Symposium
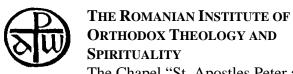
Globalization from A (Archeology) to S (Spirituality): What Is It and Who Needs It?

The Twelfth Ecumenical Theological Symposium

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December 4, 2004

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Dr. Nicolae Condrea, Archbishop

Stephen Greenwald, MCNY President

Prof. Paul Hamilton

George Alexe (right) and Theodor Damian, organizers of the event.

Preliminaries to the 12th Ecumenical Theological Symposium

Dr. Nicolae Condrea: Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America and Canada

Dr. Theodor Damian: President of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality

Prof. Stephen Greenwald: President of the Metropolitan College of New York,

Distinguished Speakers and Faculty, Students,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The topic of our 12th Ecumenical Theological Symposium emphasizes one of the most fervent questions of our times: Globalization. From the very beginning, we may remark that our topic seems very approachable in many ways, but at the same

From right: Richard Grallo, Bert Breiner, Vadim Moldovan, StevenCresap, Archbishop Nicolae Condrea, George Alexe, Theodor Damian.

time, is also controversial and inaccessible to many. There are still a large number of daily debates, confusions, misunderstandings and ambiguities related to many of its aspects such as the economic, political, social, cultural and even artistic and religious Globalization. To reject Globalization is our existential alternative.

Certainly, there are many global antecedents to this new era of globalization. Some of them are aptly analyzed by the Romanian philosopher, George Uscatescu, professor at the University of Madrid who wrote a famous book titled *Tempo di Utopia*, published in Italy in the city of Pisa (Editrice Giardini, 1967).

To better understand globalization, particularly the new concept of globalization in our time, we must not ignore this "Time of Utopia" as it was depicted by George Uscatescu. A virtual relation between globalization and utopia could be revelatory and beneficial to our general topic, by acknowledging not only the reality of utopia and its implications, but also its positive and active elements.

George Uscatescu has realized a vast synthesis of utopia, beginning with Plato until our times. All utopias detected by him are critically analyzed in their literary, philosophical, theological, scientific and historical ways of their manifestation, in order to determine mankind's future through the prism of utopia and to harmonize, as much as is possible, the real with the ideal.

The ardent questions that George Uscatescu answers in his book are very similar to those of our time of globalization. For example, he raises the following questions: "Are utopias realizable? What role are they playing in our lives? And finally, which is the modern and true meaning of utopia?" In our case we can also ask, "Is globalization realizable? What role does it play in our life? And finally, which is the modern and true meaning of globalization?"

At that period of time when George Uscatescu was writing his book Tempo di Utopia, Europe, especially Eastern Europe, was experiencing the totalitarian global tendencies of Hitlerian

Racism, Italian Fascism and Soviet Communism. Each of them circumscribed another type of utopian globalization. These totalitarian tendencies were "global utopias," since they denied all freedom and the value of the individual. (See Nicolas Berdyaev, *Destiny of Man,* first Harper Torchbook edition published 1960, p. 212).

Despite this tragic utopianism, George Uscatescu logically reached the conclusion that utopias are indeed realizable on the condition that they have to be deformed.

In his noble efforts to find out a reasonable justification of these totalitarian utopias with global tendencies, George Uscatescu surprisingly affirms the triumph of utopia and the unavoidable preoccupation to consider the problem of the human existence as a "totality" in order to depict in "utopian terms" the mysterious place of man in the Cosmos, by underlining in this way the return of utopia to an eschatological sense. In this context, on the threshold of the new utopian era, George Uscatescu called the intellectuals and the educated classes to discover the real means to avoid the utopias, by returning to a non-utopian society less perfect but free. Thus, the utopian ideal of a perfect society is replaced with the realistic ideal of a less perfect, but free society. Certainly *Tempo di Utopia* has its actuality and George Uscatescu deserves to be greatly appreciated for his contribution to the understanding of this modern notion, what it means in itself and in its relations with ethics, science, politics, metaphysics and religion, by wisely valorizing its active and positive elements.

Now, after the collapse of Soviet totalitarian Communism, the "Time of Utopia" was followed by the "Time of Globalization." However, the temptation of utopias did not disappear. What we have to keep in mind is the very fact that utopia might become an impulsive force of globalization. In these cases, utopias have always created phantasmagorical worlds by destroying one's sense of reality, as Berdyaev asserted (p. 182). Certainly, globalization is not conceived as being utopian, at least not yet, even if its balance between real and ideal, that preserves its true success, could be jeopardized by the utopian impulses.

In conclusion, utopias are going to play a key role in the era of globalization. Already, the Europeans are giving a great significance to the relation between utopias and globalization. Next year, from June 30th to July 2nd 2005, the 6th International Conference on Utopias and Globalization: From Early Modernity to the 21st Century will take place in New Lanark, England.

Organized by the British Utopian Studies Society, in collaboration with the German Centre for Research in Early Modern History, Culture and Science and the Institute for English and American Studies of the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main, this interdisciplinary conference will deal with a number of five topics with their related concerns, as follows: 1. *The Concept of Utopia:* Postmodern Utopias, Positive and Negative Utopias, the End of Utopia? 2. *Utopia and Modernity:* Utopia and Civil Society, Technological and Biotechnological Utopias. 3. *Utopia in the Age of Globalization:* Postcolonial Utopias, Critical Utopias. 4. *Utopia in Practice:* Concrete Utopias, Anti-Globalization Movement. And 5. *Utopia and Art, New Technologies:* Virtual Communities and the Avant-Garde.

As we are witnessing the naissance of a new era of Globalization, one of the first things we notice is the absence of an indisputable definition and ideology to better characterize this new phenomenon. This gives the impression that all the debates are unilaterally oriented to provide only an anthropocentric approach to this magnificent enterprise. But an anthropocentric globalization without its counterpart, the theocentric dimension, would be nonsense. It would be an unachieved process, or only partially achieved.

Our Twelfth Ecumenical Theological Symposium dedicated to Globalization is equally outlining the phenomenon in both its theocentric and anthropocentric dimensions. In this way, through our distinguished speakers, we hope to contribute to a better definition and understanding of Globalization in all its implications and consequences.

I would like to close my preliminary introduction by stressing the fact that for the first time (since 1993), at the initiative of our president Dr. Theodor Damian, the present Ecumenical and Theological Symposium was organized by the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality of New York in cooperation with the Metropolitan College of New York and the "Spiru Haret" University of Bucharest, Romania. This academic event deserves to be appreciated as one of the most remarkable university performances that will hopefully be transformed into a new cultural tradition of these three highly respected institutions.

The papers proposed for this Symposium will be presented as follows: My paper, entitled *A Contemporary Dilemma: Globalizing Religion or Spiritualizing Globalization, Faith and Reason in a Global Age,* by Dr. Bert F. Breiner. *The Effect of Mass Virtual Pleasure on Cultural Sectors,* by Steven Cresap. *Global Change: Prospects for Plutocracy on a 'Learning Planet,'* by Dr. Richard Grallo, followed by: *Globalization as Reconstruction of the World: The Theological Value of Recapitulation,* by Dr. Theodor Damian. And finally, *Capitalism versus 'Vertical Solidarity': A Social Work Perspective on Globalization,* by Dr. Vadim Moldovan.

All papers will be kindly moderated by Dr. Paul E.C. Hamilton. In conclusion, let me express our gratitude and appreciation to all of you attending this traditional event, especially to our distinguished speakers. We welcome each of them and all of you! Certainly, we are extending our deepest gratitude and heart felt congratulations to the organizers of this Symposium, representing the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality, the Metropolitan College of New York and "Spiru Haret" University of Bucharest, Romania, and particularly to Dr. Theodor Damian and his distinguished wife, Mrs. Claudia Damian, for their hard work and dedication. Special thanks must be given to Prof. Steven Greenwald and the administration of the Metropolitan College of New York for allowing us to have this event here on the College's premises.

George Alexe

A Contemporary Dilemma: Globalizing Religion or Spiritualizing Globalization

Contemporary problems created by the new era of globalization are far from being exhausted, debated or eventually resolved. All existential levels of the world are globally affected in many ways. Even the modern and post modern autonomous fragmentation of the world's divine unity seems to be increased rather than being decreased by the contemporary globalization now in progress.

Nevertheless, the phenomenal precipitation provoked by this new era of globalization might have in itself the germinal power of harmonizing its various constituent parts in order to restore the primordial unity of the created world. It appears that we are witnessing a new fullness of time intentionally anticipating a new era of global goodness.

Insofar as it may be generally apprehended, this new globalization is unilaterally expressed more and more in material than in spiritual or cultural terms. This reality indicates the probability of a real contest, if not a trial, between all the competitive parts striving for the global supremacy of the world. Hopefully, our topic: "Globalizing Religion or Spiritualizing Globalization" might be the best way to solve this anachronistic struggle of dichotomizing the created world of God.

For sure, the most appropriate method for finding a correct response to this dilemmatic question must not be in any case anthropocentric nor theocentric, but theandric because it reunites all human efforts, both spiritual and material in the same

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globalizing process that has in view the reconstruction of the world according to the will of God, its true creator.

However, to realize the globalization of religion or to spiritualize the contemporary globalization, one must clearly understand the biblical roots of both globalization and religion, arising from the wholeness of the divine creation of the world and of man. Unfortunately, the wholeness of the divine creation was broken by original sin. The original unity between matter and spirit has also tragically deteriorated as it degenerated into a permanent struggle between the material and the spiritual.

Certainly, the restoration of the divine unity of the world was mankind's greatest problem, since the original sin was committed in Paradise. In fact, the universality of the original sin, also called the ancestral sin, is a negative globalization – that is to say, the globalization of evil outside man's communion with God. All forms of this negative globalization are the materialist consequences of the original sin. We may acknowledge that the ancestral sin is the true origin of what might be called the Adamic Anthropocentrism, because it was generated by Adam's disobedience to God in the Garden of Eden. This Adamic Anthropocentrism has become the prototype of Globalization to which all ancient forms of globalization have to conform, as they were archeologically and historically recorded throughout mankind's historiography before and even after Jesus Christ.

Two thousand years ago, the ancient anthropocentric globalization of mankind ended at the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity, Who restored the unity of the divine creation and the communion of man with God by inaugurating a new era of globalization: the Kingdom of God. This new globalization means the theandric reconstruction of a new world through mankind's recapitulation in the theandric person of Jesus Christ.

Free from the consequences of the original sin, the new world begins the era of reconciliation between material and spiritual. In this beginning, one can see the first tendencies of

globalizing religion and also of spiritualizing globalization. Once again, man regained the lost sense of the wholeness of the world created by God. For a thousand years, the real sense of globalization was its spiritualization. The great schism of 1054, between the old Rome and Constantinople, had broken this globalization of religion in two parts generally known as Western Christianity and Eastern Christianity. Later on the Western globalization was characterized by anthropocentric humanism which made a clear separation between God and man, material and spiritual, divine and human, faith and reason. So, besides the theocentric globalizing character of religion, we are faced with the anthropocentric globalizing character of humanism. Thus, the unity between theocentrism and anthropocentrism that was theandrically transfigured in the globalization achieved by the Christian religion through Jesus Christ and His Apostles, was humanly divided in two unilateral globalizations. Without any doubt, the fact that the mutual anathemas were lifted by Pope Paul the Vth and Ecumencial Patriarch Athenagoras the Ist in 1965 represented a great step for the religious reconciliation between East and West and was to have a great impact on the future of the Old Continent.

Mankind is now facing the contemporary phenomenon of a new globalization. There are new spiritual and material realities with different levels of authority, but certainly less unilateral in their developments and achievements. Hopefully this visible change in attitude could be of good auspices for the new phenomenon of globalization, which seems to be based on a new conception about globality. This new conception is large enough to create a new theandric synthesis between theocentrism and anthropocentrism, since both of them are only apparently dissimilar, but ontologically united in the divine act of creation. Excluding any utopian dream, mankind still has a chance of salvation by globalizing religion and then theandrically spiritualizing globalization.

Bert Breiner

BERT F. BREINER, PHD

Some Thoughts on Globalization and the "Clash of Civilizations"

Globalization is one of those concepts that on the surface seem so self-evident that it is not necessary to define it or to describe it. You can travel almost anywhere in the world and see Coca-Cola signs, hear people talking on cell phones, watch CNN, hook up a computer to the internet and find skyscrapers. Even in the United States, there are Muslim mosques, Sikh gurdwaras and Hindu temples, not only in a metropolitan city like New York, but in small Midwestern towns as well. In fact, the very first purpose-built mosque in the United States was constructed in a cornfield in rural Ohio. It wasn't built in an urban center at all. Globalization seems to pervade all aspects of our culture and our society in a way that would have been unimaginable just a generation ago.

When it comes to understanding the meaning of this increasingly obvious globalization, however, things are not so simple. Some have tried to focus on what globalization means by talking about its most surface and visible aspects. In this way, they have singled out technology as a key factor of contemporary globalization. Looking at technology as a way of understanding contemporary globalization fundamentally misses the point. It does not help to understand the real and perceived clashes of peoples that are an outstanding feature of this new global age. You cannot listen to the news or pick up a newspaper for two days running without becoming aware that within this global village, there are clashes of cultures, civilizations and peoples in almost every part of the world.

Huntington first popularized the phrase "clash of civilizations" in his article of the same name in the *Harvard*

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Review. However, even people who have never heard of the Huntington article are aware that in this "global village" in which we live, there is still an inherent element of confrontation between peoples, theologies, ideas, civilizations, and cultures. These clashes cannot be adequately explained in terms of the impact of our rapid growth in technology. Globalization affects culture, values, language and the way people see themselves in the world, not just the way they communicate with each other long distance.

It is, therefore, necessary to look at globalization in terms of its effects on various world views, because while Huntington might speak of a clash of civilizations, I would speak instead of a clash of world views. Let me explain what I mean by "world view". First of all, it is a way we understand the nature of the world in which we live: what it means, what it is made up of, and how it works. And it is a way of understanding the human condition, and what it means to be a human being in relation to each other and to the world. What does it mean to be human? Does it mean to be made up of body, soul, and spirit, or only material things and intellectual things?

Another way of presenting world views is to say that a world view enables us to understand, first of all, the world around us: how it exists, its structure, what it is made up of, the laws, and the powers that govern it. What is real? Is the whole of the universe explicable in its own terms, or does it require a reference to some transcendent reality in order to be fully understood. Is there, in any meaningful sense, a "supernatural" order beside the "natural one" of everyday life? Second, a world view deals with what constitutes an adequate basis for judgments of truth. How does one distinguish true knowledge from false knowledge? How does one distinguish valid reasoning, valid inference from invalid reasoning and invalid inference? How does one decide whether or not a so-called fact is indeed true? How does one decide if a conclusion derived from an assertion is in fact true? Third, a world view includes views of what is good, in the sense of what is right, what is valuable, and what will fulfill our sense of purpose as human beings. And, finally, world views include (and this is

probably the most neglected aspect) that which is pleasing, desirable and beautiful.

The four traditional divisions of philosophy are metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics. My argument, in part, is that globalization, more than being just the spread of technology, represents a widespread dissemination of a common epistemology, common views on how one determines what is and is not true, what is or is not the case, and valid inference from it. To a lesser, but important extent, the contemporary experience of globalization also entails a dissemination of a common ethics, a set of values, a common set of beliefs about what is right and good and valuable.

When I lived in Malaysia, one of the things I noticed there is the extent to which there is, among the political, social and intellectual elite, a discourse which is shared by their counterparts in many parts of the world. It is the same intellectual discourse one can hear in New York, Guyana, Bonn or Lagos. This is exactly what we would expect for the hard sciences. There is nothing surprising about physicists speaking the same way everywhere. It is almost self- evident that they will be speaking about gluons and quarks and wonderful things such as these, whether they are in Malaysia or Nigeria or China. What is surprising is the extent to which this is also true of the "soft sciences" and the humanities as well. Similar categories are used to understand economics, social organization, law, politics, demography, and human psychology.

One example of this is to be found in language. World languages reflect the concepts with which people think and with which they work out and develop their ideas. Different languages break up the world differently and train their speakers to perceive it in various ways. In some cases, this may reflect a preference for one category over another as the central or natural focus of our observation of the world around us. If a Frenchman and an American were both to witness someone run from one side of the street to the other, the American would likely say that "he ran across the street". The Frenchman, on the other hand, would

probably say, "il a traversé la rue en courant". The interesting thing here is that both grammatical structures are possible in both languages. It is grammatically correct in English to say "he crossed the street running". It just doesn't sound right to a native speaker. Exactly the same is true of the French "il est couru à travers la rue".

In other cases, languages actually force distinctions on their speakers that are not regularly (or at least not necessarily) made in other languages. For example, take the case of someone translating "I wrote a letter yesterday" into Russian. The translator must choose between two mutually exclusive past tenses (я читал and я прочитал). While English has various ways to register differences to those similar to the two Russian past tenses, it does not force this conceptual dichotomization of past events on its native speakers. Examples like this are just the tip of iceberg when it comes to the different categories and structures that languages impose upon the ordinary thought patterns of their speakers.

Of course, this does not mean that one can think some things in one language but not in another. It certainly does mean that one would be less likely and certainly would not do so habitually. In Malay, for example, there is no word that means "brother or "sister". There are words that mean "older brother" or "older sister" and "younger brother" and "younger sister". There is also a broader term for "relative". That doesn't mean that a Malay cannot understand what the English word brother means or that he or she could not express the same concept in Malay. It is perfectly possible to say that someone "is a male person who has the same mother and father as I do." This adequately expresses the meaning of the English word brother. However, no one is likely to go around talking like that all the time. As a result, the Malay language forces on its speakers a categorization of siblings which is, to speakers of English, a separate category entirely (that of birth precedence). One would be correct in assuming that there is social correspondence to the linguistic distinction regularly made by Malay speakers.

One of the major impacts of globalization is precisely the fact the social, political and intellectual elite of countries throughout the world increasingly use a few languages as their primary means of thinking and working. Recently, a friend and colleague from Russia told me he is not sure that he could actually write an academic paper in Russian. It would have to be in English, because that is the language in which he thinks. In many countries in the world there are many people who are more comfortable speaking English (or French or Spanish or a handful of other "world languages" than the national language of the majority. In some cases, a European language has been made official and is the medium of education. One result of this is the gradual decay in the use and fluency of traditional languages.

These are the kinds of dimensions of globalization that are rarely discussed. They are, however, even more dramatic than the very visible technological advances that are associated with modern globalization. They are also more intimately connected to the clashes that remain an ever present element in the world today.

The "common language" of science and technology and the spread of a common political, social, economic and psychological discourse, a spread carried not only with the growth of technology and science, but also with the spread of Western languages and canons of scholarship, are crucial to understanding the impact of globalization. However, they most clearly affect the epistemological quadrant of a person's world view. The result is a growing clash between an increasingly shared epistemology and often clashing metaphysical, ethical and esthetic values. These other quadrants continue to clash, not only between different world views, but, increasingly, within a given world view. It is not possible to implement radical change on a quadrant of a total world view and expect to maintain anything remotely resembling a traditional equilibrium.

Of course this phenomenon is not entirely new. For example, the spreading of Greek culture, art and science was much deeper that most people realize. More than 300 years after

Christ, the Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, left his memoirs and his personal thoughts about the meaning of life, as he came to understand it. What language did he write in? Greek. And what is more, it is an excellent example of Stoic philosophy, an ancient Greek school of philosophy. Even the famous Julius Caesar provides an example of how deep Greek influence went in the Roman world. If one reads the history of the Caesars by Suetonius in the original, he or she will be reading a Latin text. When, one gets to Caesar's famous dying word's, however, – "καὶ σὺ τέκνον" – the language changes. The great Roman, Julius Caesar, uttered his dying words, "you too child," not in Latin, but in Greek, which is an indication of how deep the Hellenization of the ancient world really went.

Arabization would be another example. The famous medieval Jewish philosopher, jurist and theologian, Moses Maimonides, wrote many of his most important works not in Hebrew, but in Arabic. Another important example is the Sinecisation of the Far East, the influence of the ancient Chinese culture. Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese all use, or have used at one point or another, variations of the Chinese system of writing. Thich Nhat Han, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, who wrote an introduction to Buddhism in 1998, continually refers to Chinese characters to explain Buddhist concepts.

Globalization, understood in terms of a dramatic spread of cultural ideas influencing, to some extent, aspects of many culture's world views, is not a new concept. What is most striking, however, about contemporary globalization is its extent. Hellenization, Arabization and Sinecization resulted in what a historian might call different "spheres of influence." The contemporary spread of a shared global epistemology is more truly global than anything that has happened in the past. Its effects may be felt on every continent and, to a greater or lesser extent, in every country.

The spread of the global culture, however, is uneven in many respects. First, it is strongest among the elites of all the world's countries. In some parts of the world, it sits as a more or

less thin veneer over the traditional world view, especially for the majority of the population. Nonetheless, the growth of its epistemology is growing constantly and there are very few places that have not begun, at least, to think and to understand the world in which they live in the terms of modern science. The spread of political and economic concepts is not far behind. Bringing up the rear of the globalization train is the spread of social and psychological concepts. It is the breadth of this "westernization" (for lack of a better term) that makes it so different from anything that has previously happened in history.

For those whom the spread of this globalized understanding about truth and knowledge is a more or less thick veneer over traditional world views may use it, talk it, even think with it. In many cases, however, it does not inform their values, goals or understanding of what it is to be human. And this results in clashes both between and within cultures.

Take the example of Sayyid Qutb, who was the great ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood makes the news periodically. They are among the "bad guys" of Islamic fundamentalists in Egypt who tried to assassinate Sadat. I put 'bad guys' in quotes, because if it were not for the Muslim Brotherhood, in much of Egypt, particularly upper Egypt, there would be almost no hospitals or schools. However, their great ideologue Sayyid Qutb wrote a commentary on the Qur'an. When one reads it, one will realize almost immediately that this was not written by someone trained in classical Islamic scholarship, as Sayyid Qutb was not. Instead, this commentary was written by a scholar trained in the Western discipline of sociology. Indeed, Sayyid Qutb studied at the Sorbonne in Paris and even in the United States, where he learned his sociology. It is from this perspective that he writes his commentary on the Qur'an. It is written with the categories, the insights, and the way of thinking that is typical of this globalized way of pursuing truth and arguing one's case. What he wants to show with it is radically different to which what his counterparts in France or the United States would espouse. There are no such common values one would find in a

village. He is using this way of speaking to put forward Islamic values or at least what he perceives to be Islamic values. This is typical of what is happening at the deeper level of our contemporary "globalization." He shares in a wide-spread way of thinking and speaking, but not in a common set of values and ideals.

This analysis of contemporary globalization raises questions about the interaction of faith and reason. First, by *reason* I do not mean the faculty of reason, which is our ability to think things through. What I mean by *reason* here is particularly the canons of our way of thinking – the criteria we use to determine what is true, what is not true, what is valid, what is not valid. In a sense, this is the most universal of the globalized part of our world. We share a common way of thinking academically, and a common concept of how to present and argue a case.

Faith, on the other hand, gives us our values, that are certain, for which I am personally willing to live and die, and by which I am willing to construct my life. This is not common, however. The result is that people are increasingly using a common language, be it of civics, science, philosophy, or whatever, to express vastly different faiths, and vastly different world views.

I do not think that we will succeed in understanding the tensions of contemporary globalization primarily by focusing on a clash of cultures and civilizations. Today there is talk of the West vs. Islam, and the West vs. China. This focus is entirely missing the point. The real clash in a globalized society will be between those who share a common set of goals and values, economic and political leaders throughout most of the world, for example, and those who have values and goals informed by a traditional view. Yet both are informed by a common technology, a common way of thinking and arguing and explaining their case.

Until we realize that the real nature of the clashes, which are such a visible aspect of our globalized world, we will not begin to really understand what is happening in the world today, and what all the bloodshed is really all about.
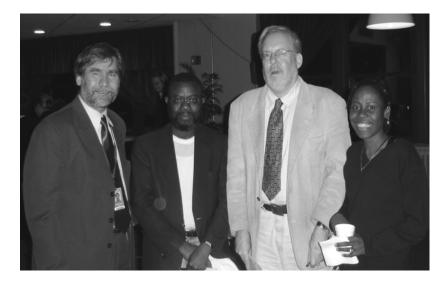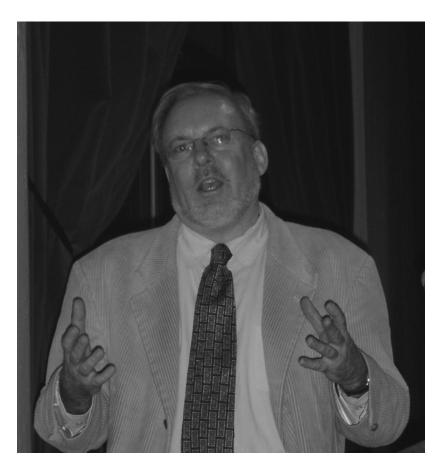
Bert Breiner and
Elena Bront de Avila

Bert Breiner (left),
Richard Grallo, and
Daniel Damian

Theodor Damian
(left),
Prof. Isola Kokumo,
Steven and Resia
Cresap

Steven Cresap

STEVEN CRESAP, PHD

Globalization and Entertainment
Three phases of mass virtual pleasure

Introduction

To invoke Huizinga's memorable phrase, *homo ludens* has been pleasuring himself virtually and in the mass since the beginning of culture.[1] It has only been relatively recently – during, say, the last half millennium – that mass virtual pleasure has become institutionalized in the form of what we today call entertainment. With institutionalization came for the first time in history the feasibility of spreading entertainment throughout the world. To understand how this happened, it might be helpful to speculate that the globalization of entertainment happened in three phases, corresponding to three periods in Western cultural history: modern, postmodern and post-postmodern. These periods can be identified, in part, by looking for the prevalence of institutions as providers of services, among which is mass virtual pleasure. The modern phase involved the export of "high" culture by Western powers, institutionalized as opera houses, concert halls and theaters, together with the bureaucracies and markets required to make them function. The postmodern phase, by contrast, was characterized by the general deinstitutionalization of services, which meant for entertainment that theaters and the like receded in importance, and mass virtual pleasure moved inside in the form of radio, television, the Internet, videos and DVDs, etc. Insular cultures grew up in defiance of Eurocentric institutions. Today, in the post-postmodern phase, whose symbolic start was 9/11, new technologies are cementing this dispersal, fragmenting the multicultural ethos of the postmodern period.

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Of course, in all such speculation, we have to keep in mind that all three phases of globalization are happening simultaneously. Using the past tense to refer to the modern and postmodern periods should not be construed as to indicate that the phases of globalization connected to them are over. Rather, all phases continue to exert their influence along with more recent developments. Just as there are parts of the world that are just now going through their industrial revolutions, so too are there still theaters and arenas being built, supported by new modernist regimes. Postmodern attitudes and values – such as the "authoritarianism without authority" said to characterize the Putin regime – continue to make people tune in and drop out of those same modernist regimes. And there are current trends, the post-postmodern, that do not so much supplant the previous ones as potentiate and distill them into a new, volatile and unpredictable phase of globalization.

Critique and History

In speculating about the history of entertainment, it may seem at first as though we face serious epistemological, even metaphysical, limits. It is not as though we can simply *see* mass virtual pleasure in any of its variants, without the presuppositions of a long critical tradition. We are able to critique entertainment only because we have learned to assume the stance of what is not entertainment. All limits, after all, have two sides. In defining its rival, reason also defines itself. Modern entertainment-critique has certainly overstepped its share of bounds. Simplifications in theory have contributed to equally simplistic but much more consequential policies, such as censorship in space and time. Still, it is difficult to understand in this case why critique should be considered more of a problem than what it critiques, when most of us are so obviously in thrall to mass virtual pleasuring in its myriad forms. This situation warrants a bold, constructive exercize of reason that would aim, in spite of its Kantian

overtones, to be anti-Kantian in result. Kant's critical project attacked metaphysics to defend faith: in the guise of reason regulating itself, it kept the world safe for the old irrationalities (God, freedom, immortality). The present critique, by contrast, defends metaphysics to attack a new irrationality: entertainment as cultural hegemon.

Reason faces no epistemological limit that would place mass virtual pleasuring beyond its scope. Its irrationality, though structural, is not fundamental, as Kant thought was the case with religion and traditional morality. In spite of occasional self-advertisements to the contrary, entertainment is no noumenal realm: it consists wholly of phenomena. Mass virtual pleasuring is, after all, a human activity as old as culture, which means that its irrationality has an eminently human function. We pleasure ourselves virtually and in the mass for the same good and comprehensible reasons that we pleasure ourselves in other ways. What would be anomalous is if we did <u>not</u> try, as best we can, to free ourselves from the presuppositions of ordinary reality.

Culture depends on demarcating various sectors of existence (sacred and profane, raw and cooked, etc.) that are enforced in a variety of ways through mores and institutions.

People living in a given culture must in one way or another, observe the boundaries of these sectors, even if they are in the process of redrawing them.

In pre-modern culture, demarcations of sectors seem to us to have been done according to no principle of irrational principles. What strikes us about pre-modern people is their holism, the amazing ability to find analogies in what to us have to be distinct areas of life. Of course they did not have our maps, so they were not aware of our borders. There was an apparent permeability between, say, the world of work and the world of play (understood as leisure-time activity). Going from one sector to another was more like exploring the neighborhood than entering an unknown territory. Sectors were allowed to encroach onto each other, absorbed each other, reinforced each other. Norms and transgressions were constructed from similar schemas based on

images, fantasies and local experience. Violating a taboo was of course not without consequences, but doing so did not call into question the basic rationale for the taboo in the first place, the holistic mélange of thinking and feeling. For pre-moderns, there appears to have been no theoretical distinction, or felt difference of quality, between reality and appearance, work and play. This is why the pre-modern prince could also be a priest, the pre-modern politician also a symbolic personage, the pre-modern scientist also a magician. The purpose of all vocations was to produce pleasing appearances and wish-fulfillment. No important metaphysical boundaries were violated because there were none of violate.

Pre-modern societies integrated rituals of mass virtual pleasuring into daily life, or connected them to other sets of rituals, such as worship and war. In these cases the limit between entertainment and non-entertaining reality was unclear and constantly shifting: pre-modern people appear in many cases to have had trouble knowing when they were being entertained and when they were not. None of their rituals or delusions could overstep severe social and technological constraints: the daily necessity of producing for subsistence kept most of the population in touch with reality most of the time.

Pre-modern societies seem to us to be holistic universes. Basic distinctions were missing: between everyday reality and wish-fulfillment, for example, or between religious devotion and understanding nature. Basic cultural sectors – work, rite, play – were commingled in a total, quasi-functional dream state. Mental processes were swamped by sense experience. Actions were driven by desire for immediate sensual and sexual gratification. Images and narratives produced a direct and unreflective response. Obviously there were distinctions (taboos, liminal areas, binary oppositions, seasonal celebrations, sacred precincts, etc.) but none of these marked what we take to be obvious differences.

Modern Globalization

If we can except the empires of the ancient world, which were relatively limited in scope, globalization proper began in the modern period when Western powers exported their institutions throughout the world, mostly by example, often by force. In addition to religious and political institutions, the West exported its entertainment institutions as well: opera houses and concert halls and theaters, together with their supportive social structures, were built in cities around the world. The archetypal event in this development was the first performance of Verdi's *Aida* in Cairo in 1871, but of course the most pervasive form was the emergence of movie theaters and their attendant industries around the world in the mid twentieth century. In spite of some cross-colonization of content, global entertainment in the modern period was primarily Eurocentric. The paradigm for modern entertainment was a large-scale administrative apparatus superimposed on an industrial megamachine. Such an arrangement depended for a large measure of its legitimation on its ability to produce overwhelming violence. Administrators and artists became adept at the reproduction of that ability, in art and ideology, as evidenced by the proliferation of "sublime" genres – monumental crowd scenes, violent confrontations, horror and war genres – within the paradigmatic modern narrative trope, the triumph of justice.

In the modern period the forms of public display that first emerged to amuse the Western European elites were introduced to cultures that for the most part had hardly known institutionalization at all. One feature of modernization, which until recently was equivalent to Westernization, was a thorough-going delineation of cultural sectors. Walls were built between church and state, work and play, reason and imagination. Often such sectors were defined and activated by institution-building: the modern university and the modern opera house and movie theater were the concrete realization of the increasing differentiation of cultural sectors. With separation came what I

call the "purification" of the sectors, to apply Kant's notion of "pure" reason to the practical working-out of ways of living and thinking which had existed in the pre-modern period in a state of blurred synergy.

Such "purity" is in this sense an ideal state. No cultural form can ever achieve complete autonomy. and no hegemony is ever completely resisted. But forms can move toward such conditions, and sometimes achieve a remarkable ability to sustain their adherents. Relative autonomy can be measured by quite commonsensical social and psychological tests: how much time can one spend in a given sector? Can a sector offer a way to make a living? To what extent has my thinking been influenced by participating in a sector?

With well-defined cultural sectors supported by institutions, these different ways of living and thinking were able to operate with increasing autonomy, developing according to the inherent laws of each medium. And with sectorization came competition: in the modern period in the West it looked as though reason itself, as supported by educational and scientific institutions, was well on its way to true cultural autonomy, unconstrained by the moralities and interests of the previous period.

In his critical philosophy Kant seems to have been trying to defend pre-modern cultural forms (religion and traditional morality) against the encroachments of institutionalized reason. Kant's way to defend pre-modern forms was to delimit reason on rational grounds; his criticism acted as a constraint on Platonic technocrats and enlightened social engineers. He delimited reason as one cultural sector among others, with no authoritative claim to hegemony. Ironically, in doing so, he helped to define and strengthen reason, in its pragmatic and utilitarian strains, at least for a while. For example, in regard to globalization in its eighteenth-century from, Kant justified universal cultural progress (what the Europeans were doing) in terms of a barely disguised theological principle, that of original sin:

> All the culture and art that adorn mankind, as well as
> the most beautiful social order, are fruits of
> unsocialbleness that is forced to discipline itself and
> thus through an imposed art to develop nature's seed
> completely.[2]

In delimiting the sectors Kant was mapping a terrain already in development. Kant was not the architect of sectorization, but rather its surveyor. Sectorization, in the sense of technical specialization, is essential to modernization. When Kant mapped the fact/value distinction, for example, scientists were already losing their customary moral restraints. Professionals had already been departing from everyone else in significant respects – work, values, knowledge, lifestyles – before Kant. In the actual development of sectorization, there were few self-imposed limits that mattered: pure (institutional) reason sought for and achieved something close to hegemony, as we can still see in the lingering reliance even in other sectors on bureaucratic organization, utilitarian ethics, statistical analysis, the profit motive, and so forth.

The most notorious rivalry in the modern period was between reason and religion, which worked itself out in countless battles over science, morality and the relationship between church and state. To see how reason and entertainment grew to be rivals, one must consider their similarities. Both reason and entertainment can be viewed as performances, employing symbolic systems to produce meaning. They both rely on a set of initial conditions, only to jump beyond them (the demonstration; the *coup de theatre)*. Reason and entertainment construct by deconstructing the given; in their cases creation is re-creation. This gives them an inherent instability, a dynamism that impels them to violate limits, whether imposed by their own structures or by competing interests. As self-reproducing practices, with their own forms of organization (including both rituals and institutions), market-driven and value-free, reason and entertainment easily move beyond their historic context in the life of communities. This frees them to explore extremes in form and content. At once

lawful and anarchic, they provide information not only about ordinary reality but also about possible worlds. But this very capacity for transcendence also allows them to intrude into rival cultural sectors, subverting or absorbing or even destroying them. Instability and autonomy are a volatile combination: no wonder our recent history has been marked by culture wars, as one or another of these forms vie for hegemony.

Kant thought reason's limits were self-imposed: structurally tied to experience, reason caused itself to break down when it was applied to what cannot be experienced. Entertainment would appear to impose on itself at least one such limit, insofar as it is mass *virtual* pleasuring. Western metaphysics as a whole has expended considerable heuristic energy making the distinction between appearance and reality, and finding ways to restrict each to its proper sector. Virtuality cancels the distinction between appearance and reality: it selects a subset from the totality of appearances that make up experience, while nevertheless relying on an implied social contract to treat this subset, at least momentarily, as the whole (the so-called "suspension of disbelief"). Virtuality ensures entertainment's status as "play." Virtuality also means that entertainment tends to break down insofar as "ordinary reality" intrudes. The rules of ordinary reality – morality, taste, political correctness, etc. – are of necessity extrinsic to entertainment, and always imposed at considerable cost in pleasure. This particular limit, however, does nothing to diminish entertainment's power in relation to other sectors. Extracted from the life of communities, "pure" entertainment is free to skim off the pleasurable surface of any atrocity, including the destruction of communities themselves.

Modernization is not only a process of specialization but also an effort to demarcate the sectors, to draw the borders between areas of activity and arrange them in a hierarchy. Modernity created an elaborate network of cultural sectors, separating out, through a process of spiritual analysis, religion from science, facts from values, and work from wish-fulfillment. Work, which connected us with reality, was not the same as play,

which was wholly appearance. And obviously, in this scheme, work was the proper hierarch. When modern people did cross the borders, as they had to as human beings, they did so of necessity with a sense of violation. They were aware that they were moving from a valued to a devalued space, and doing so in order to exploit that space, not to inhabit it. Modern institutions may have made use of entertainment, as ceremonial gesture or aid to creativity, but only in support of their rational function. The modern sectors were not impermeable, but negotiating them was much more difficult than it had been before modernity. Border-crossing remained a kind of imaginative slumming, a concession to pre-modern, and therefore infantile, desires. People did it, but only on condition that they could cross back.

The test cases were Richard Wagner's Bayreuth Festival and what Jean-Luc Godard used to call Hollywood/Mosfilm. In Wagner's description of what he hoped would happen in his Festival Theater we can find an anticipation of the dominant big studio aesthetic of the twentieth century:

> In the proportions and arrangement of the room and its seats … you will find expressed a thought which, once you have grasped it, will place you in a new relation to the play you are about to witness . . .the mysterious entry of the music will next prepare you for the unveiling and distinct portrayal of scenic pictures that seem to rise from an ideal world of dreams . . .[3]

Wagner's music dramas, like the big-studio movies that came after them, are both prime examples of modernism's staying-power. In the face of general disorientation, these specific forms have been remarkably resilient. This is not because of simple conservatism or institutional inertia. These forms have been implicated in all the destructive systems of the modern period: fascism, communism, free-market capitalism. They are, above all, survivors. Bayreuth emerged reinvigorated from the destruction of the Third Reich, the film industries of Eastern Europe and the

former Soviet Union continue production after the collapse of Communism, and of course the studio system continues to prevail in spite of market shakedowns and technological innovations. These institutions have shown themselves capable of adapting to internal developments as well: productions at Bayreuth in the postwar period served as a short course on modernist and postmodernist dramaturgy, while the movies have incorporated new waves, not only in narrative structure but also in visual and musical forms as well.

In the modern world, the boundaries between sectors appeared to be drawn more definitely. Each had its own ways of thinking and valuing, its own practices and institutions. Work was productivity, play was entertainment, and rite was something else. Modern history records a variety of efforts at demarcating sectors and sub-sectors. The separation of church and state was also the separation of both from entertainment. As sects and parties multiplied, so did genres of entertainment. This process of sectoral differentiation was largely driven by a struggle for hegemony on the part of work. Empowered in its drive to control nature through science and technology, modern work became a powerful kind of asceticism: the denial of immediate for eventual gratification; mastery of the universe. As the principles and values of science and technology became the basis of rational policy-making, social engineers endeavored to ark off an existential space for policy-formation and productivity, based on the principle of "pure" (autonomous) reason, ruled by abstraction.

Rational discipline, of course, can have aesthetic effects, but in the modern period it served mainly as a practical defense against sensuality and sex. Pleasure and play in modern organizations were either highly sublimated, as in the satisfactions afforded by problem-solving, or strictly delimited, as in semi-routine get-togethers and ceremonial occasions. Modern play became the diametrical opposite: activities motivated by fantasy-based gratification within the experiences themselves. Its characteristic modern form, entertainment, is inseparable from imaginative sensuality and erotic fantasy. Everything bad that modernizing

philosophers and religious leaders have ever said about appearance – it is changing, it is deceptive, etc. – is precisely what makes for good entertainment.

In demarcating the entertainment sector, social engineers made use of a range of strategies. They started by devaluing pleasure and play in their own value systems. They used censorship, of course, but more often what might be called censorship by other means, such as the arbitration (official and unofficial) of taste, and the many forms of self-censorship. They colonized it, introducing processes of rationalization and bureaucratization in all forms of entertainment. They enforced zoning in time and space. They organized boycotts and other consumer empowerment. They manifested benign and malign indifference. They engaged in rival production, both propaganda and escapism. And sometimes they even allowed themselves qualified enjoyment.

In spite of periodic claims of triumph, however, work never managed to achieve complete autonomy, much less hegemony. There never ceased to be interpenetration between the sectors, in the sense that principles and practices characteristic of each sector could always be found to some extent in the others. To the extent that there was colonization, there was counter-colonization. Processes of rationalization were met by processes of irrationalization. Neither the academies nor the corporations nor the churches managed to purify themselves of desires for fantasy and mystery, not to speak of immediate gratification.

The unintended consequence of modernization is that in the very effort to demarcate the sectors, they each gained an unaccustomed and idiosyncratic power. Just as specialization increased efficiency, sectoral differentiation increased the "purity" (autonomy) of the sectors. In the process of modernization, work, rite and play each became more distinct and more themselves, as in a process of distillation. And distillation was potentiation. Separating state and church made for more effective policy-making, but it also increased religion's appeal by turning it into the celebration of a separate reality, the preserve of mystery and

therapy. Entertainment, increasingly dispensing with connections with the other sectors, as well as social reality in general, became its own abstract essence: mass virtual pleasure – in less metaphysical terminology, fun. Concentrated and amplified in rationally designed techniques and structures, entertainment established its own science and its own system, its own enormous, world-wide economy and its own persuasive anti-ethics. Mainstream entertainment was highly organized, so that its lessons were reinforced through repetition and legitimization. In the modern period, enclosed within institutions, it was concentrated and intensified.

Around the middle of the eighteenth century business corporations and public service institutions began to dominate the social environment. These two forms of social enclosure were sometimes opposed, but both shared a fundamental orientation toward rationality. Reason – idealized, self-validating and total – was adopted by more and more of the educated elites as a universal method, thought to connect its possessors (the technocrats and professionals) with absolute truth and its alleged power. Reason in certain respect did become total, through its institutionalization via centralized planning in all modern Western political systems, including laissez-faire ones.

With modern entertainment, the situation remained as it was in the modernizing phase of antiquity: as Foucault once put it, a mass of individuals looking at a relatively smaller number of objects. This is as much as to say that entertainment was still bread and circuses. Enclosing mass virtual pleasuring within the boundaries of arenas had a twofold effect: it collected and concentrated the pleasure, and at the same time split the social roles of producer and consumer. And enclosure supported other developments in cultural zoning (social division of space and time) such as work/leisure. Inside the boundaries of the arena, in the unbounded regions, mass virtual pleasuring was made marginal.

The process of participation and identification involved in mass virtual pleasuring are dispositions of power. The problem for the modern dramaturge was to control the energy of these

processes, to engineer audience subjection and resistance in such a way that the entertainment experience itself had value for other things. Modern entertainment was intended to perform one of the more difficult conjuring tricks: turning escapists into activists. The value of entertainment's value is, after all, its use: the production and distribution of power. Modern entertainment institutions were intended to deflect and defuse violence, while also reproducing it.

In modern society, mass virtual pleasuring occurred within a delimited space: opera house, movie theater, auditorium, hall, arena. Entertainment was spectacle within a material and social enclosure. Like all modern institutions, it substituted one environment for another. When we talked of "going out" for entertainment, we were usually talking about going in somewhere else. And what was true of space was also true of time: we reserved entertainment to certain hours, "leisure time," which implied that mass virtual pleasuring was not the serious business of life.

At the time of the ascendancy of industrial capitalism, which we can date from the mid-eighteenth century, reason was accepted by a surprising number of professionals and ordinary citizens as a sort of universal key to perfectibility. Freed, at least in their own minds, of baser motives (including deference and humility), operating by means of powerful institutions, scientists and administrators attempted to re-design the social environment. So did artists and musicians. Art, no less than science, was an instrument of social engineering. Mass art existed only in certain times and places, in enclosures. It produced deviancy (temporarily, in audiences) and then corrected it (through exhortation or catharsis or a combination of the two). Mass art separated from its traditional context, the life of specific communities, and assumed its place in a relatively autonomous sphere. This separation opened up many possibilities, some of which were contradictory or even mutually exclusive. One of these was "purification": art for art's sake. Another possibility was entertainment as a disciplinary regimen (art for reason's sake). In spite of divorces and reconciliations, elite and popular display traditions increasingly took on the same socio-aesthetic embodiment: spectacle within an institution.

This was a specific cultural form prevalent in the modern West: the application of pure (institutional) reason to mass art. Many institution-builders tried to justify and account for their inventions by means of metaphysical claims. Institutions were structures within structures, and one of the latter was the deep structure of human self-understanding. Entertainment in this sense was the working-out of reason in a field which should be impenetrable to reason. With revolutionary ambition, modern artists and theoreticians sought, for a time successfully, to engineer structural changes in our common culture by means of reason, thus mobilizing elite and popular traditions of public display. Pure (institutional) reason, as it emerged as a serious social force, turned the production and reception of shared aesthetic experience into something like Foucault's waking nightmare: a modern "disciplinary" regimen, and therapy for deviants.

Opera houses, movie theaters, concert halls, auditoriums and spectatoriums, sports- and ritual-arenas, were rationalized institutions no less than prisons, workhouses and schools. All modern life occurred in an asylum of sorts. We enjoyed and still do being at least for a time within well-set boundaries, part of a clearly defined mass. This enclosure of individuals happened in punishment, health case, education, etc., typically within designed alternative environments. Opera houses and movie theaters expressed the utopian desire to perfect existence by recreating the social environment. This resulted in the separation of mass virtual pleasuring from other sectors: what we do and have done to us during mass virtual pleasuring was distinguished from the unbounded regions beyond the borders of the arena.

What distinguished modern entertainment was its self-imputed ability to put aesthetic experience to use: to impress an audience, to direct its attention, to mass and concentrate it, preparing it for further ends. Modern institution-builders typically thought of their inventions as models for recreating society as a whole – utopias in miniature. In this respect opera houses and movie theaters were the leisure-time equivalents to the other modern asylums. Modern entertainment, like imprisonment and

schooling, was a political system, even, in an attenuated sense, a communitarian tradition. According to the institutional ideology, entertainment was an ultimate faculty or power for solving fundamental issues: connection with God/Nature, entry into action. Thus, the institutional ideology denied the existence of "pure" entertainment, mass art for the sake of art rather than the masses. Entertainment promised what religion had failed to provide: an aesthete's utopia, on a mass scale and with unprecedented sensory impact.

On the social effects of the Bollywood film industry, Suketu Mehta, author of *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found,* remarked,

> The medium fostered new ways of looking at the caste system. And since Hindus and Muslims have always worked together in the determinedly secular Bombay film industry, new if not entirely accurate ways of looking at others, too. Growing up in Bombay with the movies,
>
> I had come to understand Muslims as lovable, Christian girls as flirtatious, Sikhs as loyally martial, Parsis as endearingly cracked. The movies trafficked in broad stereotypes, but they were, for the most part, good-natured stereotypes.[4]

Rationalization increased entertainment's potential. It was during the period of reason's quasi-hegemony that mass virtual pleasuring became "entertainment," or, more, familiarly, "going out." Mass virtual pleasuring no longer happened primarily in the home as part of work and devotion and the rest of ordinary life. To entertain or be entertained it was necessary to exit ordinary reality. But going out was also going in: entertainment became something that happened within physical enclosures (theaters, opera houses, concert halls, arenas, etc.). Entertainment institutions were supported by systems of rational marketing and control. No less than asylums and prisons and factories, theaters were the emblems to modernity. As with those other non-entertaining institutions, the

enclosure of mass virtual pleasuring within walls contributed to the disappearance off a variety of pre-modern traditions. What "reform" opera did in the eighteenth century, the movies did in the twentieth: invent a "normal," and potentially "total," institution.

Postmodern Globalization

In the postmodern period, whose symbolic start was the decade of the 1960's, the boundaries between cultural sectors became blurred, partly as a result of intentional efforts to redraw them, as with multiculturalism, and partly because of certain unintended consequences of modernism itself. In some ways the development of postmodern culture resembles Heinrich Wolfllin's scheme for the development of artistic styles in the early modern period:[5]

Classic   **Baroque**

closed   *open*
linear   *painterly*
(Leonardo)   (Bernini)

Applied to culture in general, the scheme yields:

Modern   **Postmodern**

Eurocentric   *Multicultural*
(Dialectical Materialism;   (Neo-Hegelianism;
Utilitarianism;   Deconstruction;
Pragmatism)   Neo-pragmatism)

Of course it is necessary to complicate Wolfflin's scheme, first by splitting it in the middle:

Classic   *Mannerist*   **Baroque**
                     (Michelangelo)

Which gives us:

Modern   *Late Modern*   **Postmodern**
                     (Decadence,
                     Existentialism)

And one can extend the scheme into the high modern period:

                                        Romantic
                                        (Delacroix)
Classic   *Mannerist*   **Baroque**
                                        Neoclassic
                                         (David, Ingres)

Which suggests a speculative future:

                                        Post-postmodern
                                        (global
                                        entertainment)
Modern   *Late Modern*   **Postmodern**
                                        Premodern
                                        (reaction)

Post-modernity might be defined as sectorization without hierarchy. The cultural realms as the moderns mapped them out were still there, but their borders became permeable to an extent unknown before, even in the pre-modern period. Most important, there was no longer a hierarchy among the sectors, so no way to decide which should be one's place of habitation or which should exploit which. In this context the best survival strategy was often identified as the ability to go back and both across the borders without having a final destination.

One feature of the postmodern period was a more or less universal trend to deinstitutionalize, in the widest sense. Institutions of all kinds receded in importance, rapidly replaced by community-based and individual services. All services, including cultural ones, increasingly took place outside modern structures, both architectural and conceptual. The insane were let out of asylums, the poor were released from "indoor" (and even "outdoor") relief, the movie-going public was no longer forced into movie theaters, literary artists were released from linearity (as in hypertext, zines, blogs, word art, etc.) while their rivals in visuals and sonics rediscovered vestiges of narrative in otherwise fragmented spectacles. Insofar as the postmodern period involved a legitimation crisis, one effect of that crisis was the neglect and even destruction of institutions. Services, both material and cultural, seemed to be returning to the carnivalesque pre-modern (or transhistorical) mix of traditions, like the family and the gang.

In postmodern entertainment, the mass element receded in importance and the virtual element emerged. Postmodern culture was dedicated to flattening out our experience, denying any reality behind appearances. Everything was appearance. Virtuality was taken to hitherto unimaginable and presently unimagined extremes. Comic books, cartoons, video games, virtual reality environments and their constantly evolving descendants were less "realistic" than their distant ancestors, theatrical representations, photography, etc.

Postmodern globalization was marked by the personalizing and politicizing of scholarship, the legitimation of rhetoric, the "reconstruction" of events in journalism, punning in philosophy,

revival of "decadent" schools (cynicism, hedonism, Epicureanism, aestheticism, etc.), anecdotage in jurisprudence, speculation in science, infotainment, metaphoricity, text-pleasure and many, many more. In other sectors there were analogous intrusions: imaged-based politics, televangelism, sexploitation, New Age hygienics, "low" forms in "high" art, recrudescence of myth-making, self-generating celebrity, pop stars on postage stamps, porno on prime time. Entertainment's political importance grew to Byzantine proportions. Coalitions became vast fan clubs competing for media supremacy, electing presidents and conducting wars by means of public spectacles. Entertainment gave a new meaning to "party" politics. Within the entertainment sector itself, categories blurred to the extent that "high" and "low," elite and popular, normal and extreme no longer made sense as opposites.

Post-modernity produced a multiplicity of semi-autonomous cultural sectors, assuming radically different social roles and ways of behaving as people moved, as they were compelled to, from sector to sector. To the degree that they were successful, consumers learned the ability to negotiate this multiplicity, to respect the boundaries as one crossed them, to surf the sectors. Postmodern media (TV, internet, etc.) made it harder to compartmentalize experience. The result was that postmodern globalization threatened finally to destroy the remnants of pre-modern cultures. Brutalism and bigness no longer impressed: the great gray edifices no longer awed. This loss of effect, it is important to note, was true not only for systems oriented to heroic social engineering but also for those based on commodity production: the difference is that in the latter case the monuments and the rhetoric were still in place through the postmodern period. Terror's inferior cognates, horror and "the gross," replaced the sublime. Individuated narratives were normal. Categories of a sort of anti-naturalist picturesque – nostalgia, pastiche, the dainty and the dumpy, etc. – were preferred by almost everybody, and new varieties of the beautiful as the aesthetic value of pleasure – camp, pop, op, hip hop, and on and on – became the only genres with power.

Digital reality environments and their constantly evolving descendants were less "realistic" than their by that time distant ancestors, theatrical representation, photography, etc. Animation as an art was complicated in its reproduction of space through projection in one dimension, but the point of animation was to not be theatrical representation. The allure of a cartoon was its abstractedness from reality. Appearances in postmodern entertainment were meant to be savored as appearances; the realistic aspect recedes. One indication of this general shift in culture was the cartoonization of theater and film: the recycling of plots and characters from comic books and animated series. These representations were to original realistic drama what one dimension is to two.

In the first few decades of their development movies were shown in small halls (nickelodeons, etc.); in the postmodern period the halls in movie theaters began to shrink again. More important, film's transmission via video and now DVD, meant to be viewed at home, reduced not only the audience space but the image itself. It at once cancelled both the image's intrinsic impact, by shrinking it, and the group facilitation effect that increases that impact. This was another example of the trend mentioned above, the return (on a high-tech infrastructure) to pre-modern practices and institutions.

As modern structures disintegrated, the modern sectoral hierarchy was overturned. Reason lost its authority; myth, rhetoric, concrete thinking and other pre-modern practices regained their influence. With the proliferation of genres in new media, entertainment became mass virtual pleasuring again, as such regained the level of social saturation it had in pre-modern societies. In spite of postmodern theory, however, the reality seems to be that there was an emergent hierarchy, with entertainment at the top. Only in the postmodern period did entertainment come close to achieving true autonomy. Until then it had been checked by rival sectors, most recently by modern reason. In the postmodern period, the agon between reason and faith was joined by another contest, just as significant: that between both reason and faith and entertainment. For pure reason in the modern period, entertainment

was just another cultural sector to colonize for the greater good, the universal provision of calculable happiness. In the postmodern period it was reason and religion that were being colonized. The real rival of both Plato's rational utopia and religious tradition was the festival.

Post-postmodern Globalization

It may be difficult to see that we are in a qualitatively different cultural period today, since so much of what is happening now seems merely the exaggeration of what has been going on since the '60's. Today we increasingly rely on mass virtual pleasure in politics and scholarship. It has become a respectable foundation, of the ontological-epistemological sort, for a wide variety of disciplines. Millions define themselves and their social roles in terms of mass virtual pleasure. It provides a significant minority with their main reason for living. Take, for example, the model for current clubs: a de-individuating background highlighting a pantheon of hyper individuals: gods, demi-gods, stars and starlets. Note the increasing reliance on charisma in politics. Charisma is mass virtual pleasure in the "reality" sector. Entertainers go into politics and politicians become entertainers. Presidents stake out their values through the movies they watch. Policy is conceived and implemented according to semi-conscious master texts of heroism, redemption, purification. Politics is Hollywood for ugly people. Politics is the pursuit of entertainment by other means. All of these trends had their start in the postmodern period; we seem to be faced with nothing more than more of the same.

And yet I would argue that there is a change of quality in the basic attitude with which we embrace the new technologies and the new social arrangements they make possible. In spite of its overt anti-authoritarianism and embrace of eccentricity, the postmodern period was unified insofar as it was guided by the paradigm of multiculturalism. Postmodern globalization was supposed to work both ways: it was really a process of cross-colonization.

Eurocentric forms were demoted to a level of equality with African, Asian and Latin American syntheses. Institutions were emptied out because alternatives were present that promised to provide the same sort of services without the constraints of hierarchy, bureaucracy or domination. Fundamentally, postmodernism was motivated by the same democratic ideology that first emerged in the modern period. This is why postmodern forms could co-exist with each other, and were often to be found within the ex-dominant institutions that had first resisted them but later scrambled to accommodate them. Multiculturalism was a Western idea that denied its own Westernness. There was a novel multiplicity, for sure, but a multiplicity founded on a notion of universal harmony not unlike the one that had motivated the creation of empires. To paraphrase McLuhan, the global village was not the imperial city, but it was meant nevertheless to be a singular habitation for all humanity.

This does not seem to be the situation now. Looking at the globalization of entertainment today, we find a disturbing difference. In a recent article Herbert Gans, professor of sociology at Columbia University, tried to account for the apparent contradiction posed by the popularity of the morally sleazy *Desperate Housewives* in Bible-belt regions of the country: "For some people it's a case of 'I am moral therefore I can watch the most immoral show'."[6] In the context of a recent flap over the presence of microscopic shellfish in tap water, which poses a problem for orthodox Jews, William B. Helmreich, a professor of sociology and Judaic studies at the City University of New York Graduate Center, said that "in a society where people feel via the Internet and television their very values are under constant attack, there's a need for people to reassert their level of religiosity, and one way this is done is by discovering new restrictions which give people the opportunity to demonstrate their adherence to their faith."[7]

The ironic result of modern and postmodern globalization has been that certain pre-modern cultures were left either completely or partially unaffected, so that they could sustain themselves and increase their power to wage wars of resistance

against colonial powers and, eventually, take terroristic revenge in the 21st century. Today, in the post-postmodern period, new global technologies (pirate radio, satellite TV, digital recording, etc.) are bringing about a dispersal of insular cultures: hip hop tribes, fundamentalist sects, and terrorist cells are able to sustain themselves in defiance of both Eurocentric institutions and multicultural attitudes. Since 9/11 it has been easier to see that instead of a general multicultural ideology spreading to remote areas of the globe, new information technologies have made it possible for spontaneous groups to form and sustain themselves as cultures. It has also been used by pre-modern cultures, such as fundamentalist groups, who can be very selective in the kinds of mass virtual pleasure they create. The global village has fragmented into a warren of hostile encampments.

It has become difficult, and sometimes even dangerous, to surf the sectors, as we were able to do in the postmodern period. Ideologically, there seems to be a return to the kind of universalistic thinking that characterized the beginnings of modernism. Human rights, which a few years ago would have been roundly criticized by many as merely relative to modern Western culture, are now more likely to be understood as embedded in the universal structures of society – but only by Westerners. Democracy, understood by postmodernists as one political construct among many no less deserving of legitimization, is now more likely to be considered the only formula for stability and development (and accepted or rejected as such according to one's ideology). Global entertainment, formerly the monolithic standard against which the underground defined itself, has become an arena for warring ideologies. The youth market, which in modern period did not exist, and which in the postmodern period aspired to some aspects of adulthood, now reflects only itself. Mainstream entertainment institutions increasingly feel the pressure to infantilize their products, as evidenced in crossover genres, computer-generated action sequences, and the apparently insatiable desire for representations of sex, violence, violent sex and sexy violence. But, significantly, these institutions are also responding to other formerly

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ignored sectors, such as the religious right: whether intentionally *(Passion of the Christ)* or not *(March of the Penguins),* Hollywood products are as likely to promote militant ideologies as they were once likely to promote secularism and tolerance.

In conclusion, the post-postmodern phase of entertainment globalization has to be understood in the context of the present cultural period. It is a period that differs in significant ways from what came before, and so far the differences do not seem to be wholly reassuring. Several questions arise: can there be a global culture based the sharing of technologies and institutional forms, but without a shared set of attitudes and values? Will the globalization of mass virtual pleasure continue in its current form – liberated from local constraints, purified, autonomous and increasingly hegemonic? And if it does, what will happen to work and rite and all the other areas of life that have until now been sustained by experiences that, at their core, have nothing necessarily to do with massification, virtuality and pleasure?

NOTES:

[1] Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens* (1938).

[2] Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent" (1784), in *Perpetual Peace and other Essays,* ed. Ted Humphrey, Hackett, 1983.

[3] Richard Wagner, "Bayreuth" (1873), in *Wagner on Music and Drama,* ed. H. Ashton Ellis, Dutton, 1964.

[4] *New York Times Sunday Magazine* (November 14, 2004).

[5] Heinrich Wölfflin, *Principles of Art History* (1950).

[6] *The New York Times* (November 22, 2004).

[7] *The New York Times* (November 7, 2004).

Richard Grallo (right)
and Bert Breiner

Elena Bront de Avila

Isola Kokumo

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RICHARD GRALLO, PHD

Global Change:
Prospects for Plutocracy and a "Learning Planet"

Introduction

The topic here is *globalization,* examined briefly from three points of view. The first is the viewpoint of *educational psychology,* a branch of psychology that is concerned with *learning* and *teaching*. In these remarks on globalization, an attempt will be made to relate it to learning and whether learning is happening or not. The second viewpoint is *clinical psychology.* This is another branch of psychology, and its concern is with the elusive phenomenon of *mental health.* When we think about globalization, we can examine the kinds of environments we are creating and whether or not they are conducive to mental health. Finally, the third viewpoint is that of *philosophy*. From this discipline, we can examine some of the goals of globalization and whether or not they are worthwhile.

More specifically the goal here is to pose a problem about globalization in terms of learning, but no attempt will be made to solve it. However, to even pose the problem, we must define our terms.

What then is *globalization*? A Canadian government website defines globalization as "increased mobility of goods, services, labor, technology and capital throughout the world" (Canada Government, 2005). Some authors argue that this process has roots back in the 1500's and even earlier. This developing situation is not just, as the novel suggests, "a tale of two cities." It is as if the planet is becoming one great, inter-connected city: a "Planetopolis."

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Our concern here has a slightly different yet related point and can be described as "a tale of two spheres." One of these spheres belongs on a set of shoulders and is part of the human being. The other sphere is much larger and not connected to any set of shoulders. We are standing on it as it speeds through space at about 67,000 miles per hour. Let examine *learning* in relation to these two spheres, the little one (the person) and the big one (the planet) and explore some of the connections involved.

Happenings in the Small Sphere

Consider the little sphere: the human being. One of the things that can be said about us is that, for better or worse, we are *learners*. As such, we somehow pick up new things and carry them with us; we remember experiences and are changed as we go through life. A number of points can be made regarding this learner.

First, there are at least two kinds of learning. In some instances, *learning is the acquisition of knowledge*, where we are moving from a state of not knowing into a state of knowing, (a reasonable certainty regarding an answer to our question). For example, we might seek answers to a question about taxes, or government programs or the meaning of a word. If we come into possession of sufficient evidence for answering these questions, and we recognize this sufficiency, then we have acquired knowledge. This is no easy thing. Much of what people regard as knowledge is really some other cognitive state, such as *opinion* or *speculation.*

In other instances, *learning is the acquisition of new habits.* Examples of this might be learning how to drive a car or to use a computer. In this sense, learning can install habits that are morally good or morally bad. One could, for example, acquire the habit of robbing banks. Whether good or bad, this form of learning is a *systematic change in behavior.*

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Second, these two types of learning have been recognized and distinguished by both philosophers as well as educational psychologists (Paris & Cunningham, 1996; Ryle, 2000). Yet although these types of learning are different, they are inter-related, since both pertain to activities of the little sphere. Hence, discussions about *learning* in individuals tend to be ambiguous unless these distinctions are drawn. (Of course, the situation becomes even more complex when we think and write about these issues in different languages).

Third, learning of both types involves multiple processes of taking in and sending out information. Recently, advances in neuroscience have uncovered the structure and functioning of "neural networks" and their ability to receive and send information, often in highly flexible and adaptable ways (Lawrence, 1991). Of course, the relation of such networks to levels of consciousness and to specific cognitive processes remains to be explored. The main point here is that there are processes that are more receptive and others that are more constructive.

Fourth, it is important to clarify just what the individual learner does when learning. They do many things (Grallo, 2004). One is to *seek meaningful possibilities*, such as hypotheses, different interpretations, diverse ideas, and distinct perspectives. A second thing they might do is to *seek knowledge*, where they are not just interested in a plethora of possibilities, but wish to select those that are true, that best fit the available facts. In academic circles, there is an ongoing debate about this, with some university departments emphasizing the search for possibilities and diverse interpretations (e.g. English education), and other departments seeking only those possibilities that best fit the facts (e.g. engineering, medicine). A third thing learners might do is to *clarify values*, that is to say they might evaluate possibilities not according to some criterion of truth or probability, but according to a criterion of value, or usefulness. A fourth thing learners might

engage in is *decision making* wherein they select from those possibilities judged to be valuable, a limited number of options they will import into their life. All of these are very different activities, and tend to make any exploration of *learning* very muddled unless they are distinguished.

Fifth, each of these types of activity constitutes a distinct level of consciousness. Each level has specific cognitive and behavioral processes associated with it and each is distinguished by the kind of goal sought.

Finally, there are many interferences to learning. This fact tends to make any discussion of learning quite complicated. Psychologists have been identifying a number of interferences with our efforts to solve problems: we do not do as well as we think. For example, people may judge incorrectly because of influences from social pressure (Asch, 1951, 1955, 1956), or because of the uncritical use of shortcuts in thinking (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984), or because of other distorting factors, (Grallo, Breiner & Aquilino, 2001). These are just a few of the types of interferences with learning.

What are the results of such interferences? It is interesting to note here that the philosopher Bernard Lonergan and the clinical psychologist Albert Ellis both arrived independently at similar conclusions: (1) that human beings (as learners) have the capacity to be intelligent sometimes, but to be unintelligent at other times; (2) that they can be reasonable sometimes, but quite unreasonable at others; (3) that they can be responsible sometimes (i.e. act of the basis of knowledge), but quite irresponsible at other times; (4) that they can be caring on some occasions, but not on others (Lonergan, 1972; Ellis, A., 1984, 1994). The result of this set of facts is that human beings are a "mixed bag," sometimes bright, frequently lost, and probably deeply in need of help. Goethe once described the human as a drunk on horseback - at the time quite defective in judgment and behavior, yet riding somewhere nevertheless.

If learning were to proceed without the distortions introduced by these interferences then we would have a rare instance of *authentic (or undistorted) learning.*

Happenings on the Big Sphere

Let us now turn our attention to the "big sphere" – the globe. What kind of "learner" and "problem solver" is this?

A number of years ago the paleontologist P.T. de Chardin spoke of the earth as being coated over as if by a number of layers of "paint." One of these coatings was biological, living organisms. He referred to this as the *biosphere.* However this was covered by something else, knowing organisms. He referred to this coating as the *noosphere* (de Chardin, 1976). Of course, these distinctions were drawn decades before the appearance of the internet. This same multifaceted internet can be regarded as an electrical engineering mimicking of the multiple electrical pathways of the brain. Hence, the planet itself may be said to have a "neural network" that is growing and adapting, and no one knows what the result is going to be. Is it going to be another learning sphere, like the little one? Is it going to be a "learning planet?" To what extent is it true that the political sphere is the moral sphere "writ large" as numerous philosophers have suggested? Will the limitations of the individual carry over into the larger sphere?

Given vastly unequal distributions of both talent and resources, whatever the result is, it may very well involve the development of cultures and societies that incorporate human intelligence as well as stupidity, reasonableness as well as irrationality, responsibility as well as irresponsibility, caring as well as viciousness (Grallo, 2003). All of these are possible simultaneously and each is related to the different levels of consciousness.

A few examples of social situations gone awry might prove useful in highlighting the connection between individual

potential and limitation and the magnified potentials and limitations of the societies that individuals produce.

The first might be labeled the *schizophrenic railroad station*. Schizophrenia is a debilitating mental condition characterized by an extreme disorganization of personality and a tenuous grasp on reality (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Some schizophrenics have described their condition as constantly hearing multiple radio stations blaring messages in their heads. As recently as a few years ago, this mental condition was duplicated outwardly at a Pennsylvania railroad station in New York. At that time, one could expect to enter that station and hear multiple messages as well as loud music being broadcast simultaneously over loud speakers. The result was quite disorienting. It appeared that an outward environment had been created to match the inner environment of the schizophrenic.

Another example is found in the big city traffic phenomenon of *gridlock*. In this condition, drivers from all directions enter an intersection in order to get through the intersection and proceed to their destination. From the point of view of the individual driver, it is a reasonable goal to proceed to the desired destination as soon as possible. However, when all drivers at an intersection pursue their individual rational ends, the result is the frustration of the goals of all – gridlock. Studies on "social dilemmas" (Pruitt, 1998) such as the "prisoner's dilemma" (Luce & Raiffa, 1957; Lippa, 1994) and the "commons dilemma" (Hardin, 1968; Franzoi, 2000) have documented the limitations of individual "rational self-interest." These limitations are quite robust. In New York City, signs and traffic signals have failed to eliminate gridlock. The most effective approach appears to be the presence of (armed) police officers.

In such environments with the human beings who create them, what are the relative prospects for *democracy* and *tyranny?* If we confine ourselves to the United States, it appears that we are living in an *oligarchy* (rule by a privileged few), which may well be a *plutocracy* (rule by the wealthy). Benjamin Franklin was once asked, "What kind of government are you creating?" His

answer was, "A democracy if you can keep it" (Van Doren, 1980). It is not clear that we have ever had it. Examine the role of "leading families" and the mythology surrounding them. In these instances, discussion of "equality" and "democracy" are often quietly replaced by discussions of the "best and the brightest" and "creativity" and "public service." As long as these terms remain poorly defined, the socially constructive exploits of the elites, as reported to the general population, can be framed in near mythic proportions, while the errors, oversights, group biases and self-serving interests are swept under the rug where they can continue to operate uninterrupted. Such a condition continues until a different elite group comes into power. The deficiencies of the previous group are exposed, partly to correct the record and partly to justify the existence and privilege of the newcomers, and the cycle begins all over again.

If we examine the planet as a whole, it is clear that it is dotted by both democratic republics and tyrannies. However, globalization appears to be creating a new plutocracy, with the creation of super wealthy global elites, international corporate "persons" and the diminishing of national boundaries. While Hobbes (1651/1998) seemed to envision a single "leviathan" (commonwealth) to keep warring interests at bay, his recommendations do not seem to extend to an environment of multiple leviathans in the form of nation states and multi-national corporations. In such an environment, the individual can easily get lost, as can families and local neighborhoods.

As with the individual learner, for the planet itself to become an authentically "learning planet," conditions must be set up to foster authentic learning while at the same time reversing interferences with that learning. Today democratic republics at this juncture in history could play a pivotal role in bringing about an authentic "learning planet," or they could retreat. However, whatever leaders there are to steer such a course are themselves subject to numerous limitations and interferences with learning. And therein lies the problem, both individual and global.

As Lonergan (1957) has pointed out, one of the most serious of the interferences with learning is *bias*, defined as a ruling out of relevant images, questions and insights (This is a more process oriented definition than that provided by psychologists such as Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). Such relevant images, questions and insights provide the clues to effective solutions of human problems, both individual and social. However the countervailing force of bias manifests itself in individuals, in groups and across the planet generally. It blocks or distorts new possibilities that might lead to the solution of problems. It seeks to advance the private interests of individuals or of distinct groups over and above the common good. It can take over institutions and governments and promulgate genuinely stupid, irrational, unreasonable and vicious policies. It provides rationalizations to a continual blocking of effective solutions as initial problems tend to get worse. It provides plausible rationalizations and excuses for its operation through philosophies and a variety of media outlets. It spawns opposition, which is often the mirror-image in myopia and equally persistent in refusing to examine its own limitations. For Lonergan ". . . the wheel of progress becomes the wheel of decline when the process is distorted by bias. And the situation becomes the dump in which are heaped up . . . all the biases of self-centered and shortsighted individuals and groups" (Carley, 2005, p. 8).

Conclusion: But is it the end?

Globalization is rapidly bringing all of us together. The pace of this change is accelerating. The roughly 6 billion human inhabitants of earth exceed in number all of the previous generations combined. Yet these inhabitants, both individually and in groups, combine surprising capabilities for development with disappointing and dangerous limitations tending to decline. Hence, globalization has intensified this basic problem of human nature: apparently a house divided.

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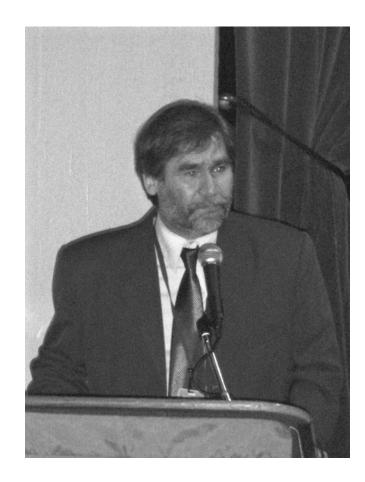Ryle, G. (2000). *The concept of mind.* Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

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Theodor Damian (left), Steven Cresap

George Alexe (left) and Archbishop Nicolae Condrea

Theodor Damian

Globalization as Reconstruction of the World:
The Theological Value of Recapitulation

Preliminary Considerations

Globalization is one of the most debated and hot topics today. The strong reaction people have at World Trade Organization meetings is one indication of that. Another one is the quantity of writing on the topic. According to internet resources every field of life is affected by globalization. Only Google - to mention just one tool of research - gives 6.560.000 entries for the word.

If globalization would not drastically affect people's lives there would probably be less interest for it. Because of its implications in human life at all levels, those who are happy with it are quick to praise and preach it, whereas those who are unhappy and skeptical are quick to protest, warn and discourage.

In this presentation I will try to look at this phenomenon not so much from the point of view of its external manifestations that have to do with technology, economics, politics (Americanization for many), but from the point of view of its inner forces, drives, and characteristics. In doing that I will make an appeal to theology and metaphysics that can facilitate a new understanding and interpretation of it.

* * *

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Man is a globalizing being

Globalization falls upon us like an avalanche. We can not stop it, we can only adjust to it. It is like a system and we are its parts. Every system is global in character. It encloses and holds together all the parts that make it what it is. The part cannot escape it. The system is part of its destiny. So is globalization part of our destiny.

Globalization has two dimensions: one physical, visible, epidermic; the other one, hidden. One is *epi,* the other is *meta.* It is important to pay attention to its external manifestations because they affect us in many ways, but maybe it is at least equally important if not more, to pay attention to its inner forces and drives.

In a love relationship between two people we see the external manifestations based on which we judge, interpret, evaluate. It is hard, if not impossible, for us to see the inner workings of the chemistry that is at the basis of that relationship.

However, in order to better understand the phenomenon we need to go into the *meta* of it. But one cannot study the metaphysics with the tools used for the study of physics. Just as one cannot define man based on the external manifestations alone, and one needs to go to the psychological level as well, so with globalization: one has to go to the *meta* which is the ground and raison d'etre of the *epi.* In order to do that theology can be of significant help.

When Pico della Mirandola wrote that God placed man in the middle of the world in order to better understand it *(Oration on the Dignity of Man,* Gateway, Chicago, 1956, p. 7), he indicated that man was meant to englobe in his or her embrace the entire creation of God. To understand means to affect because understanding generates attitudes. Attitudes are equivalent to actions that one takes toward the subject of one's understanding.

Being placed in the middle of creation in order to better understand it, man was indeed destined to be the crown of it all; to be its crown, which is to master it, implies to know it. Indeed

understanding implies a certain degree of knowledge, and knowledge is the ground of power, of mastering. This is consistent with the theological doctrine according to which man was created in the image of God. If we were to define God etymologically, then one can say that God is the Seer. In Greek, *Theos* comes from *theastai* = to see. The more you see, the more you know, and the more you know the more powerful you become. God is the Seer of all, that is why He is all-knowing and almighty. But man is created in God's image. That means he or she is supposed to see, and from seeing to get knowledge and then power.

This is why God placed man, as Pico della Mirandola says, in the middle of the world, in order to help him or her to better see the world. And seeing it - knowing, understanding it, he gets power over it, masters it, and consequently affects it. And that is what man did progressively, by degrees, since the beginning of his existence: to try to control and master the world, the universe, to put his or her print over everything he touches. And he wants to touch everything.

Indeed man is a globalizing force.

Divide et Impera *Versus Recapitulate and Master*
The Spirit of Division

Karl Barth was very skeptical about man's ways of dealing with the world. Chased by the spirit of possession man's main desire resides in constant acquisition: to get, to have. That is why Nietzsche wrote that man's goal in life is to bring everyday something home. According to Blaise Pascal it is the spirit of possession that generates man's tragedy. One of the reasons for this is the fact that man identifies himself with what he or she possesses, which leads to his being's reification.

In this equation *to be* is in competition with *to have* and *to have* is the winner. Then, man defines himself quantitatively instead of qualitatively.

The same Karl Barth observes with a note of sharp skepticism that whatever man possesses he destroys. And of course, when he himself is a quantity and identifies himself with his possessions, by destroying them he destroys himself. That is why E.Cioran described man as being a self proclaimed destructor.

The spirit of acquisition leads to division, separation and fragmentation. Division helps in the process of conquering. It becomes a strategy. The best one. That is why the old Latin adage advises: Divide and conquer! *Divide et impera!*

However, this only tells about how the world is, not how it is supposed to be. Conquering the world by dividing it, conquering it chased by the desire to possess it is not what the world needs and not what man needs, certainly because the destruction of what he possesses is going to be his own destruction. Man needs to conquer, to master the world in a totally different way, paradoxically, by offering himself or herself to it.

Globalization is not where you got the entire world and brought destruction upon it. That is the *epi* attitude, philosophy, *Weltanschauung*. The real conquering of the world which does make man a master as he was meant to be, but which does not bring about destruction, the real globalization is when man understands the original purpose of the world, and his own vocation in relation to it.

Pico della Mirandola again: God placed man in the middle of the world in order to better see it and to consequently understand it. If you understand something you help the thing reach its own fulfillment according to its nature, destiny and destination. If you go against its nature you did not understand it. That does not help.

How do we understand? The word itself tells it: to stand under. Not above. To stand above runs two risks: that of superficiality, you just see things from above, you will never get into, you will never know and understand. To see from above, is the *epi,* in the detriment of *meta.*

The second risk of seeing from above it that of arrogance. That will never help me get in communion. Arrogance closes doors. It does not open them. Treated arrogantly things will resemble a citadel on a rock that never opens its doors to the one who shows no consideration to it.

On the contrary, when I try to under-stand, I will stand under. That is humility. This is the slide that brings me to the *meta.* Inside the thing is the heart of it. When I am there, beyond appearances, this is when I am in communion, the real communion. Of course, when I am allowed to or I have the chance to enter somebody's heart, I have to take my boots off. That is like the holy ground where Moses had to enter with no shoes.

The principle of globalization is participation, not imposition. Participation in turn makes authentic communion. If globalization is based on the spirit of possession, it brings about division and destruction. Then I don't need it. If it creates communion, mutual growth and is applied with dignity, then I need it.

In other words globalization as arrogance is *epi:* surface, appearance, superficiality. It is not authentic. In contrast, globalization as humility is *meta,* it is real, profound, healthy and stable.

Recapitulation (anakephalaiosis)

Paradoxically, one becomes a master by practicing humility. I will allow you to take me when I see that you love me, you want to serve me, you treat me with dignity. Thus you are my friend. Otherwise you are my enemy. That is why it was said that the best master is the one who knows to serve best. God is the perfect master because He is the perfect servant. That service to humanity culminates in Jesus Christ Messiah, who according to Isaiah and the Jewish prophetic tradition is *Yebed Jahwe,* God's servant, but man's servant at the same time.

Christ brought salvation to the entire world by coming to serve it, by dying for it, by being in communion with it, by recapitulating it. St. Irenaeus of Lugdunum (in the 2nd century) is one of the most prominent theologians who explained the concept of everything's recapitulation in Christ. "Jesus", he says, "came all the way of the universal economy *(oikonomia)* by recapitulating everything in Himself" *(Contre les Hérésies,* I, 2, critical edition by A. Rousseau and L. Doutreleau, Ed. Cerf, "Sources Chrétiennes", Paris, 1979, pp. 135-157). In other words, if we want to use our topic's vocabulary, we talk here about Christ's globalizing work for the salvation of the world.

This is the type of globalization that our world needs today and this is how Irenaeus explains Christ's recapitulative salvific work: by taking on human nature the Son of God came in direct communion with man. Every one who accepts Christ, comes in communion with Him, participates in His theandric life and being. When Christ allows everybody to come and participate in His theandric life, He recapitulates everyone. He is like taking one by one and purifying, saving, deifying them all. Christ is thus fulfilling his globalizing mission in the world.

However, to re-capitulate is to capitulate again. So recapitulation is based on capitulation, which is to give up, to renounce, to abandon. In other words, if you want to win the world, to conquer it in order to save it, you need to capitulate before it. This is the exact paradoxical sense of the crucifixion, without which there is no resurrection and final victory. Capitulation is humility. I mentioned earlier that Christ was called *Yebed Jahwe,* God's servant, and then the servant of the world, of man. By serving God and man He reconciles God and man.

As St. Paul explains in his letter to the Philippians, Christ indeed capitulated in the sense that His kenosis was a renunciation to his divine glory and prerogatives. Capitulation means head down, bowed down, humility, service. It was by humbling Himself to death, and even death on the cross (Philippians, 2, 8) that He entered the world to its heart, in its unfathomable depth, and won man's heart.

Following this paradigm one can say that if we want a globalization that is beneficial to our world, we need to understand what globalization really is, how it can be done in a way that does not harm the world. We have to reinvent or rediscover the communion. We need to conquer the world by humility and service, not by arrogance and individualistic profit. In other words, if we want to become agents of globalization in the authentic sense of the term, as René Descartes in his *Discourse on Method* teaches, we need to conquer ourselves first before trying to conquer the world. And this is the most difficult thing to do.

Conclusions

According to many analysts our wold does not go in the right direction. Greed is one of the causes that produce war among nations and conflict among individuals. There is visible war and invisible war, hidden, camouflaged. There is so much destructive potential on earth that even if only part of it were used, we could be the last generation in the world.

That it why we need reconstruction and we have to reinvent ourselves, our concepts, beliefs and definitions.

The process of globalization, the way we see it in our time, needs to be based on stable values. We need to recapitulate what we had and lost. Religion, the most powerful values generator in the human world can be of significant help, if taken very seriously. It is only a globalization that grows out of religious values that can promise us a future.

Vadim Moldovan

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"Vertical Solidarity" vs. Capitalism:
A Social Work Perspective on Globalization

Globalization

 Globalization is defined as the growing interconnectedness between political*, social* and economic systems beyond national borders, which is occurring at an accelerated pace due to technological advances (Dean, 2004). Vastly improved communication and information technologies have tremendously increased opportunities for traffic in information, goods, and people. Globalization appears to be sweeping the world at an ever-increasing pace leaving neither a geographic area nor a field of human endeavor free of its influence.

 The social work profession is affected as well. As the impact of globalization is unfolding, so is the understanding of the role of social work in this new world. Economic interests are apparently providing the thrust for globalization. Political changes resulting from the rapid world-wide economic restructuring are following close behind. Social consequences of political transformation are inevitably occurring in the wake of political reforms. The social work profession is usually at the forefront of dealing with the social issues affecting society, and the new social order challenges the very nature of the profession. The purpose of this paper is to offer some thoughts on the relationship between globalization and social work.

 The trend toward globalization is generally viewed by social work academia with skepticism and alarm. It is often perceived as a force, which tears up the fabric of local cultures,

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impoverishes labor and destroys the environment creating global inequalities and social exclusion (Finn & Jacobson, 2003: Polack, 2004, Reisch, 2000).

Largely due to technological progress, the two hundred year-old conflict between the interests of capital and those of humanity has gone global. Social contradictions have become more apparent: international commerce is subverting local traditions, cultures are falling victim to foreign products and services and exploitation is replacing social justice as a norm of human interaction.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, capitalism has expanded into the territories formerly dominated by socialist ideology. Countries that used to belong to the socialist camp largely purged their economies of the socialist element. Even in China, a nominally socialist country, private ownership of capital has significantly increased. At the same time, in the United States, interests of major corporations are scoring one political victory after another, evident by a slew of regulatory reforms in the areas of the environment and social policy favoring large businesses.

Globalization and Social work

Social workers in the United States, along with the country's entire social service sector, are affected by globalization in a number of ways. The increasing global political involvement of the United States is accompanied by foreign wars. Military spending and budgetary reallocations away from the social sector leave social programs starving for funds. Fluidity of manufacturing and services processes allow corporation searching for greater efficiencies to relocate and outsource frequently and with ease. As a result, social workers are treating soldiers returning from the foreign wars, deal with displacement and poverty of labor, and assist the growing number of the needy in the time of budget cuts and reduction in services.

Social problems are no longer local phenomena confined to a particular country. To the contrary, local social problems invariably represent global trends. The situation concerning the mental health field in the United States, where social workers represent by far the largest segment of service providers (Newhill & Korr, 2004), is presented here as emblematic of the global influence of privatization.

In New York City, outpatient psychiatric services have been undergoing profound changes since the late 1980s. Privately managed care companies are paying substantially less for fewer services and gradually replacing the traditionally more generous government-run medical insurance programs. As psychiatric clinics are struggling for their fiscal survival, they are turning psychotherapists (usually clinical social workers) into money-making machines. In order to keep their jobs, clinical social workers must provide psychotherapy to 8-10 patients a day and process mounds of paperwork related to reimbursements. Needless to say, in such an environment, social workers are burning out, and patients are suffering from assembly-line-like services.

While municipal hospitals are either closing or reducing their services, private hospitals are expanding. Psychiatric clinics, formerly affiliated with non-profit mental health centers, are being taken over by for-profit private hospitals. The transition from non-profit to for-profit status is likely to result in further increases in workloads, reduction in quality of services and a downward pressure on wages.

Representatives of the companies manufacturing psychiatric medications became a constant presence at the clinics, enticing doctors and social workers alike to promote their remedies. Despite their questionable effectiveness and negative side effects of many psychiatric drugs, the hugely profitable psycho-pharmaceutical companies are dominating mental health services. Psychiatrists, seduced by free dinners, trips to Florida and speaking fees became little more than drug reps themselves. Social workers' inducements are smaller – free lunches and

stationary – but enough to make many of them promote psychiatric drugs with the same zeal as psychiatrists.

These are not just local trends – throughout the world, governments dominated by business interests are absconding from their responsibility for helping the needy through farming out social services to private entities and medicalizing social problems.

Social workers are increasingly functioning in the realm of social control rather than social care – working on changing behaviors and attitudes of individuals rather than attempting to bring about social change. The profession that calls itself "value-based" has mostly lost the sight of its fundamental values of social justice and human dignity. Social work is in danger of becoming another instrument of capitalism and economic globalization.

Social work began as a movement of resisters and rabble rousers who were fighting against the social degradation caused by industrialization at the end of the nineteenth century (Wenocur & Reisch, 1989). It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the slide of the social work profession from its historic role of an advocate to the present role of collaborator. It is suffice to say that the change in orientation has a lot to do with funding for social services and the very social work tendency to compromise.

What then, makes global capitalism so successful at subverting the principles of charity and justice, which are so basic not only to social work, but also to religious and cultural movements?

Global Capitalism as Disease

Marxist understanding of capitalism is still relevant and no post-modern imagery can top a radical Marxian metaphor: "Capital is dead labor which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks" (Marx, 1867). Marx perceives capitalism as a disease depriving humanity

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of its vitality. We will examine the course of this disease by interpreting Baudrillard's concept of *simulacrum*. According to Baudrillard (1995), capitalist economy replaces all that is authentic by marketable copies called simulacra. The capitalist system and its loyal henchman technological progress, developed an uncanny ability to replace the most basic needs and attributes of being human with products and resells them to the people-turned-consumers.

Water is polluted and then sold purified and bottled. Human emotions are denied and then peddled through television pastiche. Social exchanges are being transformed into financial transactions. Cultures are robbed of their traditions, and those traditions are decontextualized and later purveyed as art. Food is denatured and then reconstituted. Capitalism simulates and commodifies everything it can lay its hands on. As sellable simulacra are being produced, the originals wither away and die off.

Simulacra are artificial, standardized, mass produced, and deadly. I would like to share a personal experience as an illustration of this thesis. Last October, at my country house in Upstate New York, I left two baskets of apples side-by-side, not as an experiment but as a happenstance. The first basket contained small gnarled apples picked at a long-abandoned orchard. The second basket held several large perfectly shaped and beautifully colored apples purchased at the local supermarket. When I returned to the house in November, the crab apples were completely devoured by mice. The supermarket apples were not even touched by them. Throughout the whole winter, these apples remained intact in their artificial, standardized, and mass-produced glory. Perhaps this is a measure of the deadliness of simulacra – when even mice refuse to recognize mass-produced and altered apples as food.

Intrusion of "free market" into social life is often seen as an irresistible force of nature (Ohmae, 1994). Yet, the metaphor of disease may be more appropriate to express the capitalist condition of society. The symptoms of this disease can be

recognized as the ravages of slavery, racism, sexism, homophobia, starvation, genocide, imperialist conquest, war, disease, unemployment, alienation, and despair (McLaren & Farahmandpur, 1994). The disease of capitalism is advancing with persistence and pathological consistency. It is contagious and progressive. In other words, other countries are prone to catch it, and social problems caused by global capitalism tend to get worse with time.

The disease of global capitalism is about to afflict and radically alter every cultural system in the world. Dams, which are needed to produce electric energy, are being built on the rivers sacred to the indigenous peoples. Mining for the minerals needed for industrial production despoils the lands where people lived for millennia in harmony with nature. New technologies subvert traditional agricultural societies. Mass-produced goods replace local arts and crafts. The disease destroys indigenous, cultural, and spiritual traditions. It also prevails over the social work argument of social justice and human dignity.

Global Dissent – "Vertical Solidarity"

In the face of adversity, one is inevitably searching for a remedy. Yet, instead of treating the underlying social disease of exploitation, the social work profession, along with many other sectors of society, appears to be collaborating with the disease. Despite their historic commitment to social justice and advocacy for the victims of industrialization, social workers are finding themselves in the role of executioners of pernicious social policies. One may find a fairly robust critique of economic globalization and exploitation in the academic circles (e.g., Smith, 2003, McLaren & Farahmandpur, 1994). On the professional level, however, social workers rarely protest against the growing poverty, income disparity, degradation of human rights, environmental despoliation, dismantling of social programs, etc.

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Social workers rarely practice advocacy and their core values of human dignity, and social justice is being subverted by individualized treatment and social relativism. Social workers, however, are not alone in their apathy. The clergy of many denominations are consumed by the proselytizing opportunities offered by globalization and seem to be retreating from the message of justice and charity. While acknowledging the munificence of the manifold religious charities, it is also difficult to understand their silence about the growing social ills being caused by the dysfunctional social system.

The capitalist system is skillful at co-opting potential opposition. Social workers are seduced by professionalization and the power of social status. Likewise, religious institutions are often taken by moralistic packaging of the capitalism-induced policies. Ironically, the capitalist government became a champion of family values and human life by presenting homosexuality and abortion as paramount evils. At the same time, the evil of global capitalism remains obscured.

As funding for social services is being shifted to "faith-based institutions," secular and religious social services find themselves competing for public money – the "divide and conquer" methods are as effective as ever. Besides, mutual distrust between secular social work and religious institutions is historical and requires very little effort to maintain. And yet, despite their differences, social workers and clergy share many concerns about the destructive impact of globalization on human condition (Dube, 2002, "Social Doctrine Compendium" 2004). However, there is also, common to both groups, a reluctance to tackle the source of destruction: the disease itself. It is sad to witness the erosion of the mutual historic mission of protection of the weak against the powerful. It is also ironic that these religious and social work institutions alike are reluctant to employ moral judgment when the judgment is due to indict the evil of global capitalism.

Herein lies an opportunity for an alliance between social work and religious institutions, not as a marriage of convenience

(Alinsky, 1989), but as solidarity in the face of a common adversity. Generally, political opposition builds on "horizontal" solidarity among the members of the same ethnic group, religious creed, professional association, political party, or social class. Consequently, the opposition to a larger and stronger social force, such as economic globalization, is parochial and fragmented. At the times of crisis, however, an ability of diverse constituencies to come together becomes a measure of acknowledging common danger. The danger of global capitalism threatens the common ethical foundation of religious and social work institutions.

The process of building coalitions across diverse interest groups can be called "vertical solidarity." It goes beyond the mere alliances under the banners of political parties into the realm of the profound realization of and commitment to the common cause. "Vertical solidarity" involves a focus on the commonality and mutuality of the roles, which social workers and clergy serve in society. It involves a clear realization of the present mission shared by both groups. The universality of social problems related to globalization and modern technologies holds a promise of a solidarity crossing geographic boundaries. Global capitalism can be opposed with the global dissent of "vertical solidarity."

No strategies for achieving "global solidarity" are being proposed here. Instead, this paper represents an attempt to identify a potential role of the social work profession in dealing with the social impact of global capitalism. Economic globalization, as the root cause of contemporary social problems, should be clearly diagnosed before any form of treatment can be attempted. In turn, this realization can lead to the global cooperative strategies of dissent in the name of human dignity and social justice.

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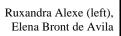
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Professors, students and guests