

# Globalization and its Impact on Youth

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[Gidley, Jennifer, (2001) Globalization and its Impact on Youth, *Journal of Futures Studies*, (Vol 6, No 1, August), pp. 89-106]

## Modernity Project Mark II

Globalization is a series of powerful processes that provide both opportunities and threats. It is well known that the development model foisted upon the 'developing' world by the West, in the name of modernization (Modernity Project Mark I) has been regarded for decades by many non-western scholars and activists as cultural imperialism. The realization that globalization has the power to exponentially increase this transgression has led me to coin the term Modernity Project Mark II, to highlight its amplified effects. While much has been written in the last few years about the impact of globalization, particularly on the less 'developed' countries and peoples, the discourse with regard to globalization and youth has remained oddly silent. And yet, the one billion youth (defined as being young people between the ages of 15 and 24) make up almost 20% of the total world population. In its first definitive statement of the impact of globalization on the situation of youth, the United Nations (Youth Information Network) takes a rather cautious view, conceding more analysis is needed on the impact of:

*Intensified evidence of poverty, unemployment and social exclusion ... Furthermore, the trade imbalances between developed and developing economies, favoring the more developed economies, place development at risk in many countries ... Hundreds of millions of people are negatively affected by these factors. Young people are particularly affected, because it means that their transition to adulthood is made more difficult...(On the other hand) ... There are constructive trends. Many countries are experiencing a deepening of democracy ... This opens up opportunities for participation by all people. Young people will gain from this move towards democracy. (United Nations 2000)*

This cool and balanced weighing of pros and cons, masks a deeper, more far-reaching and profound cultural transgression that is emerging in the literature on the impact of globalization. While the emphasis of concern (of global NGOs) about the well-being of youth globally has primarily focused on health and education issues in the 'developing' world, the emerging figures for growing mental health issues for young people in the 'overdeveloped' world confirm that 'development' as part of the modernity project is not the panacea it was once thought. Yet globalization (called by some 'Americanization') has amplified the modernity project manyfold, supported by mass education and communication technologies, particularly the Internet and the mass Media. Globalization is increasingly perceived by many non-western academics and researchers as 'a form of western ethnocentrism and patronizing cultural imperialism,

which invades local cultures and lifestyles, deepens the insecurities of indigenous identities and contributes to the erosion of national cultures and historical traditions'. (Lemish, Drotner et al. 1998) On the other hand as feminist futures researcher Ivana Milojevic points out, it also creates 'opportunities for global transformation based on human unity.' (Milojevic 2000)

The tensions thus created have been referred to by Benjamin Barber as "'McWorld', the moving force of a borderless market towards global homogeneity, and ... 'Jihad', the rivaling process of localization, which originates in cultural, ethnic, and linguistic boundaries". (Lemish, Drotner et al. 1998)

### **The Factory Model of Schooling**

With the onset of the industrial revolution young people and even children became fodder for the industrial machine - cheap labor, used mercilessly by industry to keep the factories churning. While these Dickensian images of children in sweat shops are no longer valid for the West, the global sweep of industrial geography has merely shifted these images into other backyards - those of the newly 'developing' nations. As gentrification emerges and child labor becomes unfashionable in one place the multi-national global agenda simply shifts to another locus, from Japan to Korea, from Malaysia to Taiwan, from China to Fiji as the race for ever cheaper products meets the craving to buy what the high-tech world has to offer. Who will be next? Ethiopia? Mongolia?

In addition to these overtly oppressive macro-economic forces, globalization also impacts on non-western youth as a result of at least two other major processes: mass education (based on the factory model) and the Media. In a critique of the model of education put forward by the World Bank a decade ago at the 'Education for All' meeting in Jomtein, Thailand, a number of educationists and social activists, cite this model as being a further attempt to assert the values and culture of the western materialist worldview. The Education for All agenda argued that education is essential for economic survival, but Sangeeta Kamat contests this yoking of education with economics. (Kamat 2000) She argues that it is a flawed model for education being based as it is on human capital theory in which the World Bank's proposals relate to 'building human capital for increasing national productivity, as in production and consumption of (economically valued) goods and services'. Furthermore, while the rhetoric of the 'Education for All' strategy was to promote 'flexibility and adaptability to local culture' according to Anita Dighe, in practice, in India at least, the reality of the World-bank funded District Primary Education Project is homogeneity and 'uniformity'. (Jain 2000)

In addition, Catherine Hoppers has strongly critiqued the EFA agenda on literacy: "Instead of looking at literacy as a continuum in different modes of communication, from the oral to the written, we (the EFA) equated being ignorant of the western alphabet with total ignorance". (Hoppers 2000) And yet, in the west itself, the narrow conceptualization of literacy as the 'new supreme force' has been undergoing serious critique from educationists and futures researchers for decades. The overvaluing of

narrowly-defined 'textual literacy' (reading and writing text) compared with broader categories of human expression (social 'literacy', oral 'literacy', emotional 'literacy') reflects the material manifestation of narrowly defined conceptualizations of human intelligence. Although the literature on multiple intelligences, cognitive holism, the value of artistic education and oral literacy has been growing in the west for decades, it seems that the World Bank programs have overlooked their impact. (Read 1943; Anderson 1985; Eisner 1985; Arnheim 1989; Gardner 1996) Educational and youth futures researchers, aware of the failure of the western educational model to provide young people with confidence, hope, a sense of meaning and a love of life-long learning, are engaged in exploring alternative educational processes which transcend the narrow bounds of the three R's (reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic). (Slaughter 1989; Hutchinson 1996; Gidley 1998) Perhaps it is time for the west to learn something from the 90% of the world's oral cultures, referred to by Ong, who primarily use symbolic systems of meaning making transfer, such as story-telling, myth and dance while they still remember how it is done. (Ong 1982)

As a result of this process of mass education of children of the third world over the last decade, the increasing enculturation of the world's youth into the western world-view is described by Pawan Gupta: "the modern education system has used modern science (and vice versa) to successfully perpetuate many modern myths which both advertise the superiority of the modern development paradigm and devalue rural communities and their knowledge systems, values and wisdom". He adds, in a description of what might be called 'virtual colonialism', "the West has succeeded in refining the instruments of control to such a high degree that the physical presence of the oppressor is no longer required at the site of exploitation". (Gupta 2000) It is well known that education is the most powerful method of enculturating (even 'brainwashing') a people. Mass education which transplants an educational model from one cultural system (such as Euro-American) into another very different culture while retaining the original standards and categories of knowledge, is tantamount to cultural genocide. (Nandy 2000)

### **The New Media as Amplifier of Global 'Culture'**

The Mass Media (such as Television, music), and in particular the New Media (such as the Internet) are important tools in the process of spreading the global culture to young people around the world and conversely can be used as a platform for the networking of resistance. Researchers from Denmark, France and Israel found that as a result of the media-induced processes of globalization, young people in those countries have a preference for transnational fiction, and movie material (particularly American 'soapies') and also a new sense of transnational social space provided by the Internet. (Lemish, Drotner et al. 1998)

One of the paradoxes of the western cultural influence of the media is the tension between the homogenizing effect of a dominant culture on diverse cultures, and the inherent individualism at the center of the western cultural model. This creates a push and pull effect of 'look alike' teenage role models masking the ongoing struggle for

individuality and identity which is at the heart of adolescence. However, when the individualism that is being promoted in tandem with the global media images of western lifestyles is blended with the aggressive market-driven consumerism it can be a rather toxic brew for youth living in poverty unable to attain the image. Sonia Livingstone describes this process whereby modern marketing directs popular culture, transforming the global citizen (or viewer) into the consumer. She adds, "whether conceived optimistically or pessimistically, the processes of globalization of media and culture are seen by many as the means par excellence by which such social changes are effected". (Livingstone 1998)

Yet ironically, in the one place where the wealth seems to grow into infinity, the youth of the US, have activated their ethical conscience. For the first time since the anti-Vietnam war marches of the sixties, students in large numbers are demonstrating in American universities. Paradoxically, the targets of their resistance are the multi-nationals who continue to abuse young people confined to work in the sweatshops of the third world manufacturing the very 'label-brands' these students like to buy and wear. One of the processes used by these students, Culture Jamming, co-opts the powerful advertising images of the corporate giants and modifies them to show their shadow side. (Klein 2000) This student resistance (United Students Against Sweatshops) is being hailed as the beginnings of a new anti-corporatist movement (Featherstone 2000) and is just one of the many paradoxes that surround the complexities of being young and human on earth at the beginning of the 21st century.

In this example the students are using their very commodification as their point of leverage. As long as globalization continues to be fuelled by consumerism, the young, as 'market-share', hold some trump cards - their buying power (teenagers are spending currently \$US 100 billion per year in cities, globally) (Moses 2000) and their peer influence - the Achilles' heels of the multi-nationals.

## **A Monoculture In Decline: Challenges From Within**

The particular variety of culture that is underpinned by western scientific thought, and in recent decades amplified by the information technologies and the economic rationalist paradigm of commodification, has since the European Enlightenment in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, claimed cultural superiority. With this self-imposed authority (at first European, now American), it has sought to 'develop' the 'underdeveloped world' using the development paradigms of 'deficit' and 'disadvantage' rather than 'diversity' as its justification. (Dighe 2000) Yet, like all great civilizations of the past that have reached their zenith before they begin to decay, the 'over-developed' western culture, with its foundations rooted in a materialist world-view, has been for decades showing signs of decay. The litany of symptoms exhibited by many young people of the 'most developed' nations, exemplify this with great poignancy. Research shows that many youth of the west are increasingly manifesting high rates of depression (15-24%), eating disorders and other forms of mental illness, (Bashir and Bennett 2000). Comparative studies (primarily OECD countries) indicate that when the figures for all mental health disorders are combined (including ADHD, Conduct Disorder, Depression, Anxiety, etc)

as many as 18-22% of children and adolescents suffer from one or more of these disorders. (Raphael 2000) In Australia there have been increases in youth homelessness, and school truancy which have created an underclass of 'street kids', disenfranchised by society, yet often by choice. Increasing numbers are committing suicide and other violent crimes at an alarming rate, and are expressing a general malaise, loss of meaning and hopelessness about the future. (Eckersley 1993; Gidley and Wildman 1996) Youth suicides among young males (15-24) in Australia have doubled in the past twenty years. (Mitchell 2000) Sohail Inayatullah refers to these phenomena as symptoms of 'postindustrial fatigue'. (Inayatullah forthcoming) Western culture has recently been described by film director Peter Weir as a 'toxic culture', after a spate of violent school shootings by and of fellow students in the United States.

Before exploring some of the manifestations of this cultural breakdown, it is essential in my view to go to the heart of what is missing from the western materialist cultural model. The epistemology of positivist scientific thinking that underpins Western culture follows both the empiricist and Cartesian traditions that developed during the European Enlightenment. More recently referred to as instrumental rationality it is a reductionist, materialistic mode of thinking which excludes such diverse ways of knowing as imagination, inspiration, intuition. As the epistemology of the technologically advanced western culture its global dominance of other cultures discounts the mythic, aesthetic, subjective, spiritual, traditional ways of knowing of most of the earth's cultures. Based as it is on a view of human nature that lacks a spiritual dimension (divorcing psychology from theology, science from ethics), all further fragmentations stem from this inherent tendency to segregate rather than integrate. Richard Tarnas refers to these developments as the post-Copernican double bind (Tarnas 1991) where the dominant worldview led humans to experience the following three estrangements:

- cosmological estrangement from their home at the center of the cosmos (with Copernicus declaring that the earth was not the center of the universe);
- ontological estrangement from their own being with the separation that came with Descartes realization that "I think, therefore I am" (meaning at essence I am an intellect, nothing more);
- and finally, building on these new rational/materialist foundations came the epistemological estrangement from the philosopher Kant's conclusion that all human knowledge is interpretive, that the world has no reality save what is perceived by the mind that views it.

In a sense the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century 'anti-philosophies' of nihilism and post-modernism are the logical extensions of this triple alienation of the human spirit. As a longer term result of this cultural worldview, combined with the added pressures of increased mechanization and globalization, several major factors (inherent in the western materialist cultural paradigm) have arisen in my view which have contributed to a failure of healthy enculturation of young people. These include the triumph of individualism/egoism over community, the colonization of imagination, the secularization of culture and environmental degradation. (Gidley 2000) ([www.nr.org](http://www.nr.org))

## **Individualism versus Community**

The current age of the 'I' which celebrates self-centered egoism, began in the 60s and 70s with the recognition of (and rebellion against) the injustices involved in the long-term cultural dominance of the 'wealthy white male'. The various movements for 'liberation' and human rights (feminism, gay, black and indigenous rights movements) set in motion a process where rights began to dominate responsibilities. While not wanting to undermine the gains that have been made in terms of equity and human rights, in the process of unmoderated individualism, the needs of family and community have often been compromised. As a result of the ensuing breakdown of families (approximately 40% of marriages in Australia and the US end in divorce) and other social structures (linked also to the shift in male-female power relationships) we are seeing an unprecedented fragmentation of the social glue without which young people are rudderless in their social orientation. In Australia, it is projected that almost one third (31%) of 0-4 year olds will be living with only one parent by 2021. (Moodie 2000) Is it just coincidence that the symptoms observed today among young people, such as homelessness, alienation, and depression have increased during the same few decades? By contrast this individualism inherent in the west, strikes a strong chord with youth in their striving for their own identities and balances some of the homogenizing cultural forces.

## **The Colonization of Imagination**

Over roughly the same period of time, the education of the imaginations of children and youth around the globe has changed from the nourishment of oral folk and fairy tales to the poisoning of interactive electronic nightmares. Since the advent of TV, and Video game parlors, followed by the use of computer games (originally designed to train and desensitize soldiers before sending them off to the killing fields), (Grossman, Degaetano et al. 1999) western children and youth have been consistently and exponentially exposed to violent images. Globalization has led to the ubiquitousness of these processes and their subsequent colonization of youth culture and imagination, globally. Is it surprising then that over the past decade in particular, symptoms have appeared among young people (particularly in the US, but also other 'developed' countries) of ever increasing violence and suicide. The American Medical Association and American Academy of Paediatrics have recently made a joint statement that "The prolonged viewing of media violence can lead to emotional desensitization towards violence in real life". (Callahan and Cubbin 2000) Most of the research on suicide and suicidal ideation show strong links with depression and also hopelessness about the future. (Beck, Steer et al. 1985; Abramson, Metalsky et al. 1989) (Cole 1989) By contrast, young people educated with an eye to the development of a healthy, positive imagination are not disempowered by their concerns about the future. (Gidley 1998)

## **The Secularization of Culture**

The triumph of secular over spiritual values, coinciding with the widespread crisis of values reflected in postmodernism as a 'belief' system' has resulted in a dominant

world culture which although ostensibly Christian, is in practice amoral. The egoism that brings greed in its wake, the economic rationalism that denudes politics of the principals of social justice, the secularization of education (leading to a loss of the values dimension), the death of churches as inspiring community organizations and ultimately the cultural fascism (and religious fundamentalism) that leads to ethnic cleansing are all symptoms of societies that have lost connections with moral, ethical and spiritual values. The resultant symptoms in young people are a cynical 'don't care' attitude, loss of purpose and meaning, and a 'dropping out' of mainstream society, assisted of course by the high levels of youth unemployment. On the other hand the counter point to this is that many young people are beginning to recognize this void and seek to find meaning through a search for spiritual values.

### **Environmental Degradation**

Finally the culture that has dominated the global environmental agenda, valuing private and corporate profit, over community or planet, has been responsible for the systematic and pervasive pollution of our earth, air and water. What message we might wonder have Chernobyl, massive oil spills and global warming given to our youth? In addition, while the scientific/medical solution of chemical approaches to mental as well as physical illnesses provides 'newer and better drugs' for depression, hyperactivity and anxiety, the numbers of depressed adolescents and children described as attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) continue to climb. (Seligman 1995) Meanwhile, genetic engineers push forward to develop improved strains of everything bringing us closer daily to the age of the 'designer baby'. Is it any wonder that in this unnatural world so many youth are turning to drug abuse to escape, or to alcohol binges to drown their sorrows. Conversely, the environmental awareness of youth is high with 'green futures' being almost universally present in their preferred futures scenarios. (Gidley forthcoming)

### **Youth by Definition as a Force of Renewal**

#### **Contested Definitions of Youth**

There is much controversy about definitions of youth and adolescence and whether the characteristics which define youth are universal or culture-specific. I will briefly summarise what has been dealt with in some depth elsewhere. (Gidley forthcoming) The most frequently used conception of adolescence this century is that of George Stanley Hall who initiated the seminal psychological study of the period between puberty and adulthood at around 21 and coined the phrase 'storm and stress'. (Hall 1904) In terms of cross-cultural perspectives, studies from cultural anthropology using a world sample of 186 pre-industrial societies, recognize a distinct stage of social adolescence as almost a cultural universal. (Levinson and Ember 1996) However, the inevitability of adolescence as a period of 'storm and stress' in traditional cultures is strongly contested. Diverse cultural conditions relating to traditional family roles, community embeddedness, and most importantly, initiation ceremonies, appear to

reduce and/or ameliorate the stressors of western adolescence in many non-western cultures, such as China, Indonesian Java, Micronesia, to name a few. (Broude 1995) How long this will remain so is questionable in the face of global cultural change.

To attempt to gauge the diversity of youth globally we can get a quantitative picture from the following figures:

### **The 'Global Village' of Youth**

If the one billion + youth who currently live in the world (that is approximately 18% of the global population) consisted of a village of 100 people:

- There would be 51 young men and 49 young women
- 49 would live in the village center and 51 in the rural outskirts
- There would be 60 young Asians, 15 Africans, 9 Latin Americans and Caribbeans and only 16 young people from the industrialized countries of the world
- 15 of the villagers would be 'illiterate', 9 of them young women (this refers to literacy narrowly defined as contested earlier)
- 64 would be living on an average of less than US\$1,000 per year, while only 11 would be earning an average income of more than US \$10,000 per year
- By the end of the year, one person would have contracted the HIV virus (United Nations 1999)

A more qualitative picture will be drawn in the following section.

### **Global Youth Culture as Resistance to Homogenization**

In spite of the pressure towards homogeneity, of the globalizing influence of western values, youth everywhere refuse to be suppressed. One of the great challenges and excitements of working with young people is their irrepressible spirit of rebellion. Sociologists and ethnographers (and more recently market researchers) have devoted numerous dissertations to the various characteristics and types of 'youth subculture' and new age 'tribes' such as 'punks', 'Goths', 'homeys', 'surfies', 'ferals' and 'skinheads' to name a few. (Lees 1988) One theory suggests that each main youth subculture has been superceded by another, each generation attaching themselves to a drug of choice - the hippies favored LSD, the punks were partial to speed, while the latest metamorphosis into the rave culture prefer designer drugs such as MDMA or 'ecstasy'. (Smith 1992)

If we look to the extremes of the western youth profile, on one end of the spectrum we have recently begun to hear of some areas where the young can 'make it' in society - where they can rise to heights of success in certain predefined areas. These would include the Olympic heroes and heroines, popstars and of course the new breed known as 'the dotcom boys' - the young twenty somethings who have made their first million from floating a successful dotcom company.

At the other end of the spectrum are the marginalized and disenfranchised - the 'street kids' who spurn society because it has rejected them. In Australia and the US growing

numbers of young people have become disenchanted with schooling, lack of work prospects and the general malaise of materialism. It seems the more that policy makers try to codify and rectify their curricula, to nationalize their agendas and to increase their retention rates, the more that young people will slip through the cracks. They live a life on the streets of cities and rural towns - hanging out with friends making a social life to make up for the sense of belonging and meaning that once came from working and community life. Many are children of the long term unemployed, who don't look to employment as the norm, but others are from diverse backgrounds, choosing the school of life rather than the life of school. (Gidley and Wildman 1996) Although the 'street frequenting' youth of the 'developed' world are living in relative poverty they are still wealthy compared to the 'street kids' in Brazil or the Philippines, without the safety net of Social Security.

In the above context, the extent to which western culture is adequately initiating its youth into the stage of adult maturity needs to be seriously considered.

### **'Rites' (and Wrongs) of Passage**

Notwithstanding the contentiousness of developmental stage theory, the fact that puberty marks a stage of dramatic changes cannot reasonably be denied. Taking this perspective, I would argue that adolescence is a stage when powerful, opposing forces are emerging that require harmonizing over time. The changes of puberty bring with them simultaneously, new experiences of two forces:

- the coolness of newfound intellectual reason (with their ensuing idealism tempered with opinionated argument, a sense of fragmentation, and critical judgement), and
- the heat of passions, romantic emotions and the generative energy of their hormonally charged, emerging sexual capacities (with their impulsive, demanding urges).

A culture that polarizes and fragments reality can make the harmonizing of these forces difficult for many, impossible for some. The swings between the polarities are common fare for most. What is required of a culture and an enculturation system to support the adolescent stage of development and maximize the potential of this transition is not what is currently on offer. Furthermore, It has been suggested that if a society, or the responsible adults, do not provide some adequate initiation or orientation for adolescents one of two things may happen:

- they may seek to initiate themselves through drugs, and other customs referred to as part of 'youth sub-culture' - dress, body mutilation, 'street living' and even risk-taking behaviors.
- they may become disorientated, lose their sense of meaning, or hope about the future, or at worst attempt to take their own lives.

David Tacey, in an article from which the title for this section was borrowed, relates the increase in risk-taking behaviors among the Western youth to a failure of appropriate initiation processes, (Tacey 1995) which I would add, should be part of healthy, wisdom-based enculturation of youth.

## **Renewal through Emerging Positive Enculturation Processes**

Since everything contains the seed of its opposite, even whilst the globalization project ('Modernity Project Mark II') threatens to be potentially more damaging in its colonizing and homogenizing power than Modernity Project Mark I, it also holds the potential for the greatest emancipation. It is suggested by Bhandari that what is needed is to be able to distinguish between the hegemonic and emancipatory potential of the diverse strands of modernity (Bhandari 2000). Processes need to be put in place which will foster the potential of globalization to increase these opportunities to encourage diversity, and cultural renewal, particularly processes that are positive for youth globally. The earlier critique of the World Bank's EFA agenda is certainly not a critique of education as such, but rather of the instrumental, factory-model style on offer. Some emancipatory alternatives will be briefly explored below.

### **Alternative Enculturation for Wisdom**

What is needed is enculturation processes that integrate and synthesize, that include social, cultural and educational processes that encourage wisdom, healthy imagination and creative and ethical activity through:

- an integrated knowledge system, underpinned by wisdom
- exposure to and involvement with the aesthetics of the arts, music, theatre, and
- appropriate opportunities for engagement in worthwhile action through employment and/or useful occupation

Several examples of educational models and approaches do exist today which have the holistic development on the child/adolescent in mind and transformation as the goal. One such approach that I have examined quite extensively is the Rudolf Steiner education system which provides an integrated, holistic balance of intellectual/cognitive, artistic/imaginative and practical/life skills education. (Steiner 1972; Steiner 1981) It is underpinned by an holistic cosmology, and spiritually based ontology, which regards recognition of the interconnectedness of all things as a way of knowing. This aligns it also with many non-western epistemologies which do not subscribe to the fragmented nature of learning underpinned by instrumental rationality. My own research found that Steiner educated students (in contrast to many mainstream youth) have a sense of confidence and empowerment that they can create a more positive, equitable and just future, and a sense of responsibility that they are a key to the future health of society and the planet. (Gidley forthcoming)

Another youth and futures-positive educational approach has been developed by Riane Eisler, called partnership education. (Eisler 2001) It is an integrated framework for primary and secondary education, which has three interconnected components:

- Partnership process (how we teach and learn)
- Partnership structure (the kind of learning environment)
- Partnership content (the actual educational curriculum)

Educational alternatives, such as those briefly mentioned above, which provide transformed enculturation processes could provide a powerful balance thereby harmonizing the conflicting inner forces experienced by contemporary adolescents.

## **Visions of a Transformed Global Society**

My vision of a transformed society would be far removed from the monocultural variety that globalization is attempting to impose. The critical value of cultural 'diversity' to the survival of human society as a whole, would be paramount. This diversity would be found between cultures (for example, Chinese and Ayurvedic medicines would be equally valued with western allopathic medicine, so that genuine dialogue between practitioners could actually discover which approach best suited which situation). Some beginnings are being made in Australia with the establishment of Holistic Medical practices which integrate paramedical (e.g. massage, physiotherapy) and non-western practices (e.g. acupuncture) into traditional doctor's clinics. Dommers and Welch also explore the development of 'systems maps' for General Practitioners to facilitate more integrated health service models. (Dommers and Welch 2001) In addition, the diversity would be found within cultures whereby the plurality of possible ways of knowing would be encouraged at all levels of education, including university learning. This would involve a revaluing of the arts, the practical skills, and contemplative processes as being of equal value with the rational, in contributing to a holistic knowledge paradigm for the future.

However, such a vision could not be implemented without great struggle. There is much powerful vested interest in maintaining the status quo whereby the few who play monopoly with the vast majority of the world's power and wealth cling desperately to their monocultural myth of globalization which commodifies and homogenizes all values into the economic 'bottom line'. In the same way that it has taken decades for the world's scientists to admit that disregard for the environment had resulted in global warming, it may also take more decades before the grassroots visions suggested here will develop the critical mass that is needed for transformation into a learning (rather than consuming) society. In the vision presented here, the economic bottom line would be superseded by what has become known as the 'triple bottom line' where the impacts of any enterprise/policy on the environment, and the social/human/spiritual ecology, are equally valued with economic impact.

Such a transformed global society (a pluralistic, multi-layered network of cultures within societies) could emerge from the emancipatory potential of globalization. An idealistic, global youth culture could contribute to creating a world that would go beyond symptom treatment into a place of hope, renewal, potential and creativity, a place where a society might reflect the health, not the symptoms, of its members, and where the young people drew physical, emotional and spiritual sustenance.

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