Review

Globalisation and crisis of cultural identity

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Abstract

Globalization is a dynamic process which impacts differentially on various cultures around the world. It permeates cultural boundaries and in the process results in the spread of Western ideologies and values across the world. This paper investigates the relationship between globalization and cultural identity crisis underlying assumption that globalization is manifested in the intercultural penetration processes which have substantial effects on the cultural identities. Consequently, globalization is defined as a set of cultural interpenetration processes, which go back further than the 20th century. Identity crisis, on the other hand, refer to uncompromising cultural and political conflicts among polarized groups, which struggle with each other over the definition of a national identity. Globalization is regarded as having substantial impact on such crises through its encouragement of conflicts rather than conciliation, through opportunities of expression and cross-border alliances among similar but territorially distant groups. The effects of national images on national identities and repercussions are also discussed in the context of globalization. The image of a nation, which refers to its perception by others, is selected as a special case where globalization calls for a revision of the current cultural identity. It is argued that the national images, or stereotypical representations of a culture, can have subversive effects on identity as they penetrate into the culture to which these images belong, especially when such images are negative. The indicators of an identity crisis are; politicization of cultural differences, lack of compromise, totality of identity claims, and the vague political outcomes of these conflicts. This paper argues that we require awareness of the dreadful consequences of cultural globalization, and the strength to retain the absolute local cultural traits prescribed by god. To retain cultural pluralism this paper answers many questions like- Do we live in a culturally converging world? What are the cultural consequences of globalization? "In terms of Culture, is Globalization an opportunity or a threat? **If globalization means greater integration and/or interconnection, would this overwhelm the world's cultural diversity? Does globalization encourage cultural homogenization, polarization or hybridization? These are perhaps the most important questions that can be asked when it comes to examine the effects of globalization on culture. What do we mean by globalization? What do we mean by culture? Is it fair/wise to think that globalization is a phenomenon independent from cultural changes? Wouldn't these questions depoliticize our understanding of cultural change (at the global level) by not addressing the self interested powerful forces behind change that aim to influence cultural interactions and interconnections?**

Keywords: Globalization, cultural identity, intercultural penetration, Westernization, polarized groups, cultural pluralism.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization, which also has been called global construction, global orientation and global expansion by various schools of thought, is the latest phase process in an old process rooted in the expansion of modern capitalism and encompassing the political, economic and cultural realms worldwide. Globalization creates a global culture in which the identity is amalgamated that tends to bring a homogenous culture throughout the world that might assist the local beliefs and cultural values to be universalized rather than to be demolished. On the contrary, such a cultural invasion is a threat that causes serious problems for some conservative states by virtue

of the fact that the openness to foreign content can erode the traditional values and indigenous cultural identity. This overcoming of cultural experience reduces the socio-religious identity of a country as Castle (1996) argued that globalization is really the globalization of modernity, and modernity is the harbinger of identity. In the perspective of globalization and cultural identity .Howes (1996) has stated that, cultural identity is not likely to be the easy prey of globalization. This is because identity is not in-fact merely some fragile communal-psychic attachment, but a considerable dimension of institutionalized social life in modernity. Understanding that what we call 'identity' may not be a universal, but just one particular, modern, way of socially organizing and indeed regulating cultural experience takes some of the wind from the sails of argument that globalization inevitably destroys identity.

Globalisation has brought about not just an increasing rapprochement of previously exclusive societies and peoples but equally and more significantly an almost indefinable anxiety in these societies and peoples with regards to the nature of their place and identity in the so-called global village. In a global context, the nature of the identity of a nation and/or people invariably defines its space. Yet globalisation equally means the intermingling of different peoples and identities as well as the penetration of the local space by distance. There then arises a need to redefine or reassert local space in relation to the global space since there is a possibility/ probability of minority and or powerless nations/peoples being subsumed under the more powerful and thus shedding the essence of their "self". Literature and language thus become a medium through which this local space can be asserted, that is the discursive reconstruction of space via literature or the expression of the local in (English) language use. How does migration influence cultural identity? Is the increasing intermingling of cultures in the global space leading to a global cultural identity? How do writers seek to redefine racial, ethnic, gender, linguistic and/or cultural space in the global context? In what ways does language define local space? Is the appropriation of language in literature and/or otherwise synonymous to the appropriation of personal space in the melting pot of globalisation? How can cultural "inbetweeness" be asserted as personal space? The gates of the world are groaning shut from marble balconies and over the airwaves demagogues decry new risks to ancient cultures and traditional values. Satellites, the Internet, and jumbo jets carry the contagion. To many people, "foreign" has become a synonym for "danger." A significant feature of the preset juncture is the sweeping economic, social, cultural and political changes often referred to as globalization. It has been around maybe since humans started writing and even before. What we are facing now is a new concept of it, due to the fact that it is now when the scope and power of its effect is more evident than ever. The process of a deterritorialized

or multi-local world productive system, which is more informational than industrial and more speculative than productive, has led to a crisis in social structures and the breakdown of identity referents that formerly had provided a sense of meaning to individual and social life. We are facing both a breakdown and a disarticulation of institutional and symbolic mediations from the past, and also a process of reorganization of differences and inequalities that are having a strong impact on identities. The individual and collective construction of subjectivity is acquiring multiple forms, some of them unexpected and others unprecedented. In what way does reality question psychoanalysis?

On the subject of globalization, the most controversial debate is raised on the issue of cultural globalization and its main topic, the "identity crisis" and the role of mass media as a facilitating tool for its expansion or limitation. . The anthropologists describe culture as an unseen but powerful force that holds everyone captive. Culture is not an exotic notion studied by a select group of anthropologists but a mold in which we all are cast and it controls our lives in many unsuspected ways. . According to Rummens (1993: 157-159) identity is the distinctive character belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a particular social category or group. As Horowitz (2000) stated that cultural identity is the identity of a group or culture, or of an individual as far as one is influenced by one's belonging to a group or culture and which is associated with a geographic area where people share many common traits like language, religion, culture and other traits etc. Identity is a social system which works like an organic system and is made up of structure and cultural values, rules, establish beliefs and practices to which their members are expected to conform (Jones, 2005). Cultural identity is an individual's sense of self derived from formal or informal membership in groups that transmit and inculcate knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, and ways of life. A broad conception of cultural identity should not privilege nationality but instead should balance components related to vocation, class, geography, philosophy, language, and the social aspects of biology. Cultural identity changes over time and evokes emotions. It is intertwined with power and privilege, affected by close relationships, and negotiated through communication.

Many are in identity crisis for the first time ever today in their own villages and homes, as the nation that was once vibrant and proud has been brought to its knees by its own people and by others who have seized the opportunity to finish the business that they have been longing for centuries. Their own language has been diluted so much to the point that heritage and cultural values will be in the risk of becoming extinct. Some decry the effects of globalization on local culture or cultural autonomy as an ever-expanding form of cultural imperialism and some see globalization as post modernization in which Western values have become

dominant even if they must operate within a global cultural context. There is nevertheless, a paradox if not outright contradiction between the Westernization of the world and the preservation of unique local identities. Each culture has its own personality. The fact that we are all human does not mean that we are all the same. To ignore this would be destroying God's own beautiful rainbow made from the many colours of cultural diversity. Do we live in a culturally converging world? What are the cultural consequences of globalization? "In terms of Culture, is Globalization an opportunity or a threat? If globalization means greater integration and/or interconnection, would this overwhelm the world's cultural diversity? Does globalization encourage cultural homogenization, polarization or hybridization? These are perhaps the most important questions that can be asked when it comes to examine the effects of globalization on culture. What do we mean by globalization? What do we mean by culture? Is it fair/wise to think that globalization is a phenomenon independent from cultural changes? Wouldn't these questions depoliticize our understanding of cultural change (at the global level) by not addressing the self interested powerful forces behind change that aim to influence cultural interactions and interconnections? Considering such concerns, then perhaps it is necessary to always ask ourselves how our cultural behaviors are shaped/influenced, by whom, in whose interest and to what ends? This means that we need to be aware of power relations underlying cultural changes at both the local and global levels. The deterioration of common identity is synonymous with a decline of meaningful social orders, which vividly depicts our status (Castells, 2005)

Yet there are others, who are generally referred to as Global Expansionists. They view globalization as an inescapable development developing ever-increasing momentum due to the intensification of global interactions and the waning importance of national boundaries. They believe that national economies, cultures and policies will integrate into a global network and that local and national authority and hence dominance will diminish in favor of a homogenous global economy and culture (Held, 2000). On the other side of the spectrum, there are opposing arguments against the virtues of globalization. Giddens (1999b) refers to them as the pessimists, and they include a gamut of those from the traditionalists to those challenging the dominance of capitalism. They perceive globalization as synonymous to westernization and Americanization. .Critics argue that cultural globalization will result in cultural dominance and supremacy. The deterioration of endemic cultures will be replaced with a universal culture promoting excessive consumption and dominance of the economic and information technology powers of the world. Many scholars believe that the western world is unfit to provide a suitable response to cultural globalization. This is because it is being challenged by numerous social and cultural

predicaments, itself. Doubtless, globalization has affected certain values rooted in major religions and cultures of the world. Concepts of good and evil, right and wrong, individualism and pluralism, individual interaction with the society and the very meaning of life are all warped and corrupted by global capitalism, international markets, mass media and the promotion of excessive consumption. Even some local languages and valuable traditions are on the verge of disappearance as the result of globalization. Global consumerism is now forming a homogeneous global culture where indigenous cultures of the South are being replaced by Western cultures (Muzaffar, 2002). Others like the philosopher like Coleman James express their dissatisfaction with the globalization. He notes the alienation of societies with their history and their fascination with foreign values. These new values and beliefs have no root or connection to their national identity. Therefore, globalization weakens the traditions and values of local cultures for the sake of universal uniformity and dominance of a commanding culture through the formidable power of international media.

In the middle of these two extreme positions, there is a third opinion, which is called "transformationalism." This perspective gives limited importance to globalization and emphasizes the significance of national and local institutions (Mirabedini, 2001, p. 147). This third view does not condemn the whole of globalization and praises its positive aspects. These scholars note that although globalization imposes a great deal of pressure on local economies and cultures, it is possible to transform this threat into an opportunity, thereby resisting being conquered by it.

The globalization process has spread throughout the western and eastern world, and has stripped the character from rich cultures by commercializing relations that before were based on community life, on gratitude and on affectionate and symbolic exchanges. The economy-world has also stimulated the appearance of a culture-world, a globalization of objects and of the imagination. However, social and cultural movements and strong local identities have instigated a cultural rebirth, a re-elaboration of cultures or even movements (of cultural resistance) against a globalization that destroys and strips cultures of their characters. It is our understanding that 'essence' can be found at the local level and 'appearance' at the global level, as stated by Professor Milton Santos.

Defending identity does not mean denying the process of globalization, or the encounter of several cultures in the world, but rather it means defending the traditions, ruptures and tendencies that identify a locality. It is this, and as a result of their cultural heritage, that human beings create sustainable life styles. The defense of a cosmopolitan, multicultural and global movement for solidarity should be our beacon. The search for cultural unity and complementation through inter-cultural dialogue

should commence as a result of this protection of cultural and artistic heritage. This avoids ethnocentrism and stimulates each culture to open itself up to other cultural matrices. Giving value to roots, ethnic groups and races, religions, shared history, cultural manifestations and artistic expressions should be the foundation from which all the processes of identity formation are structured.

Many have expressed different and even contradictory definitions of globalization in their discussions over the past few years. Globalization is defined as a set of cultural interpenetration processes, which go back further than the 20th century. Identity crises, on the other hand, refer to uncompromising cultural and political conflicts among polarized groups, which struggle with each other over the definition of a national identity. Globalization is regarded as having substantial impact on such crises through its encouragement of conflicts rather than conciliation, through opportunities of expression and cross-border alliances among similar but territorially distant groups. The national images, or stereotypical representations of a culture, can have subversive effects on identity as they penetrate into the culture to which these images belong, especially when such images are negative. The indicators of an identity crisis are; politicization of cultural differences, lack of compromise, totality of identity claims, and the vague political outcomes of these conflicts. However, as Niezen states, the main idea involving Globalization remains constant: "the possibility of applying human energy to the creation of a world that transcends human differences.

Impact of Globalisation on Cultural Identities

Culture and globalization, as recent history demonstrates, can be an explosive mix, with the capacity to unsettle not only traditional modes of belonging, but also established ways of thinking about being and belonging. Destabilizing boundaries between culture and state, self and other, sameness and difference, cultural citizenship in the global era brings out tensions between individual and group rights, between human and cultural rights, between principles of universalism and respect for cultural difference, and between the authority of the state, the rule of international law, and the seemingly lawless operations of transnational capital. The impact of globalization on cultural identities has traditionally been viewed as negative. From this perspective cultural identity has been deemed a victim of a homogonous, Western, consumer culture. This is perpetuated and given some credence by the fact that the world political economy is the historical outcome of the combination of different colonization objectives and local systems forming the basis for further political, economic and social systems. 'Local forces of power, privilege, and property relations that predate colonialism' (Agarwal, 1992) combined with varying 'social formations established

under colonial rule' (Redclift, 1987). Domestic market development was restrained in plantation societies such as Ceylon, Malaysia and the West Indies, whilst permanent domestic market and production was established in Settler societies such as South Africa, Kenya and Rhodesia. Colonial expansion based on capitalist principles, exploitation and alienation of peasants from land resources implanted a 'vicious form of domestic colonialism' which scorned traditionalism and forged the underpinnings for present day corrupt and authoritarian regimes (Cheru, 1992). This historical and socio-economic perspective however, critically fails to assess local cultural dynamics.

Globalisation is cultural homicide writ large, and television is the mirror wherein the future is displayed. Local growing markets are being targeted in a specific way. Through television, advertising, movies and pop music they are force-fed a total lifestyle package. What matters is the look, the affectation, the cool; and each of these abstractions can be translated into a merchandising equivalent available at a nearby shopping mall. What in the West operates as a culture of narcissism finds embodiment in Asia as hero worship. The heroes are the pop stars, the movie stars, the TV stars, the sports stars, who rule the global stage mirrored on your TV screen. The audience is positively brainwashed to talk, act, think and live as their heroes do.

Star power is not Asian. It is Madonna, Brittany, Brad and Mel, Ronan and Micheal, Manchester United and Agassi. The stars and the worldview marketed with and by them are hyped and hyper ventilated. They are the tools of the global economics of TV.

The Hollywood television factories make their money in the American market. The content of their programmes is driven by the internal dictates of Americana and its predilections. From its beginning American television has been a marketing device pure and simple. It is organised and operated to serve the tastes and interests of commercial sponsors and advertisers.

What Hollywood makes in the global marketplace is profit. It sells costly, high production value, glossy programmes for discounted prices to the television networks of the world. If it costs India or Pakistan $100,000 to buy an episode of X Files, they are getting a product that cost $5 million to make. The cost of bought in programming is internationally regulated – the poorer the country the less they pay. So it is impossible for Third World countries to produce local programmes with such production values. Locally produced programmes look poor in comparison to imports and seldom attract advertising.

While the global economics of TV are compelling, they are not the full story. What is seen on TV takes on an educational meaning; it is the substance of which global success is made. So the children of the elite in newly emerging economies in Asia buy into and act out the lifestyle of the rich and dominant in the West. The studied

disaffection of urban youth culture in the West produces the epidemic of lepak in Malaysia. Lepak are young people who spend their days hanging out in shopping malls, affecting the style and perhaps being bored out of their skulls.

But acquiring the look, the clothes, even the video and cassettes that comprise global popular culture is not a straightforward transmission of purchasing power into the pocket of multinationals. Asia is counterfeit country, home of the genuine imitation 100 per cent fake. The street markets in every city and town are awash with clothes, bags, sun glasses, watches, electrical and electronic goods, music tapes, videos and computer software cloned, pirated and all locally reproduced. For a pittance, young Asians can emulate their heroes while simultaneously stimulating local enterprise. The WTO hates it, Asian governments must promise to exterminate it – but the black economy is proof positive that resistance is not futile.

Globalization is a disease. But it just may be the kind of virus that requires the patient to get worse before they can recover. However much television pushes the youth of Asia to venerate global icons, super megastars, one fact remains. The biggest audience is always for local shows. Cheap and cheerful Singaporean, or Malaysian, or Indonesian, or Indian programmes may be. Friends, ER or Star Trek they are not. But Hollywood stars don't speak Singlish, or Malay or Hindi-Urdu. No matter how young people try, such icons do not and cannot look or know or experience what makes young Asians tick. Eventually, we all want to look in a mirror and see ourselves.

Cultural Identity

So to say, nation, culture, and society exert tremendous influence on each of our lives, structuring our values, engineering our view of the world, and patterning our responses to experience. Human beings cannot hold themselves apart from some form of cultural influence. No one is culture free. Culture gives meaning and form to those drives and motivations that extend towards an understanding of the cosmological ordering of the universe. All cultures, in one manner or another, invoke the great philosophical questions of life: the origin and destiny of existence, the nature of knowledge, the meaning of reality, and the significance of the human experience. As Murdock (1955) suggested in "Universals of Culture," some form of cosmology, ethics, mythology, supernatural propitiation, religious rituals, and soul concept appears in every culture known to history or ethnography. How an individual raises these questions and searches for ultimate answers is a function of the psycho- philosophical patterning of cultural identity. No one culture is inherently better or worse than another. All cultural systems are equally valid as variations on the

human experience .All persons are, to some extent, culturally bound. Every culture provides the individual with some sense of identity, some regulation of behavior, and some sense of personal place in the scheme of things.

It has been observed by athropologiests that the concept of cultural identity can be used in two different ways. First, it can be employed as a reference to the collective self-awareness that a given group embodies and reflects. This is the most prevalent use of the term. "Generally," writes Stephen Bochner (1973), "the cultural identity of a society is defined by its majority group, and this group is usually quite distinguishable from the minority sub-groups with whom they share the physical environment and the territory that they inhabit." With the emphasis upon the group, the concept is akin to the idea of a national or social character which describes a set of traits that members of a given community share with one another above and beyond their individual differences. Such traits almost always include a constellation of values and attitudes towards life, death, birth, family, children, god, and nature. Used in its collective sense, the concept of cultural identity includes typologies of cultural behavior, such behaviors being the appropriate and inappropriate ways of meeting basic needs and solving life's essential dilemmas. Used in its collective sense, the concept of cultural identity incorporates the shared premises, values, definitions, and beliefs and the day-to-day, largely unconscious, patterning of activities.

A second, more specific use of the concept revolves around the identity of the individual in relation to his or her culture. Cultural identity, in the sense that it is a functioning aspect of individual personality, is a fundamental symbol of a person's existence. Culture and personality movement was a core of anthropology in the first half of the 20th century. It attempts to find general traits repeating in a specific culture to lead to a discovery of a national character, model personality types and configurations of personality by seeking the individual characteristics and personalities. The field of personality and culture gives special attention to socialization of children and enculturation. Theorists of culture and personality school argue that socialization creates personality patterns. It helps shape people's emotions, thoughts, behaviors, cultural values and norms to fit into and function as productive members in the surrounding human society. The study of culture and personality demonstrates that different socialization practices such as childrearing in different societies (cultures) result in different personality types. In psychoanalytic literature, most notably in the writing of Erik Erikson (1959), identity is an elemental form of psychic organization which develops in successive psychosexual phases throughout life. Erikson, who focused the greater portion of his analytic studies on identity conflicts, recognized the anchoring of the ego in a larger cultural context. Identity, he suggested, takes a variety of forms in the individual.

"At one time," he wrote, "it will appear to refer to a conscious sense of individual identity: at another to an unconscious striving for a continuity of personal character: at a third, as a criterion for the silent doings of ego synthesis: and, finally, as a maintenance of an inner solidarity with a group's ideals and identity." The analytic perspective, as voiced by Erikson, is only one of a variety of definitions. Almost always, however, the concept of identity is meant to imply a coherent sense of self that depends on a stability of values and a sense of wholeness and integration.

How, then, can we conceptualize the interplay of culture and personality? Culture and personality are inextricably woven together in the gestalt of each person's identity. Culture, the mass of life patterns that human beings in a given society learn from their elders and pass on to the younger generation, is imprinted in the individual as a pattern of perceptions that is accepted and expected by others in a society (Singer 1971). Cultural identity is the symbol of one's essential experience of oneself as it incorporates the worldview, value system, attitudes, and beliefs of a group with which such elements are shared. In its most manifest form, cultural identity takes the shape of names which both locate and differentiate the person. When an individual calls himself or herself an American, a Buddhist, a Democrat, a Dane, a woman, or John Jones, that person is symbolizing parts of the complex of images that are likewise recognizable by others. The deeper structure of cultural identity is a fabric of such images and perceptions embedded in the psychological posture of the individual. At the center of this matrix of images is a psychocultural fusion of biological, social, and philosophical motivations; this fusion, a synthesis of culture and personality, is the operant person.

Freud's psychoanalysis states that all humans are the same when born, but childrearing in different societies causes deviations in behavior, personalities and identity from each other. The center, or core, of cultural identity is an image of the self and the culture intertwined in the individual's total conception of reality. This image, a patchwork of internalized roles, rules, and norms, functions as the coordinating mechanism in personal and interpersonal situations. The "mazeway," as Anthony Wallace (1956) called it, is made up of human, non-human, material, and abstract elements of the culture. It is the "stuff" of both personality and culture. The mazeway, suggested Wallace, is the patterned image of society and culture, personality and nature all of which is ingrained in the person's symbolization of self. A system of culture, he writes, "depends relatively more on the ability of constituent units autonomously to perceive the system of which they are a part, to receive and transmit information, and to act in accordance with the necessities of the system...." The image, or mazeway, of cultural identity is the gyroscope of the functioning individual. It mediates, arbitrates, and negotiates the life of the

individual. It is within the context of this central, navigating image that the fusion of biological, social, and philosophical realities form units of integration that are important to a comparative analysis of cultural identity. The way in which these units are knit together and contoured by the culture at large determines the parameters of the individual. This boundary of cultural identity plays a large part in determining the individual's ability to relate to other cultural systems.

Reflections of Globalisation on cultural Identity

Cultural differences and Cultural identity are the head and the tail of the same coin. Cultural differences between social groups get evident as cultural identities in social groups reach high expressions of self-determination and uniqueness. The economic influence of American corporate giants may indeed be overwhelming, and even pernicious, but their cultural impact is perhaps less significant than either they or their enemies would like to believe. Given our deeply ingrained tribal instincts, and increasing evidence of fragmentation of nations into smaller and smaller cultural units, it does not make sense to talk of a world of six billion people becoming a vast monoculture. The spread of globalization is undoubtedly bringing changes to the cultures it reaches, but these cultures were not static in the first place, and change does not necessarily mean the abolition of traditional values. Indeed, new global media such as the Internet have been an effective means of promoting traditional cultures - as well as the global sub-culture of anti-globalization activists.

Even though cultural argument against globalization is unacceptable, we should recognize that deep within it lies an unquestionable truth. This century, the world in which we will live will be less picturesque and imbued with less local color than the one we left behind. The festivals, attire, customs, ceremonies, rites, and beliefs that in the past gave humanity its folkloric and ethnological variety are progressively disappearing or confining themselves to minority sectors, while the bulk of society abandons them and adopts others more suited to the reality of our time. All countries of the earth experience this process, some more quickly than others, but it is not due to globalization. Rather, it is due to modernization, of which the former is effect, not cause. It is possible to lament, certainly, that this process occurs, and to feel nostalgia for the eclipse of the past ways of life that, particularly from our comfortable vantage point of the present, seem full of amusement, originality, and color. But this process is unavoidable. Totalitarian regimes in countries like Cuba or North Korea, fearful that any opening will destroy them, close themselves off and issue all types of prohibitions and censures against modernity. But even they are unable to impede modernity's slow infiltration and its gradual undermining of their so-called cultural

identity. In theory, perhaps, a country could keep this identity, but only if—like certain remote tribes in Africa or the Amazon—it decides to live in total isolation, cutting off all exchange with other nations and practicing self-sufficiency. A cultural identity preserved in this form would take that society back to prehistoric standards of living.

Language is the most important element of culture as language as particularity is the medium of cultural transmission and language as communication is the medium of cultural construction. Globalization imposes new linguistic codes for communication the result of which is the separation of historical and cultural strata from the communicative stratum in the imposed language. Identity enunciation takes place through codes "which have a history, a position within the discursive formations of a particular space and time." (Hall 1997) Cultural experiences which make a subject define his identity through codes with a "history" and "discursive positions" different from those of his formerly established ones, or in other words come to define national or individual identity in a strongly stratified language, cause identity stratification. In the same way that different situations cause new strata enter language stratified identity underscores the construction of national or individual ethnic identity under different culture, different history, different experience and in a different space without letting those differences be appropriated or contained. A cultural identity crisis happens when the codes of the cultural history with which individual identified himself clash with the codes of the newly-adopted culture. When an individual, with an already collective formed identity tries to absorb metropolis culture he confronts a lack.

To compensate such lack and in a wholesale attempt to construct dignified collective national identity, ethnic literature imposes the historical and cultural strata of the submerged language upon the superimposed language of communication. Such literature engages heterogenizing forces and voices which leave ethnic minorities with a stratified culture and identity at the wake of deploying a language in which more strata are entered.

It is true that modernization makes many forms of traditional life disappear. But at the same time, it opens opportunities and constitutes an important step forward for a society as a whole. That is why, when given the option to choose freely, peoples, sometimes counter to what their leaders or intellectual traditionalists would like, opt for modernization without the slightest ambiguity.

The allegations against globalization and in favor of cultural identity reveal a static conception of culture that has no historical basis. Which cultures have ever remained identical and unchanged over time? To find them we must search among the small and primitive magical-religious communities that live in caves, worship thunder and beasts, and, due to their primitivism, are increasingly vulnerable to exploitation and extermination.

All other cultures, in particular those that have the right to be called modern and alive, have evolved to the point that they are but a remote reflection of what they were just two or three generations before. This evolution is easily apparent in countries like France, Spain, and England, where the changes over the last half century have been so spectacular and profound that a Marcel Proust, a Federico García Lorca, or a Virginia Woolf would hardly recognize today the societies in which they were born—the societies their works helped so much to renew.

The notion of "cultural identity" is dangerous. From a social point of view, it represents merely a doubtful, artificial concept, but from a political perspective it threatens humanity's most precious achievement: freedom. I do not deny that people who speak the same language, were born and live in the same territory, face the same problems, and practice the same religions and customs have common characteristics. But that collective denominator can never fully define each one of them, and it only abolishes or relegates to a disdainful secondary plane the sum of unique attributes and traits that differentiates one member of the group from the others. The concept of identity, when not employed on an exclusively individual scale, is inherently reductionist and dehumanizing, a collectivist and ideological abstraction of all that is original and creative in the human being, of all that has not been imposed by inheritance, geography, or social pressure. Rather, true identity springs from the capacity of human beings to resist these influences and counter them with free acts of their own invention.

Media and Identity Challenges of Globalization

Global interconnection and the transforming possibilities of the media have long been familiar concepts and in recent decades, media rhetoric has promoted the vision of a world in process of unification, largely as a result of technology's power to dissolve borders and speed communication. Although many see the globalization process as inevitable, and argue that it will do no damage to nation states and may usher in a new era in world prosperity (Watson), others question the neoliberal agenda that seems to be driving these changes (Barlow; Barlow and Clarke). They point to possible dangers for democracy, cultural expression and tradition in the erosion of local and national traditions and power structures. Despite such dystopian warnings, it can be argued that the possibly dire effects of globalization are often concealed by glib rhetoric and powerful mythologies. However, globalization is not necessarily a natural progression emerging out of the ordinary communication and interaction of people and cultures around the world. Rather, it results from deliberate human choice by a powerful group of nations, transnational corporations (TNCs) and international

organizations which have stakes in the process. The new communications and information technologies have provided methods for large corporations to maximize profits by entering foreign markets (Mowlana, 1998). They have also given nation-states reason to re-examine the strategic implications of globalization for their national economic and political development. Globalization is a complex phenomenon marked by two opposing forces. On the one hand, it is characterized by massive economic expansion and technological innovation. On the other hand, there is increased inequality, cultural and social tumult, and individual alienation. Globalization of mass media is an integral part of this phenomenon and is propelled by the same ideologies, organizations and forces. In turn, the digital revolution and the introduction of new communication technologies are redefining our notions of politics and the structures of power in society. Increasingly, power resides in the hands of those who can produce, control and disseminate information most effectively. Human communication is increasing exponentially in amount and variety and is covering greater distances in a shorter time. As these new systems emerge, they in turn reinforce the globalization process and provide channels for governments, transnational corporations and media distributors to communicate and expand their power and resource base. thus, globalization is both a prerequisite for and a cause of the development of communication industries (Mowlana, 1998).

A macro-theory with a historical and sociological inspiration. Developed in large-scale historical research investigating the effects of the modernization process on human communication. Modernization means the appearance of 'modes of social life or organization which emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence' (Giddens, 1991). Modernization theories explain the changing ways of communication and media use in traditional and (post)modern societies. Modernization theory sees communications and mass media as a necessary precursor to economic growth and social change. This theory also emphasizes the connection between media expansion and institution-building, political stability, and economic growth. thus, it has helped to perpetuate the widespread assumption that broadcast television and radio helps nations "leapfrog" into the information age. Overwhelmingly, the mass media promise that globalization will bring friendship, harmony and international cooperation. As we have seen, globalization is a complex phenomenon, a dialectic which elicits very different reactions from individuals, nations and cultures around the world. It is a result of the expansion of international business and a liberalization of economics, communications and political policies worldwide. It has resulted in a complicated interaction between "globalism" and "localism", where huge corporations are selling

products across national boundaries and creating a globally homogeneous culture of consumption. In addition, globalization is resulting in economic growth in many countries and is presenting new opportunities for trade, individual empowerment and cultural integrity internationally (Mowlana, 1998).

With the concept of globalization, the whole world is rapidly changing and plays a central role in our collective future, it is uncertain how it will be affected by grassroots movements and alternatives present within the industrialized countries. Scholars argue that the media has deprived humanity from its intellectual capacities and flexibility and has reduced mankind to a single dimensioned and isolated entity. Meanwhile, Markuze explains this subject as the creation of one-dimensional man. Men and women involved in this powerful media network, contribute to a society in which its members do not have strong links with each other and do not play a part in the stability of the social order in any meaningful form (Khaniki, 2001). Moreover, many other scholars argue that one of the prominent tasks of the media in the globalization process has been its pursuit in developing a single cultural world. The culture sponsored by the western media is a culture, which dictates to the society what to eat, what to wear, how to live, what to think and what to know. This enormous chain of global communication institutions and its allies in the camp of capitalism have transformed the majority of ordinary people into obedient consumers, without identity or ability to command their destiny.

Thus, as the world changes, as a result of digitalisation and globalisation, it is possible to divide the mass media into two categories, namely the aggressive media and the resistive media. The aggressive media are the colossal information institutions with countless audiences. Although they provide a diverse range of news and information, they pursue a limited set of objectives. These objectives include entertainment for leisure and pleasure as well as education for greater uniformity and harmony of audiences. These institutions tend to remove spatial and temporal boundaries in order to eliminate identity barriers. The successful implementation of this task would pave the way for the strategic goal of the capitalist tycoons and giant industrialists to conquer the world market through exploitation of minds, the draining of brains in the developing countries and injecting a superficial sense of happiness and satisfaction.

On the other hand, well-defined, analytically useful peaks are observed in highly resistive media that tends to utilize the open atmosphere in the global information system in order to disseminate its own culture and ideology. However, these information institutions generally do not comprehend the depth and dimensions of the prevailing tragedy and insist on promoting their local and national aspirations instead of finding a broader message for the vast global audiences. Thus, they

always fail to compete with the aggressive media in absorbing potential audiences. It is important to point out that technical and practical methods used in presenting the contending culture, is its Achilles heel, not the culture itself.

The use of innovative communication strategies has been a significant contributor to social change, despite the presence of various obstacles. Social inequality, in particular is a major challenge to the communication efforts of indigenous peoples. The scheme is used by countries of the North like Canada and France as well as the countries of the South like Indonesia and Singapore to protect their territorial integrity and national identity. This issue is even of higher priority for countries with diverse languages and ethnic groups. Against the new backdrop of globalization and development of mass media, the South faces both opportunities and challenges. These may best be examined by tracing the four trends of (a) ethnicization of mass media, (b) development of alternative media, (c) design of comprehensive policies, and (d) internationalization of the mass media within the South. Many countries in the South are concerned with bolstering their national identity and strengthening their role in the globalization of media and technology. They recognize that information and communications are increasingly the source of power in our world today, and those who cannot compete effectively in the communications and information sectors will suffer both economically and culturally (Mowlana, 1998, pp. 22-38).

It has to be emphasized that the boundaries of local and national media cannot accomplish their objective of preserving national identities unless they can manage to hold on to their traditional audiences and be able to attract new viewers and listeners as well. This objective is only possible through accentuation of the advantages of their national cultures and enhancement of media coverage of micro-cultures. Many scholars believe that one of the most influential means for preservation of territorial integrity and protection of national identity is to establish a special media for specific groups and audiences. The advent and strengthening of media alternatives, represents the capability of various societies in introducing their own needs and point of views through utilization of advanced and up dated technology.

In short, the rise of alternative media signals the empowerment of the communities in expressing their opinions and needs by using modern technologies to obtain their participation in the public sphere. Therefore, a powerful measure to combat the aggression of the global media is the establishment of national and regional news agencies and media. Meanwhile, cultural commodities shall be selectively accepted and localized to satisfy local needs. However, investment on production and dissemination of local cultural commodities in global markets should not be underestimated.

Many intellectuals also argue that various societies shall continuously update their cultures and identities in order to adapt to the ever-changing world events and to preserve their identities and capabilities in the modern world. They must synergize the development of technology with the enhancement of their cultures.

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