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

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Abstract. *In this paper, we critically examine different discourses of globalization and explore how concepts of globalization have been represented in organizational theory. We argue that, despite its celebratory rhetoric of ‘one world, many peoples’, notions of globalization are inextricably linked with the continued development of First World economies, creating new forms of colonial control in the so-called ‘post-colonial’ era. Thus, globalization becomes the new global colonialism, based on the historical structure of capitalism and is a process that executes the objectives of colonialism with greater efficiency and rationalism. We discuss the economic, political, social and cultural aspects underlying globalization, and argue that the emergence of a so-called ‘global culture’ is simply a process that marks the transformation to a culture of consumption. We interrogate the notions of diversity and multiculturalism, and argue that the successful management of diversity, presented as the new prerequisite for sustainable competitive advantage, effectively continues global colonialism. We argue that, despite the rhetoric of celebrating difference, multiculturalism does little more than facilitate assimilation within the dominant ideology. We examine the different structures and processes of globalization, and conclude by discussing the possibility of alternate theorizations and a discursive redefinition of globalization involving the creation of new spaces that can articulate alternate forms of economic and social realities.*

Key words. *globalization; multiculturalism; neo-colonialism*

‘I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country . . . corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the



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money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed.' (Abraham Lincoln, 21 November 1864)

'At the level of people, the system isn't working.' (James Wolfensohn, 1999, President, World Bank)

As the post-enlightenment discourse of Progress continues to evolve, the supporting discourse of 'globalization' has emerged over the past decade and, though by no means homogeneous, it has achieved remarkable penetration into everyday speech at all levels of language use. It is widely asserted, and indeed frequently taken for granted, that we live in a 'global' village where national cultures and boundaries are dissolving, we consume 'global' brands, corporations have to be competitive in a 'global' marketplace and governments have to be responsive to the needs of the 'global' economy (Banerjee, 1998; Giddens, 1999; Hirst and Thompson, 1998; Klein, 2000; McCracken, 1988; Ohmae, 1995; Schmidt, 1995). This rhetoric is easily reproduced by business executives and government officials all over the world, suitably tailored to a variety of purposes, but especially when responding to public criticisms on the dismantling of social institutions, redundancies or plant closings. Globalization promises a leaner, more efficient economy, one that will ensure growth and be beneficial to all the nations of the world, in the long run at least, despite the short-term costs to a few people. Yet, critics of globalization argue that the virtual communities of the 'global village' and the volatile economies of the 'global marketplace' are displacing tradition, family and community. For them, the rhetoric of globalization is constructed to deliberately obscure two important questions as to the nature of its 'promise'.

- *The subjective problem:* if 'we' live in a global world, exactly who constitutes this 'us'? Who is being written into this globalization discourse, how and by whom?
- *The equity problem:* what are the costs and benefits of globalization and how are these distributed across different countries, regions and peoples?

Because the discourse of globalization is related to the broader, western discourse of industrial and capitalist progress, there is also an underlying assumption, in some variants of the discourse at least, of the inevitability of the process. However, as recent events such as the breakdown of the World Trade Organization talks in Seattle have shown, globalization is not an uncontested process but, as we will discuss later, both produces and is founded upon a tension between the global and local. In this context, the words of the President of the World Bank quoted above beg the obvious question: if the 'system' is not working at the 'level of people', at what level and for whom is it working? What other level is there, apart from people?



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Whilst globalization is often discussed as a phenomenon in itself, a critically discursive approach such as the one taken in this paper regards it as a construct and is interested in the means and purposes of its construction, the institutions through which it works and its extra-discursive consequences. Yet, no discourse operates in isolation from other discourses and often works in close relation to other specific complementary discourses. For example, a significant outcome of globalization is its impact on the workforces of the world: the 10 largest transnational corporations derive more than 60 percent of their sales from their international operations, with a significant proportion of their workforce employed outside their 'home' country (Sassen, 1998). International affiliations and joint ventures increase this territorial dispersion. Simultaneously, as members of the domestic workforces of the advanced economies are sent overseas to operate joint ventures and supervise new developments, it becomes necessary to incorporate into the domestic workforce groups who may previously have been excluded or marginalized, such as immigrant ethnic groups and women (Calás and Smircich, 1993). Migrant workers in large metropolitan cities are often classified as being part of the 'ethnic economy' or 'informal economy' without a recognition of the increasing racialization of the labour market that results from globalization (Sassen, 1998). The successful management of 'diversity' is presented as a key contemporary challenge for organizations (Chemers et al., 1995). Thus, a complementary discourse to globalization emerges in which multiculturalism becomes a concept that can be employed to manage the often problematic consequences of cultural diversity. In this paper, therefore, we critically examine the construction of globalization and multiculturalism as mutually interlocking discourses, and discuss their implications for management theory and practice.

Globalization and the New World Disorder

The discourses on globalization that dominate the business press and management journals focus primarily on its *economic* mien. Globalization's momentum is rooted in the capitalist logic of expanding markets and the international integration of capital and the forces of production. These global material exchanges involve international trade, the international division of labour and the accumulation of capital in the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods and services. The discourse on economic development in the neoclassical economic paradigm is one that emphasizes the benefits of free trade and the unrestricted flow of goods and services. This development philosophy was operationalized by the industrialized countries and international agencies after World War II: 'development' for the poorer regions of the world was constructed as economic development and was seen as a process to help the postcolonial nations construct their own economies.



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While the term ‘development’ has been in common usage for over 200 years, most scholars agree that the contemporary notion of development was dramatically endorsed by President Harry Truman in his inaugural address on 20 January 1949, outlining a global programme for development:

We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas . . . The old imperialism – exploitation for foreign profit – has no place in our plans.

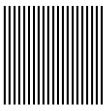
Despite the fact that both governments and independent agencies such as the Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations had been active in development projects worldwide throughout the century (Clegg et al., 2000), Truman’s speech was a watershed. A new perception of the West and the rest of the world was created on that day, marking the transition to a new imperialism. The Third World was born at that moment – on that day, over two billion people became underdeveloped because, as Esteva (1992) argues, they were:

. . . transmogrified into an inverted mirror of others’ reality: a mirror that belittles them and sends them off to the end of the queue, a mirror that defines their identity, which is really that of a heterogeneous and diverse majority, simply in the terms of a homogenizing and narrow minority. (p. 7)

The ideology of economic development and the transition to modernity was entrenched in the process of industrialization. Forty years ago, Kerr et al. (1960), analysing the ‘logic’ of industrialization, wrote:

To recognize the invincibility of the industrialization process is not necessarily to approve or to advocate industrialism. It may be argued from some value systems that economic development is undesirable or secured at too high a price of social and political changes in the traditional society. As individuals we may not approve of all the implications of an industrial society. But an argument against industrialization is now futile, and there is no turning back. (p. 42)

At the risk of decontextualizing the above quote, we might wonder what are the implications of replacing ‘industrialization’ by ‘globalization’ in the ‘postindustrial’ era of the new millennium – at perhaps the ‘end of history’ (Fukayama, 1992)? For Kerr et al. (1960), it was important to mark the dawn of the industrialization age as a disjuncture – as we will discuss later, several theorists such as Appadurai (1990), Bauman (1998), Featherstone (1991) and Harvey (1989) also conceptualize globalization as a similar disjuncture – in order to problematize industrial relations as not ‘capital versus labor, but rather the structuring of the labor force –



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how it gets recruited, developed and maintained' (p. 281). Colonial modes of development for the non-industrialized countries were central to this thesis as was the emergence of industrializing elites in those countries and there was a call for 'a new global sociology of industrialism and imperialism, able to handle simultaneously structural relationships within industrial society and their articulation with the structures of relationship between industrial society and the Third World' (Haddon, 1971, p. 5). Development ideology also informed socialist agendas of the post World War II era and, despite the rhetoric of separating the forces of production from the relations of production, the former were generally emphasized at the cost of the latter (Haddon, 1971).

Several critics have argued that the development orchestrated by the industrialized countries tended to replicate the forces of colonialism in that it continued the pattern of resource expropriation and economic control by the industrialized countries. The significant political, social and cultural consequences of such 'developmentalist Eurocentricism' (Dussel, 1999) and the pattern of dependency that resulted in the perpetuation of underdevelopment in the Third World have been documented by several researchers (Amin, 1980; Escobar, 1995; Shiva, 1989). This 'double-jeopardy' scenario is familiar to most Third World nations: pressure from powerful international agencies to raise exports and open markets implies exporting natural resources or commodities at low prices and importing manufactured goods at high prices. 'Development' was seen as economic development: once wealth was created, nation states could address social aspects of development. The separation of economic development from social development was typical of a western capitalist world view and its imposition on non-western cultures led to a host of problems: displacement of rural populations, unemployment, urbanization and environmental destruction. While some Third World countries attempted to balance economic development with social needs, most of these efforts were doomed to failure, mainly because of the dictates of resource deployment by the World Bank, which provided loans for large-scale economic projects. In recent years, many developing countries in Latin America and Asia have embarked on a full-scale process of deregulation and privatization. In the majority of cases, this process has been dictated by the 'structural adjustment programmes' of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Goldsmith, 1997). Available evidence suggests that the benefits of such programmes tend to widen the disparity between the rich and poor in developing countries, not to mention the environmental destruction resulting from institutional pressures to export 'cheap' natural resources in order to service external debt (Escobar, 1995; Shiva, 1989). As global financier George Soros puts it: 'the system is currently stacked in favor of the lenders to the detriment of the debtors' (Soros, 1998).

Globalization is also theorized in many quarters as an inevitable process, which, as Hirst and Thompson (1998) point out, serves to curtail



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any attempt to articulate radical reform strategies at the national, regional or local level by deeming them 'unviable' in the face of the inexorable 'logic' of international markets. While several writers argue that globalization is an inescapable reality making nation states obsolete (Ohmae, 1995; Schmidt, 1995), others argue that reports of the demise of the nation state are greatly exaggerated (Hirst and Thompson, 1998; Uchitelle, 1998). Structural changes in the international economy have been taking place since the 19th century. However, the internationalization of economic exchanges does not mean the world is 'global': international penetration of financial markets in OECD countries was actually greater between 1900 and 1914 than in the late 1980s, as was the ratio of foreign trade and GDP (Hirst and Thompson, 1998). Moreover, over 80 percent of the 'global' world trade and 70 percent of foreign direct investment occurs between OECD economies, and distinctions between First and Third World economies still exist as they did 50 years ago (Hirst and Thompson, 1998). However, as Miyoshi (1999) points out, whilst it is true that globalization in terms of complete integration has not yet taken place, using regional or national economies as units of analysis to describe future trends is misleading. What is currently emerging and will continue to emerge is a series of transient networks framed by economic and political linkages.

Sassen (1998) argues that the national/global binary opposition does not capture the complexities of globalization processes. In fact, it serves to limit alternate theorizations, especially about global governance issues. For instance, this dualism focuses attention on industrial outputs (as opposed to the processes and relations of production) and information transmission capacity (as opposed to the infrastructure required for this capacity). While certain economic arrangements can erode national sovereignty, it is important to realize that the nation/global categories are not mutually exclusive but that elements of globalization are embedded in particular institutional locations within nation states (Sassen, 1998). Even the most global industries – finance, media, information technology – operate through a global network located in national sites where strategic decisions on the deployment of capital and location of resources serve to strengthen the international division of labour and strategic concentration of infrastructure.

A world economy with high growth in international trade and investment is not necessarily a globalized economy. International regulation and standards still need to be enforced and monitored, and nation states will continue to be a part of this process and will still play a fundamental role in providing economic governance. As Hirst and Thompson (1998) point out, 'central functions of the nation state will become those of providing legitimacy for and ensuring the accountability of supranational and sub-national governance mechanisms' (p. 171). Whilst it is true that a small minority of transnational corporations operate at a global level with more than 60 percent of their income generated from overseas



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activity, the majority of international business activity remains 'nationally embedded' and operates in a more multinational rather than transnational fashion (Uchitelle, 1998). While the premise of a truly 'global' corporation may be faulty and contradictory, most writers seem to agree that capitalism is entering a global phase (Sassen, 1998; Sklair, 1995; Wallerstein, 1990) where 'production processes within large firms are being decoupled from specific territories and are being formed into new global systems' (Howells and Wood, 1993: 4). To the extent that a stateless, globalized economy (and, consequently, a stateless corporation) exists, it is oligopolistically organized and certainly not along the lines of a free-market, perfect-competition world that Ohmae (1995) and others of his ilk would have us believe (Hirst and Thompson, 1998). Like development, globalization proceeds at an uneven pace (Amin, 1989), where becoming global is simply the 'plan and capability of market and labor penetration by industrialized economies' (Miyoshi, 1999: 250). Recognizing that the socio-cultural impacts of globalization are not the result of free and self-regulating market economies but the result of coordinated political and economic management may produce a different understanding of how relations of production and consumption are created and sustained (Haddon, 1971). Thus, management in the post-industrial global space can also be understood as using 'power to force people to participate in the economy in a certain way' (Haddon, 1971: 23) and also the enormous difficulty in 'delinking' from 'global' institutions – institutions that have emerged from power relations that shape the structures within which national, regional, global and local entities have to operate (Amin, 1989; Jameson, 1999a; Lash and Urry, 1994).

Global Processes, Local Knowledges

Focusing solely on the economic aspects of globalization is to take too narrow a perspective of the subject. Globalization is also a *political* process in the sense that it is constructed by relationships of power, domination and subordination. Historically, control over markets and raw materials often involved the use of military power as was prevalent during colonial times. Thus, globalization has its historical roots in the modern era where military strength secured the global control of raw materials, which, through industrialization in turn, enabled the creation and control of world markets sustaining the competitive and economic advantage of the industrialized countries. Today, international institutions and transnational corporations are writing the rules of globalization. Global political exchanges often involve coercion (the various trade embargos orchestrated by western powers), surveillance (as evidenced by several World Bank and IMF policies), legitimacy (as offered by the World Trade Organization) and authority (granting of 'most favoured nation' status by the United States).



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Globalization is also a *social and cultural* process. Waters (1995) defined globalization as 'a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding'. The underlying assumption here is that globalization, like modernity, is associated with the diffusion of capitalist society and western culture. Thus, globalization is a direct consequence of European expansion beginning from the era of colonization, entrenching itself during the post World War II era of colonial development and emerging in the latter part of the century as a 'world-wide' phenomenon. However, this does not imply that the entire planet is homogenized into western culture but that political, cultural and social positions in the non-western world are established *in relation* to the capitalist West (Waters, 1995). This nexus between capitalist expansion and global production and consumption is not new: classical economists like Marx discussed how the expansion of capitalism would require a 'world-market' for modern industry (Marx, 1977).

We could also consider globalization to be a *knowledge producing (and appropriating) process* in which the social, cultural and political combine at particular geographic locations and times in unique ways. In contemporary social science, space and its definition are coming to occupy a position of increasing importance. The symbolic anthropologist, Clifford Geertz (1983), argues that the social anthropological study of communities tends to bring to the surface bodies of knowledge which are specific to the conditions in which those communities subsist, and which are concrete and pragmatic, helping members to live their lives successfully in the community's milieu, whether it be the Amazon rainforest, the Russian steppes, downtown Detroit or the bars of Bangkok. Social structures and rules of behaviour adapt to these circumstances, sometimes in subversive and oppositional forms, and, as Geertz observes in his comparative analysis of legal systems, the concepts of fact, evidence, justice, morality, ethics and legality also shift across cultures. Even the metaphysics of those knowledge-producing communities, though targeted at the transcendental, will have strong local elements in their formulation, with the effect that social concepts which are often taken to be synonymous when shifted from place to place – such as leadership, for example – are discovered to be somewhat incommensurable on closer examination (Westwood and Chan, 1992; Westwood, 1997). Accordingly, what it is possible and necessary for human beings to do in carrying on their everyday business varies with cultural context. *Local knowledge* – knowledge situated in time and space – is both in opposition to the universalizing tendencies of global knowledge, and part of it, as a reflexive understanding of knowledge construction recognizes that it is *always* grounded in local, and in this case primarily western, knowledge forms.

Haraway (1991: 195) extends Geertz's contention, arguing that in this global world of situated knowledge:



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... local knowledges have also to be in tension with the productive structurings that force unequal translations and exchanges – material and semiotic – within the webs of knowledge and power. Webs have the power of systematicity, even of centrally structured global systems with deep filaments into time space and consciousness, the dimensions of world history ... a field of structured and structuring difference, where the tones of extreme localization, of the intimately personal and individualized body, vibrate in the same field with global high tension emissions.

In other words, local knowledge is in tension with global communications of knowledge. It sits uneasily, disempowered by both exchange systems and symbolic systems, having little pragmatic or communicative value outside its immediate situation – although it is paramount in that situation, where it mediates, filters and often challenges or subverts knowledge produced and distributed on a broader spatial scale (see also Brewis and Linstead, 2000). Globalization transforms the power-knowledge nexus in its relation to ‘other’ knowledges: while colonialism generally served to undervalue or invalidate other knowledges, transnational capitalism seeks to own, exploit and profit from other knowledges as highlighted by the current debate over patenting and intellectual property rights concerning ‘traditional ecological knowledge’ of indigenous communities all over the world. As several writers have pointed out, there is a thin line between technology-driven notions of bioprospecting and knowledge-appropriating processes of biopiracy (Mies and Shiva, 1993; Escobar, 1995) that continue to sustain colonial control of planetary biodiversity.

Although globalization implies a certain level of universalism or a web of social relationships that transcend national or regional boundaries, this also has immediate consequences at the local level. The long-term future of a coal miner in the Hunter Valley (one of Australia’s many coal-producing regions) is dependent on a number of factors: world-wide trends in consumption of fossil fuels, trade policies of the World Trade Organization, world oil prices and governmental policies to name a few. The simultaneity of the global and the local, of the particular and the universal, is characteristic of the globalization process (Giddens, 1990; Wallerstein, 1990; Robertson, 1992). Localization can therefore be seen as an outcome of, or even a resistance to, global processes in particular situations. However, these ‘webs of systematicity’ among locations, as we noted above (Haraway, 1991; Harvey and Haraway, 1995) do not imply that the local can threaten the dominance of the global; instead, localization (or ‘glocalization’, a type of globalization that can accommodate situational characteristics) can be regarded as contained within globalization and as a part of the process itself (Gibson-Graham, 1997).

The Global Underclasses

Zygmunt Bauman (1998) adds a final dimension to our consideration of the differences between the local and the global in his discussion of what



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he calls 'global law' as against 'local orders'. Here, he remarks on the necessity, in order for global capital movements and investments to be 'flexible', for the rules which govern their movement to be made and unmade with relative ease, and with regard to the market itself as the law (Bauman, 1998: 105). In order for this flexibility to be maintained, the plight of those at the lower levels of economic activity – the suppliers of labour – must be rendered as rigid and inflexible as possible. That is to say, 'their freedom to choose, to accept or refuse, let alone to impose their own rules on the game, must be cut to the bare bone' (Bauman, 1998: 105). These situations produce the limited opportunities for alternative employment that can drive people into and trap them within particular occupations such as prostitution or sweat-shop labour, against which human and workers' rights collectives, are prominent in campaigning (see Brewis and Linstead, 2000: Ch. 10). Local *orders* then are also in tension with local *knowledge*, which attempts to increase the mastery of the individual over the immediate situation.

This increasing level of control at the lower levels of socio-economic activity, coupled with increasing flexibility at the higher levels, is also reflected in what are becoming key differences between what Bauman calls the first world of the globally mobile and the second world of the locally tied. But this division is not the division between the old world, the new world, the developing world and the underclass of the 'fourth world' (Castells, 1998: 70–165) – although it may overlap with these geographical distinctions. Instead, it refers to a division which is opening up between the mobile and the immobile within *all* societies,¹ as a further consequence of the increasing flexibility of investment and those who are paid to follow it, and the increasing restriction of choice for those who are subject to its fluctuations. As Bauman also argues, globalization means that residents of the first world live in *time* – space is not a significant barrier to them as electronic communications enable distances to be spanned instantly, and travel across huge distances is possible in a matter of hours. Time, then, is what these individuals complain they don't have enough of. Residents of the second world – who might well live on a council estate only a mile or so from a first-world financial district full of high and frequent flyers – live in *space* which is 'heavy, resilient, untouchable, which ties down time and keeps it beyond the residents' control' (Bauman, 1998: 88). Their problems relate to their confinement in space, their inability to transcend it, to move where there are more choices, and the difficulties they have in moving across borders, boundaries, state lines and territories. Their travel may be cheap, even illegal, and may make them prey to traffickers and debt-bonders, as well as trapping them into an occupation or a location from which they find it difficult to escape. When the individual is trafficked to a place which they do not know and into an occupation which they are not perhaps prepared for, they are stripped of their own local knowledge as well as lacking the necessary expertise to salvage some agency and self-identity



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from the new situation. Here, we might also consider Seabrook's comments, cited by Bauman (1998: 79), that the poverty which puts people into this kind of situation is not a disease of capitalism, a sign of its ill health, but 'quite the reverse: it is evidence of its robust good health, its spur to even greater accumulation and effort' (Seabrook, 1988: 15). Capitalism's global drive to accumulate relies on the restricted temporal and spatial activity of those at the lower end of the socio-economic scale to preserve its own power (Castells, 1998: 165).

This situation is thrown into relief by the continued existence of the peasantry, which is a core concern of Burrell's retro-organization theory (Burrell, 1997; Giddens, 1993, 1999). Burrell regards the peasantry as those groups who are based on an agrarian existence, with a rudimentary or developing agriculture that distinguishes them from the hunter-gatherers. They are not property owners, nor are they feudal serfs, nor are they slaves. Economically, in Europe, they suffered from the dispossession of the enclosures of the agricultural revolution, which converted them from workers of the land to workers on the land in the service of feudal lords. Still reeling from the effects of this revolution, they were further assaulted – Burrell's term – by the industrial revolution which accelerated the processes of urbanization and drew them into the growing cities, exacerbating the problems of hygiene and overcrowding already found there. Burrell argues that the 20th century cannot be fully understood – and he includes here phenomena apparently as diverse as Taylorism and Mao's industrial policy of the 1950s – except through the notion of an assault on the peasantry. For Burrell, the peasantry represent a group who still cling to an affinity with the mythic, the magical, the oral, the superstitious and the natural, and have their own ways of resisting the encroaches of rationality and bureaucracy, despite the efforts of colonizers such as the Romans and Evangelists, such as the organized Christian Church. They represent the real world where *ratio* and *libido* exist side by side and in agonistic struggle, and have been the source for major revolutions of this century in Russia and China, despite the fact that theorists, including Marx, have tended to dismiss them as unintelligent and fragmented. As industrialization spreads and the potential for global movement increases, the problems which Burrell reports of large numbers of non-literate peasant immigrants landing at Ellis Island and needing to be quickly trained and inserted into the US industrial system as workers are repeated in widespread migrations from country to city. Taylorism appeared to be an effective response to this need in the US context at the time, but its problems are familiar. The success of Taylorism, despite its embrace by Lenin, in different cultural systems, has been far less impressive. But, as Burrell points out, although the proportion of the world's population that the peasantry comprise has declined since the 16th century, their absolute numbers have increased to two billion. Whereas the majority of the underclasses referred to above can be constructed as the fall-out of capitalism, those who fail to succeed



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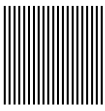
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within the system but nevertheless energize the system's drive towards success, the peasantry, are different. They hear the beat of a different drum, and they resonate to pre-modern, pre-industrial harmonies. They are resistant to incorporation, and thus problematic for the global spread of capitalism. They have in the past provided the ground for revolution, and may do so again and so pose a threat. And yet they are necessary.

Global Polity

The planet cannot, Howes (1996) argues, support a global population with the current consumer habits of the first world. So, someone has to be excluded from this global consumer society, and that seems to be the role of the peasantry. As Miyoshi (1999) points out, globalization does not mean global equality, and in fact he argues that the opposite is true, citing the increased polarization between the rich and the poor as another indicator that marks the conjunction between discourses of globalization and colonialism. The new forms of colonialism do not rely solely if at all on force to rule peoples – neocolonialist structures and thinking have permeated all corners of the globe. Exclusions, co-optations and continuing epistemic violence characterize this process through the exercise of western regimes of representation and thought upon the rest of the world (Spivak, 1987). This construction of new spaces to negotiate exchange flows is a hallmark of capitalism and colonialism. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) point out, by reducing production and labour to the abstract value of money, global capitalism is faced with the task of deterritorializing and reterritorializing the flows of exchange. This process, involving the physical and ideological apparatus of capitalism, is also a process of deculturation and acculturation, by which 'the territory and cultural space of an indigenous society must be disrupted, dissolved, and then reinscribed according to the needs of the apparatus of the occupying power' (Young, 1995). The structural power inherent in such a discourse effectively reconceptualizes democracy as global capitalism, which is sustained, as we will discuss later, by transforming citizens into consumers and where the role of the polity is to protect the world trade system. Thus, globalization becomes the new global colonialism, based on the historical structure of capitalism where transnational corporations become identified as 'carriers of democratic values and practices to the Third World' (Sklair, 1995: 42). Evidence of such transformations can be gleaned from a number of countries in Asia and Latin America, and even East Asia, that are attempting to join the global players. In an interview for a documentary on globalization, the Indonesian ambassador to the United Nations declared:

Democracy in our country to some extent will come from pressure from the outside, not necessarily from the inside. More and more foreign actors will push and then our society will realize, this is something we must have. (*Global Vision*, 1998)



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'This' referred not only to democracy but also to the images of global capitalism pictured on giant billboards in downtown Jakarta as the gaze of the camera panned through advertisements for Visa, Prudential, McDonald's, Toshiba, Nike, Siemens and Citibank. Environmental concerns and human rights are also discursively produced and addressed in the globalization-as-democracy argument as can be seen in World Trade Organization policies that 'recognize' labor and environmental concerns but do not consider them as 'central' concerns (Uchitelle, 1998). Michael Goulding, a World Bank economist describes this relationship:

Globalization is, by its nature, a carrot and stick process, in economics, politics and human rights. You encourage countries to participate in the global economy and that forces them to change internal behaviors and standards. (Goulding, 1998)

Of course, the identities of the subjects – the 'you' – that direct this process are not hard to discern. International organizations, governments and transnational corporations 'rationalize and execute the objectives of colonialism with greater efficiency and rationalism' (Miyoshi, 1993). The physical appropriation of land, a hallmark of colonialism, continues unabated today in the Third World through cash-crop agriculture, urbanization and the use of arable land for industrialization. The benefits of this form of economic growth are often enjoyed by indigenous elites and, in many cases, economic growth is a violent process for the vast majority of people who depend on the land for sustenance. Colonial control is exercised through the panoptic gaze of globalization and continues the violent inscription of power relationships. This position is no better exemplified than the Australian Bicentennial celebrations of 1988: the main 'celebration' involved the re-enactment of the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 at Botany Bay, but this time the ships' sails did not display the Union Jack but were more appropriately emblazoned with the corporate logos of Coca-Cola, Chase Corporation, Fuji Film, Mobil and other transnational firms. The fact that the Aboriginal population had not much reason to celebrate the occasion is another example of the historical amnesia that is characteristic of global colonialism (Castles et al., 1992). Perhaps it is the same amnesia that created the notion of *terra nullius* in Australia where invasion was conceptualized as 'populating and industrializing largely empty lands' (Kerr et al., 1960: 67) transforming communities that lived here for more than 50,000 years to 'nomads' while the people that arrived 200 years ago became 'settlers'.

The relationship between the global and the local is, as we have argued, grounded not only on capitalist economic systems but also on culture and the polity. Material, economic and political exchanges are also mediated by symbolic exchanges, as seen in entertainment, media, communication and advertising. At present, it appears that symbolic exchanges mediate the material (the consumption of global brands) and the political (the imaging of products and brands as representations of the



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'free world'). Jameson (1984) argues that the production of culture is directed by the logic of late capitalism. This global culture is one of consumption, and the global consumer culture is one that consumes not only products and services but, increasingly, signs and symbols and ideas (Lash and Urry, 1994), or even to follow Baudrillard (1981), signifiers or images without any real referent. We will turn our attention now to the emergence of the global consumer and discuss the role of consumption as a global culture.

Global Culture and the Global Consumer

The emergence of a 'global' culture is an important consequence of globalization. The basic theoretical debate underlying current discourses on globalization focuses on the relationships between economic and cultural forces that shape globalization. While some writers argue that it is the economic system of the means of production and reproduction that directs the cultural aspects of globalization (Giddens, 1990; Wallerstein, 1990), others claim that it is the interpenetration of culture and economy that creates contemporary consumers and markets (Robertson, 1992) where globalization becomes in one sense simply the 'export and import of culture' (Jameson, 1999a). In either case, globalization produces a tension between sameness and difference, between the universal and the particular, and between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization (Appadurai, 1990; Bhabha, 1994; Duncan, 1996). There is not one global mass culture, but rather transnational processes produce the globalization of culture where a multitude of cultural flows, not always consistent with dominant nation-state ideologies, emerge (Lash and Urry, 1994). In fact, some writers argue that globalization tends to reinforce ethnicity and nationality rather than create a new global culture. As we will discuss later, these ethnicities are reconstructed and managed through the circulation, appropriation and manipulation of images of contemporary culture (Lash and Urry, 1994; Smith, 1990). Similarly, and in a departure from structuration theory, Appadurai describes globalization as a discursive process consisting of a disjunctive series of 'scapes' (ethnoscapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes).

Ethnoscapes refer to the diversity of people in transition: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles and other mobile groups. *Technoscapes* refer to the global configuration of technology, *finanscapes* to the globalization of capital, *mediascapes* to the production and dissemination of information, and *ideoscapes* to the ideologies of states and the counter-ideologies of socio-political movements. While Appadurai (1990) conceptualizes globalization as a complex and disjunctive order rejecting models of centre and periphery, the colonizing effects of each of his 'scapes' are not hard to decipher. Construction of ethnicities in ethnoscapes is an integral part of the colonization process. Technology is often used as a weapon,



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military or economic, by industrialized societies; 'global' capital is in the hands of a few rich nations and transnational corporations; mediascapes and ideoscapes continue to promote colonial modes of development through the production and reproduction of the images of a 'global' consumer culture. There is also the problem of who is being excluded from these scapes and the implications of such exclusions, as we have discussed earlier.

While opinion about the emergence of a uniform global culture is divided, there is general agreement that consumption is a fundamental tenet underlying the globalization of culture. As Lash and Urry (1994: 296) point out, 'the consumption of goods and services becomes *the* structural basis of Western societies' and is being spread worldwide through the global media. As a result, the 'culture-ideology' of consumerism is now very much in place in several Third World locations as well (Sklair, 1995), where the social organization of consumption is taking place through the 'seduction' of the market.

The primacy of the market and the 'democratic' principles it purports to possess effectively reconceptualize citizens as consumers. Once this process is set in place, when individuals become dependent on the market for the production and reproduction of their identities, everybody becomes a consumer. To quote Bauman:

Consumer culture is a culture of men and women integrated into society as, above all, consumers. Features of the consumer culture explicable solely in terms of the logic of the market, where they originate, spill over all other aspects of contemporary life – if there are any aspects unaffected by the market mechanism left. Thus every item of culture becomes a commodity and becomes subordinated to the logic of the market either through a direct, economic mechanism, or an indirect psychological one. All perceptions and expectations, as well as life-rhythm, qualities of memory, attention, motivational and topical relevances are moulded inside the new 'foundational' institution – that of the market. (Bauman, 1987: 166)

Democratic principles of 'freedom' and 'choice' are elided into the individuals' freedom to choose in a market in which 'one simultaneously purchases products and services, and assembles, manages and markets oneself' (Rose, 1990: 102). Freedom is a necessary precondition for the exercise of power (Foucault, 1980), and power is what corporations attempt to exercise in a 'free' market through the creation of meaning in their products and services. The (post)modernistic view of consumption differs from the traditional Marxist view where consumption is completely determined by production (du Gay, 1996). Rather than view individuals simply as passive consumers manipulated by advertising power, postmodern consumption is about manipulating the symbolic meanings attached to products and services: consumption is not just a material process but an idealist practice involving the consumption of



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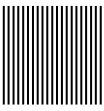
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ideas, signs and symbols (Baudrillard, 1988; Bocoock, 1993). Here, consumption becomes another form of production, but 'it is devious, it is dispersed, but it insinuates itself everywhere, silently and almost invisibly, because it does not manifest itself through its own products, but rather through its *ways of using* the products imposed by a dominant economic order' (de Certeau, 1984: xii–xiii).

Homogenization and Creolization

The diversity of cultures that continues to flourish does not contradict the notion of globalization. Rather, diversity can be seen as a consequence of globalization via the expansion of transnational capital, cultural products and media industries throughout the world (Wolff, 1991). Thus, globalization is a *homogenizing* process as well as a *differentiating* process. The emergence of a global consumer culture is a homogenizing trend while simultaneously acknowledging and exploiting distinct market niches based on cultural differences. A US-style consumer culture is becoming global through mass media advertising. In a consumer culture, identity is expressed through consumption and, in the postmodern context, leads to hyper-commodification, a phenomenon where small differences between products determine the patterns of consumption and where brand names rather than product properties are the chief source of differentiation. Consumption styles in North America, Europe and Japan, to name a few regions, revolve around the consumption of sign value rather than material exchange value, as was the case during high modernity (Baudrillard, 1981). The product becomes the image and the individual becomes the consumer always ready to purchase and consume images – images that are becoming increasingly fragmented, hyper-real and decentred, all of which are aspects of postmodernity. Postmodern consumption patterns are individualistic as opposed to collectivist, alienated rather than synergistic, and private rather than public (Firat and Venkatesh, 1994). In a global era, mass-mediated images of consumption originating from the industrialized countries, especially the United States, will continue to permeate other regions of the world.

Hall (1991a) describes this new form of global consumer culture as being distinctively that of the United States, as opposed to a culture associated with English identity, which was the case during colonial times. The imperialism inherent in the construction of a global culture is driven more by the market than empire. Modern means of cultural production, dominated by images produced mainly in the West, have no linguistic or geographical barriers. The global culture that is constructed is a consumer culture dependent on the consumption of images and symbols in different parts of the globe. Not all goods and services are mass-marketed in the same way all over the world and neither do consumers 'read' messages identically. However, the notion of an 'active'



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consumer as opposed to a 'passive' one does not necessarily imply a more radical form of consumption: while corporate strategies of niche marketing and 'mass customization' recognize difference, the overarching goal of generating consumption does not change and neither do the ecological and social inequities governing such consumption. Attempts to address environmental concerns fall into the same trap: the world can be saved only by 'green' buying and sustainable development can be achieved only if it is traded in the market (Banerjee, 1999).

Howes (1996: 5) uses the term 'creolization' to denote 'the process of recontextualization whereby foreign goods are assigned meanings and uses by the culture of reception'. He stresses that globalization theory has tended to emerge from the same centres of theory as the centres of global capitalism, and that the advanced theorists and late capitalists tend to share a language of homogenization. In contrast, he stresses a more anthropological approach to cross-cultural marketing, which stands between the centre and the margins, and stresses 'the agency of consumers to select and adapt products according to their own desires, knowledge and interests . . . Although Third World people may *seem* to be manipulated into buying consumer goods which are alien to, and destructive of, their cultures, in fact, they are actively employing consumer goods to express and forge their own unique identities'(Classem and Howes, 1996: 178–9). However, this argument still does not overturn the nexus between global capitalism and what Sklair (1995) calls the 'culture-ideology of consumerism'.

Nevertheless, Classsem and Howes do recognize that some products can impose their own cultural logic on the markets to which they are introduced. Although they take an optimistic view of the fact that transnational companies often have to make considerable efforts to adapt and market many products in different ways according to local sensitivities to indicate that Coca-colonization is not unproblematic, they do at least leave the question open, allowing that it may not be cultural difference but an illusion of cultural difference that is preserved (Classem and Howes, 1996: 184). In any case, the hegemony of the culture-ideology of consumerism is not subverted: consumerism continues to operate in its 'universal capitalist form but with the permanent potential of national-local cultural contents' (Sklair, 1995: 170).

Classem and Howes (1996) also remark that the globalization process is not all one-way traffic, and that global products are absorbed into and change western life – including such phenomena as Latinization (of parts of the US) and Japanization (of European and Mexican industry). Cultural production and reproduction in a global economy transcend national boundaries, as does ownership of the means of production. The culture industry of the United States is flourishing on a global scale. The fact that Japanese firms and investors own the vast majority of the business enterprises that constitute the US culture industry is no impediment to its expansion. Yet, the West tends to exoticize the 'other' which it



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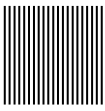
consumes, and deploys simplistic and kitsch traditionalistic imagery, which hinders them in 'asserting an identity as modern, industrially developed or developing peoples with complex lifestyles'. Indeed, the western desire to consume an exotic pre-industrial 'otherness' might be seen as acting in opposition to its drive to globalize and homogenize. Simultaneously, non-western countries are becoming skilled in manipulating their own image in the image of the West, reflecting back what the West wants to see, and even counterfeiting either their own tradition (the original definition of kitsch) or that of the West through the extensive production of counterfeit goods. Howes is sympathetic to the argument that cultural boundaries are being transformed from barriers into junctures by this two-way movement, and postcolonial subject positions are being constructed. Yet, boundaries always were such border crossings before colonies became markets, and the shift is one of emphasis and degree, not of nature. As far as the globalization process goes, and these creative movements notwithstanding, the political and economic imbalances of power in global capitalism – although not entirely confined to the West – remain so considerable that they should be seen only as movements at the margin.

Global Class Divisions

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

. . . members of the British Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities might not readily identify with the category of the West as deployed in anthropology, cultural studies, colonial discourse theory; with that particular set of cultural values, symbols, social structures and ways of being shored up by acts of violence and economic opportunism. And yet they so obviously are a part of any sensible definition of the West; they are at the heart of the category even as they seek to resist it, transform it, and educate it. (Moore 1994: 132, cited in Duncan, 1996: 38–9)

The 'West', then, operates not so much as a particular set of geographical locations, or indeed a specific collection of locationally defined peoples. It has now become 'a discursive space, a set of positionalities, a network of economic and power relations, a domain of material and discursive effects' (Moore 1994: 132). The discourses of globalization are one of the discursive effects of the construction of the epistemological space of 'the West'. The formation of multinational capital takes place in this discursive space and, as Smith (1988) argues, new forms of capital domination are no longer legitimized by 'direct colonial subjugation of the subject, but rather by the hyperextension of interpellative discourses and representations'.



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Globalization has accelerated the rise of consumerism in the Third World and facilitated the emergence of a transnational capitalist class – the indigenous elite (Kothari, 1997; Sklair, 1995). The diffusion of consumerism in the Third World is channelled through the global advertising and mass media industry by the creation of *induced wants* (as opposed to biologically determined needs), where the primary informational and educational component is to teach people in the Third World ‘how to consume . . . by creating and satisfying induced wants’ (Sklair, 1995: 150). This is done with little regard to the social and ecological consequences of the sustainability of such practices in these locations, or even sometimes the ability of local consumers to pay for their products and services. The liberalization and deregulation of the banking sector in many Third World regions has seen a host of transnational corporations (TNCs) aggressively competing for market share and an exponential rise in the issue of credit cards (Sklair, 1995). This has created a new class of consumers apart from the have and the have-nots: the rapidly expanding segment of the have-not-paid-for-what-they-haves.

Economic reform and trade liberalization in countries like India increased the gap between exports and imports, and led to more rapid export of primary resources leading to a further decline in the standards of resources of millions of people, especially the rural poor whose access to natural resources was severely diminished (Kothari, 1997). Most of the imported goods were consumer products primarily geared to the elite, out of reach for a majority of the population. These elitist policies also had a negative effect on the balance of payments situation – from \$470 million in 1981 to \$2.7 billion in 1996 (Kothari, 1997). Globalization and economic reform have followed a predictable pattern in the Third World: they increased the wealth of the elite, excluded the poor from participating in any benefits, and led to increased environmental degradation and loss of natural resources that caused even more impoverishment of the rural poor. Kothari (1997) also argues that these reforms were essentially undemocratic in that they were imposed by bypassing a majority in the citizenry. He quotes the former Prime Minister of India who, in his speech introducing economic reform, divided India’s population into three segments:

. . . the crust consists of about six crore (60 million) people, who do not need to be canvassed about economic reform. The next layer contains about 25–30 crore (250–300 million) people belonging to the middle class, who are beginning to appreciate the benefits of liberalization. It is the next segment, of 55–60 crore (550–600 million) of lower income and poor people who remain unappreciative of the changes in the economy. (Kothari, 1997: 51)

The ‘unappreciative’ people, comprising the majority, are the rural and urban poor, tribals, traditional fisherfolk, artisans, small farmers (cf. Burrell’s peasantry, discussed above). As Kothari (1997) argues, it is ‘no longer the poor that are being taken for granted, but rather deliberately



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excluded and considered dispensable under a political and economic regime that legitimizes poverty and destitution'. The global and local media perpetuate this exclusion by making the majority invisible: TVs, cars, computers, washing machines, refrigerators, air conditioners, processed foods and colas are symbols of the new India if one goes by the images produced by the advertising media. The fact that a little more than 1 per cent of Indian households own cars and only 6 per cent of households own a refrigerator does not enter the picture because the rest of the 600-plus million people do not fit the 'demographic'. In this global world, where the media are the message, 'the new rich do not need the poor any more' (Bauman, 1998: 72). Unfortunately, famine and poverty continue to exist even after CNN and BBC television coverage ceases.

In a Gramscian sense, the globalization of consumer culture is a historically determined system of hegemony in that it sustains the dominance of existing dominant groups. Contrary to popular rhetoric, a global culture does *not* make everything the same, neither does it create difference. Rather as Hall (1991b: 58) states, hegemony is the 'articulation of differences which do not disappear'. Globalization incorporates differences in cultures and societies *in the same way*: through the production and reproduction of a global consumer culture. While we can locate the sites of cultural production, the global centres that produce culture for global consumption, the different sites of consumption can mediate a multiplicity of meanings. 'Global identity' is not inscribed on a *tabula rasa*, but rather negotiated and contested in a variety of cultural contexts. Underlying these questions is an assumption of plurality and the ability of globalization to proceed harmoniously in a world of multiple cultures. But this harmonious co-mingling remains a challenge to be achieved. The cultural flows from the centre to the periphery (and vice-versa) imply *managing the consequences* of cultural diversity and the apparatus that is designed to do so is termed multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism, Ethnicity and Identity

Globalization involves the flow of meanings and symbols as well as goods and services. These multiple, polyvalent networks of social relationships among diverse cultures imply an arrangement of diversity rather than a replication of uniformity. In a global economy, diversity in terms of race, ethnicities and nationalities has to be 'managed' for the market economy to function smoothly. This reductionist view of diversity is the basis of the multiculturalist doctrine, corporate, state-sponsored or otherwise. Multiculturalism aims at preserving different cultures without interfering with the 'smooth functioning of society'. Multiculturalism emerged from North American attempts to manage the consequences of mass immigration and cultural diversity and is now 'official' in many countries including Canada and Australia. State-sponsored multiculturalism often leads to corporate multiculturalism as exemplified by the advertising



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campaigns of United Colors of Benetton that celebrate 'ethnic' identities. In this diversity of identities, consumption is the common denominator and the negotiation of a common identity through consumption is a hallmark of global culture. Transnational corporations promote cross-cultural recognition of their identities, images and logos and this global corporate image serves to 'redistribute public wealth to corporations' (Matušík, 1998). The superficiality of some approaches is well illustrated by an advertising hoarding seen in the centre of the Aston district of Birmingham in the UK. The poster proclaimed the cultural awareness and sensitivity of a large financial services house, personalized by claiming to be a photograph of the Managing Director. The director in question wore a smart business suit and a Native American head-dress though he was clearly not Native American. The population of Aston is almost entirely Asian Indian or Pakistani, and the area is frequently referred to as a 'ghetto'. Here, not only has the 'local' been interpreted in North American terms, but a kitsch version of Native American culture(s) has been taken up and globalized to signify generic ethnicity, or the globalized 'local'. The local values of the population are simultaneously displaced at the very moment that they are apparently engaged.

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

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



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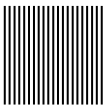
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heritage'. Rather than address relations of domination (and resistance of ethnic minorities), multiculturalism often 'translates as the acquisition of knowledge for the purpose of servicing and managing ethnic minorities' (Pettman, 1995: 82).

By this policy, Aboriginal resistance to mining (as in the case of the Jabiluka uranium mine in the Northern Territory, see Banerjee, 2000) is 'un-Australian' and should not be tolerated. Across the Tasman, Maori leaders are becoming increasingly suspicious of the rhetoric of multiculturalism employed by the New Zealand government. After a long, hard struggle lasting most of this century, the Maoris were finally able to work out a bicultural policy with the government that established their rights and a framework for decision-making. The invocation of the multicultural doctrine threatens to obscure the gains made in the recent past. Eurocentric notions of multiculturalism obscure inequalities faced by indigenous communities such as the fight for Aboriginal land rights in Australia, Asia and the Americas. Yet, as Moore (1994) has argued, the notion of Australia, just as the notion of the West, is an imaginary and fictive one – a discourse in which the authors try to write the most favourable part for themselves, and thus embedded in power relations.

The production and consumption of multiculturalism do not challenge existing power relationships: they consolidate them by refocusing the debate on 'cultural heritage'. They create a spectacle, an 'exotica of difference' (Hall, 1991a). Consequently, a multicultural Australia is one that happily celebrates the consumption of tandoori chicken and tom yum soup without addressing the power relations between cultural communities. Following this logic, Cuban communism is not a part of 'culture' as is defined by the dominant ideology. However, Cuban jazz is an element of culture that is allowed to be produced and consumed, and is spectacularized as an example of the cultural diversity that is prevalent in Australia. Power, economic or otherwise, continues to be monoculturally deployed in the way reality is defined for 'ethnic' communities (the term 'ethnic' is itself loaded with multiple meanings and exclusions as we shall see later). This celebration of cultural pluralism is predicated on an established hierarchy of cultures and multiculturalism consolidates these hegemonic relations without challenging the hierarchy of the majority and the minority.

Cultural pluralism obscures class and power differences, and prevents the possibilities for changes in structural relations (Foster and Stockley, 1984). The possibility of multiple structures and institutions serving multiple cultures is a real fear for governments. Thus, the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, in describing the need for a multicultural policy to manage the consequences of cultural diversity, states: 'we should not dismantle or repudiate our institutions in order to start afresh. Our British heritage is extremely important to us. It helps to define us as Australian' (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989: 50). Governmental and conservative concerns about multiculturalism revolve



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around fears of promoting 'ethnic ghettos', of Balkanizing the nation and, as the Australian government's Multicultural Agenda states, 'there is overwhelming support for the maintenance of cultural traditions providing [sic] they are shared with the rest of the community and that they become part of *Australian* life' (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989: 46).

The process of assimilationist inscription is evident in these statements despite the rhetoric of 'celebrating difference' and respecting ethnicities. Rather, it is a process of commodifying difference, a 'white male form of voyeurism' that, through its gaze, defines reality for the rest of the world (Jordan and Weedon, 1995). This folkloric spectacle of diverse cultures disguises underlying power relations as well as western representations and serves to 'amalgamate and spuriously to unify nationalism and culture into a depoliticized multimedia event' (Gunew, 1990). This is not to say that such sharing and celebration is wrong. On the contrary, it is to be welcomed: what we are calling attention to is the problem of allowing it to function as a *mask*. Multiculturalism in this context becomes what Spivak (2000) calls 'triumphant metropolitan nationalism' since the custodians of culture have decreed that 'culture will not be perfect unless it is multicultural'. This is a version of the multicultural where multiculturalism is simultaneously an alibi against racism as well as a criterion of cultural capital through the consumption of difference without any apparent interrogation. What is produced is an easy reconciliation through the surface aesthetics of the event which elides the real significances of material difference into mere symbolic novelty, producing the comforting sense that we are all one under the skin, the superficial sentimentality that Kundera identifies as kitsch (Kundera, 1984). Many corporations are also following this line in their advertising and internal training material, which prompted one airline manager to bemoan 'It's all Save the World Stuff – British Airways togetherness . . . like Coca-Cola' (Höpfl, 1993).

Ethnicity, authentic or otherwise, is a problematic category with political and epistemological consequences (Radhakrishnan, 1996). In a global economy, with its promise of 'one world, many cultures', the deployment of the term 'ethnic', far from embracing plurality, sustains the binary oppositions of the dominant culture. For instance, what exactly does 'ethnic food' mean? What makes Indonesian *gado gado* an 'ethnic' dish and a hamburger 'non-ethnic'? Ethnic foods (like ethnic clothing and other artifacts) are identified and categorized based on their difference from the dominant cultural forms and styles. The fact that the dominant culture is itself constituted ethnically remains hidden, except in the marginalized work of such disciplines as historical cultural anthropology and ethnomusicology. 'Ethnic violence' is a term almost exclusively reserved by the media for cases of non-white violence, with the single exception of Bosnia, and formerly South Africa. Ethnicity is deployed as a totalizing category that normalizes different histories of a variety of



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minority groups and constructs a category that is opposed to the mainstream – positioning it as an *alien* category. Thus, ethnicity is maintained ‘by the paranoia of the dominant culture as eternally illicit, transgressive, and lawless’ (Radhakrishnan, 1996).

As Jordan and Weedon (1995) point out, the mandate of ethnic art as a cultural policy is also a racist practice. Cultural traditions, suppressed and destroyed by colonialism, are allowed to re-emerge for the creation of a space, which is essential for the surveillance of neo-colonial relations (Araeen, 1987). Thus, ‘authentic’ Aboriginal art is seen to involve depictions of bush life or dreamtime stories. Experiences of urban Aboriginal painters such as Kevin Butler (1996) are in some way regarded as less ‘authentic’. Cultural consumption of ‘authentic Aboriginal art’ conflates race with culture by a fixing of difference, perpetuating the marginalization of these communities. Ethnic art like ethnic food or ethnic clothing is an invention of the dominant hegemonic culture – in most cases white, western European (predominantly Dutch, French, German, Anglo-Celtic, Spanish or Portuguese) and more latterly North American in its source – and, as several cultural theorists have argued, is an example of a new racism prevalent in modern western societies. This new ‘postmodern’ racism is expressed in the white liberal/soft left fascination with the Exotic and the Ethnic (Jordan and Weedon, 1995). As Said (1979) argues, the fixing of difference is a characteristic of Orientalism, a ‘style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and ‘the Occident’ . . . Orientalism [is] a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’ (pp. 2–3). This cultural production of the Other results in the naturalization of the knowledge of the Other and it is this cultural hegemony that sustains asymmetrical power/knowledge relations by providing the West with a ‘flexible *positional* superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand’ (Said, 1979: 7). It is from this privileged position that dichotomies of advanced/backward, developed/undeveloped, modern/primitive are constructed and managed. In his landmark work, *Orientalism*, Said (1979) demonstrates how European culture:

. . . was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively . . . European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self. (p. 3)

Managing Cultural Diversity

The ideological forces underpinning management theories and market forces play a significant role in the construction of categories like multiculturalism, ethnicity and diversity. These are represented as the ‘challenges’ of managing a culturally diverse workforce. Globalization



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fundamentally transforms the employer–employee relationship wherein owners of capital can now substitute labour more freely across national boundaries. Cultural diversity therefore is seen as a market opportunity whether it is in the form of niche marketing efforts directed at ‘ethnic’ communities (such as our Birmingham poster discussed above), or using ‘authentic’ cultural knowledge to exploit foreign markets. The languages of markets and investment appear frequently in descriptions of multiculturalism and diversity in government documents and research reports. At the societal level, the rhetoric is of ‘utilizing a diverse workforce’, or ‘capitalizing on the assets inherent in Australia’s multicultural society’ (Report of the Industry Task Force [Karpin Report], 1995). Multiculturalism and diversity are issues that need to be managed to ensure Australia’s competitiveness in the global market or, more specifically, in the Asian market. The fact that the level of representation of ethnic minorities in government or business is minimal does not enter the debate. The official governmental position is that racism is ‘bad for business’ and has negative consequences for trade but there is little effort to engage with or redress issues of existing *internal* inequalities.

The culturalization of social inequalities creates a new form of racism (Alund and Schierup, 1991). This ‘cultural racism’ constructs imagined communities through a ‘celebration and fossilization of differences, which are then subsumed into an imagined community of national cohesion’ (Castles et al., 1992). The realities of cultural pluralism create new forms of assimilation in the social-democratic policies of countries like Australia and Canada. Ethnicity, religious affiliations and nationalities become paramount categorizers while issues of self-determination and inequalities remain invisible. A multicultural ideology is inscribed on social realities of cultural groups through a unitarian structuring in order to manage and control the process of multiculturalism. Discriminatory practices are not exposed by this notion of multiculturalism, rather a hierarchical cultural division of labour is produced and sustained. Thus, the multicultural agenda of Australia now rejects its assimilationist policies of the past and instead acknowledges the ‘legitimacy’ of cultural pluralism. The power relations between who legitimizes and who is being legitimized are not difficult to discern. The acceptance of cultural pluralism is the new assimilationism and the message is clear: as long as we do not threaten the dominant ideology, we can be as multicultural as we like. Any other course of action is ‘un-Australian’, as in another country 40 years ago it might have been described as ‘un-American’ (and by some may still be described that way today). Thus, the rhetoric in multicultural Australia is of ‘tolerance’ but this call for tolerance operates from a pre-given position of power and tends to patronize those groups that are deemed worthy of tolerance. The filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini puts it more succinctly: ‘tolerance is a more refined form of condemnation’ (Perera and Pugliese, 1997). The systematic dismantling of equity programmes characterizes the ‘new, improved,



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and tolerant Australia': unequal power relations underlying many civil policies remain disguised.

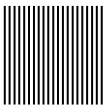
A similar conceptualization of multiculturalism and diversity can be found in the organization studies literature. Researchers addressing the trend of a multicultural workplace focus on issues of intercultural communication, diversity in work teams, leadership in diverse groups and so on (Chemers et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

Implications

Social consequences of globalization can be seen in many regions of the world where segments of societies are attempting to resist the changes necessitated by globalization. Labour strikes in France and South Korea, a minor communist revival in Eastern Europe, the current crisis in Indonesia, the rise of religious fundamentalism, the recent well-coordinated protests leading to the breakdown of the WTO talks in Seattle are some examples of the initial backlash against the globalization process. A major consequence of globalization is the problem of governance (Hirst and Thompson, 1998). While nation-states still exist and will continue to do so for some time, their control over certain economic exchanges is diminished. Global markets are difficult to regulate and institutions that are developed to do so would tend to be more powerful than national governments (Hirst and Thompson, 1998). As Chomsky (1998) argues:

. . . this is global trade without global law, without global democracy. If you have global trade and investment dominated by a few giant corporations who pit one country against another without a rule of law, you're going to have increasing pressure both in the First and Third world standards of living and standards of justice.

The neo-liberal agenda, while accepting some of the problems of globalization, would envisage a kinder, gentler globalism under the same structural system of the economy where the aim is 'not to destroy the system but to improve it' (Friedman, 2000: 17). The challenge here is to negotiate a 'third way' with an implicit acceptance of Fukuyama's 'end of history and ideology' thesis. For instance, Rodrik (1997) highlights three sources of tension between globalization and social stability. *First*, both the *international and domestic division of labour is accentuated* by international integration of markets. Labour services of large segments of the population are more easily substitutable across national boundaries leading to workers bearing a greater proportion of non-wage costs, higher levels of job insecurity and an erosion of workers' bargaining power.



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These divisions are deepened by differences in the profit-making capacities of different economic sectors, with the resultant differences in earning potential for different types of workers as evidenced by growth of the service economy, the casualization of the work force and the rise of 'McJobs' (Sassen, 1998). Between 1980 and 1995, the total assets of the top 100 TNCs increased by 697 percent from \$0.5 trillion to \$4 trillion. In the same period, direct employment in these companies decreased by 7.6 percent, whereas growth of employment through 'temp agencies' grew by 111.6 percent (Klein, 2000). *Second*, the *global reduction in trade barriers* means that countries at different levels of development compete for similar goods and services. 'Free' trade becomes freer for the advanced nations and less free for the 'underdeveloped' nations, who have the sole advantage of cheap labour. *Third*, *government spending on social services is reduced* significantly in order that institutions can be competitive. All these forces have affected Australia in particular, as is evidenced by recent public protests and industrial actions against plant closings and reductions in health, education and other social services.

While the industrialized societies can expect to experience the above tensions, the consequences for peoples of the Third World and indigenous communities all over the world are even more severe. Increasing urban migration, displacement of agricultural communities, environmental destruction and rising inequalities in wealth are but a few immediate consequences of unbridled globalization and free trade (Durning, 1992). The emergence of an indigenous elite embracing western notions of development and progress through increased consumption can already be seen in Mexico, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan and several other developing countries. Far from promising an integrated world, globalization can produce a new set of class divisions between and within nations.

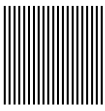
The colonizing effects of globalization can also be seen in the emerging discourse on 'global' environmentalism. Espoused as a solution to the environmental ills facing the planet, global environmentalism remains firmly rooted in the tradition of western economic thought and dehistoricizes the environmental traditions of non-western cultures. While environmental problems like pollution do not recognize national or regional boundaries, the 'global' solutions advocated by the industrialized countries perpetuate the dependency relations of colonialism. Images of polluted Third World cities abound in the media without acknowledgment of the corresponding responsibility of industrialized countries who consume 80 percent of the world's aluminium, paper, iron and steel; 75 percent of the world's energy; 75 percent of its fish resources; 70 percent of its CFCs and 61 percent of its meat (Renner, 1997). The poorer regions of the world destroy or export their natural resources to meet the demands of the richer nations or to meet debt-servicing criteria typical of the 'austerity' measures dictated by the World Bank. It is ironic to the point of absurdity that the poorer countries of the



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world have to be 'austere' in their development while the richer nations continue to enjoy standards of living that are dependent on the 'austerity' measures of the poorer nations. During its operation, none of the copper extracted by the largest copper mine in the world at the time, the Panguna mine in Bougainville, was consumed locally: developing countries account for most of the world's copper production but per capita consumption of copper is about 20 times higher in the industrialized world (Renner, 1997). As transnational companies eagerly await the transition of populous countries like China and India to the market economy and a consumer culture, global environmental problems are increasingly being blamed on the rapid resource-intensive industrialization that is taking place in these countries. Neither the dangers of environmental destruction nor the benefits of environmental protection are equally distributed: protection measures continue to be dictated by the industrialized countries often at the expense of local rural communities.

Transnational corporations are the most likely to benefit from globalization and the removal of trade barriers. As owners of international capital and resources, their power is enhanced by the elimination of tariffs and removal of restrictions on foreign ownership that has occurred as a result of the GATT Uruguay Round. Amidst the celebration of the technological wizardry that created the Information Age, virtual corporations, e-commerce and digital economies, it is easy to forget that half the people on this planet have not made a telephone call in their lives and will not do so in their lifetime. We may live in an Information Age but it is not necessarily a Knowledge Age and all the remarkable advances in communication technology do not ensure that we have anything better to communicate (Iyer, 2000). As Sassen (1998) points out, the notion of a completely virtualized enterprise is a myth that obscures the need for infrastructure, labour, education, physical assets and access to cyberspace. 'Virtual' communities existed more than a hundred years before the invention of the personal computer, and as Bauman (1998) points out, the celebrated interactivity of the new media (what he calls an 'interactive one-way medium') is exaggerated as the Internet is unlikely to be used by everyone in the world. The benefits of communication technology are lopsided, allowing a minority of the population to mobilize their funds and speculate more efficiently. As Keegan (1996) notes, 'all computers do for the Third World these days is to chronicle their decline more efficiently'. Internet choices are also framed by suppliers who invite consumers 'to spend time and money choosing between and in the numerous packages they offer' (Bauman, 1998: 53). The concept of 'community' is also being commercialized and plays a key role in the selling of new Internet sites, where the focus is on 'relationship marketing' (Wertheim, 2000). The commercialization and branding of communities is part of a larger discourse where commercial transactions are



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being transformed into commercial relationships and a focus on 'life-time value' (Rifkin, 2000). The problem of course is the effect on non-commercial relationships and communities – as Wertheim (2000: 25) points out, 'if the community is a brand, shouldn't we worry about its shelf life?'

Conclusion

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

The Question of the Peasantry

One of the many challenges of globalization is preventing perpetuation, or increase, of the inequitable distribution of wealth and resources. While the short-term consequences of accelerated economic growth in newly industrializing countries may imply a higher standard of living, these benefits are by no means distributed evenly. The urbanized middle class benefit more than the rural poor, especially those in the rural sector engaged in small-scale farming. The gap between rich and poor continues to widen: on a per capita income basis, the rich to poor ratio was 2:1 in 1800, 20:1 in 1945 and, by 1975, it was 40:1. The richest 20 percent of the world account for 82.7 percent of global income while the poorest 20 percent of the world earn 1.6 percent of global income (Waters, 1995). In the newly industrializing countries, economic growth is inevitably accompanied by an increase in income disparity. The numbers of both rural and urban peasantry are growing, and the production of urban marginality arising from economic growth in certain sectors is evident even in the advanced economies (Sassen, 1998). There is a real danger that globalization will result in the marginalization of large groups of people, rural and urban. As Burrell argues, one of the central problems facing global organization theory is the problem of the peasantry (Burrell, 1997).

Globalization will increasingly bring people from all over the world into its politics of discourse and, just like the development discourse, it will literally 'map people into certain coordinates of control' (Escobar, 1995). Any activity outside the market economy is disallowed which seriously disadvantages the 'subsistence activities' of peasants and indigenous communities all over the world. Participation in the global economy also obscures the racialization of labour markets: as Sassen (1998) points out, the fact that components of production in the global information economy occur in immigrant work environments is rarely recognized as being part of that economy: these processes 'valorize and overvalorize certain types of outputs, workers, firms and sectors, and devalorize others' (Sassen, 1998: 87).

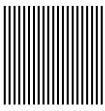


The Question of Nature

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

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

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



concept of sustainable development argue that it can colonize areas of Third World social life that are not yet ruled by the logic of the market or the consumer – areas such as forests, water rights and sacred sites (Escobar, 1995; Visvanathan, 1991).

The Question of Women and Children

Whilst recognizing that there is a need to address gender fundamentally for both women and men, the most pressing problems of gender are in the plight of women globally. Globalization is a gendered discourse with differing consequences in different regions of the world. Female labour in the Third World is grossly underestimated in national accounting practices since it takes place outside the traditional area of wage labour (Boserup, 1970; Sklair, 1995). Research on immigration patterns in Australia indicates that, of the several marginalized groups of immigrants, women migrant workers are a significant majority, often unable to break out of low-wage, low-skilled jobs (Castles et al., 1992; Shiva, 1989). As ECPAT (End Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) (1996) argues:

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

The rise of cheap global travel has made catering to sex tourism one of the few occupations open to poor women from rural communities in Asia or Latin America who leave their villages (O'Connell Davidson, 1997; Staebler, 1997). Globalization in the sex industry has meant greater ease of movement and importation of 'working' women. It has also created sexual entertainment as a tourist industry, which can be a major sector of the economy in some countries like Thailand (markets which were first developed for western armed forces on r'n'r leave – see Brewis and Linstead, 2000: Ch. 10). The number of women involved in, sold into, trapped into or indentured by the global sex industry dwarfs the number of male providers of similar services – and the customers are mainly from the advanced economies of western and northern Europe, Japan, Australia, America and the Gulf, whilst the providers (in some cases sex slaves) are from the poorer countries of South-East Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, although Eastern Europe and some states of the former USSR are now becoming involved (Staebler, 1997). This also involves the widespread exploitation of children, although the exact extent of child prostitution is difficult to define.

At the organizational level, there is a displacement of power from the national to the global level. As Calás and Smircich (1993) point out, the widespread encouragement of the 'feminine-in-management' in no way changes dominant managerial ideologies in the global economy. Rather, skills of harmonizing and caring, traditionally identified with women, are mobilized to keep the home workforce happy and quiescent so that the



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traditionally male-dominated ranks of senior management can move to fight the 'real' competitive battles cross-culturally in the new global markets – the new colonies. Children, of course, have been incorporated into extremely low-paid factory work in such countries as Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam, often working for subcontractors to those global corporations, such as Nike, who have been prominent in promoting the 'global' brand and a 'global' ideology. Ironically, they claim in their defence that they are only conforming to 'local' conditions as defined by their contractors when a departure from the global gold standard of human rights is to their economic advantage. Only because conditions may be so bad outside the factory can they claim to be acting altruistically in keeping these children out of street prostitution, whilst employing them in dirty and dangerous conditions far below western standards of health and safety.

Feminist readings of globalization have revealed many connections between the language of rape and the language of globalization. Gibson-Graham (1997) defines the globalization script as 'an act of nonreciprocal penetration' and describes how social and economic relations under late capitalism penetrate other non-capitalist relations through commodification and marketization. He discusses how globalization violates and eventually consumes other non-capitalist forms of economy (rural economies, Third World economies or socialist economies) by conscripting labour from the Third World for 'global' markets.

If globalization is such an all-encompassing force, is there a possibility of resistance and, if so, what are the points of resistance? While some aspects of localization might arise from resistances to globalization, they are still very much contained by global processes. Gibson-Graham (1997) suggests a rewriting of the globalization script in a way that exposes and challenges power relations between the different actors. This calls for a discursive redefinition of globalization and the creation of new spaces that can articulate alternate forms of economic realities. Perhaps there are lessons to be learnt from a Gandhian perspective on imperialism (Nandy, 1983) where, once the hegemony of a theory of globalization without winners or losers is established, imperialistic globalization will have lost out on cognitive as well as on ethical grounds. An unpacking of the larger discourse that legitimizes and empowers global capitalism would be a starting point. As Sklair (1995) has argued, while global capitalism may create the material conditions for socialism, it disallows the political, cultural and ideological space for socialism to develop. However, Gibson-Graham (1997) argues that rethinking and rewriting globalization can create alternative visions for economic transformation, even if these alternatives do not challenge capitalist globalization processes. This then begs the question: is it possible to theorize a non-capitalist form of globalization? If so, what will this look like? Gibson-Graham (1997) claims that immigrant entrepreneurship (he describes how self-employed immigrants, small family businesses and wage earners in the Third World



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as well as immigrant workers in US cities use their wage money to sustain non-capitalist activity in their villages) is an example of how a monolithic form of capitalism actually coexists with other non-capitalist forms of economy. However, these alternative forms of economy and culture are still marginal and overdetermined by capitalist globalization. Moreover, as we have discussed earlier, a global culture of consumption commodifies these forms as well.

Some authors argue that it is possible to develop a 'Third Way' of social democracy that can prevent widespread disempowerment (Giddens, 1998, 2000). Others reject the notion of a 'third way', arguing that a 'reformed, humanized capitalism' still does not challenge the fundamental principle of unlimited accumulation of private profit (Sklair, 1995). A radical form of globalization involves the development of a new economic structure and not the current rhetoric of the 'new economy' operating within an existing set of economic relations (Hirst and Thompson, 1998). Current notions of 'free' markets and their unchallenged association with democracy need to be interrogated as do arguments about the infallibility of 'economic rationalist' arguments. Economic rationalism is a problematic term – first, it assumes there is something inherently 'rational' about economics, which is a debatable point that is rarely challenged. Second, as a consequence of the first assumption, it constructs alternate notions as 'irrational' or impractical obscuring the belief systems that underlie the dominant system. Perhaps, 'market fundamentalism' is a more accurate term since it allows us to unpack discourses of economic rationality like any other fundamentalist belief system where fundamentalism has less to do with the content of the belief itself but more to do with the way the beliefs are defended (Giddens, 1998). Despite the rhetorical mantra of 'free' markets that is reproduced ad nauseam by international institutions, governments and transnational corporations, markets are not synonymous with democracy – they have existed comfortably under fascist, fundamentalist and dictatorial regimes as well.

For many activists, grassroots action is the answer where globalization from above leads to a globalized resistance from below. This requires a reimagining of the meaning and nature of local relationships, the democratization of local relationships along with new forms of local governance and new 'forms of political resistance at all levels' (Wiseman, 1998). Obviously, market forces will not bring about these changes, but intervention is required to 'restructure the world economy by public policies that generate more public and that encourage ethical private capital investment in the poorer countries that improve their terms of trade . . . We need to look for less fashionable and less politically debilitating models of globalization' (Hirst and Thompson, 1998: 120). Global institutions such as the World Trade Organization are coming under increasing attack for what is perceived by several nongovernmental organizations



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(NGOs) and academics as their undemocratic and non-transparent structures and processes. Activists are calling for a system based on 'economic democracy not economic totalitarianism with global trade subservient to values of ecological sustainability, health and social justice' (Shiva, 2000). Sklair (1995) specifies three central premises of a possible new way: democracy (participatory, not parliamentary), feminisms (involving a fundamental restructuring of the sexual division of labour) and socialism (more democratic form of public ownership or a form of market socialism that links markets and socialism while delinking markets and capitalism). This is an enormous task, made even more so in a planet where borders are becoming more and more penetrable, albeit selectively. Bauman (1998) takes a more pessimistic view:

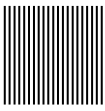
... the more consistently this pattern [of deregulation, liberalization, flexibility] is applied, the less power remains in the hands of the agency which promotes it; and less can the increasingly resourceless agency retreat from applying it, if it so wished or if it was pressed to do so. One of the most seminal consequences of the new global freedom of movement is that it becomes increasingly difficult, perhaps altogether impossible, to re-forge social issues into effective collective action. (p. 69)

However, it is important to create new spaces of resistance. As Nandy (1983: 79) suggests:

Noting the sort of polarity that drives Western culture ... by refusing to participate in the two positions established by the West – complicity or resistance – the oppressed can exist out of them or can transcend the system's analytical categories and/or stand them on their head.

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

The key question we as practitioners and educators need to ask ourselves is whether management and organization theory is helping to address these problems, or whether it is helping to improve and sophisticate those ideological processes which manage the masking of these problems, allowing the trees to obscure the wood through the 'management of cultural diversity', with organization theory becoming kitsch (Linstead, 1996). There is a need for a reflexively self-critical approach to globalization, one that seeks to address the fundamental problems in a radical way. We should also remember that the cultural logic of consumption is that consumption creates and reinforces identity, and the discourses of globalization and multiculturalism are themselves products or



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artifacts that we 'purchase'. Despite the fact that these discourses may make comfortable and progressive-sounding additions to our self-image, and despite the fact that they appear to manifest a planetary concern for our fellow persons and the environment (cf IBM's 'solutions for a small planet'), we need to consider what the ultimate price of our subscription might be. As we have argued, unless some fundamental questions are addressed by management and organization theory, and acted upon by managers and politicians, that price could well be too high for us all.

Perhaps the words of Dussel (1999: 21) provide a fitting epitaph:

The globalizing world-system reaches a limit with the exteriority of the alterity of the Other, a locus of resistance from whose affirmation the process of the negation of the negation of liberation begins.

Note

- 1 Castells (1998: 164–5) makes a similar observation that the fourth world is 'made up of multiple holes of social exclusion throughout the planet. The Fourth World comprises large areas of the globe such as much of Sub-Saharan Africa, and impoverished rural areas of Latin America. But it is also present in literally every country, and every city, in this new geography of social exclusion . . . [it] is inseparable from the rise of informational, global capitalism.

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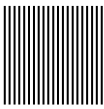
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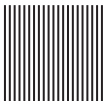
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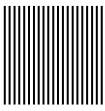
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