

**MegaMetaphorics:  
Re-Reading Globalization, Sustainability, and Virtualization  
as Rhetorics of World Politics**

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## O. An Overview

What are "world politics?" For some, this question is easy: it is anything political about, from or on the current world system of states, economies, and nations. For others, this question is much more difficult: it is the politics of world-definition, world-construction, world-action. And, for still others, the question necessarily mixes a measure from each of the previous groups. This paper takes the third way, casting the politics of world-definition as part and parcel of the nitty-gritty political dynamics of our world.<sup>1</sup> Still, all of this questioning does not occur in a vacuum. To answer, one must track the questioners out into many networks, and see how their answers, once set into various rhetorics of world politics, are being used to shape political institutions and movements around the world.

This paper compares and contrasts three active rhetorical formations now believed in the U.S. to be circulating around the world -- globalization in economic discourses, sustainability for ecological debates, and virtualization in studies of informational society -- to examine provisionally how these terms are being used, and perhaps abused, in such webs of questions and answers to imagine national community, economic prosperity, and cultural identity.<sup>2</sup> The metaphors behind megasystemic changes cannot be escaped. As a result, they might

be essential terms for explaining many of the world's contemporary political threats, economic crises, and cultural splits. The focus in this preliminary discussion will fall on the U.S. where the growing use, and abuse, of these terms in both mass media and social science during the 1990s provide many instructive examples of how megametaphorics shape political discourse. Ultimately, the purpose behind this re-reading of megametaphorical constructs is to understand how world politics are imagined as well as to see more fully who is believed to be leading whom, and why, into an operational space where the politics of the world are tied to such rhetorical constructs.

### **I. Metaphors and Politics**

Metaphors draw likenesses between objects, ideas or events. From the Greek metapherein, the metaphorical "comes from beyond" and "over," meta, and "makes comparisons" or "brings analogies," pherein. Metaphors serve as metaphrases for thought, translating the nonidentical into the undifferent through artful allusions. Such allusions should not be dismissed too quickly, because altered wordings easily can, in turn, alter our worlds. Consequently, metaphors should be watched. Their "as ifs" and "not unlikes" can prove to be critical moments of mental metamorphosis, which transform human action and cognition simply by suggesting what seems dissimilar might be alike, causing those who once acted differently and reasoned oppositely to come

together. Megametaphors are great, extended, mighty or powerful metaphors that operate as ready-made, easy-to-use, knock-off modes of reasoning. Great extended forms of mighty likeness or great difference are the narrative nuclei that sustain politics, enabling those who would rule to define friend and foe, same and other, here and there in the ontologies of their statecraft.

For those who share Lyotard's incredulity in metanarrative at this moment in world history, megametaphors seem to serve as satisfying or suggestive navigational bearings with their own polysemic qualities.<sup>3</sup> Not quite paralogies, and plainly not confirmed truths, megametaphors, like globalization, sustainability, and virtualization, slip into politics, as basic foreground or deep background, for many accounts of the world's collective action. For those who are less anxious about modernity at its present posting, the lexical powers of megametaphors are even more useful for creating a common language out of uncommon experiences and extraordinary changes. Such great likenesses allow many apparently inchoate events and dissimilar tendencies to be lumped with each other in suggestive fables of meaningful transformation. These myths, in turn, are circulated so widely, rapidly, and deeply that they soon become such a commonplace, through such repetitive rehearsals, that they place everyone in the same conceptual and practical commons.

Megametaphors crystallize seemingly disconnected and unrelated phenomena into single expressions, turning a booming-and-buzzing confusion into somewhat coherent events. Megametaphorics articulate a language of images to account for events, and these accounts, once set forth as iconic expressions, also stand for individual and collective experiences. In megametaphors, one finds the cultus, or the impulse to find meaning, in culture, and the acculturating mechanisms for propagating such meaningful impulses of interpretation. Beyond the physics of worldwide markets, environmental rationality or digital technics, these megametaphors simultaneously project and capture a new metaphysics of meaning to suggest why so many inchoate events "are like" globalization, sustainability or virtualization. As Burke claims, metaphors should not be easily dismissed. They are not far removed from the rigor of scientific reasoning; indeed, "whole works of scientific research, even entire schools, are hardly more than the patient repetition, in all of its ramifications, of a fertile metaphor."<sup>4</sup>

By exploring how some megametaphors circulate today, this analysis investigates the manner in which discursive terms can produce codirection, coevaluation, and cooperation in political activity out of the extended reach of powerful allusions. Everything is always discursively mediated, but discursive

mediations are not everything.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, one must examine how discourse produces disciplinary outcomes and why people and things keep to the mediated interactions shaped by such discourses. Megametaphors provide one explanation for these developments.

Megametaphors are ontopolitical scripts meant to anchor conventional assumptions about who are political agents, where are they based, what is political, and how they behave where they are as political actors.<sup>6</sup> They are continuously rejiggering notions of what is nature, what is society, what is politics, and what is valuable. Their matrices of likeness and difference, however, are often, as Walker observes, highly overdetermined.<sup>7</sup> And, this overdetermination provides much of the source code for their cultural impact. Globalization is difficult to conceptualize except as the loss of sovereignty, sustainability is hard to grasp without seeing that it combines what has already been obtained by the industrial (and is being attained by the industrializing) into something which is to be sustained, and virtualization is tough to imagine without suppressing materiality. These events seem to be happening, and megametaphors suggests what they are "like" and "unlike." As maps of the world made out of words, metametaphors suffuse new actions as world map readings. Thus, the world is remade, in

part, out of words as the territory of the world begins to match the practicable coordinates captured by words.<sup>8</sup>

## **II. The Doxic Effects of Metaphor**

Those who resolutely cling to a naïve instrumental understanding of language in which words always have definite meanings, clear uses, and neutral loadings will be disappointed with this paper. Such approaches to language are often unsophisticated, presumptuous, and confused. Instead, this investigation follows Bourdieu, who suggests that "when dealing with the social world, the ordinary use of ordinary language makes metaphysicians of us."<sup>9</sup> Megametaphorics are about using words in quite sophisticated, artful, and unconfused performances whose power and knowledge effects can be profound and pervasive precisely because of their metaphysical scope. Language is action, and the word-making moves of megametaphorics quite often have world-making outcomes. The metaphysics of meaning in megametaphors here are quite powerful and political.

In this respect, Bourdieu also is correct: "The social world is the locus of struggles over words which owe their seriousness -- and sometimes their violence -- to the fact that words to a great extent make things, and that changing words, and, more generally, representations (for example, pictorial representation, like Manet), is already a way of changing things. Politics is, essentially, a matter of words."<sup>10</sup> This

observation is true inasmuch as individuals and groups tussle, over words, with language, and in deeds, for greater symbolic power. And the megametaphoric act of naming things, and thereby bringing them into being out of nothingness, is, as Bourdieu argues, "the most typical demonstration"<sup>11</sup> of such power-in-action.

Megametaphors capture, in a sense, many versal possibilities as they get caught up in the politics of actualizing their more complete universalization. All who seek greater globalization, sustainability or virtualization can articulate polysemic performative discourses with such terms, which illustrate what it is "like" to be global, attain sustainable development, and become virtual. At the same time, experts will opine about these phenomena and lay persons will believe their opinions, confirming the new doxa of these discourses.<sup>12</sup> Those discussions, however, essentially start to extrude elements of globalization, sustainability, and virtualization out of the debates exploring what these phenomena could be. By presuming to suggest what such changes should be, their exponents cause parallel events and processes to come into effect, which test what they should and should not be. The hesitant and multiversal qualities of such transformations, at the same time, become much more definitive and universal, because megametaphors anchor the mythic invention of their



referents. Globalization could be many different things, as could sustainability or virtuality, but they all require very specific forms of completion, definition, and execution because of how they are imagined by the doxosophers who discover, define, and then deploy them in social life. Such doxosophical agents are ambiguous forces. To some, they may seem to be popular organic intellectuals; but, in the main, they live and work in the far more inorganic domains of business, industry, and the professions.<sup>13</sup> Hence, it is more plausible to see them as "inorganic intellectuals."

Such inorganic intellectuals also appear to be the creators, and the creations, of fully mediatized and highly educated publics who accept, as Bourdieu claims, "the vague debates of a political philosophy without technical content, a social science reduced to journalistic commentary for election nights, and uncritical glossing of unscientific opinion polls."<sup>14</sup> Because they openly trade in and out of the ordinary opinions that are dearly embraced by some simply because they have already been accepted by many, these figures become popular doxosophers. Their doxosophies very frequently derive from ideas and ethics that are extruded from megametaphorics. Not surprisingly, such inorganic intellectuals, as Bourdieu asserts, are "`technicians of opinion who think themselves wise'" and they always, "pose the problems of politics in the very same

terms in which they are posed by businessmen, politicians, and political journalists (in other words the very people who can afford to commission surveys...)." <sup>15</sup> As lovers of opinion, they continue to propound new doxa from their doxic researches and analyses.

If organic intellectuals are those whose conceptual innovations and moral commitments are developed in association with progressive social movements coming from the lower reaches of society, then one must see most exponents of megametaphorical discourse as cadres of inorganic intellectuals working in alliance with fixed interests at the upper reaches of the economy. While Marx reminds us that the ruling ideas of every epoch are those of the owning class, such ideas rarely can be propounded artfully by those individuals. <sup>16</sup> More articulate voices, however, can always be found, and their powers of persuasion quickly mix and match the themes and tones needed for megametaphoric discourse.

Megametaphors are decisively important here, because they contribute to a habitus shared by major corporate, governmental, and professional authorities. Allusions to likeness and definitions of difference in megametaphorical constructs can be expressed through actions when agents share a habitus. As Bourdieu maintains, "the habitus fulfills a function which another philosophy consigns to a transcendental conscience: it

is a socialized body, a structured body, a body which has incorporated the immanent structures of a world or of a particular sector of that world--a field--and which structures the perception of that world as well as action in that world."<sup>17</sup> The ideas of necessity, desirability, and universality implied by megametaphors like globalization, sustainability, and virtualization are imparted to institutions and other ideas through habitus as it "retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position" in the world with its many styles of living into "a unitary set of choices of persons, goods, practices."<sup>18</sup> Once the doxic effects of megametaphors like globalizing, sustainability, and virtualizing, begin to shape the fields of action and decision, they get integrated into the shared habitus. There, inside of such doxological systems of classification, division, and valorization, megametaphors help make "distinctions between what is good and what is bad, between what is right and what is wrong, between what is distinguished and what is vulgar," as the constructs of the world carried by words push and pull everyone toward world constructions that match the wording megametaphorical discourses.<sup>19</sup>

As these megametaphorics become constructed discursively by contemporary technoscience and civic discourse, the art of government continues to find "the principles of its rationality" tied to "the specific reality of the state," where the

rhetorical programs of globalization, sustainability, and virtualization are shaped to serve the systemic requirements of politics.<sup>20</sup> Government always comes into its own when it has the welfare of populations, the improvement of their condition, the increase of their wealth, security, longevity, health, etc. as its object. And, megametaphors can give rational firms and governments all of the planet's life to reformat as "endangered populations," needing various corporate commodities and state ministrations to transform their lives into objects of managerial control as part and part of "a range of absolute new tactics and techniques."<sup>21</sup> Coping with globality, sustainability, and virtuality simply crystallize the latest consolidation of instrumental rationality's "three movements: government, population, political economy, which constitute...a solid series, one which even today has assuredly not been dissolved"<sup>22</sup> in the buzz of megametaphorics.

Finding the world's communities and individuals focused on their protection in terms of "safety" or "security" turns into a key theme of many political operations, economic interventions, and ideological campaigns to raise public standards of collective morality, personal responsibility, and collective vigor. The world politics being defined in these megametaphorics, therefore, operate as "a whole series of different tactics that combined in varying proportions the

objective of disciplining the body and that of regulating populations."<sup>23</sup> The creation, circulation, and consolidation of megametaphors all contribute to the construction of self-evidence for the terms and conditions that these megametaphorics conjure up from discourse. Megametaphors bolster the symbolic order of society to the extent that they are, first, systematic and coherent as discursive frameworks, and, second, consistent and agreeable with objective conditions in the institutional structures of society. In these dispositions, megametaphorics can, in turn, ensure popular belief broadly in the established order as well as coordinate effectively the actions and thoughts of the ruling/owning/controlling elites by finding the right relations of "doxic submission which attaches us to the established order with all the ties of the unconscious."<sup>24</sup>

Megametaphorical interconnections become even more intriguing in the aftermath of the Cold War. Having won the long twilight struggle against communist totalitarianism, the United States is governed by leaders who see "Earth in the balance," arguing that global ecologies and economies now incarnate what is best and worst in the human spirit. On the one hand, economists, industrialists, and political leaders increasingly represent the strategic terrain of the post-1991 world system in languages in which all nations compete ruthlessly to control the future development of the world

economy by developing new technologies, dominating more markets, and exploiting every national economic asset. On the other hand, the phenomenon of "failed states," ranging from basket cases like Rwanda, Somalia or Angola to crippled entities like Ukraine, Afghanistan or Kazakhstan, often is attributed to the severe environmental frictions associated with rapid economic growth.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, a genuine world politics, whose key issues range from global stability to sustainable development to virtual community, are getting greater consideration in the name of creating jobs, maintaining growth, or advancing technological development in the politics of the post-Cold War era.

Through the likenesses of megametaphorics, a new order of things emerges out of some odd linkages between globalization screeds, sustainability theories, and virtualization writings as they interoperate in the normalizing discussions of firms, states, and the media. This normalization project is a vast undertaking, and not all of its implications have revealed themselves at this juncture. In following sections of this study, a handful of elective affinities are explored to observe how these megametaphors have started circulating after the Cold War in the networks of public discourses, foreign policy, and neo-liberal capitalism.

### III. "Globalization"

Globalization megametaphorics allude to a whole new world. Reich speaks plainly about "the emerging global economy," because it is like the loss of borders, the end of boundaries, and the disappearance of state sovereignties, "as almost every factor of production -- money, technology, factories, and equipment -- moves effortlessly across borders," so completely and so rapidly that "the very idea of an American economy is becoming meaningless, as are the notions of an American corporation, American capital, American products, American technology."<sup>26</sup> These doxa quickly spread without question as many feel they account for the shared loss of national borders. To globalize is to be enveloped by the cultural rush of compressed machinic times and market values in an "omnipolitan" economy and society.

In the concentration of commercialized values and economic practices within world-wide exchange, globality begins to equal a "world-city, the city to end all cities," and "in these basically eccentric or, if you like, omnipolitan conditions, the various social and cultural realities that still constitute a nation's wealth will soon give way to a sort of 'political' stereo-reality in which the interaction of exchanges will no longer look any different from the--automatic--interconnection of financial markets today."<sup>27</sup> In keeping with Fredric Jameson's

explorations of postmodernity, globalization "is what you have when the modernization process is complete and nature is gone for good."<sup>28</sup> Economy and society, culture and politics, science and technology all acquire the qualities of a second or even third nature with their own time within/over/beyond the now lost verities of first nature's time and space now long buried, or at least suppressed, by multiple modernizing projects.

The megametaphorics of globalization, whether they are spun by statesmen or journalists, emphasize the unlikeness of the present (1989 and after) to the recent past (prior to 1989). Reich's vision of "nationality" versus "transnationality" or Friedman's old "Cold War system" versus the emergent "globalization system" are meant to construct a world of difference and likeness betwixt and between various qualities to the contemporary moment in history.<sup>29</sup> For Friedman, globalization is a trope tying together neo-liberal capitalist rationalization, informational technics, mass consumption culture, and integrated world markets. Its megametaphorics are considerably different than those of the Cold War, as this doxological summation from Friedman suggests:

If the defining perspective of the Cold War world was "division," the defining perspective of globalization is "integration." The symbol of the Cold War system was a wall, which divided everyone. The symbol of the globalization system is a World Wide Web, which unites everyone. The defining document of the Cold War system was "The Treaty." The defining document of the



globalization system is "The Deal"....While the defining measurement of the Cold War was weight--particularly the throw weight of missiles--the defining document of the globalization system is speed--speed of commerce, travel, communication, and innovation. Globalization is about Moore's law, which states that the computing power of silicon chips will double every eighteen to twenty-four months. In the Cold War, the most frequently asked question was: "How big is your missile?" In globalization, the most frequently asked question is: "How fast is your modem?"....If the defining anxiety of the Cold War was fear of annihilation from an enemy you knew all too well in a world struggle that was fixed and stable, the defining anxiety in globalization is fear of rapid change from an enemy you can't see, touch, or feel--a sense that your job, community or workplace can be changed at any moment by anonymous economic and technological forces that are anything but stable.<sup>30</sup>

This extended explication of likenesses and differences in globalization remediates the world's meaning in the measures of increasing speed, instability, and collaboration all tied to remaking the world into 1s and 0s. Of course, these forces are all at work beneath, beyond, and behind the chatter of discourse, but their doxic effects redound in the discursive figures of globalization, sustainability, and virtualization.

Time and value in globalization are much more than merely getting in motion, as Friedman submits, they are "on speed." Whether one labels it "McWorld," "time-space compression," or "fast capitalism,"<sup>31</sup> the current situation, as Virilio suggests, is increasingly one of "chrono-politics" in which the sense of temporal chronologies, spatial geographies, and moral axiologies shared by many human beings is reshaped by speed. While

Virilio's overall project is not without faults, his sense of the power of speed is quite useful. In globalization, speed rules over many more aspects of everyday life as it experiences "the dromocratic revolution."<sup>32</sup> These effects are global in their scope and impact, even though their disparate influences in any single locality are not yet entirely understood.

Consequently, globalization articulates a megametaphorical domain with its own cultural kinematics for time and value, in which conventional understandings of likeness are being reshaped by technological, social, and economic motions in themselves. "Since movement creates the event," as Virilio argues, "the real is kinedramatic."<sup>33</sup> A world that moves faster, then, begins to circulate and valorize discourses of speed. A critical appreciation of such kinedramatics suggests that global events often flow on a global scale but at a local level. Perhaps these "kineformations," which are serving as an unstable new mode of cultural organization, are more accurately, the new global/local frames of new "glocality?" The actually existing structures of the fast capitalist McWorld are held together in the compressed time-space of glocal discourses and practices. Whether it is McWorld or MacWorld, Planet Reebok or The Nature Company, Microsoft or Gateway, the cultural values and time scales of such new corporate, social and technological glocality

trace the kinedramatic outlines of globalization. This is a dominant metaphorical allusion for this New World Order.<sup>34</sup>

These glocalities exist as just-in-time assemblies. Their communities, uniformities, collectivities happen in flight as unstable but cohesive serializations of subjectivity and collaborative organizations in objectification. Just-in-time unities often are occluded otherwise-in-space as purely local phenomena or essentially stable tendencies. New values, in turn, emerge just in time. Without too much irony, Shell Oil claims that getting there "at the speed of life" is what most now value, while "moving at the speed of business," according to United Parcel Service, articulates the valorizing pay-off of business itself in the many businesses of speed. As speed acquires value for its own sake, slow folks are separated from the fast class, steady savers slip behind fast money, and slow growth falls below fast pay-outs. Speed rules that fellow traveling in time will eclipse common residence in space as a key nexus of personal and social identity.

Those who collaborate in the collective construction of this actual transnationality out of capitalist kineformations, in turn, no longer necessarily hold as dear their nominal nationality within territorial space. Instead, they increasingly slip into other registers of time and space working and living as co-accelerant, com-motive, or con-chronous agents

of fast capitalist firms. In moving from the spatio-temporal perspectives of territoriality to the acceleration effects of instant communication and rapid transportation, "all of Earth's inhabitants may well wind up thinking of themselves more as contemporaries than as citizens; they may in the process slip out of the contiguous space, distributed by quota, of the old Nation-State (or City-State), which harbored the demos, and into the atopic community of a "Planet-State" that unfolds as "a sort of omnipolitan periphery whose centre will be nowhere and circumference everywhere."<sup>35</sup> The omnipolitanization of the planet is articulated in many "real time" events: the greenhouse effect, new national diasporas, holes in the ozone layer, the global demographic explosion, twenty-four hour a day currency markets, ATT World Net, narcocapitalist agrarian economies, the environmental movement, AOL everywhere and 7x24 TV news channels.<sup>36</sup> Time and space are tightly compressed, like the hyperreal worldwatch of CNN/CNBC/BBC World, which reposition "real time" observation/participation in collective action anywhere into consciousness everywhere in the ordinary lifeworld.

Globalization finds likeness working in the specificities of national locality, while the locals gain from the flexibilities of transnational generality. Transnationalized kineformations generate their own intra-corporate economies of

time and value, hollowing nation-states out to maintain adequate profitability at fairly low levels of capacity utilization by in/out-sourcing anything from anywhere to sell to anybody. The time horizon is the firm's daily production deadlines, and the value standards of its quarterly reports guide the enterprises' survival. Omnipolitanization around the world advances further with every downsizing, value-adding, or restructuring maneuver by transnational capitalism. Omnipolitan time and value expand, because, as Greider notes, to succeed,

firms must become globalized, not American or German or Japanese, but flexible hydras with feet planted in many different markets, making so-called world products that are adaptable across different cultures. Multinational are already from nation to nation, continent to continent, maximizing profit by continually adjusting the sources of output to capitalize on the numerous shifting variables: demand, price, currency values, politics. To function on the global plane, managers must be prepared to sacrifice parts of the enterprise, even the home base, at least temporarily, to protect themselves against the transient tides that undermine profit margins.<sup>37</sup>

Sacrificing home base, however, often means forsaking its grounded values and leaving its time zones to accelerate along the "real time" lines of capital's transnational valorizing flight. Marginal profits made in seconds, as calculated in cross-national currency matrices, now rezone time economies and value expectations. This is globalizing time: the transnational rush of financial, monetary, and capital telemetry on the bottom of 7x24 TV news channels or front and center in

major market intranet monitors.<sup>38</sup> The glocal is kinedramatic; and, from these kinedramas, speed controls events as it makes time and sets value. Globalization is like being on speed.

The stable serialization of such local kinedramatic moments shapes the contours of global kineformations, or organized social relations whose participants are unified by shared movements, matched rates of speed, or common trajectories. On one level, one sees the discursive traditions and common values of omnipolitan society becoming more kinedramatic as shared movements through televisual reality or collective interactions in telematic connectivity coalesce in common emotions, i.e., shock from images out of Bosnia, repulsion at news feed from Rwanda, fear in contemplating Chernobyl, pathos from the wreck of Exxon Valdez, loss on the passing of Mother Teresa, grief in Princess Di's car crash, agony in Kosovo's refugees teeming into Macedonia.<sup>39</sup> On another level, however, the kinedramaturgies of global cultures also are sustainably developed by global commerce's kineformations of production, consumption, accumulation, exchange.

Reich captures the kineformative qualities of capital in contradictions between "nominal nationality" and "actual transnationality" in the corporate world. Old territorialized containments of national, high-volume enterprise with the values of top-down control and time sense centralized executive

ownership are being displaced by new telemetrical webs of transnational, high-value enterprises unified by their rapid reactions to problem-solving, problem-identifying, solution-creating, solution-brokering challenges. In this mode of valorization, efficient capital becomes new type of kineformation whose variable informational and industrial geometries operate,

...in many places around the globe other than the United States. As the world shrinks through efficiencies in telecommunications and transportation, such groups in one nation are able to combine their skills with those of people located in other nations in order to provide the greatest value to customers located almost anywhere. The threads of the global web are computer, facsimile machines, satellites, high-resolution monitors, and modems--all of them linking designers, engineers, contractors, licensees, and dealers worldwide.<sup>40</sup>

Transnational kineformations completely bypass nominal nationality and territorial spatiality, centering their own kinedramatic movements of capital, labor, technology, and goods within their own "real time" interactions. In 1990, for example, "more than half of America's exports and imports, by value, were simply the transfers of such goods and services within global corporations," which suggests much of America's, and many other nation's, GNP is simply the gross corporate product of transnational flowmations operating inside their increasingly irrelevant national borders.<sup>41</sup>

Within these glocal webs of capitalist kineformations, value arises from continuously improving the rate and scope of any firm's quick, flexible, and thorough response to market forces. Using just-in-time outsourcing techniques, as Reich notes, goods and services "can be produced efficiently in many different locations, to be combined in all sorts of ways to serve customer needs in many places. Intellectual and financial capital can come from anywhere, and be added instantly."<sup>42</sup>

Producers/consumers/accumulators/exchangers are internationalized, compositors, moving in shared channels of mobilization at common rates of speed in the same time-frames. This world of globalization, as Friedman claims, "turns all friends and enemies into 'competitors'."<sup>43</sup>

Now there are so many valued centers of timely generation intent upon fixing their own timely equilibria of energy and motion in omnipolitan governmentality to find "the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to a convenient end,"<sup>44</sup> that most managers of global businesses no longer pace their sense of right disposition, convenient ends or even useful things in narrow national terms. The Gillette Corporation's chair, Alfred M. Zeien, claims, for example, that his firm does not "find foreign countries foreign," and, as a result, it plans not "to tailor products to any marketplace, but to treat all marketplaces the same."<sup>45</sup> This tailoring of marketplaces to



products as fast as tastes change, or can be changed, is the fast acting power of glocality. Transnational businesses, media groups, crime syndicates, and ideological blocs all are feeding these tendencies in a globalized flexible regime of flow-focused governmentality as each advances their own polyglot imaginations of convenience in seeking nonstatal ends out of the right disposition of things.

The globalized kineformation of commodities merge as part and parcel with major shifts which no longer "isolate the economy as a specific sector of reality,"<sup>46</sup> but rather generalize economics as the universal totality of what is real. Once there, deterritorialized fast capitalist agencies, and not territorialized nation-states, increasingly generate the disciplines and/or delights needed "to manage a population" not only as a "collective mass of phenomena, the level of its aggregate effects," but also "the management of population in its depths and details."<sup>47</sup> Individuals, in turn, judge their personal success more often by the goods and services shared by the other "successful fifth" of global coaccelerants than by the state of the "failed four-fifths," who while they might still be perhaps fellow citizens, they are no longer commotive contemporaries riding on the same fast capitalist tracks in global flows.<sup>48</sup>

Glocalities melt all that was once locally solid into air so that their displaced particles might mix and match with all of the other fluidized particularities speeding along in global flows. As one key architects of these changes asserts, the most rational form of global order will be one of complete borderlessness. That is, the state apparatus should do nothing to retard global flows; it should instead serve as an active accelerant, changing "so as to: allow individuals access to the best and cheapest goods and services from anywhere in the world; help corporations provide stable and rewarding jobs anywhere in the world regardless of the corporation's national identity; coordinate activities with other governments to minimize conflicts arising from narrow interest; avoid abrupt changes in economic and social fundamental."<sup>49</sup> Here, again, value as the ease of access by people to things and time as the speed of things getting to people drives the globalizing impact of omnipolitan development.

The speed-bodies of glocalized life can be tracked to disclose how the megametaphorics shape the spaces in which this speed-centered building, dwelling, thinking happen. The means of acceleration--material and symbolic--produce differential outcomes for the fast and slow classes whose power, status, wealth, labor, and information vary with their relations of access to, use of, and possession by accelerative forces. Co-

acceleration--at fast, slow or stalled rates--generate shared consciousness or brake against mismatched awarenesses. Those outside of shared time warps or spatial distortions soon prove either not to be like us or to simply not like us. Indeed, globalization becomes the thought and action of people caught up in kinematic social formations engaged constantly in acts of fast acting conflict or cooperation. Reich asks "who is 'us'?", and his answer obviously is everyone "on the go" transnationally, not anyone "stuck in place" nationally. For the globalized, "to disconnect is to disinform oneself."<sup>50</sup> Shared speed becomes like a shared lifeworld, and it forms new agents from these accelerated states of globalized consciousness.

#### **IV. "Sustainability"**

A political, economic, and technical incitement to talk about "sustainability" is a doxic notion that reimagines society like Nature, or, at least the Nature of ecology. It first surfaced in the 1960s, but this notion has become far more pronounced in the 1980s and 1990s. Few of its doxic effects take the form of general theory, because sustainability practices mostly have been steered instead toward analysis, stock taking, and classification in more quantitative forms of planetary accountancy. The project of "sustainability" in the U.S., whether one speaks of sustainable development, growth or use in relation to Earth's ecologies, embodies another set of

doxic assumptions about the world's life processes as the American state talks about a rational harmonization of its political economy with global ecology as a form of green geopolitics.

Taking "sustainability" into account creates discourses about the world whose goals derive not only from civic morality, but also from industrial rationality. Indeed, as all nations face "the limits of growth" or see "the population bomb" ticking away, ecologies became something more than what one must judge morally. They are transformed into world-defining processes the state must administer. Sustainability, then, has evolved into "a public potential; it called for management procedures; it had to be taken charge of by analytical discourses," as Washington recognized that its environmentalized manifestations are "a police matter" -- "not the repression of disorder, but an ordered maximization of collective and individual forces."<sup>51</sup>

Discourses of "geo-economics," as they have been expounded by Robert Reich, Lester Thurow, or Edward Luttwak, as well as rearticulations of "geo-politics" in an ecological register, as they have been developed by President Bill Clinton or Vice President Al Gore, all express doxological understandings of the world's economic and political importance as a site for the orderly utilization of many material resources. Geo-economics, for example, transforms through military metaphors and strategic

analogies what hitherto were regarded as purely economic concerns into national security issues of wise resource use and sovereign property rights. Government manipulation of trade policy, state support of major corporations, or public aid for retraining labor all become vital instruments for "the continuation of the ancient rivalry of the nations by new industrial means."<sup>52</sup> The relative success or failure of national economies in head-to-head global competitions are taken by geo-economics as the definitive register of any one nation-state's waxing or waning international power as well as its rising or falling industrial competitiveness, technological vitality, and economic prowess. In this context, the doxa have many believe that public considerations of globalization, sustainability or virtualization cannot be ignored, or even be granted only meaningless symbolic responses, in the quest to mobilize as many political resources as possible.

Geo-economics accepts the prevailing form of mass market consumerism as it presently exists, defines its rationalizing managerial benefits as the public ends that advanced economies ought to seek, and then affirms the need for hard discipline in elaborate programs of productivism, only now couched within rhetorics of highly politicized national competition, as the means for sustaining mass market consumer lifestyles in nations like the United States. Creating economic growth, and producing

more of it than other equally aggressive developed and developing countries, is the sine qua non of "national security" in the 1990s. As Richard Darman, President Bush's chief of OMB declared after Earth Day in 1990, "Americans did not fight and win the wars of the twentieth century to make the world safe for green vegetables."<sup>53</sup> Geo-economic readings of world politics also have, in turn, sparked debates about the sustainability of these life styles, which have even led the Clinton administration to embrace sustainability doxa as policy rhetoric.

The presidential commitment to deploying American power as an environmental protection agency has waxed and waned over the past quarter century, but in 1995 President Clinton made ecological sustainability an integral part of his global doctrine of "engagement." Indeed, "to reassert America's leadership in the post-Cold War world," and in moving "from the industrial to the information age, from the Cold War world to the global village," President Clinton asserted "We know that abroad we have the responsibility to advance freedom and democracy--to advance prosperity and the preservation of our planet....in a world where the dividing line between domestic and foreign policy is increasingly blurred....Our personal, family, and national future is affected by our policies on the environment at home and abroad. The common good at home is

simply not separate from our efforts to advance the common good around the world. They must be one in the same if we are to be truly secure in the world of the 21st century."<sup>54</sup>

By acting as an agency of environmental protection on a global level, the United States sees itself under Clinton and Gore as reasserting its world leadership following the Cold War. As the world's leader, in turn, America stipulates that it cannot advance economic prosperity and ecological preservation without erasing the dividing lines between domestic and foreign policy. In the blur of the coming Information Age and its global villages, the United States cannot separate America's common good from the common goods of the larger world. To be truly secure in the 21st century, each American's personal, family, and national stake in their collective future must be served through the nation's environmental policies. Secretary of State Christopher confirmed President Clinton's engagement with the environment through domestic statecraft and diplomatic action: "protecting our fragile environment also has profound long-range importance for our country, and in 1996 we will strive to fully integrate our environmental goals into our diplomacy--something that has never been done before."<sup>55</sup>

Because "the nations of the world look to America as a source of principled and reliable leadership," new leading principles and reliable sources for this authority need to be

discovered.<sup>56</sup> And, to a certain extent, they can be derived from a tactics of normalization rooted within the vague codes of ecological sustainability. From President Nixon's launch of the nation's Environmental Protection Agency to President Clinton's global engagement of America as the world's leading agency of environmental protection, one can see the growing importance of a green governmentality in the state's efforts to steer, manage, or legitimate all of its various policies.

Repudiating "the end of history" thesis, Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced at a major address hosted by the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University that the United States must cope instead with "history in fast-forward" since it now faces "threats from which no border can shield us--terrorism, proliferation, crime, and damage to the environment."<sup>57</sup> Such "new transnational security threats" endanger "all of us in our interdependent world,"<sup>58</sup> so the United States will step forward in the post-Cold War era to combat these threats as an integral part of its anti-isolationist policies. As it runs headlong ahead on fast-forward, the United States pledged through its Secretary of State to reduce greenhouse gases, ratify biodiversity conventions, and approve the Law of the Sea. Even so, President Clinton, Vice President Gore, and Secretary Christopher also recognized "how we can make greater use of environmental initiatives to promote larger



strategic and economic goals....helping our environmental industrial capture a larger share of a \$400-billion global market."<sup>59</sup>

Consequently, Secretary Christopher directed the staffs of Global Affairs, Policy Planning, and the New Bureau of Oceans, International Environment, and Scientific Affairs "to identify for environment, population, and resource issues affect key U.S. interests"<sup>60</sup> during February 1996. Along with naming a new Assistant Secretary for Oceans, International Environment, and Scientific Affairs, Christopher also ordered that each American embassy now have an environmental senior officer and all bureau and mission planning have an environmental elements in their agenda. As he told the House International Relations Committee, in 1996 things would change at the State Department, because he was "fully integrating environmental goals into our daily diplomacy for the first time" and "making greater use of environmental initiatives to promote our larger strategic and economic goals."<sup>61</sup>

These efforts to connect economic growth with sustainability, however, are stated most obviously in Vice President Al Gore's environmental musings. To ground his green geo-politics, Gore argues that "the task of restoring the natural balance of the Earth's ecological system" could reaffirm America's longstanding "interest in social justice, democratic

government, and free market economics."<sup>62</sup> The geo-powers unlocked by this official ecology might even be seen as bringing "a renewed dedication to what Jefferson believed were not merely American but universal inalienable rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."<sup>63</sup> At another level, however, Gore takes his own spiritual-religious opposition to geo-economics to new heights, arguing that America's new strategic goals after the Cold War must be centered upon sustainability to reestablish "a natural and healthy relationship between human beings and the earth," replacing the brutal exploitation of Nature with an "environmentalism of the spirit."<sup>64</sup>

Gore's confounding of domestic and foreign policies through sustainability, then, flows into a six-point course of action that necessitate: 1) stabilizing the world population, 2) deploying appropriate technologies, 3) devising techniques of ecological accounting to audit the production of all economic "goods" and ecological "bads," 4) imposing new regulatory frameworks to make the plan a success, 5) reeducating the global populace about environmental necessities, and, finally, 6) establishing models of sustainable development. Because there are no other institutional entities--the UN, OECD, or NATO--with the muscle for performing the heavy lifting needed to manage the global environment, according to Gore, "the responsibility for

taking the initiative, for innovating, catalyzing, and leading such an effort, falls disproportionately on the United States."<sup>65</sup>

As the world's leading capitalist economy, Gore concludes "the United States has a special obligation to discover effective ways of using the power of market forces to help save the global environment."<sup>66</sup> And, in the final analysis, ecological sustainability boils down to a new form of economic rationality to remake world politics. It is "a search for the lowest-cost method of reducing the greatest amount of pollution" in the turnover of production processes.<sup>67</sup> Almost magically, sustainable development becomes primarily an economic, and not merely an environmental, calculation. The initiatives taken by businesses to prevent pollution, reduce waste, and maximize energy efficiencies are to be supported as world remaking programs. But, in taking these steps, world businesses reaffirm most existing premises of technology utilization, managerial centralization, and profit generation now driving advanced corporate capitalism.

These megametaphorics are not propounded only to preserve Nature, mollify green consumers, or respect Mother Earth; they also enhance corporate profits, national productivity, and state power. The "e-factor" is not merely ecology--it also is efficiency, excellence, education, empowerment, enforcement, and economics. As long as implementing ecological changes in

business means implementing an alternative array of instrumentally rational policies, like finding lower-cost methods of energy use, supply management, labor utilization, corporate communication, product generation or pollution abatement, sustainability has tremendous world remaking potential. Gore's new stewardship through sustainable development may not be strictly ecological, but these megametaphorics strive to cultivate a sense, at least, of being environmentally responsible. Such rhetorics permit real differences to become a like in working "deliberately and carefully, with an aim toward long-term cultural change, always with an eye toward the bottom line, lest you get frustrated and discouraged in the process" since these "environmentally responsible businesses can be both possible and profitable."<sup>68</sup>

#### **V. "Virtualization"**

The rapidity of change in the digital domains of the Internet is widely acknowledged in the megametaphorics of the present. To write about it, or reconsider the effects of its current mix of functionalities, is a hazardous enterprise, but the digerati rise to the challenge. Still, their analysis seems doomed to lag far behind the event horizon where the latest actions are happening. These changes cannot be quantified easily, and their inherent qualities are ephemeral. So much of what is written about the Net, then, must necessarily write

instead about what already is written on the Net. No one really knows what its effects are. Consequently, one tries to understand what many believe its effects have been, might be or should be, because these widely circulated doxological beliefs now constitute a considerable stock of net effects in-and-of themselves. In this respect, virtualization is partly the effects of computer networks, digital discourses, and online organizations on everyday life and partly the rush of rhetoric about what many think those effects are. Their doxic effects are widespread and influential.

By repeating how technologies have "anonymous histories" that shape space, temper time, and package performance apart from the conscious intention of their users, the figure of virtualization in computer-mediated communications over information networks begins to respecify how political subjectivity changes in digital environments.<sup>69</sup> Most importantly, digital networks seem to create new notions of likeness in operational domains and cultural discourses far beyond the scope and method of how territorial states work now. In this manner, the doxa hold that "netizenship" is potentially far more than "e-citizenship," because virtual life on the Net is much more, and far less, than simply living in any city, polis or state.

As the post-IPO Internet address retailer, Network Solutions, suggests in its many cable television ads, the Net's bitscapes are today's equivalent of the Wild West—a telematic terra nullis in which anyone can grab their "dot coms" and get rich. This new commercialization of virtual life is transforming the hyperrealities of cyberspace.<sup>70</sup> The old interface values of disembodied subjectivity, distributed community, and cybernetic play inherited from the early days of the Net are rapidly being eclipsed by newer interface values tied to reimagining cyberspace as hyperreal estate, virtual markets, and online e-commerce. And, in many ways, the megametaphorics of virtualization shown netizens as he or she who recognizes these shifts, leverages their potential for increased and political power, and imagines how online infostructures might constitute new forms of economic commonwealth. Moreover, the online bourgeois of digital sites increasingly appears to have interest, capabilities, and goals which appear to be antithetical to those commonly shared by the offline citoyen of material cities. This flexible geometry of indefinite boundaries, open architectures, and unfixed locations online in the netropolis of "virtual life" constantly contradicts the fixed geometries of definite boundaries, closed communities, and inflexible locations offline in the polis still out there in "the meat world" in "real life."

Nations of citizens always have been, on the one hand, produced in particular media regimes and market circumstances. The construction of single mother tongues, rigid territorial borders, and cohesive mass populations, as Anderson argues, evolved alongside the development of older megametaphorics circulated by a national press.<sup>71</sup> Print capitalism was the material foundation of those nation-states, and "nations are therefore nations of people influenced by the same newspapers."<sup>72</sup> Cybernetic nodes for virtualized netizens, on the other hand, are being generated out of other media regimes and market circumstances, which are tied to telematic virtualizations. Virtualization, then, evolves around nodes of interest where flows of digital attention are influenced by the same webs of hypertextual tools, links, and codes.<sup>73</sup> Among nations, one has a "home" group or ground by virtue of birth and development in an off-line place with other real subjects. Around nodes, one builds "home" pages by organizing virtual objects at specific online sites.

Framed in hypertext and caught in capitalist commerce, hypertextual capitalism is the material foundation of virtual identities. As Turkle notes,

On the Web, the idiom for constructing a "home" identity is to assemble a "homepage" of virtual objects that correspond to one's interests. One constructs a homepage by composing or "pasting" on it words, images, and sounds, and by making connections

between it and other sites on the Internet or the Web. Like the agents in emergent AI, one's identity emerges from whom one knows, one's associations, and connections. People link their homepage to pages about such things as music, paintings, television shows, cities, books, photographs, comic strips, and fashion models....If we take the homepage as a real estate metaphor for the self, its decor is postmodern: Its different rooms with different styles are located on computer all over the world but through one's efforts, they are brought together to be of a piece.<sup>74</sup>

Hypertextuality is virtualization's most crucial practice, unifying many disparate elements into the digital objects that now carry individual identities, express self-invented biographies, and articulate a new mode for societalizing subjectivities virtually. Virtualized unities are formed on the fly in flows of commercial products and services, whose signs and substances now shape the innumerable connections, associations, and knowledges of postmodernized DIY individualization. With the pull of browsers, one builds his/her own quasi-social, ultra-selfish pastiche of fragments from the public sphere in which Lycos, AOL, Netscape or The Wall Street Journal will connect you only with information that you pre-select as what you want to see.<sup>75</sup> Virtual megametaphorics assume the emergence of netizens, who work as free-lancers amidst social instability, beyond local ties, but continuously laced together just-in-time with others all over the world by networks of data.

The doxa suggest that this hyperindividuation of



virtualization also will recast personal and social agency. Whereas nations once mandated modes or behavior and thought, virtual networks presume an individual "as actor, designer, juggler and stage director of his own biography, identity, social networks, commitments and convictions. Put in plain terms, 'individualization' means the disintegration of the certainties of industrial society as well as the compulsion to find and invent new certainties for oneself and others without them."<sup>76</sup> In some sense, informationalization forces all to become electronic existentialists as the standard biographies of older industrial societies become chosen biographies, DIY histories, autogenic experiences out in the flows of capital, data, labor, and product. Beck observes, "to use Sartre's term, people are condemned to individualization...whatever a man or woman was and is, whatever he or she thinks or does, constitutes the individuality of that particular person."<sup>77</sup>

At the cybernetic interface, personal workstations, mainframe accounts, and network addresses all methodically individuate nodal interactions, and these realities are reflected back in everyday rhetorics of virtualization. Compaq sells itself as a new economy of scope standing by on-line 7x24x52, waiting to fill each individual's "custom-built" machine order. "Get the technology," Compaq promises, "YOU WANT any way you want TO GET IT."<sup>78</sup> Gateway 2000 matches Compaq's

pledge to individuals with its even more comprehensive "Your:)Ware" packaged suite of computer products, ranging from custom-made machines and software bundles to ISP connections and guaranteed trade-up programs.<sup>79</sup> PeopleSoft realizes individuals now must construct their own private enterprises, capital assets, and business communities, and do it also increasingly on-line. Hence, it promises individuals continuous rationalization support for "your supply chain," because it is PeopleSoft's promise: "We work in your world."<sup>80</sup>

Individual identity in worlds managed by PeopleSoft, accessed through Your:) Ware, and sustained through e-business becomes one of multiple personality (dis)order. On the one hand, a strongly centered nation-state opens up into many decentered virtual webs. This can disorder the national character of homogenous political communities, and any single individual is condemned to constitute themselves out of activities, accesses, and assets opened to them online, which will reorder the individual biography of increasingly disordered national citizen-subjects. And, on the other hand, real individuals with one relatively immobile, geographically emplaced, and psychosocially definite identity behind given national boundaries can become, once, online, much more mobile, displaced, and indefinite as they reinvent themselves as virtual agents. The welfare state's experiments in conditioning

people, as Beck claims, for "ego-centered ways of life" pays off in spades online as particular persons morph their way through the day as multiple personalities.<sup>81</sup> Such modes of life of the screen raise tremendous identity questions for netizens, because multiple personalities can be quite disordering as well as very ordered. The waning stability of uniform national identities in place is captured by Turkle's endorsement of pluralized nodal identities online:

Every era constructs its own metaphors for psychological well-being. Not so long ago, stability was socially valued and culturally reinforced. Rigid gender roles, repetitive labor, the expectation of being in one kind of job or remaining in one town over a lifetime, all of these made consistency central to definitions of health. But these stable social worlds have broken down. In our time, health is described in terms of fluidity rather than stability. What matters most now is the ability to adapt and change--to new jobs, new career directions, new gender roles, new technologies.<sup>82</sup>

Virtual communities anchored to telematic interaction provide Turkle with the new normative structures to enforce these normalizing expectations. Stable points of subjectivity are like fluidized objects of many flexible geometries. They now apply in societalized online environments "not only to human mental and physical spheres, but also to the bodies of corporations, governments, and businesses....in these environments, people either explicitly play roles (as in MUDs) or more subtly shape their online selves. Adults learn about

being multiple and fluid--and so do children."<sup>83</sup> As De Kerckhove observes, all of these aesthetic traces are signs of nodality reshaping territory, identity, and power:

There is no horizon on the Net, only expansions and contractions, and our relationship to it begins a formidable expansion of psychological size. The loss of a clear sense of boundaries, the expansion of our mental frameworks by satellite, the on-line redistribution of our powers of action, all of these add up to a confused body image. We can't be absolutely sure anymore where we begin and where we end.<sup>84</sup>

The recalibration of normalization routines around flexibility and plurality in networks moves Turkle to see virtualization "as a space for growth."<sup>85</sup> She recognizes, like Robert Jay Lifton, the worth of a "protean self" for avoiding either "a dogmatic insistence on unity" or a "return to systems of belief, such as religious fundamentalism, that enforce conformity."<sup>86</sup>

The societalization of new ways of life around virtual realities in such doxa, then, essentially turn citizenship, taken in the modes of conventional liberalism, traditional nationalism or religious fundamentalism, into a monopersonality disorder before the new multiple personality order. For Turkle, the netizen's digital being, which emerges in real life from virtual life, "is capable, like Proteus, of fluid transformations but is grounded in coherence and moral outlook. It is multiple but integrated."<sup>87</sup> In defiance of American First!ers, like Pat Buchanan, France First!ers, like Claude Le

Pen, or Russia First!ers, like Vladimir Zhirinovsky, Turkle finds the new bottomline for netizens: "You can have a sense of self without being one self."<sup>88</sup> Moreover, online practices and theories carried by "experiences in MUDs, on the WELL, on local bulletin boards, on commercial network services, and on the World Wide Web" all are bring these netropolitan realities home.<sup>89</sup>

At the virtual intersections of network places, and connectivity spaces, as Gergen claims, "our range of social participation is expanding exponentially. As we absorb the views, values, and visions of others, and live out the multiple plots in which we are enmeshed, we enter a postmodern consciousness."<sup>90</sup> Whether or not this is postmodern perhaps is less clear, but sharply bounded personal identities and clearly bordered social communities of territorial citizenship are increasingly in doubt on-line. Actually, the multimediations of the digital domain, as Deibert affirms, carry a functional bias toward decentered and fragmented identities, "and away from modern conceptions of the autonomous sovereign individual, "in which cyberspace generates "a plurality of 'worlds' and multiple 'realities,' each of which is contingent on social constructions, or 'language-games' that constitute and orient the field of experience."<sup>91</sup>

Turkle's musings about "life on the screen" easily supports

such visions of multiculturalized virtuality among the netizenry of on-line environments. In cyberspace, identity is often a series of multiple roles in which society and community become composite materials concocted out of various codes, discourses, and games. Multiculturalized menus for virtuality, then, "blur the boundaries between self and game, self and rule, self and simulation" such that as one player observes, "'you are what you pretend to be...you are what you play.'" But people don't just become who they play, they play who they are or who they want to be or who they don't want to be."<sup>92</sup>

These tendencies, as Turkle suggests, add up to netizens "taking things at their interface value" in which "people are increasingly comfortable with substituting representations of reality for the real."<sup>93</sup> Therefore, the on-line emulations of territoriality, sovereignty or community, which might be generated out of computer-mediated communications, mean that "programs are treated as social actors we can do business with, provided that they work."<sup>94</sup> If people treat computers "in ways that blur the boundary between things and people," then all of those things and people, which once had fixed boundaries and clear distinctions, begin to blur along many of their historical borders as well.<sup>95</sup> Telematic networks, while not quite political entities, are increasingly taken at their interface values as their representations of reality and lifestyle sites become more

openly accepted as framing/composing/building what is "the real" by nodes in the network. Provided that these virtual relations work, and now they mostly are when it comes to making money, trading shares, writing letters, broadcasting television, calling overseas, organizing partisans, designing products, playing games, or tracking business, the virtualization of individual and social life in the digital domain blurs the distinctions between local and global, domestic and foreign, real life and virtual life, of homeplace and marketplace.

#### **VI. Summary: Doxosophies and Doxosophers in Politics**

This analysis suggests megametaphorical terms serve as some of the key myths carrying forward the processes of modernization today as they fill popular doxologies with fables of likeness and difference. Myths create belief; and, in being believed, such myths can become reality in the on-going tussles of social forces. By being believed, for those whose deeds actuate and affirm their content, megametaphors cannot be ignored. And, within many established institutional regmies, megametaphorics serve as powerful screens whose filters are manipulated by inorganic intellectuals and vested interests to further the likenesses of globalization, sustainability, and virtualization.

All the events that megametaphors cast as unfolding in the economy and society are not things that necessarily exist as

such. Rather the perception of their existence gains greater focus in the frames suggested by such polysemic terms. They outline more determinate visions of what can be, should be, and will be done. For many people, believing in the doxosophies derived from such megametaphors, following the programmatic designs of inorganic intellectuals who propound such beliefs, and then accepting their doxic effects in thought and action, somehow all lead to even more of the same being done. Megametaphor, therefore, can be a tool of psychosocial domination as well as the means for ontopolitical interpretation. Doxic constructs plow open the fields of interpretative interaction where ideas can link up with institutions. Those institutions, in turn, remediate ideas so fully that the symbolic order actuates and affirms them in other realms of psychological and social behavior.<sup>96</sup>

Therefore, one cannot dismiss such megametaphorics as nothing but rhetoric. Their doxic effects quickly insinuate themselves into both official policy and critical analysis through the work of doxosophers, like Robert Reich, Al Gore or Sherry Turkle, as well as corporate and government executives, like Bill Clinton, Warren Christopher or Bill Gates. In this respect, the doxosophies of neo-liberal markets, green capitalism, and virtual organizations are turning into a concrete neo-liberal utopia that, as Bordieu claims, now,



generates a potent belief, 'free trade faith,' not only among those who live from it materially such as financiers, big businessmen, etc., but also those who derive from it their justifications for existing, such as the senior civil servants and politicians who deify the power of markets in the name of economic efficiency, who demand the lifting of the administrative or political barriers that could hinder the owners of capital in their purely individual pursuit of maximum individual profit instituted as a model of rationality, who want independent central banks, who preach the subordination of the national states to the demands of economic freedom for the masters of the economy, with the suppression of all regulations on all markets, starting with the labor market, the forbidding of deficits and inflation, generalized privatization of public services, and the reduction of public and welfare spending.<sup>97</sup>

The likenesses spun up from these beliefs are continuously displayed in the spectacles of global media as they cover the common efforts of all "those high representatives of the state who abase the dignity of their position by bowing before the bosses of multinationals, Daewoo or Toyota, or competing to charm Bill Gates with their smiles and gestures of complicity."<sup>98</sup>

A world where one asks, "what are world politics?," is both an axis for analysis as well as a domain of decision that many social forces -- individuals and groups -- work to control and transform. These tendencies lead to continuous change and constant conflict among the same forces struggling to redirect society at large. Those who dominate the world exploit their positions to their advantage; yet, they also face the resistance, questioning, and challenge of those who are

dominated and who would become new dominant forces. Looked at by themselves, megametaphors may seem somewhat colorless. When one, however, hears such "ready-made phrases all day," as Bourdieu worries, they become a doxosophy, or "a whole philosophy and a whole worldview which engender fatalism and submission."<sup>99</sup> Few things are more pressing than the disposition of the world in such megametaphors, because they circulate widely in political rhetorics, economic arguments or cultural controversies. This fact alone turns them into key strategic assets for anyone who is intent upon prevailing in these struggles. Their doxic effects must not be discounted.

The megametaphors remediate the most common modes of interpretation, as they now prevail in the world, in language that spins particular words -- like globalization, sustainability, and virtualization -- into either important chokepoints or major right-of-ways for the flows of political discourse. This study has only touched a few of the peaks protruding from the fog rising over these rhetorical battles. Metaphors cannot be ignored, because they are basic rhetorical tools of politics for both the producers of world constructs as well as the construction of the world product. National community and cultural identity are being riven by deep changes, which megametaphorics continue to reflect as well as generate. Without the megametaphors of globality, sustainability or

virtuality, and their doxological understanding by inorganic intellectuals and institutional decision-makers, the politics of what is called globalization, sustainable development, and virtualization would not be the same.

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