

GLOBALIZATION AND GLOBAL EDUCATION

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By globalization I refer to a process whereby a number of megatrends have become universal to human condition, and to a growing institutional interconnectedness that is embodied or caused by these megatrends. Such trends are evidenced at micro and macro levels in economic, technological, ideological, political, spatial, ecological and socio-cultural dimensions of human life, cover a wide variety of locale, national and international relations, and leave impacts that are normally differentially experienced at various cultural formations, activity levels, and territorial scales. Some of the global trends are local specific but have a universal impact on human condition; other trends have universal origin but local significance and (differential) impact. Most have their origins in natural and social processes, but some also emanate from strategic decisions and alliances of multinational firms and governments.

By globalization I also point to the movement for learning about these megatrends and their interconnections in order to make them into a new culture of global coexistence and awareness concerning mutual dependency of nations and cross-cultural understanding, and for better management of local issues. Therefore, globalization not only refers to global trends and to the process that generates them but also to the knowledge that is needed for a better management and operationalization of these trends at local and global scales. The task of global education is, thus, to incorporate these megatrends into core curricula to bear upon the social theory and practice; this involves a critical understanding of their nature, causes and consequences, as well as a comprehension of what teleology they may assume in the foreseeable future.

To begin with, the emerging one-world system is an unevenly developed and culturally diverse global community in which nation-states have become highly interdependent and thus sensitive to each other's behavior and actions. This world system is better characterized as multipolar and bi-centric, incorporating a multitude of asymmetrical, interdependent and function-specific centers and poles. Specifically, the system is unipolar in political terms (the US), tripolar when economic strength is considered (the US, EEC and Japan), bipolar with

respect to military balance (the US and the Russian Federation), and multipolar in cultural and ideological nomenclatures as reflected in religious, ethnic and nationalist movements. The system is also bifurcated in that the nation-state is now challenged by a multitude of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that operate at global and local scales and which impact local conditions and practices on a continuous basis. Examples include multinational corporations, human rights organizations, and grassroots movements for environmental safety, and economic justice. Thus, the emerging world system is also comprised of two "state-centric" and "NGO-centric" subsystems where the former dominates but at an increasingly reduced effectiveness. Under these conditions, a global multi-centric balance of power has become the main focus of a stable world order in which local-global interactions, mutual dependencies of nations and inter-firm alliances, are increasingly intensified at the expense of superpowerism and parochial politics.

The most critical feature of this new world system is a built-in tension in its drive for simultaneous stability and chaos. In particular, the system is caught between two diametrically opposing tendencies, one calling for integration and cooperation and the other creating conditions for disintegration and conflict. This volatile situation is caused by two sets of influences, namely world-integrating forces (WIF) and world-disintegrating forces (WDF). They exist side-by-side, at both local and global scales, are mutually reinforcing and operate with a more or less equal force and urgency. While WIF tend to bring nation-states and NGOs ever closer to each other and beget global homogeneity, WDF have resulted in the creation of smaller local competing poles and global heterogeneity. No wonder that increasing political and economic integration and mutual dependencies and alliances among nations and NGOs is matched by a similarly growing tendency toward cultural schism, national assertiveness, intense competition and local home rule.

WIF and WDF together constitute the causal influences that underlie the ongoing globalization and restructuring discourses of the international political economy. Among the most critical WIF are globalization of capital and its preconditions for accumulation leading to global spread of industrial production, tertiary services, commodity markets, strategic alliances, multi-sourcing, mass consumption, and popular culture. Global flows of money, people and ideas were equally pivotal for spreading Fordist accumulation regime to LDCs in the form of peripheral Fordism (assembly operations). International economic and language integration and interdependency, multilateral and bilateral organizations, transnational corporations, and grassroots organizations, among other NGOs, also act as powerful WIF. International division of labor and specialization, inter- and intra-firm trade and technological alliances and the uneven distribution of useable resources at a world scale have provided additional impetus for intensified international socioeconomic and political relations and interdependence. Last but most important of all, revolutions in information, telecommunication and transport technologies have been momentous for growing world integration and the need for international cooperation. The collective impact of these changes has led to a historically unprecedented time-space compression, a development that has tremendous potential to facilitate political integration among otherwise competing nations. Yet, the ultimate effect of these revolutions could be increased conflict between countries that

produce and control the technologies and those who use them as purchased commodities.

WDF, on the other hand, include the decline in the overall influence of the US and the CIS and the consequent emboldening of smaller power centers in a world in transition to a new order. Meanwhile, the rise of Japan and the EEC as new technology leaders and economic competitors for the US has created a potentially unstable tripolar economic world where each of the poles fear the possible coalition between the other two against its interests. Meanwhile, international debt has become the cause for a slow capital movement to the third world where economic conditions remain explosive, threatening political stability in both the South and the North. The growing asymmetrical interdependence is also crippling national government's efforts to consistently follow an economic policy as this has become too closely related to developments outside the national border. The rising level of world education and mass awareness has also played a cardinal role in grassroots movements that have turned democratization and human rights into universal values and demands. Growing ethnic, racial and gender consciousness, and widening cultural and religious chasms have equally contributed to the emerging world discord. Meanwhile, rising nationalism (and traditionalism) in an age of massive world-wide migratory movement, neomercantilism (state-sponsored protectionism) in an era of global trade, and neocontinentalism (regional trading blocs) in a free-trade world have largely increased potential for disorder and disintegration in the multi-centric world. An additional source of tension is the current dispute among nations, between DCs and LDCs in particular, over a global approach to environmental problems.

On the fast moving and growing technology side, Fordism has produced its counterpart in the form of post-Fordist accumulation schemes as production for mass consumption is being undermined by the new trend toward a more fragmented production process, otherwise known as flexible specialization, with far reaching implication for spatial and global market integration. The trend is encouraged by electronicization, computerization and roboticization of production and information technologies. Even more influential have been the widening gaps among nation-states, between the North and the South in particular, and distending social inequalities within the nation-states, being exacerbated daily by population explosion and its sapatial concentration in the third world. This disparity has been, in turn, institutionalized by the adaptationist strategy for international education which has hindered cross-cultural communication and mutual understanding, leading to further monopolization of knowledge development in DCs and hindrance to its diffusion elsewhere. The resulting increased international illiteracy, mutual distrust and misunderstanding among nations, coupled with past abuses and colonial practices, have weakened potential for global cooperation, endangering world peace and political stability.

Among the many political and economic ramifications of the ongoing global restructuring, the contradictory tendencies for integration and disintegration in particular, one I believe is pivotal for a new paradigm of global education, namely the diminishing utility of illegitimate power, offensive force (militarism, violence) and ideology in gaining societal hegemony or maintaining a popularly undesirable status quo in favor of a hegemon or its praxis. Thus, civil and international wars have become less and less effective in gaining

dominance over the incumbents. Under the new condition, dictators and undemocratic centralizers are increasingly forced to accept a certain level of democratic processes and individualistic civil rights. No wonder that democracy, constitutional liberalism and public participation is slowly spreading across the globe, significantly in the East and South, while national sovereignty has become a major force and demand in international relations.

The increased sensitivity of the existing global balance of power to any balance-altering force is at the root of this new development against offensive force. The United States which considers the status quo in its favor shows even more irritability to any balance-altering force. This sensitivity was well demonstrated by the world's decisive response to Iraq's annexation of Kuwait in August of 1990. The growing utility of defensive force (power to resist aggression) in countering illegitimate domination is another reason for this new development. The current wave of universal demand for autonomy, self-determination, civil society development, democratization and human rights are in turn at the roots of the enhanced power of defensive forces. The trend is also caused by the increased utility of multilateral negotiation and the growing effectiveness of the United Nations in mediating and policing international conflicts and national discords as indicated by its growing peace-keeping role. Meanwhile, the introduction of cultural forces in international political relations has put new limits on the use of brute force for the purpose of gaining hegemonic domination.

As the power of offensive force has diminished, economic force and information technologies have become the most effective means of influence and domination. Indeed, Japan and Germany have grown into powerful international forces almost solely by means of their economic strength and information-processing capabilities. On the contrary, the US and the CIS have been increasingly weakened in international politics despite their growing military might. As economics and information emerge as new fields of force, economic development and information technologies would become among major components of national defense strategy. This change will, in turn, lead to a shift of more resources, including technologies, to non-military sectors and provide developmentalists, planners and policy makers with a more persuasive power to advocate a "conversion" strategy. In the meantime, increasing global awareness about environmental degradation and resource exhaustibility is expected to cause a further shift of resources toward intensive civilian uses and sustainable development, away from extensive military projects and narrowly conceived economic growth objectives.

The projected trend toward less military spending is also based on the assumption that defensive force is becoming an effective means for power projection and deterrence. Thus, it can be expected that the current competition among nation-states to build up offensive forces, particularly in areas of conventional forces and multilateral military based-development, will be replaced by technological competition for building defensive forces of small, mobile and high-tech variants. Since costs of force projection and deterrence are significantly lower than costs of building an offensive force apparatus or waging wars, less money will go into the military and warfare in the future. As the idea of "disarmament for development" gains increasing global acceptability, as in the UN system, and as international tension and militarism decreases, the "peace dividend" will grow in size in many parts of the

world, particularly in countries that were directly effected by the end of the Cold War.

A number of other emerging trends must also be accounted for in formulating a new strategy or pedagogy for global education. Negotiated political transition is becoming a new facet of the political culture in many parts of the world, a tactic that was successfully experienced in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. A few developing countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa with dictatorial regimes have also experienced the method and others are expected to follow suit. This development has in turn become critical for the promotion of democracy and development across the globe. The current thirst for civil society associations, public participation and decentralization is also better served as more people are brought into the national, political and development processes and the idea of tolerance and mutual respect replaces tendencies for violence and self-centerism.

The ideological rigidity of the last few decades about the role of public and private sectors in development process is waning, while their partnership or cooperation has become the subject of new theoretical enquires. Unrealistic assumptions about the social side of human nature and the unquestionable desirability of an egalitarian society are also under careful scrutiny. The current gap between planning and market forces is being bridged in new approaches in which a balance and a division of tasks are sought between the public and private sectors. Governments are rethinking national industrial policies and most now favor an export-oriented strategy that promotes high-tech production. The role of foreign capital in third world development is also being reassessed and its positive impact is now emphasized and captured by formation of new joint ventures. The IMF's stabilization and the World Bank's structural adjustment programs are also expected to become widely practiced in the third world, notwithstanding their negative consequences for the poor. Meanwhile, the idea of a pluralistic economy alongside the emerging political pluralism is gaining increasing acceptability. State, private and cooperative sectors are expected to increasingly combine energies to provide a more sustainable economic basis for communities and nations.

Meanwhile, considerable perceptual differences have developed between the largely experiential knowledge of LDCs and the more or less abstract mainstream Western literature on social sciences and humanities, including planning and development. The gap reflects the uneven development of capitalism and human knowledge at a world scale, as well as cultural diversities among nations. Whatever its causes, the perceptual gap has been accentuated by the adaptationist strategy for international education and is becoming a serious obstacle to global education. Specifically, it has led to a rejectionist attitude among students from LDCs studying in the West, resulting in a tendency to resist learning even concepts and techniques that could otherwise benefit their countries. Reinforced by a number of other factors such as foreign policy disasters in DCs, the rejectionist attitude would endanger the hopes for any future communication of knowledge and experience as well as mutual understanding and cooperation between the developed and less developed worlds.

Moreover, as human problems and aspirations for development continue to internationalize, the dividing lines between various theoretical and strategic positions become increasingly blurred. The emergent shared areas of mutual agreements and understandings has enhanced the chance for cross-conceptual and cross-cultural acceptability and cooperation

among otherwise diverse cultures and nationalities. Admittedly, localism and nationalism continue to persist, international differentiation still remains a distinctive character of the present world, and we are by no means near "the end of ideology". Thus, the expanding shared theoretical and practical areas, it must be emphasized, represent only those aspects of international diversities that have converged to create common basis for a more universal solution to the problems of humanity as a whole and in terms of its specific constituencies. To augment this shared portion, conscious attempts would have to be directed toward cross-cultural education and understanding, while paying increasing respect to national, local, and cultural differences.

Finally, the quest for universalism grows out of a new consciousness and conviction that the world community represents "a dialectic of polarity, one in which unity and diversity are redefined as simultaneous and necessary poles of the same essence -- the humanity", and that while the differences of traditions, of cultures, of languages, and of arts should be protected and preserved, the interrelationship and unity of the whole should at the same time be accepted. The practice of this new awareness demands unification and integration of human knowledge of the world by means of universalized education. This is so because the present incoherence of human relationship is a direct result of the past disintegrative educational and knowledge-communication processes. Instead of attempting to assimilate diversities, as under naive universalism in the colonial era, or avoid and perpetuate them as under adaptationism in the neocolonial period, the new universalism should globalize teaching materials by creating universal concepts reflecting shared international realities and by developing a pedagogy capable of teaching such concepts and integrating diversities with universal aspects of the study subject.

More on global education, my proposal for an interactive pedagogy, in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.