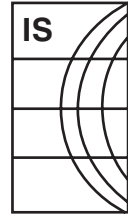

Globalization and Mixing in the Visual Arts

An Empirical Survey of 'High Culture' and Globalization

Alain Quemin

Université de Marne-la-Vallée and Institut Universitaire de France



abstract: While there has been an increasing amount of research into globalization since the 1990s, empirical sociological studies in this area remain all too scarce. By analysing specific cases in contemporary visual art, this article shows that the widespread art world discourse on globalization, mixing and the abolition of borders is to a large extent based on illusion. By objectifying the positions occupied by different countries in the field of art, the article brings to light a marked hierarchy that reveals that, beyond the development of international exchanges, the art world still has a clearly defined centre comprising a small number of western countries, among which the US and Germany are pre-eminent, and a vast periphery, comprising all the other states. The specific example empirically analysed here leads to a reconsideration of earlier studies of cultural globalization, most of which are essentially abstract.

keywords: art ♦ art market ♦ globalization ♦ institutions ♦ internationalization

Since the end of the 1960s, the international art trade has to a large extent been integrated into a world market, the *very heart* of which (Moulin, 2000) is constituted by international exchanges, and the main contemporary art institutions,¹ including museums and art centres, have been part of a vast international network.

The various actors on this scene often state that they consider geographical boundaries and nationalities, including those of the artists, to be of no significance. Such a notion, which no doubt one would always find to be the majority view in the world of contemporary art (which by essence seems so obviously international, since, today, validation by space, by geographical distance, has replaced the validation by time,

characteristic of ancient art), has no doubt been reinforced by the current situation.

Globalization, cultural mixing and the questioning of the traditional frontiers and hierarchies between forms of artistic expression are all part of the *Zeitgeist*, and extend well beyond contemporary art.

This discourse is now particularly prominent in the US,² but it is also present in other countries. The theme of Documenta 11, held in Kassel in 2002, centred on different world cultures, on the peripheral zones and the position of the artist in today's world. The 2001 Venice Biennale was titled 'Plateau of Humankind', no less.

However, if the actors on the international contemporary art scene are convinced that this planetary creative effervescence is a reality, along with the concomitant exchanges, and while they may often prove ardent upholders of the deepest cultural relativism, arguing that no country can claim greater artistic importance than any other, and that all this is a matter of talent and individual personality, it is also true that, paradoxically but imperturbably, they also often recognize the existence of a hierarchy of countries. Indeed, when one starts to question the various actors and move beyond the basic scruples regarding the existence of leader nations (Quemin, 2001a) and secondary or marginal countries, all more or less concur and present a list in which the US occupies the top position, followed by Germany and then by other countries such as Switzerland and the UK, or even France and Italy. Although implicit, this ranking is also familiar to all, and is part of the world of contemporary art (Becker, 1988). It implies knowledge of such fundamental factors as the weight of the respective actors, among which are the countries themselves. We have set out to construct a set of indicators that reveal that, beyond the initial discourse, there is indeed such a ranking of the countries involved in the world of contemporary art, a ranking in terms both of the market and of institutions. Further, our research has enabled us to check whether or not this ranking, which we have tried to objectify as much as possible, matches the one known to the actors in the international world of contemporary art. On the basis of this empirical study, we can then go on to address the theoretical discussions of cultural globalization in the high arts, which, in our view, still tend to lack adequate empirical foundations.

The Prominence of Foreign Countries in the Main French Public Collections

In order to get a sense of the international importance of each country, we began by analysing the composition of a number of major French public collections (this could also be done for large public collections in other countries). Despite the permanent discourse of the decision-makers

that nationality is never a criterion when considering the acquisition of artworks, that the only factors taken into account are the talent of the individual artists and the particular works in question, Table 1, showing the nationalities of the artists represented in the collections, does reveal a very troubling phenomenon of concentration. Let us take the example of the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain (FNAC) (Pesson and Bonnard, 1997; Pesson, 1998), which is France's main public collection, with some 70,000 works.

The proportion of foreign artists was 30 percent for the period 1988–90 and rose to 50 percent for 1991–3, then stood at 36 percent during the years 1994, 1995 and 1996 (of the 432 artists who had at least one work purchased by the FNAC, 157 were foreigners, representing 29 different nationalities), before rising again to 50 percent (215 out of 427) for the years 1997–9, and 53 percent over the years from 2000 to 2004 (257 out of 487). In the medium term, therefore, the FNAC's acquisitions have been fairly equally divided between French and foreign artists.

As for the number of works per nationality in the foreign works acquired by the FNAC during the different periods since the turn of the 1990s,³ the ranking is shown in Table 1.

While no nationality seems to be automatically excluded from access to the FNAC acquisition process, since some 54 foreign countries came to be represented over this period of nearly 15 years (out of a total of 189 countries in the world, admittedly), and while it is even possible to observe an increasing openness, in that 39 foreign countries are represented for the years 1991–6 but 43 for 2000–4, a period that is also one year shorter, the shares of the respective countries remain very unequal. The dominance of the US is overwhelming, for it accounts for 27 percent of foreign artists. Further, the five most prominent countries – the US, Germany, the UK, Italy and Switzerland – account for no less than 60 percent⁴ of the foreign artists whose work was bought by the FNAC from 1991 to 1996. These five countries belong to the western world and are among the richest countries on the planet. Since the turn of the 1990s, in the era of the purported triumph of globalization and mixing, the countries of Western Europe and North America represent over three-quarters of the artists (76.9 percent) featuring in the main French public collection.

Since the start of the 1990s, the list of countries represented in the FNAC collection has changed relatively little. The five countries at the top of the list are unchanged: the US, Germany, the UK, Italy and Switzerland, and these five still represent some 60 percent of the artists bought by the FNAC. The concentration of acquisitions among a few nationalities is thus both pronounced and continuous. While the share of the US seems to have decreased slightly, going from 27 percent to 18 percent of the artists

Table 1 FNAC Acquisitions by Nationality of Artists

Country	Number of artists			Total 1991–2004
	1991–6	1997–9	2000–4	
US	102	35	74	211
Germany	45	22	26	93
Italy	31	18	11	60
UK	29	22	22	73
Switzerland	22	12	22	56
Yugoslavia	14	1	3	18
Belgium	13	8	8	29
Canada	12	3	10	25
Japan	9	4	1	14
Spain	9	9	8	26
Israel	9	2	4	15
Netherlands	8	9	8	25
Austria	8	5	7	20
Greece	8	3	2	13
China	6	4	4	14
Ireland	6	3	2	11
Morocco	4	2	1	7
Sweden	3	2	3	8
USSR/Russia	3	3	3	9
Brazil	3	1	3	7
Algeria	3	0	1	4
Argentina	3	2	1	6
Korea	3	5	2	10
Cuba	3	1	0	4
Poland	3	3	3	9
Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic	3	2	1	6
Norway	2	1	1	4
Hungary	2	1	0	3
Uruguay	2	0	0	2
Chile	2	0	0	2
Denmark	1	2	3	6
Portugal	1	1	0	2
Dominican Republic	1	0	0	1
Lebanon	1	0	1	2
Iran	1	0	1	2
Romania	1	0	1	2
Vietnam	1	0	0	1
Mexico	1	1	0	2
Australia	1	0	2	3
Iceland	0	1	0	1

continued

Table 1 *Continued*

Country	Number of artists			Total 1991–2004
	1991–6	1997–9	2000–4	
Finland	0	0	1	1
Lithuania	0	0	1	1
Belarus	0	0	1	1
Croatia	0	0	1	1
Albania	0	0	1	1
Egypt	0	1	1	2
Palestine	0	1	0	1
Turkey	0	1	0	1
South Africa	0	1	2	3
Benin	0	1	0	1
Cameroon	0	0	1	1
Mali	0	0	1	1
Thailand	0	1	1	2
India	0	0	1	1
Total number of artists whose nationality is known	379 ^a	194	251	824

^a Note that during this same period the FNAC also acquired works by 12 artists who are stateless or of unknown nationality, or whose nationality was incorrectly noted.

acquired during the first two periods,⁵ this certainly did not threaten its primacy, and indeed its weight increased further in the years 2000–4 (29 percent of artists). The position and share of German artists is fairly stable (around 11 percent), but the country has lost something of its advance over those immediately behind it, the UK and Italy. The most noteworthy fact is no doubt the rise of the UK at the end of the 1990s, as clearly reflected in the earlier statistics (the UK gains three points and two places, overtaking Italy and equalling Germany). It has also significantly closed the gap between it and the US. The rise of the UK – which we refer to again later on – is a phenomenon that has often been noted by actors in the world of contemporary art and reflects the breakthrough of the ‘Young British Artists’ on the international art scene of the 1990s (Quemin, 2002c).

Since 2000, Italy has lost considerable ground in the purchases of the main French public collection.

As for Spain, it has trouble maintaining its position and oscillates between 11th and sixth place. These two positions appear to define the upper and lower limits of its position in the international world of

contemporary art. Indeed, the other indicators we have devised here, and which are discussed later, also convey a certain weakness in the Spanish position in the international world of contemporary art.

As for Yugoslavia's slide in the rankings (from sixth place to the bottom of the table), it reflects the country's political disintegration and economic disruption. Canada, too, slumped considerably in the latter half of the 1990s, but also progressed markedly again afterwards.

Japan has also slipped notably, having been bypassed by an interest in the emerging Asian countries and even overtaken by China and South Korea.

As stated earlier, since the start of the 1990s, the FNAC has bought works by artists from 55 countries, which could be taken to illustrate the currently very fashionable theme of cultural and artistic pluralism.

The FNAC has thus shown real eclecticism in terms of the nationality of the artists whose works it buys. The western world certainly occupies a central position with countries like the US, Germany, the UK, Italy and Switzerland, but all five continents are represented, and in general by a multitude of countries, not taking into account present or past political or economic divisions. Western Europe is present in all its diversity, well beyond the four main countries mentioned above, with Spain, Portugal, Greece, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Ireland and Iceland all represented. Eastern Europe is far from absent, with Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia (later the Czech Republic), Romania, Yugoslavia, the USSR (later Russia), Lithuania, Belarus, Croatia and Albania all included. The Middle and Near East are also represented, by Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Iran and Turkey. Africa is present through several countries of North Africa but also from sub-Saharan Africa: Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Benin, Cameroon, Mali and South Africa. In addition to the US, ranked at the top the list, the Americas are represented by countries from North, Central and South America: Canada, Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina and Chile. South and Southeast Asia also feature among the FNAC's acquisitions with Japan, China, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and India. Finally, Oceania is represented by Australia.

However, beyond this very real diversity, there is a very marked hierarchy which, in the medium term at least, is fairly stable. Its existence is all the more surprising in that the nationality of the artists never enters into the reckoning when acquisitions are decided.

In spite of the statement or belief that only the talent of the artists and quality of the specific works are decisive factors, the analysis of FNAC acquisitions by nationality, as presented in the preceding paragraphs, does reveal a very clear hierarchy of countries. If the only criterion consciously considered is quality, the hierarchy revealed by these initial statistics tends

to confirm the hypothesis that the nationality of the artists underlies their quality.

Should we therefore conclude that certain countries or peoples have a greater talent for making art? Those who might be tempted by such biologist explanations, or their more refined culturalist version, will no doubt find it hard to explain why the French, who had such a gift for art in the 19th and early 20th centuries, saw this eminence wrested from them by the Americans (Guilbaut, 1988; Cohen-Solal, 2000). It is very clear that the ranking of countries we have already presented, which recurs constantly in other contexts, is the one that underpins the representations held by art world actors. What our analysis reveals are mainly representations that obtain in this social world.

In particular, while the respective shares of French and foreign artists bought by the FNAC vary considerably over the different periods that we have looked at (with the share of foreign artists oscillating between a third and half the artists acquired), that makes the stability of the ranking all the more surprising. An increase or reduction in the share of foreign artists does not affect the structure of nationalities, which is much more permanent, in spite of marginal developments in the medium term. This tends to confirm the power of the social representations evoked in our discussion so far.

The Hierarchy of Countries as Revealed by Displays in Institutions

An analysis of the nationality of the artists whose works are exhibited in the world's major museums and centres of contemporary art also brings out the significance of the phenomena of concentration and hierarchization. To give but one example, at the Hamburger Bahnhof, the biggest contemporary art museum in Berlin, the artists featuring in the permanent exhibit when we visited at the end of 2000 were all either American or German: only two nationalities.

Another example: Tate Modern, London, which opened in May 2000, regarding which commentators have frequently emphasized the forceful presence of British artists in its exhibitions, displays even more American artists. This fact has elicited very little commentary, as if it were somehow natural. German artists also occupy a comfortable position, especially the younger generations, as do French artists: for the latter, however, the works are mainly from the modern rather than the contemporary period. In comparison, other nationalities are little represented.

In 2003, out of the 87 artists exhibited at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, 34 were French (39 percent), 53 foreign (61 percent). Only 11 countries were represented, and with a strong hierarchy. The US was well

ahead of the foreign artists, with 32 percent, followed, unusually, by Italy in second place (23 percent) and then Germany (19 percent), Switzerland (7.5 percent), the UK (5.7 percent) and Belgium (3.8 percent). The representation of Austria, South Korea, China, Brazil and Israel (1.9 percent each) is close to negligible.

The hierarchy found at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York is just as eloquent. If we set aside modern works and concentrate on contemporary art, the nationalities represented by the works of historical contemporary art on the fourth-floor 'Painting and Sculpture' section and those in the third-floor 'Contemporary Galleries' were as follows in October 2005: the US: 62.5 percent of the artists; the UK: 5.9 percent; Germany and France: 4.4 percent each; Switzerland: 3.7 percent; Italy: 2.9 percent; Japan, Venezuela and Brazil: 2.2 percent each; Spain and South Africa: 1.5 percent each; with a last group of countries: Austria, Belgium, Sweden, Yugoslavia, Canada, Cuba, Chile, Iran and Congo, each representing only 0.7 percent of the artists.

These figures indicate that, generally speaking, the big 'international' collections favour the home country (and the US seems particularly active in its championing of national artists) and, regarding other nations, all pretty much reproduce the same hierarchy that, although rarely mentioned or even denied, exists throughout the world of contemporary art.

Generally speaking, what characterizes the collections of the big 'international' museums is precisely this concentration of the exhibited works on certain artists and nationalities – those that have greatest legitimacy in the international world of contemporary art.⁶

What emerges from the preceding analysis of the hangings of the permanent collections in a number of the main international institutions can also be observed at the biggest and most prestigious art events, such as the biennials. For example, the nationalities of the 97 artists featuring in the two sections of the 2005 Venice Biennale, 'Always a Little Further' and 'The Experience of Art', were as follows: the US: 12.4 percent; Spain: 9.3 percent; Germany and the UK: 7.2 percent each; South Africa: 6.2 percent; Brazil: 5.2 percent; France, Italy, Denmark and Cuba: 4.1 percent each; Russia and Argentina: 3.1 percent each; Switzerland, Portugal, Canada, Japan and Turkey: 2.1 percent each; the Netherlands, Finland, Ireland, Greece, Poland, Albania, Lebanon, Jordan, Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, China, Taiwan, South Korea and Cameroon: 1.0 percent each. While 36 countries were represented, suggesting a fair degree of openness, even if this was a long way from representing artists from all the different countries of the world, the western countries were once again clearly dominant, and especially among the groups of the most represented countries. The extraordinary

prominence of Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries, but also of countries in the Spanish zone of influence, like Portugal, can to a large extent be explained by the fact that in 2005 the two curators of the international section at Venice were, indeed, Spanish (one need only compare the figures for the previous two biennales, in 2003 and 2001 [see Quemin, 2002a, 2002d]). And so, while the factor of artists' nationality is systematically denied, the above figures all reveal it very clearly in their own specific ways.

In these analyses, we have frequently had to content ourselves with noting only each artist's nationality. Would our findings lose their validity if we considered another factor, that of the *country of residence*? Looking again at the 97 artists represented here, and the 101 countries of residence listed, we obtain the following figures: the US: 17.8 percent; Germany: 14.9 percent; the UK: 8.9 percent; Spain: 7.9 percent; France: 5.0 percent; Italy and Brazil: 4.0 percent each; Portugal, South Africa and Russia: 3 percent; Switzerland, the Netherlands, Turkey, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Argentina: 2.0 percent each; Belgium, Austria, Finland, Poland, Greece, Palestine, Canada, Panama, Dominican Republic, Colombia, India, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan and Cameroon: 1.0 percent each.

Whereas in terms of nationality, the artists featured at the 2005 Venice Biennale represented 36 countries, when we take into account the country or (in a very few cases) countries of residence the number falls to 32. Moreover, this analysis only heightens the prominence of the western countries that already appear at the top of all our other rankings.

Another indicator, the 'Kunstkompass' (Moulin, 1992; Quemin, 2002a), which ranks artists in terms of institutional recognition, is based to a large extent on artists' visibility at group hangings or solo shows in the most prominent venues, and on their prominence in the main art publications.

This ranking has been published annually by the German journal *Capital* since 1970, first in the October and more recently in the November issue. This means we can analyse the evolution of the different countries' positions over a considerable period in order to see which are the long-term leaders and how the ranking has evolved, and which new challengers have emerged. The Kunstkompass does not offer a direct indication of the works' economic value but, rather, constitutes an indicator of the presence of living contemporary artists. As Raymonde Moulin emphasizes in *L'Artiste, l'institution et le marché*, the aim of its creator, Willi Bongard, was to establish a scale for measuring artists' reputations, based on the rough assumption that this was an objective measure of their aesthetic value (Moulin, 1992). An artist's rank in this classification is the result not of their prices on the contemporary art market but of a set of judgements made by contemporary art 'experts' (Bourdieu, 1984). It is thus the judgements of the directors of the (western) world's major

museums and of the owners of the biggest private collections, together with the contents of the main books and periodicals in the field of contemporary art, that are used to measure the degree of recognition enjoyed by artists. Solo exhibitions are given greater weight than group ones and a certain number of points are awarded in accordance with a set of specific factors. The result of all this analysis is a list of the 100 most recognized artists.

Raymonde Moulin notes that the weighting system established by Bongard, and refined by the collaborators who continued the system after his death in 1985, is not unrelated to the very honourable position held by German artists in this ranking. That said, whatever criticisms may have been made of the *Kunstkompass* as an instrument, the publication of the results obtained by Bongard and his successors has always had the effect of a *self-fulfilling prophecy*. Moreover, while one can certainly criticize the overrepresentation of Germany in the construction of this indicator and, accordingly, of German artists in the resulting table (as well as of certain major neighbours) (Quemin, 2002a), the *evolution* of the countries' respective positions within this ranking is less open to debate, since it introduces much less bias.

In order to study the evolving positions of artists according to nationality over recent years, it is we believe useful to study the recent trends within the *Kunstkompass*.

As we mentioned earlier, the *Kunstkompass* takes the form of a ranking. The hundred best-known and esteemed artists are ranked in descending order of renown.

In 2004, the rank of each artist for that year was followed by their rank in 2003 and then by their name, age, nationality and main discipline (painting, sculpture, video, installation, conceptual art, land art, etc.), the total number of points obtained, and other indications concerning, notably, the artist's gallery, but also the average price of a work and a comparison between this price and their reputation, as measured by the *Kunstkompass*. Based on this comparison of the artist's reputation and their financial value, the magazine is able to classify each artist as either 'very expensive', 'expensive', 'appropriately priced', 'inexpensive' or 'very inexpensive'.

Out of the 100 most renowned artists for 2004, 31 are American, 27 are German, seven are British, four are French, three are Italian, and three are Swiss, with other nationalities sharing the few remaining places. In all, 22 countries are represented (in addition to the aforementioned, and more modestly positioned: Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Yugoslavia, Russia, South Africa, Canada, Iran, Mexico, Brazil, Cuba, Japan, South Korea and Thailand; there is one very surprising absence: Spain, no doubt because of the importance of the role played in

this indicator by German experts, who are less responsive to 'Mediterranean' art), and the West is clearly dominant.⁷

In order to compare the positions of the different countries in 2004, we have added up the number of points accumulated by all the artists of a given country, and calculated the percentage of points per country. This helps reveal the position of each country in terms of the artists represented in the ranking (Table 2).

This ranking of countries does not vary significantly from the other ones. It too brings out the overwhelming dominance of American and German artists on the international contemporary art scene and, more generally, the dominance of western countries.

How has the prominence of the different countries, as measured by the *Kunstkompass*, varied over the last few years?

Before undertaking an exhaustive analysis of the development of this classification in recent years, we may first look at the development of the top 10 artists, in terms of nationality, over the 30 years of *Kunstkompass's* existence (Table 3).

Whereas in 1970 American artists dominated the top 10 places of the *Kunstkompass*, with the US being home to half the 10 internationally most renowned artists, just over 30 years later this dominant position appears to be shared with Germany, which has moved forward in spectacular fashion, having had no artists in the 1970 top 10. It is also worth noting

Table 2 *National Shares in the Kunstkompass in 2004*

Country	Percentage of points per country
US	32.4%
Germany	29.1%
UK	7.3%
France	4.0%
Switzerland	3.2%
Austria	2.8%
Canada	2.7%
Italy	2.6%
Denmark	2.0%
Belgium	1.7%
Netherlands	1.5%
Japan	1.4%
Russia	1.3%
South Africa	1.2%
South Korea	1.1%
Greece	1.0%

Note: Artists from Iran, Mexico, Yugoslavia, Thailand, Cuba and Brazil also appear in the list, but their weight is below 1 percent.

Table 3 *Nationalities Represented by the Top 10 Artists in the 1970 and 2004 Rankings of the Kunstkompass*

1970 ranking: 1st: US (5 artists)/2nd: France (3 artists)/equal 3rd: Italy and Switzerland (1 artist each)

2004 ranking: equal 1st: US and Germany (4 artists each)/equal 3rd: France and Austria (1 artist each)

that today, as in 1970 the first places in the top 10 are held by artists from western countries, and only a very small number of countries, at that.

We might also compare the evolution of the number of artists per country over the years for the whole top 100. This, of course, broadens the scope to other countries. The results are shown in Table 4.

From Table 4 it can be seen that, while the US has continued to dominate the rankings in terms of the number of artists, its position has nevertheless slipped while Germany, whose presence has grown solidly, continues to gain. The position of Austrian artists, too, has improved. However, it is debatable whether the considerable improvement enjoyed by German artists, and to a lesser extent by the Austrians, is not largely a reflection of the increasing weight given to German institutions in determining the number of points allotted to each artist in the ranking (Quemin, 2002a). The recent (but relative) rise of Denmark and, above all, Canada, is also noteworthy.

In contrast, the UK has slipped in relation to the late 1970s, as has France. Belgium, which disappeared for a while from the list of the 100 most recognized artists, has re-entered it. Switzerland seems fairly stable, while the Italian position has been somewhat eroded.

We may also note the disappearance of several countries from outside the western world. These countries seem particularly vulnerable, in that they are represented by a single artist. However, between 1970 and the most recent Kunstkompass, a dozen new countries outside the Western European and North American ambit have entered the list – more than have slipped out of it. This illustrates the phenomenon of multiculturalism.

If, in both 2000 and 2005, the hundred artists enjoying greatest international recognition were concentrated in 22 countries, it should be noted that in 1979, and even in 1997, they represented only 14 countries. Recent years have therefore seen real diversification in the geographical origins of the most recognized artists,⁸ which clearly illustrates the phenomenon of multiculturalism. That said, in 2005, 90 of these artists still came from countries of Western Europe or North America (in 2000 the figure was 88), and while this represents a decrease since 1979, when there were 95, it clearly shows the overwhelming dominance of these two geographical ensembles when it comes to the most recognized contemporary art.

Table 4 *Number of Artists per Country in the Kunstkompass Top 100*

Country	1979	1997	2000	2004	2005
US	50	40	33	32	31
Germany	11	28	28	29	31
UK	12	8	8	7	8
France	9	6	5	4	4
Italy	4	5	4	3	2
Switzerland	3	2	3	3	3
Belgium	3	0	0	2	2
Netherlands	2	1	1	1	2
Austria	1	2	3	3	2
Japan	1	1	2	1	1
Egypt	1	1	0	0	0
Argentina	1	0	0	0	0
Israel	1	0	0	0	0
Venezuela	1	0	0	0	0
Russia	0	1	1	1	1
South Korea	0	1	1	1	1
Greece	0	1	1	1	1
South Africa	0	0	1	1	1
Canada	0	1	1	3	3
Iran	0	0	1	1	1
Mexico	0	0	1	1	1
Iceland	0	0	1	0	0
Yugoslavia	0	1	1	1	1
Denmark	0	1	1	2	1
Australia	0	0	1	0	0
Thailand	0	0	1	1	1
Cuba	0	0	1	1	1

We have just considered the development of the figures for the number of artists per country over the years. But what picture do we get if we consider the evolution over 12 years of the percentage of the total number of points attributed to each country via nationals appearing in the Kunstkompass top 100? This indicator allows us to consider not only the number of artists per country, but also their ranking, and the number of points obtained by each one. We have calculated the share of points over the recent period in order to plot the current trend in the international world of contemporary art (Table 5).

The points analysis for 1994 reveals the tremendous prominence of the United States, which accounts for over 40 percent of the points attributed to the top 100 artists. Germany also plays a very important role, with nearly 30 percent of the total points in the indicator. A long way behind these two countries, who appear to be the clear leaders on the international art

Table 5 *Evolution of the Shares of Countries in the Kunstkompass: 1994–2005 (in percentages)*

Country	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
US	41.2	42.0	40.6	41.4	42.0	38.2	34.2	34.9	32.8	32.2	32.4	32.3
Germany	28.0	28.2	29.7	28.3	26.1	29.2	9.9	27.0	26.9	28.2	29.1	32.2
UK	6.5	5.7	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.9	7.5	6.3	7.9	7.9	7.3	7.1
France	6.1	5.9	5.0	5.4	4.5	3.9	4.3	3.7	3.2	4.0	4.0	3.9
Italy	5.4	4.6	3.9	4.4	5.1	2.1	3.6	4.4	3.6	3.7	2.6	2.0
Austria	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.9	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.0
Belgium	1.5	0.7	0.7	0	0	0	0	0.7	0.8	1.5	1.7	1.8
Russia	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2
South Korea	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.1
Greece	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0
Switzerland	0.9	1.5	1.7	1.7	2.7	4.0	3.5	4.1	4.0	3.3	3.2	3.2
Spain	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.7
Denmark	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	2.0	1.2
Canada	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.7	2.7
Japan	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6	1.5	2.1	2.2	2.2	1.4	0.7
Yugoslavia	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7
Iran	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0
Iceland	0	0	0	0	0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.2	0	0
Netherlands	0	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0	0.6	0.7	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.5
Australia	0	0	0	0	0	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0	0	0
Thailand	0	0	0	0	0	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Cuba	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8
S. Africa	0	0	0	0	0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.3
Mexico	0	0	0	0	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.0
Brazil	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.7	0

scene, come three others – the UK, France and Italy – whose artistic recognition is relatively modest. The share of the countries further down the ranking seems more insignificant, insofar as most of them are present through only one artist. This is the case for Austria, Belgium, Russia, South Korea, Greece, Switzerland, Spain, Denmark, Canada, Japan and Yugoslavia. Note, in particular, the weak position of Switzerland. Although this country is a leading power in terms of the international market for contemporary art as home of the world's top fair, Art Basel, and a good number of first-rank galleries (Piguet, 2000; Quemin, 2001a, 2002a; see also Fournier and Roy-Valex, 2001), and while it plays a significant role in confirming the status of artists, the performance of Switzerland when it comes to the 'production of artists' or, to put it differently, the recognition of its home-grown artists, is relatively weak.

Before discussing the evolution of the respective positions over these 12 years, a preliminary remark is once again in order. For whereas the actors of the contemporary art scene (notably the people we interviewed in the US, Germany, the UK, France, Italy, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Spain, Canada and South Korea) nearly always invoke the talent or even genius of individual artists – in other words, the height of individuality – as the reason for success and as the sole criterion behind the choices made by the experts, this being thought to guarantee the quality⁹ of the work (which, in many cases, is difficult to define other than by referring to its creator), analysis of the evolution of *Kunstkompass* makes it clear that careers and the choices made by institutions also depend on other kinds of logic, which in most cases, indeed, are not even conscious. In effect, even if the ranking of artists as individuals changes considerably from one year to the next, with some figures disappearing from the ranking while others enter it, it is a striking fact that *the positions of individual countries* in the *Kunstkompass* results rarely change significantly from one year to the next, and that the evolution of their respective shares is a much more long-term process. Once again, this tends to indicate that nationality plays a significant role in representations, even if this role is rarely conscious.

In the evolution of the respective positions over the last dozen years we can observe a number of medium-term trends.

As we have already pointed out – and we have found traces of this phenomenon when looking at other indicators – if the US is still very much number one in the international world of contemporary art, and while it constitutes its centre, its position does at first examination seem to have become more fragile in the last few years. Thus, in 1999 the total points share of American artists in the *Kunstkompass* dipped below 40 percent and it has now slipped to around 32 percent.

In contrast, Germany has maintained its share at around 30 percent over the same period.

The UK, riding the wave of the Young British Artists, has seen its position improve slightly (from 6.5 to 7.1 percent) and it is now well ahead of countries like France that were very much within touching distance in 1994.

This gap between the countries has in fact widened in both directions, since, according to this indicator, France has slipped markedly, going from 6.1 percent in 1994 to 3.9 percent in 2005, after a trough of 3.7 percent in 2001. With the exception of 2000 and 2003, when it rose slightly, the French share has been falling regularly over the years, apparently reflecting a weakening of the French position on the international contemporary art scene (Quemin, 2001b).

Italy, too, has slipped markedly, going from 5.4 percent to 2.1 percent on this scale between 1994 and 1999. It too enjoyed an improvement in 2000, when its share rose to 3.6 percent, but this has since fallen again to 2.0 percent in 2005.

Austria's position has steadily improved, so that it is now at the same level as Italy.

Switzerland seems doomed to keep fluctuating, and dropped right down to 1 percent in 2004, but was then back up at 3.2 percent in 2005.

Belgium, whose share collapsed for a few years, when it disappeared from the table, has since made a notable comeback, as has Spain.

All the other countries concerned appear as makeweights in the *Kunstkompass*. While it may be true that the number of countries represented in the table has risen in the last 12 years, all but those mentioned above occupy only minor positions on the scale.

Another sign that reflects the power of representations and the hierarchy of countries is that most of the artists termed 'very expensive' by the *Kunstkompass* are American. In 2004, seven Americans were described as 'very expensive' in relation to their institutional recognition, while only three Germans, three Britons, one Italian and one Belgian were given this rating. However, there are also a fair number of 'expensive' artists from Germany and Italy as well as the US. In contrast, nearly all the French artists appearing in the *Kunstkompass* since 1994 are rated 'very inexpensive' or 'inexpensive' in relation to their institutional status. This shows clearly that the nature of the link between institutional recognition, which is what the *Kunstkompass* seeks to reflect, and the financial value accorded by the art market, varies in accordance with the artist's nationality. For while aesthetic quality is linked to nationality, so is the way that quality translates into market value.

Although constantly ignored or denied by art world actors, the weight of the nationality factor is nevertheless clearly perceptible if we simply pay attention to its influence, and, based on a multitude of objective indicators, we can make out a recurrent opposition between a 'centre' and a

'periphery'. The centre clearly comprises the US, or possibly the US and Germany, or, to take a wider definition, a strongly hierarchical group formed by the US, Germany, the UK, France and Italy, who all appear regularly at the head of the rankings based on nationality that we have established here using various indicators, and nearly always in the same order: the US a long way ahead, Germany a comfortable second, a good way ahead of the next country.

The Hierarchy of Countries Revealed by the Market

Regarding art fairs and gallery participation by country, we limit ourselves here to Art Basel, the Basel art fair (see Table 6). For the other major fairs, readers may consult existing studies (Quemin, 2001a, 2002a; Fournier and Roy-Valex, 2001).

Art Basel is the world's leading art fair (in 2000, it received a record 800 applications, of which only 271 were approved) and, as such, represents a major stake for the leading galleries that wish to exhibit there, but also for countries themselves.¹⁰ Many observers explain the success of this fair by its capacity for permanent innovation. It was the world's first art fair to devote exhibitions to guest countries, to offer advantageous conditions to young artists and solo shows, and to create independent platforms for photography, multiples, monumental sculpture, video and Internet art, as well as a new experimental platform, 'Art Unlimited', in 2000.

The Basel art fair is known around the world for the stringency of its selection process (in 2000, for example, the Piccadilly Gallery in London was rejected after many years of participation) and for the quality of the exhibitors who are accepted.

At the 2005 Basel art fair, the countries represented included a dominant group of six comprising the US, well ahead with 63 galleries, followed by Germany (52) and Switzerland (37), with the UK fourth (25), ahead of France (24) and Italy (16). While the first six countries are the ones that appear regularly at the top of the rankings we have established using the previous various indicators, the top three of these are also notable for their power on the international market for contemporary art. Although Switzerland occupies a lesser position, when its cultural institutions and the recognition of its artists are taken into account, it clearly plays a leading role in the market, just behind the US and Germany.

In terms of geographical location, the concentration of galleries at the Basel art fair is extremely marked. The three leading countries: the US, Germany and Switzerland, are home to no fewer than 55 percent of the exhibiting galleries, and if we add those of the three countries that come

Table 6 *Art Basel 2000 and 2005: Number of Galleries per Country^a*

Country	Number of galleries present	
	2000	2005
Germany	63	52
US	53	63
Switzerland	45	37
France	33	24
UK	24	25
Italy	21	16
Spain	9	8
Austria	9	9
Belgium	9	7
Japan	5	5
Netherlands	4	3
Brazil	3	3
Canada	3	2
Sweden	3	2
Australia	2	1
China	2	1
South Korea	2	2
Luxembourg	2	0
Norway	2	1
Argentina	1	0
Denmark	1	3
Greece	1	1
Ireland	1	1
Monaco	1	0
Czech Republic	1	0
Portugal	0	1
Finland	0	1
Poland	0	2
Russia	0	1
Mexico	0	2
South Africa	0	1
Total	300 ^b	274

^a List based on the fair's 2005 website and catalogue for 2000. Some of the galleries with spaces in more than one country will have been counted several times in 2000. For 2005, however, we counted only the country that appears in first position on the site.

^b The total thus obtained is slightly superior to the actual number of galleries at the fair, because some galleries will have been included in the figures for each of the countries where they have spaces. For example, out of the 33 galleries listed as French, nine also have spaces in another country.

next – the UK, followed by France and Italy – we see that nearly 80 percent of the galleries are concentrated within these top six, western nations. We are therefore bound to stress that if, as the 2000 catalogue claimed, Art Basel aims to present ‘the most important galleries in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Oceania’, then the weight of these different geographical zones is very unevenly distributed. In 2005, Western Europe alone accounted for 70 percent of the galleries presented in Basel, and North America nearly 24 percent. Which leaves the remaining 6 percent to be shared by the galleries operating outside these twin cores: 3 percent for Asia, 2 percent for South America and less than 1 percent for Oceania, Eastern Europe and Africa combined. Evidently, there is a very powerful opposition between the western world, which accounts for 94 percent of the galleries, and other zones, which are completely peripheral. The discourse on cultural globalization and artistic mixing seems to be thoroughly undermined by these figures. When the heart of the market is involved, very few countries that do not belong to Western Europe or North America manage to find a place. Only Japan, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, China, South Korea, Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic and South Africa managed to penetrate the very close circle of countries allowed into Art Basel. Several of these countries, furthermore, have long had strong links with western culture (notably Japan and Australia), while others, such as South Korea, although they may have opened their borders more recently, have managed to quickly join the international world of contemporary art thanks to a proactive cultural policy in favour of contemporary art strongly supported by private initiative.

In 2000, the Basel art fair agreed to divulge the number of countries from which one or more galleries had applied to exhibit. This figure, 40, compares with the 25 countries ultimately represented at that event. There is then, a strongly selective approach that prevents certain countries (15 out of the 40 represented by the applicant galleries) from acceding to the major platform that is the world’s leading contemporary art fair. And this, of course, does not include those countries whose galleries ‘eliminate themselves’ by assuming that they will not meet the Art Basel organizing committee’s quality criteria.

The pronounced concentration evident in the nationality of galleries exhibiting at art fairs is also reflected in that other main area of the art market, auctions, which also reveal a strong hierarchy between nations.

Although the directors of the major auction houses, Christie’s and Sotheby’s, whom we met in New York, have always assured us that they never think in terms of artists’ nationalities when organizing sales, an analysis of the major international auctions of contemporary art reveals the same concentration on a very small number of nations, nearly all of them western.

To give only one example, on the evening of 9 November 2005, Sotheby's New York held one of its two big annual prestige sales of contemporary art. The auction catalogue presented work by 54 artists.

An overwhelming proportion of these artists, 41, were of American nationality or lived in the US (or had, before their death).

Other countries were poorly represented in relation to the home nationality. Still, quite in keeping with the patterns already observed in this article, two countries fared better than the others: the UK, with seven artists, and Germany, with four. Only two other countries were represented. Both of the two remaining artists were Belgian,¹¹ one of them based in Mexico.

The extreme concentration here is perfectly obvious. Manifestly, at the art market's highest level of recognition, only American and European artists gain admission. Indeed, even within this group, the relative positions of the different nationalities are very unevenly distributed and the dominance of the US is even more overwhelming: the country accounted for no fewer than three-quarters of the artists whose work was sold at one of the most important auctions of the season.

As always, the massive predominance of the US and Western Europe went hand in hand with the representation of a very small number of countries, mainly those that keep reappearing at the top of the artistic rankings, whatever the criteria.

The Recurring Division of the International Art World into Centre and Periphery

Thus, as soon as we look beyond the general discourse, the reality revealed by the statistics is a stark one. There is a remarkable concordance in the rankings of the different countries as regards both the international institutions of contemporary art and the market. However, it is also important to distinguish between exhibitions and the market.

Concerning exhibitions, first of all, Europe plays a central role because of its very important biennials (notably Venice and Documenta in Kassel) and museums of contemporary art such as the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and Tate Modern in London. Here, too, the US has real strengths, what with institutions as renowned as MoMA, New York, and PS1, which many consider the most important contemporary art centre in the world.

The market, too, seems to have a certain geographical diversity, especially if we break it down into the two subsets that are gallery sales and auction sales. While no other city has galleries to rival the importance of those in New York, either in turnover or influence, Germany and Switzerland, but also the UK, do have some very important ones. The world's most influential contemporary art fair is in Basel, Switzerland, and Europe in general (Basel but also the ARCO in Madrid, FIAC in Paris, Frieze Art

Fair in London, Berlin, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, etc.) has a number of major fairs, which, according to many observers, outperform those the US (Chicago, Armory Show in New York, Art Basel in Miami since December 2002) (Fournier and Roy-Valex, 2001). Beyond these two poles constituted by a handful of Western European countries and the US, no other fair has any real international influence.

Concerning the second sector of the market, that of contemporary art auctions, the US is clearly in the lead and New York benefits quite strikingly from the effects of concentration. The only other country to hold undeniably international auctions is the UK, with London, but it comes a long way behind the US. As we have seen in the example given earlier, this extreme concentration of the major auctions is mirrored in that of the nationalities whose work is sold there.

Finally, it is possible to establish another ranking, in terms of artistic recognition: a major concentration of nationalities (and in particular the strong legitimacy enjoyed by American and German artists) can be seen in the *Kunstkompass* ranking by 'reputation', as analysed earlier in this study. As we have seen, while in 1979 and even in 1997 the 100 most recognized artists represented only 14 countries, in 2000 and 2004 that figure had risen to 22. Without a doubt, then, recent years have witnessed a certain diversification of geographical origins as regards the most highly recognized artists, which illustrates the phenomenon of multiculturalism. However, as we have stressed, 90 of these 100 artists still came from countries in Western Europe and North America,¹² and even if this is down from the 1979 figure of 95, it does show the overwhelming dominance of these two geographical zones when it comes to the most recognized contemporary art.

In the same way, western artists occupy a very dominant position among the acquisitions of institutions such as the French FNAC, or in the big 'international' museums. The US nearly always enjoys a healthy lead, while Germany, as the 'challenger', occupies a comfortable second place, followed by three other countries: the UK, France and Italy, while all the other nations have a role that is either very limited or non-existent.

To sum up, the world of contemporary art thus clearly has a centre, because it functions very much as a duopoly formed by, on the one hand, the US and, on the other, Europe (or, more precisely, a few countries in Western Europe: Germany, the UK, France and Italy, and sometimes Switzerland), with Germany very much at its heart. These five or six countries are all among the world's richest nations.

In contrast to this emphatically western centre, there is an 'artistic periphery' that consists of all those countries that do not belong to this double geographical nucleus constituted by that handful of Western European countries and the US. It includes all those countries that do not

appear in the preceding list, and in particular the countries of the Third World, but not only them, as can be seen from the cases of Japan, Canada and Spain. While the discourse on globalization, cultural relativism and mixing that has emerged in recent years has allowed for the emergence of artists from a wider variety of countries, and from the Third World in particular, their recognition by the market remains very slight, the market being pretty much controlled by westerners and favouring mainly artists living in the same space. In general, non-western countries play only a minor role and hardly ever have their say except, to a limited degree, in biennials of contemporary art. While events of this kind have mushroomed all around the globe (Piguet, 2000; Quemin, 2002b), this has not resulted in the displacement of the most important zones, or even in any meaningful sharing between centre and periphery.

It is therefore important to see the phenomenon of globalization in proper perspective (Appadurai, 1996, 2000; Bartelson, 2000; Ohmae, 1990; Sassen, 1992, 1999, 2000), and to set aside the often hasty discourses on this theme.

If we consider analyses of globalization generally, or of cultural globalization in particular, we cannot fail to be struck by the frequently insubstantial nature of the empirical data supporting the various positions. Indeed, these often remain on a purely theoretical level, which no doubt goes some way to explaining the fact that these same positions have been fighting it out for years now without knowledge of the question growing as much as one might wish. The theme of globalization rose to prominence in the 1990s and even became central to sociology in the second half of that decade (Therborn, 2000a), but to illustrate what we would consider the insufficient use of empirical data in this field, we could look at the June 2000 issue of *International Sociology*, devoted to the theme of globalization (*International Sociology*, 2000), or at a book specifically about cultural globalization (King, 2000), which field has accounted for much of the work on globalization so far (Therborn, 2000b). In both cases, there is an almost total absence of empirical data. The authors stick mostly to abstract considerations and almost never support their analyses with statistical evidence, as if somehow such data could not provide even a partial answer to some of the questions raised by the theme of globalization.

In the case of contemporary art, first of all, globalization certainly has not challenged in any way the US–European or US–German duopoly, or even the US hegemony in this art world. All the discourses on these themes – especially the ones put forward by art critics – will never banish the following reality: both the market and the power of institutional certification are in the hands of western countries, and in particular, the richest of these countries, the US and Germany, together, to a lesser degree, with Switzerland and the UK. And it is artists from these first two countries

who occupy the dominant positions on the international contemporary art scene.

The richest countries may have allowed the development of biennials in the peripheral countries, but these do not really compete with the most established events, which are clearly those organized in the western world. Further, the market – auctions, art fairs and influential galleries – has definitely not been abandoned to potential rivals, and remains located in the UK, Switzerland, Germany and, above all, the US.

While more and more artists from peripheral countries are managing to gain international recognition, at least in the rankings of the *Kunstkompass* or selections of biennials of contemporary art, most of these artists only *come from* those countries: they do not live there (Quemin, 2002b). For example, one of the best-known non-western artists, Nam June Paik, has been living in the US for years now. Likewise, Ilya Kabakov, who was born in the Soviet Union, and whose work, as critics have emphasized, is inseparable from both his personal history and the history of the Soviet Union, has been living and working in New York for some years. One of the rising figures of contemporary art, the Japanese artist Mariko Mori, whose work aims for a global scope, also lives and works in New York. A final example, Rirkrit Tiravanija, who combines the disadvantage of being a Thai national with that of birth in Argentina (two zones on the periphery of the international art world), compensates for that with the double advantage of living in both New York and Berlin. It would seem that nowadays, even more than a few years ago, the fact of living and working in New York is almost a prerequisite of success, at least at the highest level, and especially so for artists from peripheral countries.

The statistically based analyses based on nationality presented earlier in this article highlight the extreme degree of concentration. However, when countries of residence are taken into account, the picture is not tempered but actually becomes even starker (Quemin, 2002a). Just as we have seen in the case of the Venice Biennale, the apparent weakening of the American position revealed in recent years by *Kunstkompass* is in fact due to a great extent to the emergence in the ranking of new artists who, although not American by nationality, have often attained international recognition after settling in the US. Just as, in the past, this country powered the dynamo of art world innovation (Moulin, 1967) by imposing artistic movements and generations such as Pop Art, Minimal Art and Conceptual Art, so has it recently refreshed the art scene by drawing on artists who, if certainly not American (they still hold passports from their homelands), are perfectly integrated into the New York art scene. If our earlier analyses based on nationality showed the centrality of the US in the international art world, then the introduction of data concerning country of residence and corresponding integration into an art network

only underscores the central role of this country and, to a lesser degree, that of its immediate second, Germany (Quemin, 2002b).

One of the recurrent themes in the debate over cultural globalization centres on the question of whether or not this phenomenon is a factor for uniformity or is, on the contrary, generating new forms of diversity (Therborn, 2000b). It is clear, in light of the figures given here, that the negligible role allowed to many countries in the international art world would not be expected to allow much room for cultural diversity, however much that value may be touted by art world actors. Whereas the more optimistic accounts would like to think that globalization is leading to the disappearance of frontiers, this empirical analysis makes it evident that the geographical units constituted by states still have much of their old power on the international art scene. This brings us to one of the conceptions of globalization (Bartelson, 2000) identified by Scholte, according to which, in spite of the intensification of exchanges linked to this phenomenon, pre-existing geographical entities remain as relevant as ever (Scholte, 1997). Although the debates about imperialism and the inequality of exchanges, particularly in the cultural sphere, have to a large degree been based on considerations that are mainly theoretical, and even ideological, more than on concrete case studies, the example analysed here in empirical terms does bear out these theories (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1999; Wallerstein, 2000) that rightly point to the imbalance of international cultural exchanges and the existence of effects of domination that it would be a mistake to underestimate. In contrast, the statistically substantiated analyses presented here should lead us to treat the analyses of Sassen and Bauman with some circumspection when they underline the weakening of the national territorial factor (Sassen, 1996; Bauman, 1998). The same goes for the assertions of Lash and Urry (1994), according to which the global situation is structured more by patterns of flux than by preconstituted entities, and for those of Castells (1991), who also insists on flows rather than organizations. It is the same with the analyses of Scholte, who no doubt overemphasizes the factor of deterritorialization (Scholte, 1996). In the field of contemporary visual arts, if we go beyond simple discourses, then the national dimension, the dimension of states, remains a major structural factor, as is underlined by the data we have compiled and analysed in this study. The particular case we have studied makes it clear that the intensification of international exchanges has definitely not been accompanied by a disappearance of frontiers. The national territorial factor continues to have a major effect, even in a field as 'globalized' as contemporary art seems to be.

Conclusion

In spite of increasing internationalization, the different indicators we have considered here make it quite clear that the territorial dimension certainly has not disappeared. Fashionable phenomena such as 'globalization', mixing and cultural relativism and the tremendous opening to other world cultures, touted in the world of contemporary art in recent years, are to a large extent illusory. And there is no need to invoke some conscious, deliberate power cynically asserting itself here; it is enough to let actors and institutions freely play their role for a power structure whose territorial dimension is, we think, hard to contest, to impose itself through the least known but also the most potent social representations. Although artistic events have spread around the globe, this has not led to a displacement of the most important zones, or even to any real sharing between centre and periphery, the latter comprising all those countries that are not a part of that double geographical nucleus that, still today, is constituted by a few countries of Western Europe, on one side, and America on the other.

At a more theoretical level, taking into account a domain that is apparently so very internationalized and even globalized – in the sense that pre-existing territorial entities may be said to lose their importance as a result of the very phenomenon of international exchanges – brings out all the limits of the phenomenon, providing this is subjected to careful empirical analysis. While authors of cultural globalization have tended to dismiss national societies as irrelevant (King, 2000), it is by no means certain that this is a judicious position, or that culture really is increasingly deterritorialized.

Insofar as the limits of the purported phenomenon of globalization are clearly evident, even in a field where one might have expected it to be especially potent, it would be a good thing to encourage empirical studies in other spheres of activity in order to test the extent, but also the limits, of a phenomenon whose homogenizing effects, or capacity to attenuate the power of national territorial entities, have no doubt been somewhat overestimated.

Notes

Many thanks to Jennifer Parker-Talwar (Penn State University) for her advice.

1. This article deals only with the visual arts. However, parallels could no doubt be drawn with other forms of contemporary creation.
2. If there are discourses that question even the reality of the phenomenon of globalization in art, as found, for example, in the journal *Third Text*, their influence on the international world of contemporary art is much less than those that, often with little foundation, talk up the phenomenon.

3. The difference in length of the two periods, 1991–6 and 1997–9, is due to the fact we have had to stick to the available data, put out by the FNAC itself. The figures given here may contain a degree of imprecision because some of them were obtained by adding up results per year and for groups of years. Some artists may therefore have been counted several times if their works were acquired on several occasions during the different periods. Nevertheless, the indicator thus obtained, although not perfectly accurate, does effectively reflect the respective weight of the countries.
4. If the position of the US in particular, and, more generally, the five most important countries, is already strong in terms of *acts* of acquisition, it would no doubt be even more so if we considered the *budget* spent on each country, since the works produced by these countries are often expensive.
5. As we see using other indicators, even if the US now stands at the top of nearly all the rankings, its presence in the international world of contemporary art may on first analysis seem to have declined slightly in the last few years.
6. For other, equally eloquent examples, see Quemin (2002a).
7. In addition, as we discuss later on, even when more peripheral countries are present, most of the artists concerned have a gallery in the West, be it in the Anglo-Saxon world or in Germany, and are now living in the West. Here we simply cite Nam June Paik and Ilya Kabakov, whose respective nationalities, as indicated in *Kunstkompass*, are Korean and Russian, but who have long been living at the heart of the contemporary art world, in New York.
8. We use the expression ‘geographical origin’ advisedly, since many of the artists from the zones that are most peripheral to the world of contemporary art no longer live or work in their countries of origin. Likewise, few of them manage to attain the greatest degree of international renown without going through a ‘mainstream’ western gallery. Here we can see the negative effects on national artists and markets of the hegemony of a small number of countries.
9. In her studies of value in art, Raymonde Moulin has developed a sociological approach to the quality of artworks based on the concept of aesthetic value (Moulin, 1967, 1992).
10. It would have been interesting to study the make-up and nationalities of the selection committee, which is not clearly mentioned in the Art Basel catalogue. For example, does it include representatives of the peripheral countries? Or are the members of the committee drawn mainly from Switzerland, Germany and the US?
11. The position of Belgium may surprise and seem like something of a fluke. Another prestigious contemporary art sale, at Christie’s in November 2000, which we have analysed elsewhere (Quemin, 2002b) yielded the following results: out of 48 artists, 22 were American and lived in the US (or were living there when they died), and four were born elsewhere but lived in the US. Six artists were British, five were German and four Italian. Switzerland was represented by three artists, Japan by two, while France and South Africa were each represented by only one artist. The rankings for 2000 and 2005 are thus strikingly close, and the figures for the most recent sale can hardly be said to reflect an openness to peripheral countries – on the contrary, since the triumph of the US is even more emphatic.

12. In 2000, the 10 artists who were not American, Canadian or from one of the top-ranked Western European countries, were Russian (11th position in the ranking), Korean, South African, Iranian, Mexican, Yugoslavian, Japanese, Thai and Cuban (91st). Several of them, as we see later, were living and working in North America or Europe.

Bibliography

- Appadurai, A. (1996) *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Appadurai, A., ed. (2000) *Globalization: Public Culture*. Society for Transnational Cultural Studies. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.
- Bartelson, J. (2000) 'Three Concepts of Globalization', *International Sociology* 15(2): 180–96.
- Bauman, Z. (1998) *Globalization: The Human Consequences*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Becker, H. S. (1988) *Les Mondes de l'art*. Paris: Flammarion.
- Bellavance, G., ed. (2000) *Monde et réseaux de l'art: diffusion, migration et cosmopolitisme en art contemporain*. Montreal: Liber.
- Benhamou, F. (1996) *L'Économie de la culture*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984) 'Le Hit-Parade des intellectuels français ou qui sera juge de la légitimité des juges?', *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 52–3: 95–7.
- Bourdieu, P. and Wacquant, L. (1999) 'On the Cunning of Imperialist Reason', *Theory, Culture and Society* 16(1): 41–58.
- Castells, M. (1991) *The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring and the Urban Regional Process*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Cohen-Solal, A. (2000) 'Un jour, ils auront des peintres'. *L'Avènement des peintres américains, Paris 1867, New York 1948*. Paris: Gallimard. (English edn: *Painting American: The Rise of American Artists, Paris 1867 – New York 1948*. New York: Knopf, 2001.)
- Crane, D. (1987) *The Transformation of the Avant-Garde: The New York Art World: 1940–1985*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Fournier, M. and Roy-Valex, M. (2001) 'Art contemporain et internationalisation: les rôles des galeries et des foires', report to the Ministry of Culture and Communication of Quebec.
- Fournier, M. and Roy-Valex, M. (2002) 'Art contemporain et internationalisation. Les Galeries québécoises et les foires', *Sociologie et Sociétés* XXXIV(2): 41–62.
- Guilbaut, S. (1988) *Comment New York vola l'idée d'art moderne*. Nimes: Jacqueline Chambon.
- Hoog, M. and Hoog, E. (1991) *Le Marché de l'art*. Paris: PUF.
- International Sociology* (2000) special issue 'Globalizations are Plural', 15(2).
- King, A. D., ed. (2000) *Culture, Globalization and the World System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Lash, S. and Urry, J. (1994) *Economies of Signs and Space*. London: Sage.
- Millet, C. (1994) *L'Art contemporain en France*. Paris: Flammarion.
- Millet, C. (1997) *L'Art contemporain*. Paris: Flammarion.

- Moulin, R. (1967) *Le Marché de la peinture en France*. Paris: Minuit.
- Moulin, R. (1992) *L'Artiste, l'institution et le marché*. Paris: Flammarion.
- Moulin, R. (1994) 'Paris face à la mondialisation du marché de l'art', *Le Débat* 80 ('Le Nouveau Paris'): 175–85.
- Moulin, R. (1995) *De la valeur de l'art*. Paris: Flammarion.
- Moulin, R. (2000) *Le Marché de l'art. Mondialisation et nouvelles technologies*. Paris: Flammarion.
- Moulin, R. and Quemin, A. (1993) 'La Certification de la valeur de l'art. Experts et expertises', *Annales ESC* No. 6 (special 'Mondes de l'art' issue, November–December): 1421–45.
- Moulin, R. and Quemin, A. (2001) 'L'Expertise artistique', in F. Aubert and J.-P. Sylvestre (eds) *Confiance et rationalité*, pp. 185–200. Paris: INRA Editions.
- Ohmae, K. (1990) *The Borderless World*. London: Collins.
- Pesson, G. (1998) *Fonds national d'art contemporain. Acquisition d'oeuvres d'art faite aux galeries. Comparaison 1987–1988/1997–1998*, report of the FNAC. Paris: FNAC.
- Pesson, G. and Bonnard, M. (1997) *Fonds national d'art contemporain, Acquisitions 1994–1996. Peinture, sculpture, arts graphiques. Bilan statistique*, report of the FNAC. Paris: FNAC.
- Piguet, P. (2000) 'Foires, biennales et salons internationaux d'art contemporain', in *Universalialia 2000*, pp. 301–3. Paris: Encyclopaedia Universalis.
- Quemin, A. (1999) 'Christie's et Sotheby's: l'arrivée des maisons anglo-saxonnes de ventes aux enchères', in *Universalialia 1999*, pp. 237–40. Paris: Encyclopaedia Universalis.
- Quemin, A. (2001a) *Le Rôle des pays prescripteurs sur le marché et dans le monde de l'art contemporain*. Paris: Ministère des Affaires Étrangères.
- Quemin, A. (2001b) 'Le Marché de l'art contemporain en France', in *Universalialia 2001*, pp. 209–13. Paris: Encyclopaedia Universalis.
- Quemin, A. (2002a) *L'Art contemporain international. Entre les institutions et le marché*. Nîmes: Jacqueline Chambon/Artprice.
- Quemin, A. (2002b) 'L'Art contemporain international à l'heure de la "globalisation". La Place de la France dans le concert des nations', *Pratiques* 1: 100–63.
- Quemin, A. (2002c) 'Charles Saatchi', in *Universalialia 2002*, p. 396. Paris: Encyclopaedia Universalis.
- Quemin, A. (2002d) 'L'Illusion de l'abolition des frontières dans le monde de l'art contemporain international. La place des pays "périphériques" à l'ère de la globalisation et du métissage', *Sociologie et Sociétés* XXXIV(2): 15–40.
- Rouget, B., Sagot-Duvauroux, D. and Pflieger, S. (1991) *Le Marché de l'art contemporain en France*. Paris: La Documentation Française.
- Sassen, S. (1992) *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Sassen, S. (1996) *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Sassen, S. (1999) *Globalization and its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money*. New York: New Press.
- Sassen, S. (2000) 'Territory and Territoriality in the Global Economy', *International Sociology* 15(2): 372–93.

- Scholte, J.-A. (1996) 'The Geography of Collective Identities in a Globalizing World', *Review of International Political Economy* 3-4: 565-607.
- Scholte, J.-A. (1997) 'Global Capitalism and the State', *International Affairs* 73(3): 427-52.
- Therborn, G. (2000a) 'From the Universal to the Global', *International Sociology* 15(2): 149-50.
- Therborn, G. (2000b) 'Globalizations. Dimensions, Historical Waves, Regional Effects, Normative Governance', *International Sociology* 15(2): 151-79.
- Verger, A. (1987) 'L'Art d'estimer l'art. Comment classer l'incomparable?', *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* March: 105-21.
- Verger, A. (1991) 'Le Champ des avants-gardes', *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 88: 3-40.
- Wallerstein, I. (2000) 'The National and the Universal: Can There Be Such a Thing as World Culture?', in A. D. King (ed.) *Culture, Globalization and the World System. Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*, pp. 91-105. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Biographical Note: Alain Quemin is a professor and dean at the Sociology Department of the Université de Marne-la-Vallée (France), a member of the Institut Universitaire de France and a researcher in the Laboratoire Techniques, Territoires et Sociétés. He is a member of the Comité National du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. He has been acting vice-president of the sociology of art research network at the European Sociological Association, and secretary, then president, of the committee for research into the sociology of art at the International Sociological Association.

Address: Université de Marne-la-Vallée, Département de Sociologie, 05 Boulevard Descartes, Champs-sur-Marne, 77454 Marne-la-Vallée Cedex 2, France.
[email: quemin@univ-mlv.fr]