occupations. For all organisations the trend is toward the virtual. In the modern system of society, organisations have dominated our social activities, but a global world-system cannot be organised and regulated as a whole: it is a chaotic system.

C. Systems of elementary interactions

Communications are instrumental (intentional) actions and are born by connecting and differentiation of information, the announcement thereof, and the expression of self (on the concept of communicative action, see Ulkan 1997.) All acts of communication have as their focus the decision about the consent and dissent on their continuation, a decision which would not exist without communication. In elementary interactions between persons, the participants are likewise addressee and agent of orientation. The difference between organisations and elementary interactions is that the conditions of membership are, at first, the presence of persons, and second, the participants' ability to decide about who is present or who is not. A person's presence defines the borderline of this social system. Elementary interactions have a short period and the stabilisation is only possible by means of the creation of structure; for example, generating "closeness" and "distance", finding themes of communication, selecting the role of participation, showing consideration, etc.

The consequence of new media and electronic communication is that the presence of a person acquires a new definition: the membership within the systems is defined not by a *direct* presence, but by electronic involvement and thus a *virtual* presence. Communication and acknowledgment is not bound by the process of spacio-temporal presence. An e-mail address is now enough to continue with the communicative operations. Presence is now defined via electronic network systems. This leads to a fundamental change in the structure of all social systems. Yet, it is to note that systems of elementary interactions are not the model to grasp the societal system and its complexity (Luhmann 1997 vol. II, 826). It is a common fault of many

social scientists to model social systems with patterns of elementary interactions.

II. Features of national societal communities in the system of modern society and trends of development

The development of the system of modern society is characterised significantly by the fact that religious and cultural pluralism have led to a differentiation in the religious, political and professional complex in the social structure. One of the processes was the stabilisation of the modern market system by the nation states and its competition on a world market of protection (Bornschier 1988, Bornschier and Trezzini 1996, on European nation building see also Bös 1998). The center of this development was in 17th century Great Britain, The Netherlands, France and, peripherally, Germany. The breakdown of this development followed in the 19th century with the appearance of new leadership societies, that is the United States of America and Germany, as a consequence of the industrial and democratic revolutions. One of the results of this breakdown was that the institutional arrangements of the early modern period were remodelled. The extension of the modern culture reduces the significance of the ascriptive status-allocation of monarchy, nobility, state church as well as the economic kinship system. The further development of modern culture was driven by the expansion of standard language, general education, and common traditions within the European nation states. The innovations in the societal community were the emergence of associations, the sovereignty of national states, citizenship, and the democratic constitutionalism. For economic development, the markets of factors of production, professional services, and an economic rationality of administration became significant. In the United States of America, two features were essential for the societal community, namely, associations and professions, which are, in addition, based on employment rather than on possession.

Inter-cultural and inter-societal comparisons provide us with evidence of different codes of membership and features of national societal communities in the system of Western modern society. The function of programming these codes is to close the societal community.

• Characteristic of the societal system of *Great Britain* is a ranked and differentiated community which leads to a connection between tradition and modernity. The main features of the societal community are the fair

distribution and balance of interests, and also the acceptance of social authorities and differentiation. This background consent was destroyed during the Thatcher era and the re-structuring of British society was initiated.

• The societal community of the *United States of America* is characterised by a particularisation (WASP or other ascriptive properties on ethnicity, religion, and gender), but one typically also finds the freedom of association, the rights of citizens, and the local autonomy from the state, that is the freedom from the despotism of the state. This is a matter of entering into free contracts, a free development of public opinion, and a coordination of grades of freedom. The societal community is therefore to characterise by the equality of chances, the system of checks and balances, but also particularisation.

• In contrast, the development of modernisation in *France* is characterised by a stratified societal community in the sense of a hierarchy of nobility, classes, and professional groups. Thereby the inequality of the members of the societal community and a leveling out of administration are typical. This structure is one of the problems of modernisation in France under the conditions of globalization.

• What was significant in *Germany* was a closed and differentiated (hierarchical) societal community consisting of a working class, the farming community, business persons, members of the educated class (academes) – until the developments following the First and Second World Wars. The dominated features of the societal community was the cultural universality and an equal administrative treatment. In Germany's "welfare state" after the Second World War a leveling – more or less – of membership and also a inclusion of alien people has been typical. The inclusion of foreigners leads – like in the European countries in general – to one of the main conflicts in Germany's societal community after the *Wiedervereinigung*.

In France, Germany, also Italy, in contrast to other Western societies, conflicts between religious traditionalism and secular modernity were typical.

• The case of *Japan* is informative because we discover a porous particularised and hierarchical societal community which is ordered by isolation. Yet, the community is not structured by castes. It is typical that in this unique case of a societal community the kinship system is not significant for social integration, and there is no functional universalistic cultural orientation. A significant feature of Japanese culture is to bring into line the

"ideal" with reality. Thereby universalistic terms have no functional place in this type of social system. The Japanese society is a set of competing groups. The code of membership is defined by primordial, ascriptive, sacral, and hierarchical settings. The hierarchy is structured by a system of social positions on the basis of seniority, which itself is not competitive. In Japan's society the foundation of all communication is an intuitive understanding unlike social intercourse of Western culture. For Western social scientists this concept of communication is difficult to grasp. A Japanese colleague has answered my question 'What is the mystery of Japanese power?' with: 'Japanese make a blend.' (On Japan, and the United States of America, see Preyer and Schissler 1996; on a sketch on Japanese social structure and cultural orientations, see Eisenstadt 1998, 43–46; on Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and France, see Preyer 1998b, see also Münch 1986; on further empirical research on European societies, Hradil and Immerfall 1997.)

The trends of development – this is consensus among many social scientists – are going towards individualism, decentralisation, association, and globalization. Yet also fundamentalistic reactions of all sorts are typical. Since the 19th century, a new pattern of stratification which has institutionalised individual responsibility and a partial equality of opportunity has emerged. In retrospect, this proved to be functionally adequate for the changed situation in economic, social, and political life. But at the same time, the religious, ethnic, kinship, and national collective identities did not vanish. One of the essential features of communication under the condition of modernity is the differentiation between person and a system of roles. If someone has to identify me in the performance of my role, he or she does not identify me with it, I hope. Yet, what is there to rely on if there remains behind the identification of "my role" a black box and "I myself" remain in all communicative descriptions non-transparent? This is the reason for the 'cult of the individual' (Durkheim) and today "of authenticity" – both are secular religions – because it seems that the recursion of communication is only possible by such cults. In addition modern individualism is a societal self-description, and also a pattern for ascriptions of actions and experiences that is make happen something (*Erlebnisse*) in communication.

The 19th century was the ideological century. In its descriptions of the particular social systems such as in economic theory and the theory of the state it has dominated self-description of the society and political programs of the 20th century (on the function of self-description of society, see

Luhmann 1997, ch. 5.) Yet, to confront with the growth of complexity and contingency of functional differentiation and of a globalised world-system the realisation of inclusions such as in a global "community", claims of global "solidarity", "participation" and "democracy" falls through. All this is not to program in a global world-system, and there is no chance to institutionalise the so-called *Weltbürgerrechte* in such "system". The execution of these rights would be a civil war in continuation. We have to minimise our claims of controlling social systems because all solutions of functional imperatives of such systems can only be '*ein Kleinarbeiten von Systemproblemen*'.

III. The globalised society

Since the beginning of the nineties social scientists have recognised a new sequence in the development of the modern system of society. This was not present in the time of the Cold War, but has its roots there. We perceive today the absolute end of the ideologies of the 19th century which have been dominating us. The application of modern technologies of communication leads to new forms of economic cooperation and organisation, political regulations, and structures of communication. The result is a trend to delocalisation (Virilio 1996) of all social systems. This means that all ideas of the perfection of the social are coming to an end. The mobilisation of society is evidence for the non-perfectibility and non-ideality of the social. In this sense, the ideology of modern culture has no future.

At first it is helpful to clarify the meaning and dimensions of globalization which are elaborated in the sociological research. For it, the overview of Chase-Dunn (1999) is helpful for our orientation. It shows: globalization is a multidimensional process and happens like all social processes simultaneously. Yet, I refer to it with some modified directions of proliferation (a summary and evaluation of the results of research in the 80s and beginning 90s is presented in Featherstone et. al. (eds.) 1995):

1. *Common ecological constraints* means that ecological problems like for example shortage of natural resources operate globally, and generate more and more systemic constraints. The consequence is the imperative of more investment in natural scientific research for the successful solution of common ecological problems.

2. *Cultural globalization means* that there is an expansion of Western values (incorporated in social constitutions), and an adaption of Western

institutional practices as well. Yet also for example Japanese strategies of management and forms of organisation of corporation have been taking effect in the Western economic system; Asian religions like Buddhism influence intellectual orientations etc. It is evident that for example the lean production and management are accepted in the Western economic systems. Perhaps, the consequence is a new cultural syncretism which leads to 'globalization as hybridization' and 'structural hybridization' as Pieterse (1995) has called it. In this sense – in difference to Robertson (1995) – globalization involve not "universalisation" nor even "multiculturalism" but "interculturalism". Hybridization means 'the way in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices'. (Rowe and Schelling 1991, 231.)

3. *Economic globalization* means that we at present live in a time of the development of a new economic global system and relationship, namely a network of production, financial market, services, and marketing of transnational corporations. There is today a free financial market and all global players decide on investments following a new economy of scale.

4. *Political globalization* means the evolutionary emergence of an international political structure and constraints of its institutionalisation. In the Eurocentric world-system an interstate system emerges since the 17th century which is characterised by a balance of power. One of the main features of this "system" is that the mechanism of stabilisation is structured by competition of states more and more in the global marked of protection.

5. *Globalization of communication* means to participate in the system of communication of cooperating electronic media (*Medienverbund*). In consequences a delocalisation of the social emerges. These technologies make possible an exchange of information around the globe without any control by organisations and nation states. It is to be expected that electronic virtualisation will change our understanding of the social, history, and also of consciousness (Preyer 1998b, 31–44.)

In the following, I shall speak of glo*b*alization in the sense of an expansion and of "glo*c*alization", a concept introduced by Robertson (1995), as re-organisation of social systems as a mechanism of building networks of such systems to make a blend.

A. The new societal model

A globalised society refers to a new model of the societal which takes the place of the post-Second World War Keynesian model. A part of it is a post-hegemonial culture and a new code of membership: the network code of membership. The global world-system is characterised by the fact that societal action system, organisation, and interaction are structured by an electronic complex. In this system, all conditions of participation are controlled and determined by the operations of electronic networks. Therefore a new code of membership and new mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion emerge. This "code" and these "mechanisms" close the systems of communication by specific conditions of participation. Yet, globalization and particularisation are not exclusive in nature. Both happen simultaneously in a global world-system. The dynamics of development lead to a globalization of the economy and science in contrast to a particularisation of law, communities, political regulations and culture. The unification of for example EU law and regulations show in particular the typical tensions between generalisations and specification of such developments in the context of globalization, for example there are particular historical, and cultural communities of law in Europe, and EU unification leads to an inflation of the code of the legal system in its own domain. It is further not to expect that the traditional and common law disappears in a global system.

Many social scientists and economists expect that the global market system is not limited in a protectionistic way and that economic exchange will expand around the globe. Corporations establish global chains of production of economic value and have thus a better economy of scale. A global economic system also establishes a global financial market and leads to an autonomous financial policy. A global economy is a knowledge-based system with the knowledge centres carrying a new significance, playing a new role as a result of the innovations in the key and pace-making technologies. They have to transform in an early stage of its development into product construction of occupations in the market system. The particularisation of the legal, communal, and political systems is a result of the fact that the optimisation of effectivity and legitimisation can be achieved not at the global level, but only in a differentiation of levels in the solution of political problems: community and regional administrations gain greater competencies in solving their own problems through the principle of subsidiarity. Yet this means that in a global world-system a dismantling of universal competencies in politics and a fall of open communities of

citizenship is taking place. This process has as a further consequence that more state-owned enterprises are being privatised. A political control of this system is no longer possible. It is the end of a power-based intra-structure of the modern organisation of states (Willke 1997). The structurations between the global and the local are surely one of the foci of research and theorising in future social science.

B. Post-hegemonial culture

Economy, law, science, and politics are social systems with specific functions and of individual and collective actors. In these systems we find a development of different codes of membership, for example among colleagues, interest groups, relations of friendship etc. The significant orientations and rules are a result of the historical development of the system of modern society. These "codes" are programmed more or less inclusively or exclusively. Both are two sides of a form of social integration. But these orientations and rules are always subject to conflict and are a result of the management of risk. A characteristic development in a global world-system is the expansion of differentiated social systems, negotiation, building of networks between systems, and the effort to find compromises. Yet this does not mean that negotiation is a central mechanism of inter-coordination and regulation of conflict between social systems. There is a gap between the sequences of interaction in which we participate and the uncontrollable complexity of societal system as well as the uncoordinated and differentiated horizon of time of social systems. Negotiation is an indication of problems, but not its solution, because all solutions have consequences which cannot be controlled, for example decisions of investigations, jurisdictions etc. There is also the requirement to implement the decisions made in terms of problem solutions, which are dependent on the allocation of resources.

Globalization and glocalization lead to a drop of universal cultural claims and competencies. There is an internal connection between a global economic system and the contemporary postmodernism, that is the plurality of cultural orientations. In a global world-system there is no single concept of culture which dominates all others (Bergesen 1998). In this sense, the culture is of a post-hegemonial nature. Postmodernism is a cultural orientation that breaks with the system of orientation of modern culture. It is caused by the end of the literal culture and the return of pictures in the

epoch of multimedia. The media machines remove all temporal and spatial distances by means of synchronisation and virtualisation. World-time becomes media-time and it is an interface of different times. We are at the beginning of this development and it is to be expected that our parameters of rationality are in a process of change. All these processes are reinforced by the fact that, in a global world-system, all operations are simultaneous.

C. Membership of networks

If we apply the theory of membership to a global societal world-system, it is revealed that there is no programming of membership in this system: the complexity of a global world-system cannot be programmed in the inter-coordination of the subsystems. This "system" shows a change of membership and of participation because both are structured at the level of networks. One of the features of this communication is that the participants of networks make, and break, contact quickly. With the electronic media, not only virtual firms but also the system of universities, the public administration and the private household are operating on this basis, for example on-line offers of courses, video-lectures or electronic banking. Electronic networks replace significant parts of the traditional infra-structure. The network is the medium for reciprocal awareness and for gaining information. The process of inclusion and exclusion in these social networks leads to a dramatic sharpening of the differences between societal system, organisation and interaction. These processes end not in a spatial integration of the social but in a "heterarchical order" of all social systems (Luhmann 1997, 312 ff.), that is the discrimination of communication in networks. Thus, another socio-structural semantics emerges.

Glocalization means an incorporation of global processes into the local and a networking of the local with the global. The system of communication of the global world-system is to be analysed as a social network where new mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion emerge. We live in what Münch (1991) has called a "mobilised society" and social scientists have stated that the social systems change in their structure. Culture, social communities, politics and the development of the economy operate in new constellations. This situation programmes new conflicts of interests of the participants. At present we do not know the models of political regulation in this field. The assumption is that the future models are not global regimes, and we do not expect that the UN is able to manage coming conflicts in the world-system.

The Kosovo conflict and the military operations of the Nato is an evidence for this trend. Yet, in a global world-system, this is a requirement that the world market of protection has to satisfy. If not, we are headed towards a global civil war, not of political ideologies but of fundamentalisms of all sorts. All social systems have to reorganise their codes of membership in a global world-system and must qualify their conditions of participation (you will find further research on the dynamic of a global world-system, Preyer and Bös (eds.) forthcoming.) This is the imperative for the survival of social systems in a global world-system. There is nothing that we can do about that, but we have to adapt ourself to these uncontrollable operations. The lamentation and uneasy feeling in particular of "intellectuals" today is understandable in view of this new situation.

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