Globalization, Multiculturalism and Other Fictions: Colonialism for the New Millennium?

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Introduction

The fact that we are living in a "global" age seems inescapable. Rapid advances in information technology and the increased permeability of national boundaries have contributed to the pace of globalization in virtually all sectors of the economy. Globalization is one of the buzzwords of the nineties: we live in a "global" village, we consume "global" brands, corporations have to be competitive in a "global" marketplace and governments have to be responsive to the needs of the "global" economy (Banerjee 1998). These phrases are echoed by business executives and government officials all over the world, especially when responding to public criticisms on the

dismantling of social institutions, layoffs or plant closings. Globalization promises a leaner, more efficient economy, one that will ensure growth and be beneficial to all the nations of the world. Yet this begs two important questions as to the accuracy of this "promise".

- Is globalization truly "global" or does it refer to the expansion of capital and markets for the sole benefit of the industrialized countries of the world?
- What are the costs and benefits of globalization and how are these shared across different countries?

A significant outcome of globalization is its impact on the workforce: the mobility of capital across borders often implies operating in a culturally differentiated workplace. Simultaneously, as members of the domestic workforces of the advanced economies are sent overseas to operate joint ventures and supervise new developments, it becomes necessary to incorporate into the domestic workforce groups who may previously have been excluded or marginalized, such as immigrant ethnic groups and women (Calás and Smircich 1993). Thus, the successful management of diversity is presented as a key contemporary challenge for organizations (Chemers, Oskamp and Costanzo 1995). This complementary discourse to globalization also presents multiculturalism as a concept that can be employed to manage the consequences of cultural diversity. In this paper, we examine the construction of globalization and multiculturalism as mutually interlocking discourses and discuss its implications for management theory and practice.

Globalization and the New World Order

The discourses on globalization that dominate the business press and management journals focus primarily on its *economic* mien. Globalization's impetus is implanted in the capitalist logic of

expanding markets and the international integration of capital and the forces of production. The discourse on economic development in the neoclassical economic paradigm is one that emphasizes the benefits of free trade and the unrestricted flow of goods and services. This development philosophy was operationalized by the industrialized countries and international agencies after World War II: "development" for the poorer regions of the world was constructed as economic development and was seen as a process to help the postcolonial nations build their own economies. However, as several critics have pointed out, the development orchestrated by the industrialized countries tended to replicate the forces of colonialism in that it continued the pattern of resource expropriation and economic control by the industrialized countries.

This pattern of dependency resulting in the perpetuation of underdevelopment in the Third World has been documented by several researchers (Amin 1980; Escobar 1995; Shiva 1989). The "double jeopardy" scenario is familiar to most Third World nations: pressure from powerful international agencies to raise exports and open markets implies exporting natural resources or commodities at low prices and importing manufactured goods at high prices. "Development" was seen as economic development: once wealth was created, nation states could address social aspects of development. The separation of economic development from social development was typical of post-Enlightenment thinking in general and a Western capitalist world view in particular and its imposition on non-Western cultures led to a host of problems: displacement of rural populations, unemployment, urbanization, and environmental destruction. While some Third World countries attempted to balance economic development with social needs, most of these efforts were doomed to failure mainly due to the dictates of resource deployment by the World Bank which provided loans for large scale economic projects. In recent years, many developing countries in Latin America and

Asia have embarked on a full-scale process of deregulation and privatization. In a majority of cases, this process has been dictated by the "structural adjustment programs" of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Goldsmith 1997).

Focusing solely on the economic aspects of globalization is to take too narrow a perspective of the subject. Globalization is also a *political* process in the sense that it is constructed by relationships of power, of domination and subordination. Historically, control over markets and raw materials often involved the use of military power as was prevalent during colonial times. Today, international institutions and transnational corporations are the controlling agents. Thus, globalization has its historical roots in the modern era where military strength secured the global control of raw materials which through industrialization in turn, enabled the creation and control of world markets sustaining the competitive and economic advantage of the industrialized countries.

Globalization is also a *social and cultural* process. Waters (1995:3) defined globalization as "a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding". The underlying assumption here is that globalization, like modernity, is associated with the diffusion of capitalist society and Western culture. Thus, globalization is a direct consequence of European expansion beginning from the era of colonization, entrenching itself during the post World War II era of colonial development, and emerging in the latter part of the century as a "world wide" phenomenon. Despite its world-wide connotation, Western capitalist development is inherent in the concept of globalization: however, this does not imply that the entire planet is homogenized into Western culture but that political, cultural and social positions in the non-Western world are established *in relation* to the capitalist West (Waters 1995). This nexus between capitalist expansion and global production and consumption is

not new: classical economists like Marx discussed how the expansion of capitalism would require a "world-market" for modern industry (Marx 1977).

However, globalization involves more than *economic* exchanges: as Waters (1995) has pointed out, there are *material* exchanges as well as *political* and *symbolic* exchanges. Global material exchanges involve international trade, the international division of labor and the accumulation of capital. Thus, material exchanges involve the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods and services. These exchanges often involve global political exchanges of maintenance, coercion (as evidenced by several World Bank and IMF policies), surveillance (the various trade embargos orchestrated by Western powers), legitimacy (as offered by the World Trade Organization) and authority (granting of "most favored nation" status by the United States). Global symbolic exchanges can be seen in entertainment, media, communication, and advertising. These three exchanges are interdependent and one cannot be overdetermined by the other. At present, it appears that symbolic exchanges mediate the material (the consumption of global brands) and the political (the imaging of products and brands as representations of the "free world").

Globalization implies a certain level of universalism or a web of social relationships that transcend national or regional boundaries. It has immediate consequences at the local level. The long-term future of a coal miner in the Hunter Valley is dependent on a number of factors: world-wide trends in consumption of fossil fuels, trade policies of the World Trade Organization, world oil prices, and governmental policies to name a few. Thus, as Giddens (1990) states, globalization is a dialectical process involving the constant interplay of the global and the local. The simultaneity of the global and the local, of the particular and the universal, is characteristic of the globalization process (Wallerstein 1990; Robertson 1992). The relationship between the global and the local is grounded

not only on capitalist economic systems but on culture and the polity. However, as Jameson (1984) argues, the production of culture is directed by the logic of late capitalism. This global mass culture is one of consumption, and the global consumer culture is one that consumes not only products and services but increasingly, signs and symbols and ideas (Lash and Urry 1994).

Global Culture and Global Spaces

The emergence of a global culture is an important consequence of globalization. The basic theoretical debate underlying current discourses on globalization focuses on the relationships between economic and cultural forces that shape globalization. While some researchers argue that it is the economic system of the means of production and reproduction that directs the cultural aspects of globalization (Giddens 1990; Wallerstein 1990), others claim that it is the interpenetration of culture and economy that creates contemporary consumers and markets (Robertson 1992). In either case, globalization produces a tension between sameness and difference, between the universal and the particular and between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization (Appadurai 1990; Bhabha 1994:219; Duncan 1996:35-39). In a departure from the structuration theories of the world, Appadurai describes globalization as a discursive process consisting of a disjunctive series of "scapes" (ethnsoscapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes).

Ethnoscapes refer to the diversity of people in transition: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, and other mobile groups. *Technoscapes* refer to the global configuration of technology, *finanscapes* to the globalization of capital, *mediascapes* to the production and dissemination of information, and ideoscapes to the ideologies of states and the counter-ideologies of socio-political movements. While Appadurai (1990) conceptualizes globalization as a complex and disjunctive order

rejecting models of center and periphery, the colonizing effects of each of his "scapes" are not hard to decipher. Construction of ethnicities in ethnoscapes is an integral part of the colonization process. Technology is often used as a weapon, military or economic, by industrialized societies; "global" capital is in the hands of a few rich nations and transnational corporations; mediascapes and ideoscapes continue to promote colonial modes of development through the production and reproduction of the images of a "global" consumer culture.

The new forms of colonialism do not rely solely if at all on force to rule peoples - neocolonialist structures and thinking have permeated all corners of the globe. Exclusions, co-optations, and continuing epistemic violence characterize this process through the exercise of Western regimes of representation and thought upon the rest of the world (Spivak 1987). This construction of new spaces to negotiate exchange flows is a hallmark of capitalism and colonialism. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) point out, by reducing production and labor to the abstract value of money, global capitalism is faced with the task of deterritorializing and reterritoriatizing the flows of exchange. This process, involving the physical and ideological apparatus of capitalism, is also a process of deculturation and acculturation, by which "the territory and cultural space of an indigenous society must be disrupted, dissolved, and then reinscribed according to the needs of the apparatus of the occupying power" (Young 1995). Thus, globalization becomes the new global colonialism, based on the historical structure of capitalism. The physical appropriation of land, a hallmark of colonialism, continues unabated today in the Third World through cash crop agriculture, urbanization and the use of arable land for industrialization. The benefits of this form of economic growth are often enjoyed by indigenous elites and in many cases economic growth is a violent process for the vast majority of people who depend on the land for sustenance. Colonial control is

exercised through the panoptic gaze of globalization and continues the violent inscription of power relationships. This position is no better exemplified than the Australian Bicentennial celebrations of 1988: the main "celebration" involved the re-enactment of the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 at Botany Bay, but this time the ships' sails were emblazoned with the corporate logos of Coca Cola, Chase Corporation, Fuji Film, Mobil and other transnational firms. The fact that the Aboriginal population had not much reason to celebrate the occasion was another example of the historical amnesia that is characteristic of global colonialism (Castles et al. 1992).

Cultural Identity and Diversity

What does a global culture look like? Hall (1991a) describes the new form of global mass culture as being distinctively that of the United States, as opposed to a culture associated with English identity, which was the case during colonial times. The cultural imperialism inherent in the construction of a global culture has more to do with the market than the empire. Modern means of cultural production, dominated by images produced mainly in the West, have no linguistic or geographical barriers. The global culture that is constructed is a consumer culture dependent on the consumption of images and symbols in different parts of the globe. It is hegemonic in a Gramscian sense in that it sustains the dominance of existing dominant groups. Contrary to popular rhetoric, a global culture does *not* make everything the same, neither does it celebrate difference. Rather as Hall (1991b:58) states, hegemony is the "articulation of differences which do not disappear". Globalization incorporates differences in cultures and societies *in the same way*: through the production and reproduction of a global consumer culture. While we can locate the sites of cultural production, the global centers that produce culture for global consumption, the different sites of

consumption can mediate a multiplicity of meanings. For example, global advertising commonly uses signs and symbols to communicate meaning rather than employing elaborate written copy. The use of global signifiers implies a universal understanding of the signified: however meanings associated with the global signifiers and the signifieds can be elaborated locally. This negotiation of meaning in a global culture is another example of the interplay between the global and the local, between the universal and the particular. "Global identity" is not inscribed on a *tabula rasa* , but rather negotiated and contested in a variety of cultural contexts.

The diversity of cultures that continue to flourish does not contradict the notion of globalization. Rather, diversity can be seen as a consequence of globalization via the expansion of transnational capital, cultural products and media industries throughout the world (Wolff 1991). The commodification and management of cultures for tourism is an example of cultural production on a global scale. The forces underlying the consumption of cultures are the same forces that operate in a capitalist economy and, as in the case of tourism in non-Western countries, definitions of "culture" and the management and promotion of local culture are imported from the West (King 1991). Production of meanings of categories can be paradoxical and confusing in the process of global cultural production and consumption. In music stores nowadays, recordings of music from non-English speaking background countries are typically stored in a separate category called "World Music". The acknowledgment of non-English music as a part of 'world" music is ironic when we consider that the cultural products sent to outer space on the Voyager missions were mainly of Western origin: recordings of Beethoven and Bach and the works of William Shakespeare. These were supposed to represent the "best" of our planet's culture. Cultural production and reproduction in a global economy transcends national boundaries as does ownership of the means of production.

The culture industry of the United States is flourishing on a global scale. The fact that the vast majority of the business enterprises that constitute the U.S. culture industry are owned by Japanese firms and investors is no impediment to its expansion.

Globalization is a *homogenizing* process as well as a *differentiating* process. The emergence of a global consumer culture is a homogenizing trend while simultaneously acknowledging and exploiting distinct market niches based on cultural differences. An U.S-style consumer culture is becoming global through mass media advertising. In a consumer culture identity is expressed through consumption and, in the postmodern context leads to hypercommodification, a phenomenon where small differences between products determine the patterns of consumption and where brand names rather than product properties are the chief source of differentiation. Consumption styles in North America, Europe, and Japan, to name a few regions, revolve around the consumption of sign value rather than material exchange value as was the case during modernity (Baudrillard 1981). The product becomes the image and the individual becomes the consumer always ready to purchase and consume images, images that are becoming increasingly fragmented, hyperreal and decentered, all of which are aspects of postmodernity. Postmodern consumption patterns are individualistic as opposed to collectivist, alienated rather than synergistic, and private rather than public (Firat and Venkatesh 1994). In a global era, mass mediated images of consumption originating from the industrialized countries, especially the United States, will continue to permeate other regions of the world.

Yet we need to be cautious in our use of the terms “West” and “white”, for example, and tying them too closely to their physical origins. As Moore points out, even in these categories there is movement and change, and that although

> “members of the British Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities might not readily identify with the category of the West as deployed in anthropology, cultural studies, colonial

> discourse theory; with that particular set of cultural, values, symbols social structures and ways of being shored up by acts of violence and economic opportunism. And yet they so obviously are a part of any sensible definition of the West; they are at the heart of the category even as they seek to resist it, transform it, and educate it" (Moore 1994:132 cited in Duncan 1996:38-39).

The "West" then, operates not so much as a particular set of geographical locations, or indeed a specific collection of locationally defined peoples. It has now become "a discursive space, a set of positionalities, a network of economic and power relations, a domain of material and discursive effects" (Moore 1994:132).

The discourses of globalization are one of the discursive effects of the construction of the epistemological space of "the West". Drawing from Waters (1995), Wallerstein (1990), Robertson (1992) and other writers, our analysis of the effects of these discourses of globalization can be summarized as follows:

- *Capitalism is a significant globalizing force.* The logic of increasing the scale of production is driven by the logic of increasing scales of consumption through commodification and this necessitates the expansion of trade without restrictive national boundaries.
- *Globalization has a distinct Western, and predominantly a U.S. flavor*. Other sites are located in relation to Western sites. Local particularisms are required to be legitimized through Western cultural preferences which are effectively universalized in theory and practice.
- *Transnational institutionalised practices inform globalization*. These could be in the form of trade agreements or the emergence of regional (as opposed to national) blocs such as the EU, ASEAN, NAFTA, etc.

- *Globalization involves an expansion of the authority of global organizations and bureaucracies* like the World Trade Organization. As a consequence, globalization implies a decline in the sovereignty of the state.
- *The interplay between the global and the local* produces a tension. This tension can be played out in differing ways in different contexts.
- *Globalization does not merely homogenize*. It differentiates and homogenizes at the same time. It does not destroy difference but manipulates it.
- *Globalization implies the existence of a global consumer culture*. A consumer culture is characterized by the creation of identity through consumption. You are what you buy, display, and possibly also use. A culture of consumption transcends socio-cultural and geographic locations.
- *Globalization relativizes different cultures*: it may make the world into "a single place' but it does not integrate different cultures. It creates new divisions and the interplay between the global and the local provides the space for the absorption of ethnic minorities and the reconstitution of nations.

These features of the common discourses of globalization entail some interesting questions. If globalization is a social, cultural, political and economic process, how do we know when this process is completed? In other words, how does a "non-global" society know that it has "arrived"? What does a "global" world look like? Does globalization affect all regions in the same way or are some regions/nations/states/corporations/communities/societies more global than others? Do they become global or are they "born global"? Underlying these questions is an assumption of plurality and the ability of globalization to proceed harmoniously in a world of multiple cultures. But this

harmonious co-mingling remains a challenge to be achieved. The cultural flows from the center to the periphery (and vice-versa) imply *managing the consequences* of cultural diversity and the apparatus that is designed to do so is termed multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism, Ethnicity and Identity

Globalization involves the flow of meanings and symbols as well as goods and services. These multiple, polyvalent networks of social relationships among diverse cultures imply an organization of diversity rather than a replication of uniformity. In a global economy, diversity in terms of race, ethnicities, and nationalities has to be "managed" for the market economy to function smoothly. This reductionist view of diversity is the basis of the multiculturalist doctrine, state-sponsored or otherwise. Multiculturalism aims at preserving different cultures without interfering with the "smooth functioning of society". Multiculturalism emerged from North American attempts to manage the consequences of mass immigration and cultural diversity and is now "official" in many countries including Canada and Australia. State-sponsored multiculturalism often leads to corporate multiculturalism as exemplified by the advertising campaigns of United Colors of Benetton that celebrate "ethnic" identities. In this diversity of identities, consumption is the common denominator and the negotiation of a common identity through consumption is a hallmark of global culture. The superficiality of some approaches is well illustrated by an advertising hoarding seen in the centre of the Aston district of Birmingham in the UK. The poster proclaimed the cultural awareness and sensitivity of a large financial services house, personalised by claiming to be a photograph of the Managing Director. The director in question wore a smart business suit and a Native American head-

dress. The population of Aston is almost entirely Asian Indian or Pakistani, and the area is frequently referred to as a "ghetto".

This notion of multiculturalism is problematic and, as we shall see, perpetuates hegemonic modes of relations in a global context. It does not acknowledge, let alone challenge, existing real inequalities of opportunity and access. The globalization of multiculturalism in its sanitized, packaged form is a process that is well underway as can be seen in the various "official" policies of governments as well as in the mission statements of several transnational corporations.

For instance, the Australian government's "National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia" defines multiculturalism as "a policy for managing the consequences of cultural diversity in the interests of the individual and society as a whole" (Office of Multicultural Affairs 1989, page vii). The Agenda also states that cultural identity, a dimension of multicultural policy is "the right of all Australians, *within carefully defined limits*, to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion" (emphasis added). The Agenda goes on to state that all governmental multicultural policies are based on the premise that "all Australians should have an overriding and unifying commitment to Australia, to its interests and future first and foremost". This "acceptable" multiculturalism or multicultural nationalism raises some interesting questions, because the interests and future of "Australia" are not presented as an ongoing debate in which these *communities* might have a legitimate stake, and these groups are not seen as already being at the "heart" of Australia (see Moore 1994:132 cited above). Multiculturalism here is a property devolved to the individual. By becoming Australian, individuals lose their right to community, but retain the right to mourn this community as their "individual cultural heritage".

By this policy, Aboriginal resistance to mining (as in the case of the Jabiluka uranium mine) may become “un-Australian” and should not be tolerated. Across the Tasman, Maori leaders are becoming increasingly suspicious of the rhetoric of multiculturalism employed by the New Zealand government. After a long, hard struggle lasting most of this century, the Maoris were finally able to work out a bi-cultural policy with the government that established their rights and a framework for decision-making. The invocation of the multicultural doctrine threatens to obscure the gains made in the recent past. Eurocentric notions of multiculturalism obscure inequalities faced by indigenous communities such as the fight for Aboriginal land rights in Australia, Asia and South America. Yet as Moore (1994) has argued, the notion of Australia, just as the notion of the West, is an imaginary and fictive one - a discourse in which the authors try to write the most favourable part for themselves, and thus embedded in power relations.

The production and consumption of multiculturalism does not challenge existing power relationships: it consolidates them by refocussing the debate on “cultural heritage”. It creates a spectacle, an “exotica of difference” (Hall 1991a). Consequently, a multicultural Australia is one that gleefully celebrates the consumption of tandoori chicken and tom yum soup without addressing the power relations between cultural communities. Following this logic, Cuban communism is not a part of “culture” as is defined by the dominant ideology. However, Cuban jazz is an element of culture that is allowed to be produced and consumed and is spectacularized as an example of the cultural diversity that is prevalent in Australia. Power, economic or otherwise, continues to be monoculturally deployed in the way reality is defined for “ethnic” communities (the term “ethnic” is itself loaded with multiple meanings and exclusions as we shall see later). This celebration of cultural

pluralism is predicated on an established hierarchy of cultures and multiculturalism consolidates these hegemonic relations without challenging the hierarchy of the majority and the minority.

Cultural pluralism obscures class and power differences and prevents the possibilities for changes in structural relations (Foster and Stockley 1984). The possibility of multiple structures and institutions serving multiple cultures is a real fear for governments. Thus, the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia in describing the need for a multicultural policy to manage the consequences of cultural diversity states: "...we should not dismantle or repudiate our institutions in order to start afresh. Our British heritage is extremely important to us. It helps to define us as Australian" (Office of Multicultural Affairs 1989: 50). Governmental and conservative concerns about multiculturalism revolve around fears of promoting "ethnic ghettos", of Balkanizing the nation, and as the Australian government's Multicultural Agenda states "there is overwhelming support for the maintenance of cultural traditions providing (sic) they are shared with the rest of the community and that they become part of *Australian* life" (Office of Multicultural Affairs 1989 : 46).

The process of assimilationist inscription is evident in these statements despite the rhetoric of "celebrating difference" and respecting ethnicities. Rather, it is a process of commodifying difference, a "white male form of voyeurism" that, through its gaze, defines reality for the rest of the world (Jordan and Weedon 1995). This folkloric spectacle of diverse cultures disguises underlying power relations as well as Western representations and serves to "amalgamate and spuriously to unify nationalism and culture into a depoliticized multimedia event" (Gunew 1990). This is not to say that such sharing and celebration is wrong. On the contrary it is to be welcomed: what we are calling attention to is the problem of allowing it to function as a *mask*. What is produced is an easy reconciliation through the surface aesthetics of the event which elides the real significances of

material difference into mere symbolic novelty, producing the comforting sense that we are all one under the skin, the superficial sentimentality that Kundera identifies as *kitsch* (Kundera 1984). Many corporations are also following this line in their advertising and internal training material which prompted one airline manager to bemoan "It's all Save the World Stuff - British Airways togetherness ... like Coca-Cola" (Höpfl 1993:120)

Ethnicity, authentic or otherwise, is a problematic category with political and epistemological consequences. In a global economy, with its promise of "one world, many cultures", the deployment of the term "ethnic", far from embracing plurality, sustains the binary oppositions of the dominant culture. For instance, what exactly does "ethnic food" mean? What makes Indonesian *gado gado* an "ethnic" dish and an Adelaide pie floater (Connolly 1996:94) "nonethnic"? Ethnic foods (like ethnic clothing and other artefacts) are identified and categorized based on their difference from the dominant cultural forms and styles. The fact that the dominant culture is itself constituted ethnically remains hidden, except in the marginalised work of such disciplines as historical cultural anthropology and ethnomusicology. "Ethnic violence" is a term almost exclusively reserved for cases of non-white violence by the media, with the signal exception of Bosnia, and formerly South Africa. Ethnicity is deployed as a totalizing category that normalizes different histories of a variety of minority groups and constructs a category that is opposed to the mainstream - positioning it as an *alien* category. Thus, ethnicity is maintained "by the paranoia of the dominant culture as eternally illicit, transgressive, and lawless" (Radhakrishnan 1996).

As Jordan and Weedon (1995) point out, the mandate of ethnic art as a cultural policy is also a racist practice. Cultural traditions, suppressed and destroyed by colonialism, are allowed to re-emerge for the creation of a space which is essential for the surveillance of neo-colonial relations

(Araeen 1987). Thus, “authentic” Aboriginal art is seen to involve depictions of bush life or dreamtime stories. Experiences of urban Aboriginal painters such as Kevin Butler (1996) are in some way regarded as less “authentic”. Cultural consumption of “authentic Aboriginal art” conflates race with culture by a fixing of difference, perpetuating the marginalization of these communities. Ethnic art like ethnic food or ethnic clothing is an invention of the dominant hegemonic culture - in most cases white, Western European (predominantly Dutch, French, German, Anglo-Celtic, Spanish or Portuguese) and more latterly North American in its source- and, as several cultural theorists have argued, is an example of a new racism prevalent in modern Western societies. This new “post-modern” racism is expressed in the white liberal/ soft left fascination with the Exotic and the Ethnic (Jordan and Weedon 1995).

Managing Cultural Diversity

The ideological forces underpinning management theories and market forces play a significant role in the construction of categories like multiculturalism, ethnicity and diversity. These are represented as the “challenges” of managing a culturally diverse workforce. Globalization fundamentally transforms the employer-employee relationship wherein owners of capital can now substitute labor more freely across national boundaries. Cultural diversity therefore is seen as a market opportunity whether it is in the form of niche marketing efforts directed at “ethnic” communities (such as our Birmingham poster discussed above), or using “authentic” cultural knowledge to exploit foreign markets. The languages of markets and investment appear frequently in

descriptions of multiculturalism and diversity in government documents and research reports. At the societal level, the rhetoric is of "utilizing a diverse workforce", or "capitalizing on the assets inherent in Australia's multicultural society" (Report of the Industry Task Force [Karpin Report] 1995). Multiculturalism and diversity are issues that need to be managed to ensure Australia's competitiveness in the global market, or more specifically, in the Asian market. The fact that the level of representation of ethnic minorities in government or business is minimal does not enter the debate. The Australian Prime Minister John Howard's refusal to censure the Member for Oxley Pauline Hanson's racist statements is a case in point: the official governmental position is that racism is "bad for business" and has negative consequences for trade but there is little effort to engage with or redress issues of existing *internal* inequalities. Of course, the Hanson issue has demonstrated that Australia's Asian "customers" don't see things in the same way, which is hardly surprising given the interest that the West and the US have shown in the human rights record of the People's Republic of China, which the PRC continues to argue are its own "internal affairs".

The culturalization of social inequalities creates a new form of racism (Alund and Schierup 1991). This "cultural racism" constructs imagined communities through a "celebration and fossilization of differences, which are then subsumed into an imagined community of national cohesion" (Castles et al. 1992). The realities of cultural pluralism create new forms of assimilation in the social-democratic policies of countries like Australia and Canada. Ethnicity, religious affiliations and nationalities become paramount categorizers while issues of self-determination and inequalities remain invisible. A multicultural ideology is inscribed on social realities of cultural groups through a unitarian structuring in order to manage and control the process of multiculturalism. Discriminatory practices are not exposed by this notion of multiculturalism, rather a hierarchical cultural division of

labor is produced and sustained. Thus, the multicultural agenda of Australia now rejects its assimilationist policies of the past and instead acknowledges the “legitimacy” of cultural pluralism.

The power relations between who legitimizes and who is being legitimized are not difficult to discern. The acceptance of cultural pluralism is the new assimilationism and the message is clear : as long as we do not threaten the dominant ideology, we can be as multicultural as we like. Any other course of action is “un-Australian”, as in another country forty years ago it might have been described as “un-American” (and by some may still be described that way today). Thus, the rhetoric in multicultural Australia is of “tolerance” but this call for tolerance operates from a pregiven position of power and tends to patronize those groups that are deemed worthy of tolerance. The film-maker Pier Paolo Pasolini puts it more succinctly: “tolerance is a more refined form of condemnation” (Perera and Pugliese 1997). The systematic dismantling of equity programs characterizes the “new, improved, and tolerant Australia”: unequal power relations underlying many civil policies remain disguised.

A similar conceptualization of multiculturalism and diversity can be found in the organization studies literature. Researchers addressing the trend of a multicultural workplace focus on issues of intercultural communication, diversity in work teams, leadership in diverse groups and so on (Chemers, Oskamp and Costanzo 1995), without ever challenging existing notions of multiculturalism. There is no attempt to articulate an alternative form of multiculturalism, for example a polycentric multiculturalism which focuses on power and struggle for rights without epistemologically privileging a particular community or system (Shohat and Stam 1994).

Implications

Social implications of globalization can be seen in many regions of the world where segments of societies are attempting to resist the changes necessitated by globalization. Labor strikes in France and South Korea, a minor communist revival in Eastern Europe, and the rise of religious fundamentalism in Asia and Africa are some examples of the initial backlash against the globalization process. Globalization does not imply social stability, in fact as Rodrik (1997) points out, the challenge ahead lies in ensuring that globalization does not contribute to social disintegration.

Rodrik (1997) highlights three sources of tension between globalization and social stability. *First*, both the *international and domestic division of labor is accentuated* by international integration of markets. Labor services of large segments of the population are more easily substitutable across national boundaries leading to workers bearing a greater proportion of nonwage costs, higher levels of job insecurity, and an erosion of workers' bargaining power. *Second*, the *global reduction in trade barriers* means that countries at different levels of development compete for similar goods and services. "Free" trade becomes freer for the advanced nations and less free for the underdeveloped nations, who have the sole advantage of cheap labour. *Third*, government *spending on social services is reduced* significantly in order that institutions can be competitive. All these forces have affected Australia as is evidenced by the recent public protests and industrial actions against plant closings and reductions in health, education and other social services.

While the industrialized societies can expect to experience the above tensions, the consequences for peoples of the Third World and indigenous communities all over the world are even more severe. Increasing urban migration, displacement of agricultural communities, environmental destruction, and rising inequalities in wealth are but a few immediate consequences of unbridled globalization and free trade. The emergence of an indigenous elite embracing Western

notions of development and progress through increased consumption can already be seen in Mexico, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and several other developing countries. Far from promising an integrated world, globalization can threaten to produce a new set of class divisions between and within nations. Globalization is an irreversible process and if allowed to spread unchecked, can divide populations into those that can prosper in the globalized economy and those that cannot.

The colonizing effects of globalization can also be seen in the emerging discourse on "global" environmentalism. Espoused as a solution to the environmental ills facing the planet, global environmentalism remains firmly rooted in the tradition of Western economic thought and dehistoricizes the environmental traditions of non-Western cultures. While environmental problems like pollution do not recognize national or regional boundaries, the "global" solutions advocated by the industrialized countries perpetuate the dependency relations of colonialism. Images of polluted Third World cities abound in the media without acknowledgment of the corresponding responsibility of industrialized countries who consume 80% of the world's aluminium, paper, iron and steel; 75% of the world's energy; 75% of its fish resources; 70% of its CFCs and 61% of its meat (Renner 1997). The poorer regions of the world destroy or export their natural resources to meet the demands of the richer nations or to meet debt servicing criteria typical of the "austerity" measures dictated by the World Bank. It is ironic to the point of absurdity that the poorer countries of the world have to be "austere" in their development while the richer nations continue to enjoy standards of living that are dependent on the "austerity" measures of the poorer nations. None of the copper extracted by the largest copper mine in the world, the Panguna mine in Bougainville, is consumed locally: developing countries account for most of the world's copper production but per capita consumption of copper is about 20 times higher in the industrialized world (Renner 1997). As

transnational companies eagerly await the transition of populous countries like China and India to the market economy and a consumer culture, global environmental problems are increasingly being blamed on the rapid resource-intensive industrialization that is taking place in these countries. Neither the dangers of environmental destruction nor the benefits of environmental protection are equally distributed: protection measures continue to be dictated by the industrialized countries often at the expense of local rural communities.

Transnational corporations are the most likely to benefit from globalization and the removal of trade barriers. As owners of international capital and resources, their power is enhanced by the elimination of tariffs and removal of restrictions on foreign ownership that has occurred as a result of the GATT Uruguay Round. The recent bail-out packages offered by the IMF and World Bank to countries that have been adversely affected by the Asian currency crisis, will simply serve to perpetuate and strengthen prevailing dependency relations.

Conclusion

The challenges of how we respond to globalization are many and complex, but we see the three most significant as being as follows:

The Question of the Peasantry

One of the many challenges of globalization is preventing the perpetuation of the inequitable distribution of wealth and resources. While the short-term consequences of accelerated economic growth in newly industrializing countries may imply a higher standard of living, these benefits are by no means distributed evenly. The urbanized middle class benefit more than the rural poor, especially those in the rural sector engaged in small-scale farming. The gap between rich and poor is ever-

widening: on a per capita income basis, the rich to poor ratio was 2:1 in 1800, 20:1 in 1945 and by 1975 it was 40:1. The richest 20% of the world account for 82.7% of global income while the poorest 20% of the world earn 1.6% of global income (Waters 1995). In the newly industrializing countries, economic growth is inevitably accompanied by an increase in income disparity. The numbers of both rural and urban peasantry are growing, even in the advanced economies. There is a real danger that globalization will result in the marginalization of large groups of people. As Burrell argues, one of the central problems facing global organization theory is the problem of the peasantry (Burrell 1997:Ch.10).

Globalization will increasingly bring people from all over the world into its politics of discourse and, just like the development discourse, it will literally "map people into certain coordinates of control" (Escobar 1995). Any activity outside the market economy is disallowed which seriously disadvantages the "subsistence activities" of peasants and indigenous communities all over the world.

The Question of Nature

We prefer to use the term nature here, as a deeper formulation of the problem, as the term "environment" already distances the natural world and positions it as a resource to be mastered in a similar way to which human feelings and expression become mastered through "culture". We are part of nature, but the environment is "out there" and can even be someone else's. The term environment involves the incorporation of nature as defined by the industrial system: the world becomes a resource, and, as Escobar (1995) argues, sustainable development is embedded in the process of the death of nature and the rise of environment.

The impact of globalization on the natural world is a significant issue: globalization will reduce the ability of national governments to act unilaterally in defence of their environments. One can see in the example of the CIA sponsored coup in Guatemala in the 1950s (where land reforms of the democratically elected government threatened the profits of the United Fruit Company and the American love of cheap bananas [Halberstam 1993]) the roots of contemporary problems. The contemporary example of the "dolphin-safe tuna" dispute between the U.S. and Mexico is well-documented and is a telling example of how regional and global trade agreements can transcend national environmental protection laws.

The concept of sustainable development has emerged in recent years in an effort to address environmental problems. There are several different interpretations of what sustainable development actually means, but its broad aim is to describe a process of economic growth without environmental destruction. What is being sustained (economic growth or the global ecosystem) is not very clear: many environmentalists argue that the apparent reconciliation of economic growth and the environment is simply a green sleight-of-hand and fails to address genuine environmental problems (Redclift 1987). The discourse of sustainable development focuses more on the effects of environmental destruction on economic growth potential and less on the negative consequences of economic growth. Moreover, definitions of "global ecosystems" are subsumed under a monocultural definition of "global", and is defined according to a perception of the world shared by its rulers (Escobar 1995). The reframing of the relationship between economic growth and the environment and the ecocentric philosophy of "spaceship earth" assumes equal responsibility for environmental degradation and obscures significant differences and inequities in resource utilization between countries. Sustainability of local cultures, especially peasant cultures, is not addressed, instead, global

survival is problematized in the concept of sustainable development which tends to ignore the fact that the responsibility of environmental protection is not equally shared. Critics of the concept of sustainable development argue that it is can colonize areas of Third World social life that are not yet ruled by the logic of the market or the comsumer, areas such as forests, water rights and sacred sites (Escobar 1995; Visvanathan 1991)

The Question of Women

Whilst recognizing that there is a need to address gender fundamentally for both women and men, the pressing problems of gender are in the plight of women globally. Globalization is a gendered discourse with differing consequences in different regions of the world. Research on immigration patterns in Australia indicates that of the several marginalized groups of immigrants, women migrant workers are a significant majority, often unable to break out of low-wage low-skilled jobs (Castles et al. 1992; Shiva 1989). As ECPAT (1996) argues

> "In many countries throughout the world, women and children are the lowest strata of society. Faced with unemployment and abject poverty, searching for alternatives they fall into more vulnerable situations, their gender and powerlessness exploited".

The working conditions of women and children in manufacturing in developing economies such as India are a major source of international concern. The rise of cheap global travel has made catering to sex tourism one of the few occupations open to poor women from rural communities in Asia or Latin America who leave their villages (O'Connell Davidson 1997; Staebler 1997). The number of women involved in, sold into, trapped into or indentured by the global sex industry dwarfs the number of male providers of similar services - and the customers are mainly from the advanced economies of Western and Northern Europe, Japan, Australia, America and the Gulf, whilst the

providers (in some cases sex slaves) are from the poorer countries of South-East Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, although Eastern Europe and some states of the former USSR are now becoming involved (Staebler 1997). At the organizational level, there is a displacement of power from the national to the global level. As Calás and Smircich (1993) point out, the widespread encouragement of the "feminine-in-management" in no way changes dominant managerial ideologies in the global economy. Rather, skills of harmonizing and caring, traditionally identified with women, are mobilized to keep the home workforce happy and quiescent so that the traditionally male-dominated ranks of senior management can move to fight the "real" competitive battles cross-culturally in the new global markets - the new colonies.

Returning to the two questions with which we began this paper, the answers seem obvious. Globalization works overwhelmingly in favour of the expansion of the interests of capital to the benefit of the industrialised countries. The costs and benefits of globalization are inequitably shared, with the costs tending to accrue to the "globalized" and the benefits to the "globalizers". All of this is sustained and legitimated by the twin discourses of globalization and multiculturalism, which naturalise and depoliticise the process and obscure the widening differences in power and prosperity which it entails.

The key question we as practitioners and educators need to ask ourselves is whether management and organization theory is helping to address these problems, or whether it is helping to improve and sophisticate those ideological processes which manage the masking of these problems, allowing the trees to obscure the wood through the "management of cultural diversity", with organization theory becoming kitsch (Linstead 1996). There is a need for a reflexively self-critical approach to globalization, one which seeks to address the fundamental problems in a radical way.

We should also remember that the cultural logic of consumption is that consumption creates and reinforces identity, and the discourses of globalization and multiculturalism are themselves products or artefacts which we "purchase". Despite the fact that these discourses may make comfortable and progressive-sounding additions to our self-image, and despite the fact that they appear to manifest a planetary concern with our fellow man and the environment (cf IBM's "solutions for a small planet"), we need to consider what the ultimate price of our subscription might be. As we have argued, unless some fundamental questions are addressed by management and organization theory, and acted upon by managers and politicians, that price will be too high for us all.

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