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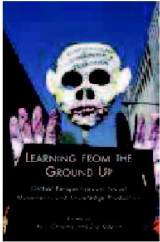
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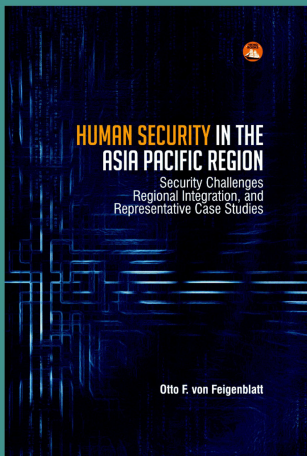
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Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences (2010) Vol 2, Special Issue No 1

***Globalization, Development and Education in Africa and Asia / Pacific:
Critical Perspectives***

Guest Editor: Dr. Dip Kapoor, University of Alberta, Canada

Editorial Introduction

Globalization, Development and Education in Africa and Asia/Pacific: Critical Perspectives

Dip Kapoor, Associate Professor, University of Alberta, (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada)

It is my pleasure to introduce the first Special Edition of JAPSS; an interdisciplinary collection of articles dedicated to addressing education/learning, educational analysis and research pertaining to the African and Asia/Pacific regions. More specifically, these refereed articles consider research and analysis pertaining to the imbrications of neoliberal/globalization (the globalization of capitalism), development (or the post-war interventionist project initiated by the colonial/imperial powers and “Third World elite” who inherited the colonial mantle) and education (in its dominant form, predominantly an uncritical-reproductive exercise in the importation of Eurocentric non/formal schooling/knowledge, albeit with localized variations) in these regions.

Given the post-independence foundational project of inter/national development and the most recent wave of neoliberal/globalization, all contributors have tried to give due consideration to examining education/learning in relation to social, political, religio-cultural and/or economic trajectories unleashed by these international/global projects and their neo/colonial, internal colonial and/or anti/imperialist implications for the peoples of these regions and related resistances/reformulations for renewal and possibility, i.e., the collection foregrounds such *critical* perspectives on the intersections between education/learning, neoliberal/globalization and development with the view to illuminate colonial/imperial ambitions and the related and on-going politics of educational, socio-cultural and political-economic resistances, alternatives and re-formulations.

The articles include a mix of critical-analytical reflections utilizing pertinent educational and inter-disciplinary social science literatures, primary/critical-interpretive research-based reports/analyses and/or analyses that are informed by direct experience. The range of actors/spaces of education/learning considered include: schools, institutions of higher education, NGOs, social movements/struggles and local communities, subsequently embracing education/learning in all its garbs/compartments—formal, nonformal, informal/incidental, popular and indigenous/local. The contributions address and have implications for interdisciplinary and education/learning specific action/practice, policy, theorization and political praxis. In keeping with these emphases, the collection considers “formal contexts” of education in Part I and “social movement/action, NGO and community contexts” in Part II.

The collection is consistent with the JAPSS emphasis on amplifying critical and/or interpretive research traditions, scholarship by diasporic and Asian/African scholars and knowledge projects/perspectives from/about these regions. There has also been a conscious attempt to include refereed contributions from graduate students (diaspora/international students), pre-tenured faculty and relatively established scholars/researchers, again, in accordance with a laudable mandate established by JAPSS.

Finally, on behalf of the Editorial Board of JAPSS and myself, I would like to express deep gratitude and thanks to the following individuals for making this edition possible by agreeing to assist with the review process: Dr. Steven Jordan (Associate Professor, McGill University), Dr. Njoki Wane (Associate Professor, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto), Dr. Anthony Pare (Professor, McGill University), Dr. Samuel Veisseire (Associate Professor, University College of the North), Dr. Amin Alhassan (Associate Professor, York University), Dr. Aziz Choudry (Assistant Professor, McGill University), Dr. Farid Panjwani (Associate Professor, Aga Khan University, Pakistan), Dr. Dia DaCosta (Associate Professor, Queens University), Dr. Bijoy Barua (Associate Professor, East West University, Bangladesh), Dr. Edward Shizha (Assistant Professor, Wilfred Laurier University) and the following

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Last but not least, I am very grateful to Alison Crump (Doctoral Student, Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University, Canada) for editorial support and for making herself available for this project while juggling between being a mother and a student. Thanks Alison.

Dip.

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*Globalization, Development and Education in Africa and Asia / Pacific:
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Part I: Formal Contexts of Education

Globalization, Culture and Development: Perspectives on Africa

Ali A. Abdi, Professor, University of Alberta (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada)

Abstract: *The idea as well as the extensive practices linked to globalization, have had important impacts on the lives of people over the past few decades. The constructiveness or otherwise of this impact seems to have been determined by one's geographical and, by extension, cultural, educational and developmental locations. In the case of Africa, the majority of the people should be characterized as pragmatically discontented with the phenomenon. Because it contains so much of Western ideological exportations into Africa and elsewhere, it may be intelligent to argue that in most life contexts, especially at the cultural level which defines and sustains so much about people's lived realities, and which also determines the quality of social development achieved in given time-space intersections, globalization has not been 'nice' to Africa. It is in response to globalization's de-culturing and under developing effects therefore, that this article locates globalization as potentially representing the continuities of Western hegemonic and colonial practices in the continent, and discusses the possible re-routing of the current trajectories of globalization so as to achieve more inclusive cultural, educational and developmental spaces.*

1. Introduction

The relatively new phenomenon of highly organized globalization has now been with us for about thirty years. Yet the realities of generic globalization would be as old as the first collective systems of humanity itself. In different places and at diverse epochal intersections of people's lives, select practices of globalization in commercial, educational, religious or technological innovations were always present, and as was the case always, those who thought they had better material and/or knowledge possibilities often globalized their products and ideas to the rest. In the new realities of the current globalization, though, the novel

phenomenon where the multi-trajectory practices of the case are reaching almost all corners of the world is interesting and worthy of all the intellectual and analytical curiosities it spawns.

In the case of Africa especially, the expansive processes of globalization that have become dominant from the mid-19th century to about the mid-20th century, ushered in new and unprecedented forms of globalizations that were driven, *sans exception*, by Europe's political, economic, educational and cultural interests and intentions. It was here where African cultures, epistemologies, worldviews and indigenous learning systems were either destroyed or relegated to the status of non-viability (Monga, 1996; wa Thiongo, 1986). And from the long-term effects of these unevenly eschewed encounters, the colonial and postcolonial forms of 'social development' (if one could characterize them that way) were so fundamentally de-cultured, they were just creating more underdevelopment and institutional weaknesses.

With that in place and with basic philosophies and operationalizations of African development mainly based on continually colonizing platforms, the political and economic fall of the Eastern Bloc in the late 1980s instigated a new form of globalization for Africa. This time, it was the full sanctioning of overnight established, nominal democracies that the public neither understood nor had the chance to examine and appreciate either on their merits or demerits (Ihonvbere, 1996). Here the imposition of Western liberalism as a system of government, and as an important component of globalization--or as Francis Fukuyama (1993) put it, as a testimony to the absolute triumph of the ideas of the West vis-à-vis the rest--on countries that have had different histories and life management systems, and above all, different cultures of governance, was to have, and had a negative impact and outcome. Today, after almost twenty years of African democracy, most countries are worse off than they were when they became 'democratic' from 1990.

It is in response to these expansive and globalization-induced de-culturing and under developing processes of the overall *vita Africana* that this paper examines the ongoing *problematiques* of the situation, complemented by select analysis of the initially disturbing conceptualizations and practically deforming forces of globalization. It should be

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meaningful to say that the totalizing nature of globalization has created and seems to sustain a discernible de-linking of Africa, in both developmental and psycho-social terms, from the rest of the world. The de-linking problem, is not, we need to repeat as often as needed, the result of something endemic to people's capacities, whether they be in Africa, Asia or the Americas, to make duly comprehended decisions to manage and, where needed, change their lives. It is, I categorically submit, the direct outcome of a world system that is historico-ethnocentrically interlinked or delinked, and with selectively located multiplicities of interconnectedness (Wallerstein, 2004), heavily favours and advances the interests of Northern countries whose powers are usually sustained by the *longue durée* inertia of the de-culturing processes. The chapter will suggest ways of overcoming these issues including the re-culturing of African systems of life, which is essential for people's capacities to relate to and constructively respond to the exigencies of the social and physical phenomena that surround them. In the new active space that should be established with respect to the problems of de-culturation and the possibilities of re-culturation, I am mainly aspiring for socially inclusive and practically located points of divergence and convergence where the design as well as the implementation of Africa's educational, economic and political projects are undertaken with expansive attention to the continent's historical, cultural and actual needs, which should not be devoid of the communally interdependent ways of existing that still characterize African life. In engaging the overall counter points vis-à-vis the top-down hegemonies of globalization, therefore, the analyses undertaken in these pages concur with the point that globalization is now so interwoven with our lives that rescinding its realities and its impact is almost impossible. As Bessis (2003) notes, in poor Southern countries, people understand they may not be able to directly confront and effectively neutralize the onslaught of globalization at this point and as such are more interested in new ways that can modify its dominant realities, which could minimally benefit them in their actual contexts. It is on that basis that we should also talk about possible ways of humanizing globalization. While I am using the generic term in this work, Africa, my focus is on Sub-Saharan Africa.

2. Conceptualizing and Theorizing Globalization: Select Pointers

As one of the most debated issues in recent academic scholarship, globalization may be defined in many ways, with selectively inherent empowering or disempowering interests and as many divergent intentions. With such simple characterizations as open borders and the movement of everything, to more complex and inclusive observations, definitional assumptions about globalization abound. In my classroom teachings, I have presented 'true' globalization as the unhindered movements of peoples, goods and services across regional, national and continental boundaries. In speaking about goods and services, one can include commodities and related economic transactions as well as social, political, cultural, educational, technological and pre-conceivable futuristic possibilities that can enhance the desired exchanges and their mechanisms. More impersonally, I tend to tentatively borrow one useful definition of globalization provided by Held et al. (2004: 68), which sees the issue "as a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions--assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact--generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power." Indeed, it is these unique extensities, intensities and velocity of current globalizations that would distinguish it from previous ones. So if we assume that these new globalizations have started with global economic re-structuring that included the few financial blueprints that were devised for the developing world by the World Bank and the IMF (International Monetary Fund), then we could say, as I have noted elsewhere (Abdi, 2006), that the new situation may have started from late 1970s into early 1980s. And that should raise the question, what happened to people's lives and what happened to Africans in particular since the early 1980s? Concisely, the overall picture is not very appealing, in fact it is extensively problematic and we shall see more of this discussion in the latter sections of the chapter.

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In terms of the global viability and applicability of Held et al.'s definition (above), one might say that despite all its linguistic and descriptive dexterity, it cannot not speak for the world of the African, or for the new hundreds of millions of peasants, the urban poor or women and children who are being disenfranchised by rapid and global multinationals-driven globalization all over the world. These peoples have no access to the mechanisms that could enable the long reach of their actions. So at the end of the day, such definitions, as important and research-wise and useful as they are, and to be fair, as conceptual distillers of globalization as they may represent, should always raise one important question: whose world does this speak for? As should be clear by now, one important trouble with globalization is that it seems to speak mainly for the globalizers, that is, those who due to the endowed nature of their societies and their powerful multinationals are either directly or indirectly globalizing the less endowed majority of the world. We will deal more with this in the following pages. Suffice it to say that as Teodoro (2003) noted, in the current configuration of events, there may be a number of globalizations affecting people, not only with respect to their immediate impact, but also via their developmentally problematic outcomes. And that should persuade us, I think, to at least provisionally claim the right to define globalization from the perspective of its many victims. As such, I could locate globalization as a mostly profit-driven, historically de-conscientizing, selectively enriching, culturally alienating, politically dominating and economically attempting to create an amalgam of world economies and related life systems, all for the purpose of maintaining, mainly by design but occasionally by default, the ideological and institutional supremacy of the West over the rest.

However one conceptualizes or theorizes it, though, the factuality of the complexity of globalization makes it difficult to prospectively quarantine. As McMichael (2004: 285) said, globalization, in all its dimensions, "is a formative and contradictory process with no clear structural imperative." In adding to his observations, McMichael immediately points out what most of us should already know: despite these irregularities in structure and outcomes, globalization must, at least theoretically, obey the common

rules of the market. That, *ipso facto*, assures us how the monetary dimension and its architects from the corporate elite are by and large, the dominant constructors of the processes of globalization. Perhaps the dominance of the corporate elite is also a reflection of their insider status as part of the international agencies, the so-called International Financial Institutions (IFIs) that are the originators and current enforcers (in terms of policy and programs) of globalization. So before we even worry about the outcomes of globalization, we already see thick asymmetries in how different groups understand and can, by extension, operationalize it for their well-being. And the concerned socio-cultural complexities are, as Rouse (cited in Behdad 2006: 65) notes, not easy to navigate, especially for less developed societies:

We live in a confusing world, a world of crisscrossed economies, intersected systems of meaning and fragmented identities. Suddenly, the comforting modern imagery of the nation-states and national languages, of coherent communities and consistent subjectivities, of dominant centres and distant margins no longer seems adequate.

It is this complexity that calls for something new: a return to the possibilities of recasting the conceptual and theoretical locations of globalization. Thus far, the new globalizations were not only designed and imposed on the rest of humanity by Western agencies, they have also been defined, re-defined, remodelled and purposefully augmented or repainted at will by the same agencies, their analysts and some supposedly less bureaucratized Western academics who have been trying their best to tell us what globalization means. But the continuing colonization of the meanings of globalization incessantly confirms the marginalizing practices of the case. And to create enduring social or institutional meanings, the issue of representations becomes paramount. That is, before we continue focusing on what globalization has done to, or could do for Africa, Africans and others in comparable corners of development should have one important *a priori* right. They must ask for and be told what they have never been told, i.e., what are the meanings

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and intentions of globalization, why it is so important, and why everyone should jump on its bandwagon. Undoubtedly, this proposition would sound preposterous to some. The counter-argument could be that the forces of globalization are on, every country and every group in the world is partaking in it's platforms, no one can disengage from it, and let us just be reasonable and focus on the immediate *post-facto* events. We may also be told that everybody knows and understands globalization.

Indeed, as Williamson (1993), partially speaking for his former employer, the World Bank, advised us some years ago, we should have been at the point of no return, and with the world practically heeding the siren call for universal mono-economics, all was and should be fine. If Williamson's world was realized, then we should already be in the era of hyper-globalization where states, let alone borders, are no longer viable and where the social, cultural and educational are all subservient to the monetary interests of neoliberal economics. In the case of the political, we should already be in the long ago-predicted promised land of liberal democracy (Fukuyama, 1993). Of course, none of this has happened for Africa; if anything, the opposite would be true. In economic terms, for example, most African countries were doing worse in the early 21st century than was the case in early 1990s (UNDP, 2003), and the promise of imported liberal democracy did materialize in one unexpected but important way. It precipitated more economic woes and institutional failure for most of the poor countries that embraced it after the fall of the Eastern Bloc (Abdi, 2008; Ake, 2003; Ihonvbere, 1996).

To see why more representation is needed in the boardrooms and academic circles where new ideas and their pending practices are conceptualized, selectively theorized, and for lack of better words, snobbishly implemented, one can read Ihonvbere's (1996) important essay, "On the threshold of another false start," where, for example, the imposition of a Eurocentric and unworkable processes of democratization were imposed on post-Cold War Africa. Clearly, the intentions here were not removed from sustaining a clear politico-economic line from colonialism, to pre-'democracy' problematic spaces and into post-Cold War ill-advised incidences of counter-indigenous, so-named

democracies. It was also in 1996 that Claude Ake's book *Democracy and Development in Africa*, and Celestin Monga's *Anthropology of Anger*, were published. As in Ihonvbere's essay, both books questioned, among other things, the socio-political development decisions that are made on behalf of Africa without the direct involvement of Africans. As Ake (1996) noted, whether it is the false promises of globalization, the general threads of economic and political development, or the shallow rhetoric of democracy, no historically or culturally inclusive practices of any of these were ever implemented in the old continent. What has happened instead, was that ideas, concepts, policies and programs were conceived and constructed elsewhere, and exported almost in pre-packaged fashion to Africa.

For Monga (1996), the problems lie not only in producing and distributing the wrong items, but basically misunderstanding the overall African context. And to his dismay, technically *ditto* for the rest of us, Western governments and institutions were more than willing to construct new meanings about African life that are for Africa, but not about Africa. The point should be clear: things, ideas and programs were conceptualized and manufactured about Africa, but in real terms, they have nothing to do with Africa. In a more direct language, they were false fabrications about the continent, which by driving globalization and development policies, would do, as they have extensively done, more harm than healing. Indeed, as Ihonvbere (1996) pointed out, in terms of the processes of democratization, which for the West were some of the most important components of globalization, the line that was followed did not seem to be different from the misguided, European-based policies of social development that almost all post-independence African countries chose to apply. So with the failure of that impractical first phase of African development, Western donors and their rentier states did not seem to have learned anything from those experiences. Thus, with so much of Africa heeding the unidirectional call to democratize the 'threshold' of another false start on, the presumptions of democratization were at play, and the consequences, as pointed above, were anything but conducive to the well being of people.

3. Colonialism and the Problematic Globalizing and De-culturing of Africa

In Africa, as in other parts of the world, the processes of globalization have been happening with different intentions, intensities and outcomes. What we can say, though, is that European colonialism from early-mid 19th century into late 20th century was, before the current trends of globalization, the most expansive, externally imposed form of globalization the continent has experienced. Important in analyzing the two trends of globalization is how the former has actually directly affected the way Africans have been able to respond to, or more appropriately survive the current one, which we may term latter-day globalization. For me at least, this is extremely important, for I subscribe to the conclusions about the effects of colonialism on Africans and their subsequent realities of underdevelopment that have been extensively discussed in the writings of such brilliant historians and cultural sociologists of colonialism as Frantz Fanon (1967, 1968), Julius Nyerere (1968), Aimé Césaire (1972), Ivan van Sertima (1981), Walter Rodney (1982), Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986, 1993), and Albert Memmi (1991). Fanon, in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), extensively and quite effectively talks about how the biggest outcomes of colonial relationships have been not necessarily the direct political and economic exploitations, although these were very important, but the cultural domination of Europeans over the rest.

Fanon's points are corroborated by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o who in *Decolonizing the Mind* (1986) critically dissected how, by de-linguicizing people (i.e., taking their language out of their education and imposing a foreign language) and by extension, de-culturing them, colonialism has expansively colonized the minds of Africans, and to achieve viable livelihoods and development, mental decolonization is of paramount importance. Before Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Fanon (1967, 1968) also saw the complexity as well as the importance of psycho-cultural platforms along with physical domination. Fanon clearly understood that subjecting citizens, especially when they are either psychologically or physically (or both) subjugated, leads to whole new projects where people are objectified, and to de-objectify them, we

have to do so much to reconstitute some of the psychosomatic possibilities that have been lost. In analyzing and relating the colonial globalization of Africa, therefore, my focus should be less on economic relationships and more on the schemes of de-ontologizing and de-culturing this complex Southern continent. This is important in the sense that culture is the way people live in given tempo-spatial contexts and with respect to their stable or changing social and physical environments. When cultural platforms are deformed or destroyed, therefore, as we shall see below, people's lives may cease to exist in ways that benefit them and may only function to advantage those who caused the problems in the first place.

My above point on the important relationship between earlier colonial globalizations of Africa and the current neoliberal driven one is also culturally and psychologically located. As I have related elsewhere (Abdi, 2002a), colonialism was first and foremost psychological, then cultural, from there selectively educational, then political and culminated in the economic. It was initially psychological in the sense that through the writings of European thinkers and philosophers (see Hegel, 1965; Kant cited in Eze, 1997; Montesquieu, 1975; Voltaire, 1826), the continent and its peoples were portrayed as irresponsible, socially infantile and needing, actually deserving the domination of Europeans. And with the encounter of the two peoples favouring, not only the technologically superior group, but also disfavouring the inclusive ontologies of Africans for whom humanity was inter-subjectively located, and dehumanizing others was equal to dehumanizing yourself, the air and the incremental practice of superiority were slowly established. From there, the cultural patchwork was set in motion, and with the socio-cultural methodologies of Europeans successfully portraying their worldview and their life systems as universally superior and to be emulated (Bessis, 2003), the colonized were taught how to do those life systems, which in a twisted turn of events, would de-culture them, thus affirming Fanon's pointers that once this is achieved, the rest, in the simple parlance of everyday life, should be easy.

Indeed, the processes of colonial globalization we are talking about are mainly facilitated by the cultural

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hegemonies and their educational platforms that affirm the rising status of those natives who are good at adopting the new prescriptions and who become the ground level militia for the ensuing and more measurable political and economic platforms of the colonizing process. Interestingly, the de-culturing and overall processes of conquest and exploitation were portrayed as a *mission civilisatrice* (Said, 1993), which from there strengthens the claims of the racist philosophers, thus effectively locating the continuities of the quasi-concretizable cultural and learning relationships that are established. It is therefore, through this shedding of one's worldview, language, culture and later, communal ways of living that the program of globalization takes place. As Ivan van Sertima (1981) so cogently noted about the real life of colonialism in Africa, though, the story was anything but Europeans overtaking the continent, exploiting it in multiple ways and leaving when the people rebelled. What we need to critically understand is how the people who were in Africa before colonialism were entirely different from those the socio-culturally explosive practice left behind.

Here a note of note: people act, react and interact with respect to mental processes that govern their decisions and behaviour. People, therefore, are, at the end of the season, more psychological and cultural than anything else. What colonial globalization did to Africa, was the de-patterning of mental dispositions, thus changing them from confident, socially located communities into what Aimé Césaire, in his powerful *Discourse on Colonialism* (1972: 19) has described as millions of men and women "who have been skilfully injected with fear, inferiority complexes, trepidation, servility, despair and abasement." And to just go back to the claim of the *mission civilisatrice*, Gerald Caplan (2008; see also Hochschild, 1999) talks about the barbarism of the civilizing mission in the context of Belgium's King Leopold who successfully killed 10 million of 20 million Congolese in twenty-five years during his personal rule; and the extermination of the Herero people of Namibia by the Germans, which together should represent some of the most horrible acts of genocide in history. As noted by both Hochschild and Caplan, it was actually King Leopold who introduced the severing of limbs to Africa, a tactic replicated by Africans in Sierra Leone's civil war about a century later.

And the massive genocidal practices of the European civilizing missions (the oxymoronic nature of the description need not detain us here) were not at all limited to Africa. Many centuries earlier, in the fifty years between 1531 and 1581, Indigenous populations were so decimated by mainly Spanish and Portuguese colonizers in the post-Columbus Americas, their numbers were reduced from 80 million to 10 million (de Botton, 2002). Eventually, the project of colonialism was so effective in all its dimensions that the voluntary participation of the colonized in its projects was not difficulty (Memmi, 1991).

Several centuries before Memmi, the Tunisian historian Ibn Khaldun described, in his important circa 1380 *Prolegomena* or *Muqaddimah* (Introduction) to his *Universal History* (see Issawi, 1969) how people who are conquered by others eventually begin to imitate their conquerors in almost everything they do. The reason should not be too complicated to see. Conquest and colonialism involve extensively interactive regimes and heavy contexts of identity deformation, misrecognition, loss of self-esteem, and individual and social doubt in self-efficacy. All of these could, in the long run at least, mentally and culturally reward the victors, and through the psychology of need, people could equate perfection, achievement and success with those who have had the right means to trump their ontologies and existentialities. As Ibn Khaldun pointed out, when these relationships continue for too long, the acceptance of defeat and the admiration of the conqueror become convictions that might persuade the vanquished to actually identify (as the inferior adopted self) with the colonizer. Looking at the world today, it is not really difficult to see the result of the important analyses presented here.

Even in the current discussions on the declining economic status of many Western countries, the fate of the lower selves of the world (in development terms), whose financial liquidities have been devastated by the forces of globalization, seems to have become so habitualized that their suffering is, without any desire for better words, 'normal'. Indeed, this reality has so invaded the global public space that one can clearly see how it is a direct descendant of the processes of colonization where the natives (global natives now) were to be controlled and fed before the point of

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starvation. As Chinua Achebe (2000) wrote, the notion, actually the maxim, “I know my natives”—that is they do not need development, and hardly any sustenance, and they will still like me—was popular with colonial officers. Undoubtedly, therefore, the now descriptively celebrated less than US\$2 per day story was invented long ago by those officers who critically understood that income, food and other essentials were to be used to control people’s choices and by extension, their loyalty. In a semi-reversed practice of events, it is the combined forces of the African elite and agencies of globalization that are now playing with that earlier devised golden rule to oppress and rule. Indeed, globalization has wrought havoc on the economic lives of Africans (Abdi 2006, 2008) and I do not see any viable debate, although that can change in the future, in addressing the negative impact of this project on the situations of the least endowed in this continent and elsewhere.

If anything, the pervert normalization of the suffering of Africans continues unabated, and like old times, the only time that any action is actualized seems to be the point when the images of starving children and other victims of natural disasters are flashed on television screens so as to revive what Western analysts call the moral imperative to help hapless Africans, and occasionally some Asians (in North Korea, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, India and other places) who are having these problems because of a) their corrupt rulers, or b) their own laziness or inaction before the calamities hit them. From inclusive global perspectives or even sober historical analysis, no one seems to have time to investigate the role of globalization, indeed, directly the role of globalization in instigating the repetitive nature of these and similar calamities. As Amartya Sen (1993, 2000) noted, open societies (selectively democracies) do not experience starvation and development happens and sustains itself more effectively when basic freedoms for all segments of society are accorded. And if anything, the latest colonization by globalization of the African public space has been the imposition of false labels of democratization that are now beyond the threshold Ihonvbere (1996) spoke about, which have derailed, at least for the time being, any viable

governance structures that are open, accountable or minimally transparent.

4. Globalization as Counter-Culture/Development

I will be brief on the culture point. Most of the preceding analysis should have been about culture, and even if my pointers were historically eschewed, the applicability, as I have made quasi-abundantly clear, to current events and life systems are practical, tangible and impactful in people's daily experiences. I will just say that based on my readings of history and society, when people's psychological patterns and connections are pulverized by global forces that they cannot deal with (in our discussion, either colonial globalizations or current postcolonial, imperial globalizations, see partially Hardt and Negri, 2001), the threads of their cultural platforms start to slowly disentangle, their ontologies become de-centred, they begin to lose social (communal) agency, and could, in the process, lack the capacity for social development. As I have done in some of my earlier writings and presentations, I am using the construct 'social development' as inclusively talking about all types of development including economic, political, educational, cultural, technological and emotional well-being. It is also the case that lately, I have been occasionally using development and well being interchangeably.

A propos the inclusive nature of the idea, for me, development is always interwoven with power. From ancient times and into our here and now, those who were developed, that is, those with more economic, political, educational, cultural, technological and psychological well-beings vis-à-vis others, had more power, not only to manage their lives as they wished, but as well, to influence the lives of others. As Walter Rodney noted, power relations, or the prerogative to have your way in the contexts you reside, is the most important variable in human relations. Indeed, as Rodney himself so effectively discussed in his outstanding work, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1982), the most important outcome from the globalization of European colonialism of Africa, was the extensive underdevelopment of Africa, and undoubtedly, the rapid development of Europe. If we were to measure the value of the primary resources and

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the free or almost free labour Europe has extracted and is still extracting from Africa, one should be able to quickly see how the former would not be where it is today without those arrangements. But it was not only the massive hauling of resources that has assured the problems of underdevelopment; the case also involved, as Nyerere (1968) pointed out, the destruction of African platforms of development and African indigenous educational systems that were, as Mandela (1994) among others noted, the backbone of the continent's schemes of social progress over millennia.

Here the divergent and purposefully location-specific meanings of development are important. Some would say, for example, that to analyze international development, we should start with former US President Harry Truman's great deal program (see Black, 2002). That of course, will represent the usual American-centric perspectives of current life. The more realistic case should talk about development, as globalization, being part of human life forever, and as globalization, different groups have shared their ideas and practices of development over time and space. Indeed, as Archer (2000: 17) said, "human interaction with the world constitutes the transcendental conditions of human development, which otherwise remain an unrealized *potentia* of our species." And in that ongoing human interaction, colonialism was undoubtedly, and contrary to the falsehoods of its proponents, a fruitful program of international development for Europe and a very tangible project of international underdevelopment for Africa. In describing the issues, therefore, let us be tolerant with a historical continuum of development that does not start with the time-constrained, ethnocentric understandings of somewhere it becomes a global faith that should be religiously followed (see Rist, 2003). As Nederveen Pieterse (1998) pointed out, development, when it is not criticalized with multi-focal lenses, would be mainly about different intersections of Western hegemony, which immediately nullifies the validity of the myriad of other advancements that have been achieved all over the world at least in the past four thousand years.

Despite all the impositions of development, though, most of Africa still remains highly underdeveloped, and some

of it is actually de-developing and all the remedies hitherto imposed are not working. But again, both the descriptive and analytical hegemonies are important. They justified colonialism, persuaded Samuel Huntington (1971) to prescribe modernity for the non-Western world where 'primitive, backward' (his own words, of course) societies could only move forward if they follow the trajectories of development the West has adopted. For Huntington, the proof was not far-fetched. "If you are not doing well, why not just do as I did, and you will be like me" could have been, verbatim, attributed to the late American commentator. Succinctly, Huntington and others like him never seriously analyzed how the West developed: by robbing the resources and the labor of others. Was Africa accorded the opportunity to do the same to Europe, that is, not to rob anybody, but at least to get back some of the material stolen from her? Or perhaps a more pragmatic point: Was Africa ever allowed to analyze its development needs in a global context where she is disempowered vis-à-vis the West? No, because, as Edward Said (2002: xiv) explained, "to this day, the demeaning of non-Western ideas, scholarship and general cultural possibilities continues," despite the exponential increase in the number of important works produced about the lives of non-Westerners by those who know them best, non-Western scholars.

The exclusionary ideas also spawned the misguided travels of legions of development experts who visit Africa and other non-developed places and impose their ideologies and de-contextualized practices of good life. Here again, these schemes of non-viable development were important components of globalization that were advanced, among others, by the World Bank and the IMF. The most important of these prescriptions in the past decades came in the form of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), which were the main blueprint for African development. The focus of SAPs was mainly on reducing government expenditures, privatizing public institutions, and reducing public expenditure on social development programs such education and health care (World Bank, 1994). The failure of SAPs is a well-known story and we need not detail the tragic outcomes here. Briefly, they were counter everything the African public space was made of, including the role of government in

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national development, people's incapacity to pay for private services including privatized schools and health clinics, and the communal culture of sharing that is still common in the majority of African life situations. As Schatz (2002) noted, the World Bank was actually aware of the program's weaknesses as early as 1996 and internally promised to make some changes, but as I write this chapter, the world is still waiting for any ideas and practices from this important but globally misnamed American institution. To some careful observers of the situation such as the late Nigerian political economist Claude Ake (1996), the failure of hegemonic development was not to surprise anyone. Development, if it has to succeed must not be unloaded from the wagon of globalization and from the misinformed platforms of the World Bank or the IMF, it must not be historically de-contextualized, and above all else, it will do no good if it is expansively de-cultured and socially alienating. Ake (1996: 13) wrote:

Because the development paradigm largely ignored the specificity and historicity of African countries, it put them in a position in which everything was relevant to them, and nothing was uniquely significant for understanding them. Hence the mounting anarchy of development studies in Africa. Bits and pieces borrowed from theories and paradigms constructed for other purposes and for other kinds of experiences, meaningless for being incomplete and out of context, were applied in ways and for purposes that are not always clear, and to realities that defy comparability.

As it has been imposed on Africa by the forces of globalization, therefore, development was devoid of an authentic kernel of what Raymond Aaron might have intended when he spoke about a possible "germ of universal consciousness" (see Hoffman, 2004), and was actually de-conscientizing, to use an antithesis of Paulo Freire's (2000 [1970]) popular characterization about the role of education in human well-being or lack thereof. In speaking about the role of education in social development, it was the case and continues to be case that one of the worst things that has happened to Africa's advancement has been the destruction

of African learning systems and languages by colonialism, and with no change in the philosophical and policy foundation of African education from colonial times, the failure of the continent's schooling systems as platforms for social development, continued into the era of new globalizations. So if education is to be an important engine of national development (Mandela, 1994), then recasting Africa's learning programs so they reflect the histories, cultures and the languages of the people, should be prioritized. In speaking about these possibilities, my intention is not to do away with current systems of schooling structures, but to introduce into their midst, African epistemic notations and epistemologies, which, if gradually and carefully intermixed with what we have now, could improve the situation for hundreds of millions of learners. While there have been some recommendations in this regard, most of them talking about the Africanization of knowledge, I would subscribe, as I have done before (Abdi, 2002b) to a more inclusive approach that talks about the *relative* Africanization of schooling and avoids the *a priori* and *posteriori* notions and intentions of knowledge construction and validation. It is the case that Africans, wherever they may be, cannot and should not disengage from the global context, and knowledge should be seen as a collective human heritage that should belong to, and benefit all.

While I have deliberately engaged what might be perceived as a scathing criticism of colonialism, globalization and conventional development, I pragmatically know that we are in a *post-facto* context, and a systematic withdrawal should not be recommended by many, and least by me who is relatively cosmopolitanized, and is in fact exercising this right to analyze and critique mainly due to opportunities accorded to me by my attachments to the global labour space. Still the criticisms, whether heavy or benignly soft, should be legitimate, for what I have described here, in simple and straightforward terms, has actually taken place. However, our current desires to speak about ways of constructively living and achieving more than what has been prescribed, as the philosopher Alain Badiou would suggest, in these extensively interactive world moments, are also legitimate. For me this calls for possible ways to humanize the dominant paradigms of the day, and that requires,

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without any analytical alibi, select de-verticalizations and not necessarily de-globalizations, as Bello (2002) suggested, of the processes of globalization so they benefit, not only the multinationals and citizens of the West, complemented by those in the developing world who are in the right global circle with the former (see Hoogvelt, 2001), but also the other billions who deserve enfranchising life platforms that are no longer psycho-physically demeaning and marginalizing. And because we live in globally open, competitive environments (even within the confines of one's country), relevant systems of education for historical consciousness and social development should be designed for and accorded to all. No, this is not a rhetorical manifestation, it is the basic right of every African and others in all parts of the world, the same way it was my right and the right of my readers. And there are some new stretches of hope that are emerging in many parts of Africa. Beyond the general educational systems, which are still of top-down nature, there is a high number of civil society groups that are using informal learning programs, community theatre and neighbourhood gatherings to teach locally marginalized groups such as women, the unemployed and youth about their political and economic rights.

Most of these volunteer associations are responding to the problems, not the promise, of economic globalization and democratization where people are realizing that despite the nominal elections that take place every four or five years, it is basically the same elite who have re-constitutionalized themselves as the new legitimate rulers, mostly with the tacit support of Western donors and governments. It is actually well-known to the African public how the bar has been lowered when it comes to African democracy, where for Western sponsors, as long as the electioneering processes are visible, then supposedly, Africans are democratic. As Ake (2003) so rightly noted, though, democracy will thrive in Africa only if it reflects the traditional notions of Africa's communal participatory culture. While the difficult contexts of globalization and democracy are still real, the important reconstructive point here is that people are responding, and groups such as *Women for Change* in Zambia who I visited when I was doing citizenship education-related fieldwork in that country few years ago, are achieving so much, not only

in the social arena, but also in the political space. Such viable actions and many others like them (the organized voice of trade unions in South Africa, and environmental groups in Kenya are two other examples) are gaining momentum throughout the continent, and despite the current problems of globalization and democracy, there are few attainable glimmers of hope on the horizon.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to put together a number of ideas and analyses about the meanings, select historical locations and the outcomes of globalization with respect to the African context. In so doing, I was intent on being as descriptively inclusive as possible, but with the limited space I had and the expansiveness of the topic assigned, that was not a simple task. As such, I decided to put more emphasis on certain areas that I believe have not been treated as effectively as they deserve. For me, one of these areas is the reality of colonialism as one of the most important forms of globalization Africa has seen. And although, I have done it in a limited fashion, I have decided to re-introduce the need to discuss more extensively the meanings of globalization. As the case is now, at least academic definitions of globalization seem to be the preserve of those who have not been pained by the opening of borders and the free movement of commodities, peoples and capital. While speaking about the African experiences of the case, most of my points seem to have expounded into a multi-pronged criticism of what these have done to the *persona Africana* and how more than anything else, they have shaped the current configurations of cultural alienation, social underdevelopment and highly uneven power relations that permeate the lives of people.

Indeed, I have agreed with those who see the current spectres of globalization as a new imperial order that favours former colonial powers and their regions. Actually, I have put forward those propositions as much as anybody else, and I believe that despite the rhetoric of independent countries and peoples transacting with one another, contemporary globalizations are actually sustaining the remnants of the

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mental and cultural, and by extension, politico-economic dominations that have been established by colonialism, with these directly limiting the capacity of Africans to redefine their world, recapture lost agency, reconstitute their existentialities and achieve effective social development schemes that can recast current contexts in this ancient continent. Finally, I am aware that Africans are not and should not be perpetual victims of their histories, and as such the extensive emergence of anti-colonial and anti-globalization civil society associations and other progressive collectivities should have a positive impact on the lives of the public.

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The Interface of Neoliberal Globalization, Science Education and Indigenous African Knowledges in Africa

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Abstract: *In a globalized neo-colonial world, an insidious and often debilitating crisis of knowledge construction and legitimation does not only continue to undermine the local and indigenous knowledge systems, but it also perpetuates a neo-colonial and oppressive socio-cultural science educational system that debilitates the social and cultural identity of the indigenous African student. As Schissel and Wotherspoon (2003: vii) argue, "Educational relations are critical elements of our humanity and sociability." This paper explores the homogenizing effects of globalization and the oppressive forces of neo-colonialism that continue to work together to privilege "western-based scientific knowledge" at the expense of indigenous knowledge systems. As a result, valuable indigenous African scientific knowledge is in danger of being lost to indigenous communities, and students are not learning bodies of knowledge representative of their community knowledge, resulting in a diminished identity formation. The paper argues and concludes that indigenous knowledges/sciences have a role to play in identity formations of indigenous African learners and the students need to become knowledgeable in both African indigenous knowledge and Western dominant scientific knowledge through critical pedagogies and pedagogy of place.*

1. Introduction

With the imposition of neoliberal globalization and Eurocentric science education in Southern Africa, how do African people develop their African humanity and sociability? If neoliberalism and globalization, as I argue in this paper, marginalize indigenous African knowledges/sciences, how can the African students and people, in general, reclaim indigenous sciences to act upon

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their natural world? Indigenous knowledges are known for their resilience and ability to describe, explain, predict and negotiate nature. Can African indigenous science and ways of knowing survive the onslaught of neo-colonialism and globalization?

In this paper, I define African indigenous science as culturally-specific knowledge systems that relate to the knowledge of the original peoples of Africa, their oral culture and traditional ecological knowledge, as affected by their worldview; the knowledge that incorporates their social and natural wellbeing, their cosmos and their spiritual world. It includes plant biology, environmental education, and other education centred activities such as manufacturing, agriculture, food processing, civil engineering, animal husbandry, transportation, mining, and communication (Snively and Corsiglia, 2001). Indigenous science classifies objects, activities, and events in its given universe and interprets how the local world works through a particular cultural perspective to interpret and understand social and natural phenomena. Expressions of science thinking are abundant throughout indigenous agriculture, astronomy, navigation, mathematics, medical practices, engineering, military science, architecture, and ecology. In addition, processes of science that include rational observation of natural events, classification, and problem solving are woven into all aspects of indigenous cultures (Snively and Corsiglia, 2001). Students who are exposed to this knowledge are capable of making sense of their lives and develop a cultural identity that mirrors their social and cultural communities. African science education has been criticized for lacks of relevance to African cultures, being a collection of facts from 'western' science with little or no adaptation and less critical, and fact-transmission oriented pedagogy.

The purpose of this paper is to argue for that indigenous knowledges/sciences have a role to play in identity formations of indigenous African learners. The article also discusses the need for African students to become knowledgeable in both African indigenous knowledge and Western dominant scientific knowledge through critical pedagogies and pedagogy of place. A hybridization of sciences provides students with critical perspectives in

developing scientific knowledge, skills and attitudes and this can happen, if the influence of social needs and situations on science education is emphasized. Science courses seem more relevant to those students with science career aspirations and not to the majority for whom secondary science is terminal.

2. Literature Review

Curriculum Policy and Science Education

The formal education that indigenous African students receive does not merely serve the purpose of transmitting formal lessons and bestowing credentials, but also develops social and cultural identities. But these identities built on cultural learning are under threat from neoliberal constructs of knowledge and science education. A perusal of some science curriculum innovations implemented by most African countries indicates a Western bias in the content and practice. The content and practice of science alienates African students. Science education and its effects on students' identity formations are determined by the science curriculum in place. Curriculum innovations have been a central focus of curriculum scholars and policy makers in Africa. In most cases, innovations carried out after independence did not focus on the cultural and the place of learners in science learning. This raised critical questions about whether innovations were introduced to please foreign donors or to bring about substantive changes in education. Expectations were that, after independence, African governments would decolonize their science curricular through integrating socio-cultural expressions and insights.

While curriculum changes were deemed necessary to refocus knowledge and pedagogy on African perspectives, research indicates that most curriculum changes were promoted by outsiders, mainly western countries and donors. Some changes that were introduced in Africa were a 'copy cat' of Western curriculum forms. In Francophone Africa, 'transnational' knowledge was borrowed from France sometimes with little or no involvement from local or regional players (Holsinger and Cowell, 2000). Local input in the form

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of indigenous knowledges or sciences was largely ignored. In South Africa, an outcomes-based curriculum in science and other subjects, known as Curriculum 2005, was developed for the purpose of reclaiming knowledge and cognition among South African students. However, instead of it being a local initiative, its origins and evolution can be traced to competency based debates in Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Canada and the United States of America (Cross, Mungadi and Rouhani, 2002). Hence, the curriculum has been criticized for creating a solution to skills and job concerns without addressing the cultural cognitions of students and indigenous peoples input to knowledge thus, imposing a Western perspective and cultural imperialism (Kallaway, Kruss, Donn and Fataar, 1997).

In Rwanda, changes in science curriculum were designed with the help of a curriculum design 'specialist' from Canada to harmonize the primary and secondary curriculum in all subjects. The final document neither included cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes nor reflected critical pedagogical practice (Jaya and Treagust, 2002). In Nigeria, although Odunbunmi (1986) does not explicitly report on the importation of science curriculum, the author notes that science curriculum is a laboratory based subject that focuses on designed experiments that lead to generalizations of findings. Ogunniyi (1986) also observes that the processes of science provide students with unique opportunities to study abstract concepts and generalisations. From this perspective, scientific knowledge is divorced from pedagogy of place, the socio-cultural contexts of learners, and the cultural material that students interact with in their daily lives in their communities.

Besides reproducing curricular from western countries, some African countries have had their policies influenced by international organizations such as the World Bank and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Hassan (1997) observes that in Egypt, patterns of science education and new programs and systems were introduced with outside assistance from international organizations (Hassan, 1997). In countries like Sierra Leon, the World Bank played a major role in curriculum diversification (practical and vocational

oriented subjects) and science education reforms which did not take into consideration incorporating indigenous knowledges and sciences in their models.

Tanzania is one African country which is usually credited for having implemented a home grown curriculum through Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's philosophy of Education for Self Reliance which focused on changing the content and practice of knowledge for primary schools so that it reflected community life, while secondary school science remained symmetrical to western curricular. For example, O-saki (2007) reports that *Inquiry Science* curriculum, in Tanzania, was imported from the USA and Britain. Interestingly, the first curriculum materials for primary school science program (PSSC) came from the USA, while the Nuffield Science Project for secondary schools was from Britain. Curriculum importation was similar throughout East Africa then, namely, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania (O-saki, 2007). Holsinger and Cowell (2000) report that after independence, many African countries adopted the UNESCO biology project, the African Education Programme, and the adaptations of the PSSC physics which were designed by the Education Development Centre of the USA, and the Nuffield Science Programme of Britain. Even when Tanzania localized its examination system, the content of science and mathematics continued to reflect western forms with very little or none of the indigenous sciences that should have been relevant to students' lives.

Current educational reforms in African countries emphasize inquiry based instruction and laboratory science which are not contextualized and have no relevance to indigenous people and their everyday activities (Shumba, 1999). Perception that science knowledge can be "transferred" to the education systems of Africa should be revised. Only a self regulated learning process, which considers the situational bindedness of the knowledge between the learner and situation or context makes it possible to create knowledge in different situations that promote students' identifies.

Through colonial impositions, Western-based scientific knowledge, the so-called empirical or positivist knowledge, exclusively isolates African students who are likely to fail to appreciate and recognize their place in the science that they

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learn. In African classrooms, context-based indigenous epistemology makes sense to both the teacher and learners who can identify with the learning process and the applicability of the science content (Breidlid, 2009; Shizha, 2008a), and incorporating indigenous perspectives provides a paradigm shift in support of African indigenous people's aspirations and their holistic life experiences.

A Brief on Indigenous African Knowledge and Science

There are many ways of conceptualizing and defining indigenous knowledge since meanings and terminologies are quite varied and based on cultural, social, political and ideological definitions (Shizha, 2008a). All forms of knowledge are grounded in culture and cultural identities. Culture is multi-faceted; it may function as a tool used by dominant groups to oppress and undermine the less powerful, or it may be a resource that people can draw upon to give energy to their lives and identities, or it may be a vital feature of ongoing social interaction (Schissel and Wotherspoon, 2003). Cultures are not abstract phenomena that exist independently of people, but rather are living, dynamic entities that interact with and take shape within daily social circumstances. African indigenous knowledges are embedded in the daily circumstances and experiences of diverse African people in their local communities. Regarding the interface between cultural identity and indigenous knowledge, Catherine Odora Hoppers (2005: 2) observes that it

is the template shaping values, behaviour and consciousness within a human society from generation to generation. 'Cultural rights' means the right to preserve and enjoy one's cultural identity and development. ... Within this template, the notion of indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) has been defined as the sum total of the knowledge and skills which people in a particular geographical area possess.

In addition to Odora Hoppers's observation, Watson-Verran and Turnbull (1995: 116) observe, "Though knowledge

systems differ in their epistemologies, methodologies, logics, cognitive structures, or socioeconomic contexts, a characteristic that they all share is localness.” Localness is a component of local people’s culture and indigenous science, in particular. Each epistemology represents an indigenous science or knowledge for a given culture. It is a body of local knowledge and skills unique to a culture, often outside the formal education system that enables communities to survive. Much of African IKS remains tacit, sacred and embedded in practices, relationships and rituals (Bhola, 2002), often transferred orally between generations. Lack of documentation, clear ownership, and development makes it easy to ignore African IKS in favour of Western knowledge systems. Ditton (2007) notes the mono-cultural predominance of Anglo-American-Australian educational approaches to serve the business and capital interests of these countries, which Gonzalez (2004) in Shizha (2008b) describes as ‘coloniality of power,’ a system of control through globalized politics, economics and culture. Western science found in African educational institutions is embedded in this coloniality of power. There is inequality in the hierarchical placement or positioning of Western science and African indigenous science. Indeed, students are required to master the highly positioned empirical laboratory science that contributes towards established Western ‘knowledge,’ while being discouraged from broadening their lowly placed cultural science knowledge (Shizha, 2006, 2008a). The colonization of African knowledge spaces by western ‘knowledge’ in African educational institutions is very problematic. African narratives have been marginalized and deemed irrelevant when in actual fact they are the bedrock of African people’s existentiality and identity. The canon in the current science curriculum in schools represents the grand narrative that privileges the Western-European perspective. In contrast to canonical and mainstream scientific and technological practices, Odora-Hoppers (2000) is convinced that the strategic attempts in Western scholarship gives a negative cognitive and ontological status to everything African while valorising everything in terms of Western cosmology resulting in a monopolising and conformist-driven strategy.

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The Essence of Science Education and the Global/Neoliberal Influence

The challenges from globalization rekindle the colonial memories that reify Eurocentric cultural values and predispositions which are considered as scientific or empirical for the official curriculum in Africa (Shizha, 2008b). According to the South African National Science Education Standards:

Science is a way of knowing that is characterized by empirical criteria, logical argument, and sceptical review. Students should develop an understanding of what science is, what science is not, what science can and cannot do, and how science contributes to culture (South Africa, 1997).

While the South African National Science Education Standards mention science contributing to culture, it is not specific on which culture. What we know is that school science reinforces and reproduces Eurocentric or Western cultural capital, and conversely views indigenous science as “mythical and mystical” despite its applicability to indigenous people’s health systems, agricultural production, agro forestry, and biodiversity (Shizha, 2009). In African academic circles, science is taught in “simulated experimental teaching” (Ma and Chen, 2009: 89) which is predominately influenced by Western meanings and emphasizes the importance of data and empirical evidence on which to build theories (Shizha, 2008b, 2009). In African official science curricula, science is defined from a Western perspective as “the acquisition of systematized knowledge in any sphere of life by methods that are based upon objectively verifiable sense experience” (Makhurane, 2000: 64). Western science disregards the people’s science or everyday life experiences and focuses on replicable observation, description, prediction, and experimentation related to the physical world (Shizha, 2008a).

A critical contributing factor, which impacts on the dynamics in science knowledge construction, is globalisation (Esland, 1996). Knowledge production cannot be divorced

from the cultural perspectives and the seemingly pervasive interaction of global influences. These influences have effects on education and how curriculum is designed. Because education is a cultural process, it brings endemic local tensions into the larger global arena. The influence of globalization on science education and education in general cannot be ignored. Globalization, in its neoliberal sense, refers to a series of economic, cultural and political changes typically viewed as increasing interdependence, integration, and interaction between people and organizations throughout the world (Reynolds and Griffith, 2002). At the level of education, this interdependence includes sharing knowledge and the cross-fertilization of ideas that are relevant for the scientific and economic development of nations. Cross-fertilization, or the hybridization of knowledge, takes into account the differences in the socio-cultural needs of local people (Shizha, 2008b). This entails making indigenous knowledges of local people and the so-called 'positive' knowledge part of the scientific knowledge created by the people, especially educators who have the privilege to construct, legitimate and validate science curricula in schools.

School science based on science laboratories, theorization and positive evidence does not "allow for cultural differences" and "science for all" (Brady, 1997: 414). Instead, science education leads to educational disappointments as African students struggle with abstractions that require memorization rather than applicability in everyday life experiences. Euro-American science, in the form of 'global knowledge', is rooted in "the violence of abstraction" (Baber, 2002: 747) and in the "strategic use of positive essentialism" (Spivak, 1988: 4). In contrast, African indigenous science is practical; everyday life is more about learning how to do things rather than passively receiving knowledge. From a traditional African knowledge perspective, learning is a continuous process not institutionalized but conducted as an exercise of dignity and autonomy.

Science Education and Cultural Dissonance in Africa

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In African classrooms, educators may have to address the complex challenges in terms of how 'official science' disrupts everyday life experiences and intercultural realities. As change agents, teachers require committed to critically rethink how they can strategically construct opportunities and spaces to recognise and build on learners' knowledge and experiences (Odora-Hoppers, 2001) and ensure that learners are able to insert themselves into the democratic learning processes (Prakash and Esteva, 1998). As Schostak (2000) argues, there are no grand narratives concerning what is 'good for all'. Standardisation, to create the curriculum as dictated by neoliberal policies, is patently absurd in a context of diversity and culturally creativity. Standardization of subject matter, pedagogy and high-stakes testing are perceived as solutions to the perceived 'crisis' of the failure of African schools to create competent workers. Through the application of capitalist ideology, schools are expected to churn out school leavers with the 'correct' work attitudes and skills for the capitalist system; hence schools are engaged in behavioural and ideological management of learners. Standardisation of any curriculum generally tends to imply that schools exist "in a vacuum hermetically sealed off from the outside" (Brighouse and Woods, 1999: 99). Such a curriculum is more alienating than invitational as it seeks primarily to satisfy the powerful and privileged instead of converging with the needs of learners in their respective personal and social contexts (Odora-Hoppers, 2001).

The culture of a social group includes its distinctive commitment to certain values (Muwanga-Zake, 2009) that are coherent, profound and systemic to the extent that discrepancy in school achievement could be the manifestation of discontinuity between culture at home and the expectations at school. Hence, Ditton (2007) recognises different epistemologies in different contexts, and cultures' while Semali (1999) deplors the rarity of the interface between the school and African indigenous sciences in science classrooms in many post-colonial schools (Semali, 1999). Formal schooling and formal science, a creation of colonization in Africa, dictate that students follow a prescribed curriculum that is standardized (Shizha, 2008a). Standardization means that teachers focus on the subject

matter prescribed and predetermined by the State and book publishers. Cultural practices and preferences in terms of individual and intra-individual cultural variation are ignored resulting in the cultural caricaturing of some social groups (Lahire, 2008). The transfer of individual knowledge from the learners' everyday life experience to school science lessons is not always valued and encouraged. In the process, African ways of learning and their associated science are not recognized (often deliberately by some teachers (see Shizha, 2007).

Colonially educated teachers create a cultural dissonance between the learners' acquired life experiences and the abstractions of Euro-American science. Neo-colonial education driven by neoliberalism and the credentialization of learning for market-place certification invalidates African sciences to the extent that they are regarded as 'backward' and 'retrogressive.' Julius Nyerere (1968), the first president of Tanzania, once lamented the lack of consistency between school science and learners' indigenous cultures and blamed this dissonance for underdevelopment in Africa. Julius Nyerere (1968: 278), the first president of Tanzania, once lamented

At present our pupils learn to despise even their own parents because they are old-fashioned and ignorant; there is nothing in our existing educational system which suggests to the pupil that he [she] can learn important things about farming from his [her] elders. The result is that he [she] absorbs beliefs about witchcraft before he [she] goes to school; but does not learn the properties of local grasses; he [she] absorbs taboos from his family but does not learn the methods of making nutritious traditional foods. And from school, he [she] acquires knowledge unrelated to agricultural life. He [she] gets the worst of both systems!

Nyerere recognized the need to integrate school knowledge and home knowledge to make learning relevant to African students in order to disrupt the cultural dissonance that existed in the delivery of formal science knowledge.

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Cultural dissonance

Cultural dissonance in this paper refers to the disturbing inconsistency between the African students' cultures and the science curriculum that is taught in African schools. In extension, it is the dislocation of science learning from the cultural experiences of African students, where science learning has no practical implications for their communities' survival and progress. Students who are competent in their cultural explanations or perspectives of science are regarded as "foolish" because of the negative perceptions and conceptions of indigenous African sciences. According to Heine and Lehman (1997), dissonance destroys self-affirmation that is required to maintain a global image of self-integrity through frequent explanations and rationalization of the self. Self-affirmation bolsters a person's perception of their integrity, moral, adaptive adequacy and confidence (Schmeichel and Vohs, 2009). In African schools, students' self-affirmation is disrupted by the teaching of science that disengages the students from image-maintaining process. Shizha's (2008b) study on the incorporation of indigenous knowledges in science learning in Zimbabwe found that students were silenced by the strangeness of what they were taught and were totally disengaged from the learning process. In Kenya, Cleghorn and Rollnick (2002) observed that students who were taught science in their language and applied the cultural knowledge that they brought into science lessons from home performed actively during science education. Dissonance between 'formal science' and 'informal science' creates a boundary between "cultural legitimacy" and "cultural illegitimacy" (Lahire, 2008: 166). Cultural legitimacy is not a purely arbitrary and empty concept. Rather, it depends in large part on the specific properties of cultural activities, namely whether they are individual or collective, organised or unconfined, formal or informal, tight or loose, contemplative or participative (Lahire, 2008). Positive science is accorded cultural legitimacy by elites to create socio-historical conditions that produce homogeneous cultural profiles with cultural dissonances that disregard the contextual plurality

and social functions of culture in science creation, use and interpretation.

Dissonance in science education in Africa can be eliminated by motivating African students to choose alternative learning experiences or explanations and alternative knowledge to what western science regards as “truth” and “rational”. Spreading the alternatives, as Heine and Lehman (1997) suggest, builds a positive image among students and gives them positive personality feedback that promotes cognitive development and learning competence in science. Marginalization of African indigenous sciences alienates students and threatens their confidence and self-affirmation. Spreading alternative learning styles induces high performance motivation and, in that vein, Makuwira (2008) provides a list of what are considered to be characteristics of pedagogies which represent the indigenous worldview in science. Indigenous learners are categorized as:

- Holistic learners – meaning that indigenous students learn in a complete, cooperative, and integrated manner;
- Imaginary learners – where the students’ learning environment is unstructured;
- Kinaesthetic learners – where learners learn through manipulation and movement;
- Cooperative learners – where learning emphasizes group interaction rather than individual effort;
- Contextual learners – where the learning takes place in a specific context relevant to the learning; and
- Person-oriented learners – where learning is not information-oriented but person-oriented.

These learning attributes of African indigenous learners should be taken into account in any teaching and learning program designed to enhance students’ self-affirmation and self-perceptions in order to promote high performance in science learning. The above categorization can be implemented in science curriculum that is student- and community-centred; a process that utilizes social learning through community projects. This model develops a mind and intellect that builds on the holistic and integrated

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approach that emphasizes and strengthens students' imaginations and cooperative learning. There is a keen awareness that knowledge production is socially derived and evaluation in the context of this approach is not associated with objective tests but rather with measuring attitudes and social consciousness ([Emeagwali, 2003](#)).

When viewed from the neoliberal perspective, one sees a great divide between the expectations of neoliberalism, which promote individualism and competition, and the person-oriented approach linked to indigenous learning strategies. Positive science and learning techniques promoted by neoliberalism encourage homogeneity and promote cultural dissonance in the learning settings. Dissonance is in the form of foreign language, assessment, learning style and the irrelevance of science activity that have a negative impact on students' perceptions and understanding of science. Most African students struggle to establish meaningful knowledge and learning remains an impenetrable domain. The cause of cultural dissonance could be linked to the elite African teachers who shun indigenous African science. Thus, according to Muwanga-Zake (2009), an academic African is assimilated into Western intellectual bondage without concern about growing African IKS, leading Raseroka (2005: 6) to assert:

African communities generally have a diminished appreciation of IKS. Imperialism successfully implanted the perception that IKS is worthless or shameful because it did not fit into the colonial education system, its scientific notions and/or the missionary worldview (e.g. perception of all traditional healing practices as witch craft resulting in some cases to criminalization of the practice of this form of healing; the demonization of belief in the ancestral spirit world).

Innovations in African Indigenous Science

Sustainable growth and technological development are achievable (Mohand-Said, 2009). To make advances in scientific developments, African scholars and scientists

should avoid the absolutization of indigenous knowledge systems of Africa's indigenous people and the perception that western traditions of knowing, which are intolerant to other traditions of knowing, are the best (Ntuli, 1999). Africa was not a *tabula rasa* before the colonial era and western cultural systems of knowledge were not regarded as the means to be used in determining the value of Africa's ideas, beliefs and general way of life (Ntuli, 1999). Africa had its own knowledge, ideas and scientific constructs. The colossal architectural Great Pyramids of Egypt and the stone structures of the Great Zimbabwe in Zimbabwe are good examples that reflect the mathematical and scientific principles that were used in constructing these structures. It is therefore crucial that Africa builds on all the valuable indigenous cultural capitals of the past and relinquishes all that is deskilling or disempowering and disastrous to her development, advancement and sustainability. Even today, certain indigenous scientific methods are still in place and in use. For example, the fishing techniques used in East Africa that preserves and conserves fish for future breeding; the post-harvest pest control systems found in most of Africa; and the methods of food preservation and processing are based on African indigenous ways of knowing. Because AIK research is largely community based, a major investment in the enterprise is the well being, health and survival of the most valuable resource of all: people. The use of different herbs and plants to manage disease among the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania; the *hoodia* plants used by the Sani people of Southern Africa; the discovery of the healing properties of the African willow (South Africa) and the hoodia plant (Namibia) and iboga (Gabon and Cameroon), botanicals which are about to revolutionize the Western medical establishment in terms of cancer treatment, dietary care and anti-addictive therapy, respectively ([Emeagwali, 2003](#)) highlight the importance of honouring and respecting African perspectives on science, thus emphasizing the need for an integrated curriculum in schools. Rather than developing an ecologically coded African society which excludes the traditions of knowing of other peoples, an inclusive system and process of traditional knowledge should be deliberately and vigorously sought and implemented in the education system of the continent (Maila and Loubser, 2003). The

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importance of indigenous sciences was supported by Carlson, Foula, Chinnock et al. (2001) who acknowledged that Shaman Pharmaceuticals in South San Francisco collaborated with 58 traditional doctors from 7 provinces and 42 communities in Guinea, West Africa, between 1994 and 1998, which resulted in a collaborative venture in which 145 plant species were identified as useful for the treatment of type 2 diabetes mellitus. Guinea's traditional healers' botanical medicines were highly acknowledged and the healers' contributions recognized in their research with Shaman Pharmaceuticals. Guinea can apply this known indigenous science in its schools to promote indigenous knowledge in the competitive global scientific knowledge. These are achievements and knowledge productions that science education in African schools should be based on in addition to Western science. Traditional African medicinal practices and success are only part of the wider knowledge base on which indigenous sciences are constructed. An analysis of indigenous sciences should include, for example, discussions on medicine, mathematics, food processing, metallurgy and building technology.

School science in Africa should focus on redocumenting and reanalysing these scientific developments, some of which were destroyed and discontinued because of colonialism (Shizha, 2006). One way to reengage African indigenous science in education is through integrating African indigenous perspectives and Euro-American perspectives. African indigenous sciences have been very innovative and useful in the cultural context in which they were constructed and applied. Regrettably, much of the conventional positivist and phenomenological literature is silent about the contested nature of knowledge production (Semali, 1999). There is also silence and paucity of literature on the development of scientific knowledge in Africa. Given that personal and cultural beliefs influence perceptions and interpretations of knowledge, Euro-American science has been shielded from penetration by African indigenous science by arguments that focus on lack of evidence and impairment of objectivity that critics employ against African indigenous sciences. Those conducting the assessment and legitimation of science use political and

ideological influence or biases and financial power to delegitimize non-western sciences. Since indigenous science seems to be relatively less transferable than conventional science, and given its holistic socio-cultural and even spiritual dimensions, students should relate science to community-based learning and community-based research in terms of discovery and experimentation and the mode of transmission and sharing should be collective rather than individualistic.

The Interface

Africans cannot avoid becoming part of what the west has achieved in the world, without forgetting that they, too, have something to offer from their cultures and knowledge (de Beer and Whitlock, 2009). One needs to arrive at a new integration of indigenous knowledges and that of the rest of the world. There are intersections between mainstream science and indigenous science. At the core of mainstream science is the desire to negotiate nature through sequential processes such as hypothesis formulation, experiment and prediction (Shizha, 2006). The process of discovery may be intuitive, accidental, conjectural or inspirational but outcomes are generally predictable and repeatable although some scholars argue that the general thrust of mainstream science is to explain regularity and to deliberately exclude the unique and intractable ([Emeagwali, 2003](#)). Stewart-Harawira (2005: 32) observes that

despite having been devalued, marginalised, disenfranchised and frequently submerged throughout the history of Western imperialism, traditional indigenous knowledge forms have a profound contribution to make towards an alternative ontology for a just global order.

Gergen (2001) argues that knowledge (whether indigenous or western) is spawned within a particular segment of society based on power and class. Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) endorse this view when they argue that schools play a particularly important role in legitimising and producing dominant cultural capital through the hierarchically

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arranged bodies of school knowledge. In Africa, hegemonic western knowledge continues to be given high status in the school curriculum while disadvantaging indigenous African learners who might have attained indigenous cultural capitals. Integrating African perspectives in science education brings learners closer to their cultural identities and experiences leading to a science that is learner friendly and meaningful. Many teachers are hesitant to incorporate IK in the classroom out of fear of infecting classroom teaching with 'pseudoscience' (de Beer and Whitlock, 2009).

In some countries, such as South Africa, Ghana and Kenya, there exists profound enthusiasm and deliberate propositions to incorporate and integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems in education. In South Africa, environmental education provides a vehicle to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge Systems into the school curriculum (O'Donoghue, Masuku, Janse van Rensburg and Ward, 1999). In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development advised that society had a lot to learn from traditional skills and knowledge to manage complex ecological systems (Masuku-van Damme, 1997). It is refreshing to note that the South African government has adopted a broad and holistic policy framework for implementing this international resolution (South Africa, 1997). Consequently, indigenous communities and all South Africans are encouraged and called upon to value traditional knowledge and innovations. Furthermore, the National Research Foundation has made Indigenous Knowledge one of its focus areas in collaboration with the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (South Africa, 1996).

Scholars and educators need to revisit their educational curricula and align them to the needs of Africa based on the available resources at hand. A progressive and robust approach to the transformation of education to address this crucial issue of the disparity in the utilisation of traditional knowledge systems, is critical to the process of emancipating traditional knowledge in both the African and international perspective. Educators, in a collaborative way, may have to strategically rethink the curriculum challenges in terms of how scientific and technological knowledge will be constructed (Scott, 1999). A blended or hybridized

curriculum that incorporates Western science and African indigenous science should be the way forward. There are many indigenous knowledge systems that can be integrated into the science curriculum in African schools. Scientists in South Africa are testing many different indigenous plants that seem to have potential for healing illnesses like malaria, TB, and diabetes. Others are being considered for use as immune modulators for liver transplant patients (Horn, 2005). In Zimbabwe, Mapara (2009: 146) reports that

Among the Shona people, when one was suffering from malaria, there was the use of plants like *chiparurangoma* (*borreria dibrachiata*) as a form of treatment. It was administered orally and one was usually healed of the ailment within twenty-four hours. The Shona also used the shrub called *muwengahonye* (*canthium huillense*) to treat and heal wounds that had become septic on both human beings and livestock. Other plants like *chikohwa/gavakava* (aloe) were and continue to be used to heal people who are suffering from stomach ailments.

Science topics could include ecological sustainability which requires “a patient and systematic effort to restore and preserve traditional knowledge of the land and its functions... this is, knowledge of specific places and their peculiar traits of soils, microclimate, wildlife, and vegetation, as well as the history and the cultural practices that work in each particular setting” (Orr, 1992: 32). This type of knowledge is vital in most African communities. As an example, the Maasai pastoralists of northern Tanzania and southern Kenya traditionally know where to find water, and green shrubs that can be fed to young calves, even during long periods of drought. Likewise, in Ethiopia, often regarded as inevitably dependent on Western aid, the threat of famine can be overcome by local expertise. As Worede (in Seabrook 1993: 13) explains:

There is a wild plant that grows on the Somali border, under the driest conditions, less than 200 mm of rain a year... There are other crops; things people have known where to find in distress times. They go to the

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mountains and pick them and survive somehow. But if you destroy the natural environment of such plants, you lose these resources, and your monocultures won't save you.

By including indigenous knowledge in the curriculum, the particular social identity of the student is acknowledged. By acknowledging students' particular cultures, science programs can turn learning into a more positive experience for students who are resistant to studying the westernized science curriculum (de Beer and Whitlock, 2009).

The work of indigenous healers is well documented in Africa and their role in science and the health sector can no longer be ignored. Amutabi (2008) observes that in Kenya, little has been written about indigenous medicine and the health practices of alternative healers, but this did not stop the government from incorporating indigenous medical systems into Kenya's health system and successful in its mission of availing medical services to the majority of the people. A study by Njoroge and Bussmann (2006) cited in Wane (2010) among the Kikuyu show how herbs are administered to cure malaria. *Caesalpinia volkensii*, *Strychnos henningsii*, *Ajuga remota*, *Waarbugia ugandensis*, and *Olea europaea* were identified as anti-malarial herbal remedies found in the majority of the medicines obtained from roots, trees and shrubs. This indigenous science is relevant for school science and should be part of the science education in African schools. What kind of knowledge do natural healers have and how different is it from the knowledge taught and researched in Western universities? This question has a determining influence on the way indigenous African knowledge is perceived in the Western countries, and also on how Western knowledge is used in Africa. Thus it is important to understand how indigenous African people relate to a globalized science. Africans cannot avoid becoming part of what the west has achieved in the world, without forgetting that they, too, have something to offer from their cultures and knowledge. Africa needs an integration of indigenous sciences and Western science world.

According to Carter (2004), science learners in developing countries may develop a hybridization of perspectives and multiple identities that include interactive knowledge and epistemologies from both Western science and traditional ecological knowledge. What is currently missing, in most African science classes, is a system of teaching and learning that can combine the two. African children are either kept in their home environments, missing out on the 'modern' aspects of education, or (increasingly) forced into full-time formal schooling, missing out on the 'traditional'. The latter often furthers the neo-colonial mentality by building aspirations of urban life and encouraging young people to believe that they have no future in rural communities.

Critical Pedagogy of Place and the Interface

The entrenchment within the curriculum and the educational milieu of structures for the critical evaluation, understanding and revitalization of AIK must necessarily be an important challenge for 21st century policy makers and educators ([Emeagwali, 2003](#)). The end result could be the consolidation of self-sustaining networks of local researchers, democratically engaged in research and compatible with community values, aspirations and goals. Place or location is important in the integration of Western science and indigenous science in Africa. A synthesis of the two sciences can be applied through critical pedagogy of place. As a theoretical framework, critical pedagogy of place synthesizes two education traditions, "critical pedagogy" and "place-based education" and has been proposed as a suitable perspective from which to investigate the connections among ecosystems, culture, and education (Gruenewald, 2003). Critical pedagogy challenges the "assumptions that education should mainly support individualistic and nationalistic competition in the global economy and that educational competition of winners and losers is in the best interest of public life in a diverse society" (Gruenewald, 2003: 3). Rather than teaching and assessing student understanding of an abstract, decontextualized science, a critical pedagogy of place "encompasses an explicit understanding of relationships and processes, an embodied

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knowledge of community relationships and the ecology of place, an awareness of the layered nature of the interdependencies of life-sustaining processes” (Bowers, 2001: 152). To date, comprehensive attention to indigenous African science knowledge, its origins, construction, teaching and learning has remained more artefact than fact.

The fact that science teaching and schooling in general is conducted in a western foreign language makes the discussion on implementing indigenous sciences in African schools mere cosmetic romanticization. Currently, the official language in most sub-Saharan countries is an imported European language and education policies have excluded the use of indigenous languages beyond early primary school. The educational liabilities of imported language use only policies impacts on poor performance, school drop-out rates, inappropriate and culturally irrelevant materials, and exclusion from participation in national decision making (see Bamgbose, 2000; Bunyi, 1999). Africans have a culture, a history, a way of thinking and doing things that are different but enriching. These attributes are linked to the places we inhabit and the locations we occupy in our society. We communicate, interact, socialise and conceptualise issues from a different perspective, background and experience. We tend to look at the whole for meaning and symbolism. We do not split or operate in a linear pattern of thinking. These could no longer be ignored within the transformation framework. It is this African culture and way of doing things that should be integrated into the science curriculum. Therefore, academic institutions should apply pedagogy of place to bring life to science lessons in their classrooms, science that phenomenologically relates to the African learners’ lived experiences.

3. Conclusion

So much is being written and proposed on the viability of indigenous knowledge in Africa and other regions where indigenous people live but the question is: In the face of persistent global and market forces, can indigenous knowledges survive and be utilized in science education in

Africa? To what extent can indigenous sciences be integrated into the science curriculum in Africa? The paper has revealed the viability and usefulness of African indigenous sciences in the life of indigenous people. Indigenous science is important in the communities in which it is used as everyday knowledge, which children grow up learning in their communities. For African students, science education that negates their lived experiences and cultural knowledge would perpetuate and reinforce colonial and neocolonial developments that actually disenfranchise them in a world where multicultural or intercultural knowledge is the basis of most educational projects. Needless to add that I am not calling for the continuation of culture and context deprived systems of education that are not prospectively responding to the needs of a changing world, but rather I support a hybrid of cultures that responds to the needs of African children in African schools. What I am arguing for is the creation of a critically less isolationist science education system that infuses a lot of culture and indigenous paradigms to create inclusive spaces of schooling. Indeed, it is that type of education that can achieve two important, pre-credential items for the child: the desire and the need to be recognized, and the empowerment that is partially instigated by that recognition. If education is a life-long process that is influenced by culture, African indigenous ways of knowing have a role in the learning process in African science education. Science whether in its positive sense or cultural sense is a way of life of a particular people. Western science is not different from African indigenous science; it is also a local knowledge/practice that co-produces a knowledge space. It is essentially a group activity inevitably based in a tradition (the work of others) and it operates, not according to some set of universal principles of logic or method but by local contingent judgements and negotiations which include not just cognitive and practical concerns but moral, political and economic interests as well.

The fact that Africa experienced colonization and is a member of the global community, makes the argument for integration of positive science or colonial-global science and African indigenous science compelling. School science becomes more meaningful if students have voice and see its relevance and experience it outside of school. Teachers and

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students should contribute to an anti-racist and anti-oppressive educational and social practices, and diverse perspectives from multiple social locations. Therefore, African students should experience a hybridity of positive science and indigenous science, with the latter occupying a larger portion of their cognitive experience. As van Wyk (2002) argues, the reality is that in an expanding globalised world, learners can easily become alienated from what is taught in science, as well as the way it is taught if they are denied their cultural knowledge in science education. If standardisation is applied to science, the curriculum generally tends to imply that schools exist "... in a vacuum hermetically sealed off from the outside" (Brighouse and Woods, 1999: 99). The assumption that Africa was empty of science and rational knowledge until Europeans arrived is based on a narrow perception of knowledge as a universal resource (Shizha, 2006). Much research in recent years has addressed the contribution of indigenous knowledge to development initiatives in developing countries, thus, proving the important role that indigenous knowledge plays in science education. Only recently have African nations begun to make their way towards establishing genuinely autonomous education systems incorporating elements of indigenous culture. Africa can succeed in implementing indigenous sciences if academics in African schools act proactively and show interest in indigenous research that can facilitate indigenous peoples' struggle against the ravages of colonialism, neoliberalism and globalization (cf. Shizha, 2010).

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Neoliberal Globalization, ZANU PF Authoritarian Nationalism and the Creation of Crises in Higher Education in Zimbabwe

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Abstract: *This article examines the current crises in university education in Zimbabwe. Using contemporary accounts of neoliberalism and radical nationalism as practised in Zimbabwe, an analysis of higher education is undertaken. The paper argues that, on one side, existing literature tends to blame the Zimbabwean government, without taking into consideration the existing Western imperial pressures. Another set of literature is uncritically behind the ZANU PF government and apports all the blame on Western imperialism. It is argued in this paper that a combination of these two vectors should be used to comprehend the magnitude of the crises in higher education in Zimbabwe. This demands an adoption of a critical colonial posture that enables one to see the destructive tendencies of both Western imperialism, in the form of neoliberal globalization, and outdated radical self-aggrandizing nationalist policies, employed by the former liberators, now in government. Radical nationalism and radical capitalism (neoliberalism) are ideologies fighting on many turfs including that of Zimbabwean higher education which remains in a state of crisis while the proponents of the two authoritarian ideologies prosper. The paper suggests that Zimbabweans, especially members of the university community, should consider drawing from local subaltern perspectives and traditional wisdom (as a source of knowledge), to construct alternatives to the dictatorships of neoliberalism and radical nationalism.*

1. Introduction

The problems facing the formerly colonized countries today generically referred to as the “South”, have come to be associated with Western or developed nations’ agendas and projects. Colonialism, development, and currently neoliberal globalization, it can be argued, have been Western/Northern hegemonic manoeuvres to extract the much required natural

resources to satisfy hyper-consumerist aspirations and ways of living (Black, 2007; Willis, 2005). Harvey (2003) describes neoliberal globalization as the new imperialism where accumulation by dispossession is the main characteristic, and Tikly (2004) also refers to neoliberal globalization as imperialism, a form of Western global hegemony. Similarly, other scholars such as Moyo and Yeros (2007), Bond (2001) and Mamdani (2008) explain Zimbabwe's current problems, specifically in higher education, on the West and its project of domination of the countries of the South. This is manifested in the radical economic policies forced upon the South, on countries like Zimbabwe, by the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) inspired structural adjustment policies (SAPs) and more recently, the Poverty Reductions Strategy Papers (PRSPs).

On the other hand, we have critical colonial commentators and scholars such as Masunungure and Bratton (2008), Raftopoulos (2006), and Scarnecchia (2006) who view the problems in Zimbabwe as manufactured and perpetuated by the Zimbabwean government and its self aggrandizement policies. The West by virtue of its colonial past is used as a scapegoat. According to this school of thought, governenace is at the centre of Zimbabwe's crisis (e.g. in higher education) (Makumbe, 2002; Sithole, 2001). ZANU PF by virtue of having led the bloody and brutal liberation war in the 1970s, regards itself as having the right to rule, by right of conquest (Masunungure and Bratton, 2008), the same claim that was used by the British to exclude the majority black Africans from government during the close to a century long period of colonial rule. On the basis of this reasoning, ZANU PF does not foresee a day it will be out of power and accordingly they wish to rule till eternity (Masunungure and Bratton, 2008). The disputed land issue and elections, the selective use of the law, political violence, corruption and the consequent meltdown of the economy should be understood from ZANU PF's attempts to be the defacto ruling power in Zimbabwe regardless of holding elections after every five years.

These two perspectives provide a two tier explanation of the crises Zimbabweans and higher education are currently experiencing. Opponents of Robert Mugabe and his

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government, blame Mugabe while on the other hand Mugabe's sympathisers blame Western imperialism and the neo-liberal agenda that drives it. It should be noted that both nationalism and neoliberalism are foreign ideas with no local indigenous cultural origins and meaning to the ordinary Zimbabwean. It is against this background that this paper explores the possibility that the twin trajectories of ZANU PF nationalism and neoliberal globalization may be partially responsible for the current crisis in higher education in Zimbabwe, and that the way out of this predicament calls for the ordinary people of Zimbabwe, and more importantly the university community, to construct their own ideas outside nationalist and neoliberal thinking. Before blaming outsiders who are responsible to a significant extent, Zimbabweans should define the status of their postcolonial nation and come to a consensus over issues of governance notwithstanding policy differences. Students and faculty are currently divided into pro- and anti- radical nationalist camps and this has eroded any opportunity for finding solutions bedevilling the nation in general and the university in particular. Leadership should be answerable to and serve the people rather than itself on the basis of some historical justification, such as having participated in the war for independence. Of equally importance is an understanding of the real impacts of global political-economic processes on Zimbabwe. Some view Mugabe as a hero, while others as a dictator. The current crises in higher education, as in other areas of society, are a direct result of the policies of ZANU PF as well as neoliberal globalization policies as enunciated in Washington.

This paper attempts to provide a critical examination of the crisis in higher education, specifically in Zimbabwe's universities, and both Robert Mugabe and his ZANU PF party, on one hand, and the imperialist and Western hegemonic project, euphemistically referred to as neoliberal globalization, on the other hand, will be unmasked as being behind the crisis. Any efforts to account for the crisis in Zimbabwe's education by adopting one of the above perspectives and ignoring the other will not provide a genuine and holistic understanding. Unfortunately, most of the influential works currently available can simply be

described as pro-Mugabe and hence against the West and the neo-liberal agenda, or anti-Mugabe and for the Western version of human rights, democracy and freedom. I argue that the crisis in higher education is caused by both these contradictory and inter-dependent developments; Zimbabwe is a victim of a double tragedy. While most weaker and dependent economies in the South are enduring problems due to neoliberal globalization, Zimbabweans' predicament has been two-fold, radical capitalism and radical nationalism, both feeding on the suffering of poor Zimbabweans. The paper addresses the crises in Zimbabwe's higher education, with specific reference to public universities. This is a presentation of the distinct and bizarre situation obtaining in universities, a relook at the main players involved and the way they are portrayed. A variety of written sources have been employed, including press briefings, newspaper and secondary sources on political developments and higher education in Zimbabwe. These sources are read and interpreted from personal experiences with the Zimbabwe higher education (university), both, as its product and as an instructor in the system. After considering the neoliberalization of higher education, the paper considers the crises-making impacts of ZANU PF radical nationalism. Issues of educational quality and student victimization are then raised and examined as key illustrations of a system in crises being propelled by these twin trajectories affecting the country. This is followed by a reflective conclusion calling for honest analysis of external and internal colonial explanations for the crises and the need for new approaches to addressing this situation; approaches that need to consider (*critically* consider, as opposed to blind traditionalist-observance) local/indigenous approaches (traditional wisdoms) to ways out of crises—a directional proposition that will no doubt require continued engagement, elaboration and political commitment on the part of concerned students, faculty and administration, if not all Zimbabweans.

2. Neoliberal Globalization, Privatization and Crises in Higher Education

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The phenomenon of globalization has been defined in various ways depending on one's standpoint. Globalization is a contested phenomenon, one that does not lend itself easily to any single definition or characterisation. It is said to have many faces, and is usually discussed in economic, political, social, cultural, and technological terms (Vaira, 2004), in the context of interconnectedness and supraterritoriality (deterritorialisation) (Scholte, 2005); characterised by interdependence, flows and exchanges, the role of new technologies, the integration of markets, and the shrinking of time and space (Appadurai, 1996). Thus, globalization is a dynamic hybridization of various interlinked processes operating on a planetary scale. However, Smith (2006) recognizes that the phenomenon of globalization can be seen as a Euro-American vision of an empire, which dates back to the Middle Ages. Most people from the weaker economies, because of the immiseration they endure, at the expense of the extravagant consumption culture found in the world, do not hesitate to see globalization as yet another episode in Western hegemonic development. For instance, Grosfoguel (2005) perceives globalization as capitalist and Euro-centred colonization. Along the same lines, McMichael (2005: 119-120) argues that it is a "Western imperial project, a realignment of market rule, where the iron fist of imperialism and its geopolitical imperatives is ungloved". The relentless extraction of raw materials from the South, and the consequent destruction of both human and natural resources in these weaker economies, prompted Petras and Veltmeyer (2001: 66) to argue that "it is a strange concept of globalization that describes pillage and profit in the same breath as interdependence and stateless corporations". Thus there is an element of unanimity among critical scholars that globalization is imperialism. It is yet another stage of Western pillaging of weaker societies' resources. This is succinctly put across by Kapoor (2009a: 3):

Today's neo-colonialism/imperialism (globalization), as an advanced strain of colonialism, does not require direct political rule and occupation (formal colonies are not required), as control is exercised through growing economic and financial dependencies which ensure

captive labour markets (e.g. Export Processing Zones or EPZs also referred to as sweat shops) in developing countries (the colonies/Third World) producing goods primarily for export to developed countries (colonial powers/ First World) and secures continued exploitation of resources and environments in developing countries largely for developed country consumption.

Thus as Zimbabwe adopts SAPs dictated by the World Bank and the IMF, devaluing its currency to attract foreign (mostly Western) investment, encourage production for export while Zimbabweans fail to access home made products, like sugar; as it enters into agreement with Transnational Companies in the various sectors of the economy, we are witnessing the new form of colonialism (or neo-colonialism) at play. The ideology of this new form of colonialism is described as free-market ideology and is commonly known as neoliberalism. The principles of the free market have since been adopted in higher education institutions, at the instigation of the World Bank/IMF and the government. Neoliberal ideas in Zimbabwe's universities, like in other countries, have mainly been introduced in the form of marketization. Proponents of higher education marketization (neoliberalism) have consistently argued that large scale public funding of higher education is no longer tenable and is regressive; that generous public funding of higher education undermines equitable access, efficiency and even quality (Barr, 2004; Johnstone, 2001; World Bank, 1994).

University education in Zimbabwe has become a casualty of neoliberal policies imposed on highly indebted countries of the South. Soon after attaining independence, most African governments, including the Zimbabwean government, seeking national development, borrowed money from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The Bretton Woods Institutions turned these national debts into an opportunity to impose SAPS. Indebted governments, like the government of Zimbabwe, were required "to reduce spending, to privatise industry and services, to cheapen labour, to open up markets to multinational companies, to relax controls on capital

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movements, to devalue their currencies etc” (Levidow, 2002: 8). With reference to higher education, the government was called upon to “relieve the burden on public sources of financing higher education by increasing the participation of beneficiaries and their families (World Bank, 1988: 77). The above position was reinforced in 1994 when the World Bank pointed out that “the extent of government involvement in higher education (in Africa) far exceeded what is economically efficient” (World Bank, 1994: 9). Universities in Zimbabwe were called upon to generate revenue for their operations. Government funding started dwindling as prescribed by the World Bank (Altbach, 2004; Wangenge-Ouma, 2008). Marketization strategies have been adopted and includes, among many others, formation of university owned for-profit companies, co-ventures with proprietary non-university institutions, farming, petty trade on campus and admission of full fee-paying students (Nafukho, 2004). Fee-paying students are enrolled in courses invariably referred to as parallel programs. These are normal degree courses offered in the evenings, weekends and holidays when formal university business has closed. Students in parallel programs pay full fees with no government subsidy. The introduction of parallel programs has been witnessed at the University of Zimbabwe, Midlands State University, Great Zimbabwe University and National University of Science and Technology. Parallel programmes fit in with neoliberalism’s treatment of higher education as a private commodity; a traded commodity to be purchased by a consumer, a product to be retailed by academic institutions (Altbach, 2004; Levidow, 2005). The reality is that only those from the rich socio-economic backgrounds attend parallel programmes. The reduction or absence of government funding in universities ushered in an era of cost sharing. The World Bank wanted education services to be brought into the market place, through increased private provision and cost sharing (World Bank, 1988, 1994). According to Johnstone (2003: 351) “cost sharing is the assumption by parents and students of a portion of the costs of higher education- costs that, in many nations, at least until recently, have been borne predominantly or even exclusively by governments, or taxpayers”. The effects of

marketization have seen food and accommodation services on university campuses being privatised.

3. ZANU PF Radical Nationalism and the Creation of Crisis in Zimbabwe

The ZANU PF government has always publicly portrayed itself as patriotic, nationalist and pan-Africanist, and has always turned to nationalist rhetoric to arouse the people's feelings and obtain political support, both nationally and outside Zimbabwe's borders. According to Gellner (2006: 1), "nationalism as a sentiment is a feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the political principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent or a feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment". Guibernau (1996: 47) defines nationalism as "the sentiment of belonging to a community whose members identify with a set of symbols, beliefs and ways of life, and have the will to decide upon their common political destiny". In the case of Zimbabwe, geographical location, language, and colonial experience that ended after a brutal war, are some of the common uniting factors that define a people as Zimbabweans, and thus arouse the sentiment of nationalism.

It is important to briefly trace the history of nationalism and then locate the particular strain of nationalism being practised in Zimbabwe today. According to Anderson (1991), the first truly modern nationalism, developed as anti-colonial nationalism, in the various Creole-led independence movements that were found throughout the Americas in the latter half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. It later spread to Western Europe and then Asia, and Guibernau (1996) observes that the models of nationalist development historically generated in this process became available for pirating by later nationalist activists (like those in ZANU PF). ZANU PF appealed to nationalist feelings and succeeded to gain power. But Glover (1997: 14) observes that "while nationalism provides a series of goals- the creation of a state, the reconstruction of a nation, the development and

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encouragement of the national culture and interests, it does not indicate the direction to be taken or the methods which should be adopted to achieve them". In other words it does not provide directions on how a nation can develop

Nationalism, at its extreme is sometimes equated to racism or ethnocentrism, which define nationhood from social egocentrism, implying that loyalty towards the macro culture is more important than the wishes of its individual members (Hall, 1992). In Zimbabwe, since 2000, the demand for civil and political rights has been viewed and dismissed by the ruling party and government as minority and foreign concerns aimed at unsettling majority political will and reversing the gains of national independence and sovereignty (Raftopoulos, 2003). Zimbabwean nationalism cannot be divorced from Mugabe's policies, with Mugabe having been at the helm since 1980 when the country gained independence from Britain. This nationalist doctrine is termed Mugabeism by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009: 154) and is described as follows:

at one level it represents pan-African memory and patriotism and at another level it manifests itself as a form of radical left-nationalism dedicated to resolving intractable national and agrarian questions. Yet, to others, it is nothing but a symbol of crisis, chaos and tyranny emanating from the exhaustion of nationalism.

But others are very clear with their prognosis of Zimbabwean nationalism as practised by ZANU PF. It is seen as a policy that includes deliberate defaulting on foreign debt; pursuit of an anti-imperialist foreign policy; increased state intervention and regulation of business and a fast-track land reform programme (Moyo and Yeros, 2007). Mugabe's nationalism is also viewed as championing justice for the majority who were denied justice during the colonial period (Mamdani, 2008). But the question remains: why are the peasants and ordinary Zimbabweans opposed to Mugabe's rule, in other words, ZANU PF nationalism, if it has indeed brought previously denied justice and land? The portrayal of Mugabe nationalism or Mugabeism, as dictatorial and

without the support of the ordinary peasants in Zimbabwe, is well documented by Ranger (2008). The 2008 national elections, for both the parliament and President, showed a rejection of ZANU PF by the people of Zimbabwe, and more importantly the rural peasants. Others expose the authoritarianism and violence hidden behind the pan-African and anti-imperialist rhetoric of Mugabe's nationalism (Phimister and Raftopoulos, 2004; Raftopoulos, 2006; Ranger, 2008).

It can be derived from Anderson's theory of nationalism, as well as from any genealogical analysis of world nationalisms, that ZANU PF's brand of nationalism, and any other form of African nationalism, was created by European colonialism. Colonialism did not introduce nor promote democracy, human rights and freedom, "rather it was a terrain of conquest, violence, police rule, militarism and authoritarianism" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009: 1144). Colonialism therefore is seen reproducing itself, but in another form, within the nationalist political movements, such as ZANU PF. The brutality of the Zimbabwean police force, even towards unarmed citizens like university students has been widely documented, and has been equated to Ian Smith's Rhodesian system (Makoni, 2007; Megan, 2006). This paper argues that colonialism did not end in 1980 when Zimbabwe obtained its independence. This was just an end of a stage in European/Western colonialism. An equally dictatorial and brutal form of colonialism exists today, and this is manifested in neoliberal globalization as authored and driven by the rich countries of the world and their Transnational Companies (TNCs) (e.g. see Munrozi, 2009 and partnerships between indigenous Zimbabweans and TNCs in the case of Marange diamonds). Mugabe and his ZANU PF's leftist or radical dictatorial nationalism feeds on current Western hegemonic tendencies and provides this brand of nationalism with ready support from disgruntled people who have borne the brunt of IMF-designed immiseration.

Unemployment in Zimbabwe is currently at 80 percent, the rate of inflation hit record world levels in 2008 as shown in the table below. The abandonment of the Zimbabwean dollar at the beginning of 2009 and the resultant adoption of foreign currencies, though it has

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reigned in price increases, many people, especially the majority in the communal areas, have no access to foreign money, and it is reported that barter trade has been adopted in some circumstances, such as in the payment of school fees.

Table 1: Rate of Inflation

Year	All Items CPI	Year on Year Price Increases
1990	29.6	15.5
1991	36.8	24.3
1992	52.3	42.1
1993	66.7	27.5
1994	81.6	22.3
1995	100.0	22.5
1996	121.4	21.7
1997	144.3	18.9
1998	190.1	31.7
1999	301.3	58.5
2000	469.6	55.9
2001	100.0	71.9
2002	233.2	133.2
2003	1084.5	365.0
2004	4880.3	350.0
2005	16486.4	237.8
2006	184101.4	1016.7
2007	12562581.7	6723.7
2008	35500566912457.9	231150888.87%
2009 July	91.3	1.0%

Source: Adapted from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe: Inflation Rates (2009)

School dropouts due to high fees, especially in universities, spread of diseases because of no clean water, or no water at all, as was the case at the University of Zimbabwe (Makoni, 2007; The Sunday Mail, 2009; Zimbabwe National Students Union, 2009) paint a grim picture of the situation. Prostitution (propelled by hardship) and consequently high risks of contracting HIV/AIDS among university students is yet another problem (Makoni, 2007). Faculty and other

highly skilled personnel are leaving Zimbabwe in large numbers (Chetsanga and Muchenje, 2003; Makombe, 2009; Zimbabwe National Students Union, 2009). The fact that Robert Mugabe capped only 612 out of the 4000 University of Zimbabwe students who were scheduled to graduate at the 2009 graduation ceremony illuminates the extent of the crisis in Zimbabwe, both, in general and specifically in higher education (Gumbo, 2009).

4. Exploring the Intersections: Neoliberalism-ZANU PF Radical Nationalism and the Erosion of Higher Education

The period 1980 to 1990 is referred to by some as one of developmental nationalism, when the government of Zimbabwe adopted policies that aimed to satisfy the nationalist demands that had helped it galvanise people's support for the war (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009). The rationale of developmental nationalism was rooted in the imperative need to redress colonial racial inequalities and the uplifting of the majority blacks to a status of dignified human beings. Colonial governments had consistently treated indigenous black Africans as sub-humans, not capable of governing themselves. The first decade was therefore characterized by phenomenal quantitative expansion in higher education.

The adoption of IMF/World Bank sponsored reforms in 1991, however, ushered in a new era in education and specifically university education. The guiding principle was the reversal of government support and the adoption of what the World Bank (1988: 77) referred to as "relieve the burden on public sources of financing higher education by increasing the participation of beneficiaries and their families. It should be pointed out that the ZANU PF government was forced to adopt or was arguably perhaps even in favour of the SAPs that were adopted in higher education, as the party/officials if not Mugabe/ZANU PF radical nationalism also stood to gain (materially and politically) from some of these neoliberal interventions.

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Inaccessibility, Privatization of Services, Financial Duress for Students and Employment Implications for Faculty

The privatization of university amenities such as catering and accommodation services benefitted those with connections within the government or the ruling party (Muronzi, 2009). They became the new entrepreneurs in the name of black empowerment or indigenization. Foreign companies were also encouraged to invest in Zimbabwe. Thus the post 1991 Zimbabwe witnessed what some have described in other contexts as “state-corporate developmental collusions” (Kapoor, 2009b: 62), as the government of Zimbabwe and neoliberal policies derived from Washington, worked together in promulgating policies that marked the beginning of the crisis Zimbabwe has been enmeshed in for more than a decade now. Though the Zimbabwean government later dropped the IMF/World Bank driven structural adjustment programmes at the beginning of the new millennium, in principle the new homegrown policies that were introduced were still very much neoliberal policies. The difference was that they were now authored by Zimbabweans but the business mantra found in IMF/World Bank development prescriptions had a huge presence in the so called home grown programmes. The consequences for the people, such as those witnessed in higher education, were the same--privatization, marketization, cost recovery (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997).

Thus, since 1991 to the present, the population of Zimbabwe has been under siege from the neoliberal agenda, at the behest of the ZANU PF government. The introduction of fee-paying policy in universities together with the privatization of basic amenities such as accommodation and food catering has brought untold suffering to the students, the majority of whom are from rural/peasant and working-class parentage. Studies have shown that students are finding it difficult to pay for university education. For instance a study of university students in Zimbabwe states that:

The largest proportion of the respondents depended on their relatives or met their own educational costs.

Sixty-one percent of these relatives relied on their salaries, which predominantly have been overtaken by inflation. It is not surprising that the largest proportion of students across all institutions (54%) reported that they were sacrificially capable of meeting their educational costs. Twenty percent of the relatives used business profits and 13% transfers from acquaintances outside Zimbabwe. Most students relying on such relatives were comfortably or moderately capable of paying their dues. Interestingly, female students, more than half of them single, who constituted 7% of those relying on relatives, were receiving support from their 'spouses' or 'lovers', illustrating the existence of loose intimate relationships as a way of coping with high educational costs. The remaining group of relatives obtained income from vending (2%), other informal trade (1%), pensions (1%) and miscellaneous activities (3%) and all of them were sacrificially capable of supporting students under their guardianship (Makoni, 2007: 22).

The crisis is also seen in the drop in salaries of university employees and this has affected the working morale of academics. There has been a mass exodus of academics, resulting in plummeting standards. The flight of lecturers has hit crisis levels (Makumbe, 2009). Makombe (2009), citing Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education documents, reported that public universities have been hard hit by understaffing with the University of Zimbabwe having 385 out of the required 1171 academic members, Harare Institute of Technology has a 70% vacancy level with only 37 academic staff members out of a possible 123. Major push factors were low pay for academics in a collapsing economy with 165,000% inflation - the world's highest - poor working conditions, lack of transport and computers, and problems finding accommodation (Manyukwe, 2008). To add to this plethora of problems, there have been consistent increases in fees since 1991 and universities have been losing crucial donor funding, especially from the West. Only the Chinese seem to be supporting the University of Zimbabwe and in

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return, the Chinese language is being taught at the institution.

World Bank and International Monetary Fund's macro-economic principles of budget deficit reduction and restricted social spending (Johnstone, 2001; Nafukho, 2004) forced the government to stop financing higher education and leave that responsibility to individuals. The adoption of the homegrown development blueprint by the Zimbabwean government did not change this policy. With the abandonment of the valueless Zimbabwean dollar and adoption of multi-currencies, especially the US dollar and the South African Rand, higher education became even dearer and more out of reach (Share, 2009; Sunday Mail, 2009; ZINASU, 2009). Universities are largely underfunded and this forced universities to close doors for the whole of the second half of the 2008 academic year (Manyukwe, 2008). The University of Zimbabwe, the flagship of higher education in Zimbabwe, failed to open at the beginning of the 2009 academic year and only opened in August, and when it did open it could not accommodate first year students. Very few students turned up on opening day because of high fees ranging from US\$403 to US\$600. Only 68 out of 12 000 students at the institution had paid tuition fees while grants from traditional sources such as the government had either not been released or were not adequate (Share, 2009). Another worrying trend is that students are being forced to seek alternative accommodation as the college authorities cannot reopen the halls of residences citing water shortages (The Sunday Mail, 2009). The official government owned Herald newspaper quoted a university student in Harare describing their accommodation situation as follows:

About 20 students share a guestroom in the main house and there are 11 illegal wooden cabins, which house more than 45 students. Most house owners collect between US\$20 and US\$40 in rentals a month from each student. These landlords are making a killing from the students' predicament. Our landlord collects over US\$3 200 every month, as there are more than 80 students each paying US\$30 (Share, 2009).

The marketization policies adopted under the neoliberal doctrine adopted from the West, and the continuation of these policies by Mugabe's government have brought university education down on its knees. Some blame Western nations, as well as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for Zimbabwe's crisis because they have been refusing to extend balance of payment support, while the government of Zimbabwe argues that it is under Western sanctions. However, critics of the government perceive it differently.

Of course the blame must rest squarely at Robert Mugabe's door. He is the Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe, yet he is also the primary cause of most of the institution's woes. It is his stealing of the presidential vote in March 2008 that effectively ruined this nation and made it difficult for any well meaning nations and donor agencies to continue to assist this country. It was also as a result of the deception associated with the presidential elections that forced the national economy to take a rapid tumble into the doldrums. That economic collapse eventually led to the dollarization of the economy, with serious consequences for the students and their parents who simply could not afford the US dollar fees being charged by the University of Zimbabwe (Makumbe, 2009).

Neoliberalism regards higher education as a private commodity, a traded commodity to be purchased by a consumer, a product to be retailed by academic institutions (Altbach, 2004). University vice-chancellors and faculty deans have been turned more into business executives than the usual superintendents of pedagogical issues. In an attempt to generate revenue and fund their activities marketization has been adopted by some universities in Zimbabwe as part of the neoliberal model of privatization. Full fee-paying students are admitted over and above the students who come in with government subsidy. These students are enrolled into courses invariably referred to as parallel programmes. In most cases students enrolled in

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these programmes come from families of good socio-economic status and in most case they are already professionals seeking upward mobility within their trades. This explains why at the Midlands State University, Great Zimbabwe University, National University of Science and Technology and the University of Zimbabwe, parallel programmes started in the Faculty of Business before other areas joined in. Parallel programmes help bring in much required revenue, but some perceive it as a degree buying venture that has led to the deterioration in the standards of degrees being awarded in Zimbabwe. Government considers it as empowerment of the people and a vindication of its progressive policies of educating the nation, a need the black majority Zimbabweans were denied during British colonial rule.

The policies of Robert Mugabe's government have precipitated the crisis (Raftopoulos, 2006) and Mugabe bases the rationale and justification of his dictatorial policies on Western imperialism as manifested by neoliberal globalization schemes dominating the contemporary world (Moyo and Yeros, 2007). Neoliberal policies, as first imposed by the International Monetary Fund and later adopted by the Mugabe regime cannot be absolved. Mugabe's leftist nationalism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009), radical and exhausted nationalism (Raftopoulos, 2003) also characterised as dictatorial power grab nationalism (Meredith, 2007) is seen to be at the centre of the crisis. The suffering and crisis in higher education can be located at the vortex of neo-liberal globalization and Mugabeism, which is:

a creature of colonialism operating according to the latter's immanent logic. Its reproduction of ethnic and racial features is a reflection of its progenitor, which is colonialism. Its representation of many issues and its operation as a nest of contradictions is part of its character and survival strategy, through totalising and articulation of various longings, demands and claims of different constituencies either as aspects of decolonisation or as a politics of victimhood and redemption (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009: 1154).

Quality of University Education

According to Mbembe (2002), Marxism and nationalism as ideologies gave birth to two narratives on African identity: nativism and Afro-radicalism. Mbembe (2002: 629) defines nativism as:

a discourse of rehabilitation and a form of defence of the humanity of Africans predicated on the claim that their race, traditions, and customs confer to them a peculiar self irreducible to that of any human group, and there to chart what might or should be the destiny of Africa and Africans in the world.

Mugabe's version of nationalism has been described by some as nativist. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009: 1147) argues that Mugabe's nationalism:

Despite its self-projection as 'democratic', 'radical' and 'progressive', Mugabeism is interpolated by nativism. It is indeed appropriating and mobilising Marxist and nationalist rhetoric to develop an imaginaire of culture and politics in which a manipulation of the rhetoric of autonomy, resistance, and emancipation serves as the sole criterion for determining the legitimacy of an authentic African discourse.

To attain this African (Zimbabwean) reclamation or rehabilitation and renaissance, expansion in higher education was embarked upon to accommodate as many people as possible. In 1980, there was only one university, the University of Zimbabwe with a student population of 2,240 (Nherera, 2005). Currently there are nine public universities with a total of 55,548 students, using 2007 statistics (Southern African Regional Universities Association, 2009). This expansion has been quantitative and the qualitative dimension has been ignored or cannot be attained under current circumstances. With the neoliberal doctrine from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund dictating to the indebted governments to reduce higher education funding, and the absence of corporate funding, universities in Zimbabwe were faced with

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the problem of undercapitalization. The impact of this has been the mass movement of faculty to other countries, particularly to South Africa and Botswana where conditions are better. Some of the new universities do not have staff at the grade of professorship except the vice and pro-vice chancellors. The natural sciences and business fields have been hard hit and most universities make use of teaching assistants with just first-degree qualifications (Makombe, 2009). They are supposed to operate under experienced professors but in some instances they are found to be in charge of courses. Due to the high demand for university education, most universities have introduced graduate programmes. It is common to find holders of a masters degree teaching masters courses. Statistics show that close to 3.5 million people have left Zimbabwe since 2000 when the economy went into decline and political persecution heightened and out of these 500,000 are skilled professionals, who given the right environment, would prefer to return home (O'Dea, 2006). The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education has since formed the Brain Drain and Human Capital Mobilisation Committee whose mandate is to deal with the issue of skills shortages wrought about by the brain drain (Jongwe, 2009). As part of this brief, the committee is tasked with exploring various ways in which, this brain drain can be turned into a brain gain. The goal of the committee is to keep more professionals here while reaping the benefits of expatriate Zimbabweans. At independence such similar shortages of teaching staff were alleviated by bringing in expatriates but today Zimbabwe is a pariah society and very unattractive even to its own citizens, let alone to foreigners.

The problem of inadequate teaching staff has led to heavy teaching loads with instructors having to teach all year without a break. Since the introduction of parallel programmes, almost all the universities have programmes running throughout the year, in some cases including evenings and weekends. University vacations have been made to coincide with school holidays so as to allow school teachers enrolled in the parallel or part-time programmes to attend lectures. The only time some lecturers have a break is when universities are forced to close due to strikes by

students or industrial action by staff. These have been very frequent in recent years. Such closures are usually followed by crash programmes to make up for the lost time and money. The Great Zimbabwe University calendar for 2009 has three 'semesters'. Midlands State University students complained of not holding tutorials and being starved of lectures by being constantly referred to the internet for more information (Makoni, 2007). Under such stressful circumstances, and the large numbers involved, many cases of plagiarism go unnoticed and students engaging the services of others for a payment make the quality issue even worse. Similar issues of quality were noted in Kenya where cases of students taking previous research projects and slightly altering the titles and changing names, then presenting the projects as their original work have been reported (Wangenge-Ouma, 2008).

Besides the poor economy and the consequent depressing conditions in Zimbabwe's universities, academics have faced persecution from Mugabe's increasingly dictatorial government. With the government facing challenges and growing unpopularity, the critical voice from academe has been labelled the voice of the opposition and perceived as agents of the West aiding and seeking regime change. Such has become the politicization of the university that academic freedom does not exist. The law governing universities gives government, through the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education control over the running of the institutions. According to Cheater (1991: 202), "the Minister's involvement in choosing the nominees of the organisations represented on Council, the reduction of the university's autonomy and its conversion into a politically-controlled university comparable to a secondary school", are some of the main features of the laws that govern universities in Zimbabwe. Faculty members at that time, as cited by Cheater (1991: 204) tried to oppose the law and the Association of University Teachers released a press statement saying:

We reject the central intention of the Bill, which is to impose direct political control over the University: to transform it from an autonomous institution of learning into a state university. Given the dominance

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of a single party in the Government, the University could effectively become ... merely a party university.

It should be pointed out that at independence in 1980 Mugabe, addressing a conference on the role of the university in Zimbabwe said, "To paraphrase that famous aphorism about generals and war: higher education is too important a business to be left entirely to deans, professors, lecturers and University administrators" (Chideya, Chikomba, Pongweni, and Tsikirayi, 1981: 6). This meant academic freedom was not going to be recognised and Mugabe's administration has been relentless and consistent.

The denial of academic freedom in Zimbabwe has nothing to do with neoliberalism. Its genealogy can be traced to the 1960's when ZANU PF was formed, an era characterized by European colonial dictatorship, and later the failure of the party to transform itself from a liberation war movement into a governing political party. In an attempt to instil patriotism among the youth there has been pressure exerted on education institutions to teach what ZANU PF calls patriotic history whose rationale is to ward off Western criticism and protect national independence and sovereignty. According to Sikhumbuzo Ndiweni, ZANU-PF Information and Publicity Secretary for Bulawayo, "the mistake the ruling party made was to allow colleges and universities to be turned into anti-Government mentality factories" (Ranger, 2004: 218). Such ideas are premised on the fact that the opposition parties in Zimbabwe, such as the MDC, have former student leaders and faculty members among their ranks. And by being universities, the nature of their business involves critiquing their society. Krigger (2006) observed that historians in Zimbabwe have deplored how the ruling party, ZANU PF, has been propagating a distorted version of the history of the nationalist struggle to legitimate its violent confiscation of land and repression of the opposition since 2000. Ranger (2004: 218) further noted that:

In the History Department... Some of the senior academics, whose example had been so important, have left or are leaving for universities elsewhere.

Much of this is the result of Zimbabwe's dire crisis, which affects academics in all subjects. But there is a particular challenge for academic historians. There has arisen a new variety of historiography... This goes under the name of 'patriotic history'. It is different from and narrower than the old nationalist historiography, which celebrated aspiration and modernisation as well as resistance. It resents the 'disloyal' questions raised by historians of nationalism. It regards as irrelevant any history that is not political. And it is explicitly antagonistic to academic historiography.

Universities are faced by a paranoid dictatorship, which defines every episode in its history as a war against the West. Western neoliberal globalization, much criticised and condemned in the South, has become cannon fodder on which ZANU PF feeds on. Sloppy post-colonial theorists see Mugabe as an example of a pan-Africanist, an indomitable "lion" who possesses the temerity to name Western oppression and empower Africans by dispossessing European farmers of the land they held since colonial times. But the suffering that the ordinary Zimbabweans go through is ignored and all blame is heaped on the West. Within such an intimidating atmosphere, it is difficult to find any scholarship that is critical of the government. Those that have openly criticised ZANU PF, for example, John Makumbe and Takavafira Zhou, have been labelled enemies of the state and have faced persecution in the form of arrests while those who praise the government are found sitting on various boards of parastatals. The net result of all this has been a decline in the standing of university education.

State Victimization of Students

The deleterious impact of ZANU PF radical and dictatorial nationalism on one side and neoliberal interventions on the other has also been witnessed in the welfare of the students. Cases of students demonstrating in relation to Zimbabwean universities are not new as they date back to the Rhodesian days. Unfortunately, since independence, opposition to Mugabe's dictatorial practices

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has brewed mainly in universities, with the University of Zimbabwe being in the lead. Students are squeezed in between teething economic challenges and a government that wants them to remain silent and soldier on under the banner of nationalism and patriotism. Megan (2006) cites numerous cases of student victimization. According to a study by the Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU):

As government tightens its grip on students to avoid their possible activism, students have lost several of their liberties, especially the freedoms of association, assembly and expression because of POSA (Public Order and Security Act) and AIPPA (Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act). For example, campus security guards at NUST reportedly harass any student they see associating with Mr. Bere, the Students Representative Council President, because of his activism. The powers that campus security guards have assumed to discretionally assault the very students they previously guarded has left students appearing like high school students (Makoni, 2007: 30).

The laws in Zimbabwe today threaten the academic freedom of students and consequently promote student victimization. One of them is the University Amendment Act of 1999 that gives the Vice Chancellor of an institution the right to expel students for life. 101 students have been expelled since 2001 for political reasons (ZINASU, 2009), while hundreds have been victimized in the form of torture, arbitrary arrest and unlawful detentions. Several of them have had to finish their education abroad. It is a clear violation of the freedom of expression and academic freedom of students, that they can be expelled for expressing political views. While administrative authorities at tertiary learning institutions expel, fine or suspend students, the riot police, state security agents and campus security guards spearhead the physical and emotional torture of students. State security agents reportedly break into rooms of student activists or union leaders at late night or early morning

hours to kidnap them for questioning or torture in order to silence them (Universities World News, 2008; ZINASU, 2009).

5. Concluding Reflections

Colonial/post colonial studies on Africa, are generally anti-colonial and consequently, and rightly so, blame African ills on Western hegemonic projects, namely colonization, development and neoliberal globalization. The intentional result of such positioning has been to ignore the problems inherent within African governance since the end of direct European political rule. This stream of scholarship ignores the rise and development of dictatorship, especially within the former liberation movements. To such scholars, criticizing fellow Africans is unpatriotic and reactionary, leading to labels such as “an agent of neo-colonialism”. This paper distances itself from such a blend of post-colonial African writing. Equally biased is the critical writing, mostly written from the developed world, by those, mostly sympathisers of commercial farmers whose land was taken without compensation by Mugabe’s government. These have considered Mugabe’s government as dictatorial, racist and fail to acknowledge the effects of Western hegemonic policies, particularly poverty caused by neoliberal globalization. Neoliberal globalization feeds Mugabe’s nationalist rhetoric and the subsequent portrayal of Mugabe as an African pan-Africanist hero in some quarters of the African community and generally with blacks in the diaspora.

In this paper I argued that both ZANU PF government and neoliberalism are responsible for the plight of the suffering people of Zimbabwe and those in the country’s universities. Consequently the response to the crises in universities cannot be located in either of these two ideologies. Universities and other concerned scholars are being called upon to engage in what is described as “border gnosis; knowledge from a subaltern perspective conceived from the exterior borders of modern/colonial world system” (Mignolo, 2000: 11). Peters (2007: 48) echoes the same opinion when he states:

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In non-European cultural traditions the task of the post-colonial university, in a different cultural time, may be precisely to focus upon the question of national cultural self-definition and to do so as a means of coming to terms, confronting, engaging with, or resisting forces of cultural homogeneity which threaten to erode indigenous traditions in the wake of a globalization which commodifies both word and image.

Local indigenous ideas need be promoted—ideas that are not only opposed to the rich First World's continuing and sustained pillaging of weaker nations' raw materials and natural resources, but also critical of the breed of African leadership that has become as oppressive and dictatorial as the former European colonisers. Mignolo (2000: 67) called such an approach "a double critique, a border thinking, since to be critical of both Occidental and Islamic fundamentalism (authoritarian nationalism in this context) implies to think from both traditions and, at the same time, from neither of them". As succinctly expressed by Grosfoguel (2005: 287-288), some form of colonialism is still present in Zimbabwe today:

Coloniality does not refer only to classical colonialism, or internal colonialism, nor can it be reduced to the presence of a colonial administration... I use coloniality to address colonial situations in the present period. I mean the cultural, political, sexual, and economic oppression and exploitation of subordinate racialized and ethnic groups by dominant racial and ethnic groups, with or without the existence of colonial administrations.

To turn a blind eye to African leaders' excesses, including the persecution of university students and faculty and the near total collapse of universities is irresponsible scholarship. Ignoring coloniality and all the forms of suffering that accompany colonialism of all strands is unacceptable and can not be a viable foundation from which to build higher education and indeed, Zimbabwe.

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Critical Perspectives on NGOs and Educational Policy Development in Ethiopia

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Abstract: *This paper examines the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in advocacy and educational policy development in Ethiopia and puts forward the proposition that development organizations working in the education sector in Ethiopia have moved away from their initial role as service providers and are morphing in to policy developers; a trend that has and will continue to have a detrimental effect on the languages, cultures and educational prospects of Ethiopians. While NGOs have gained acceptance in the country based on their claims to speak on behalf of/for/with the people (grassroots claims), utilizing the example of the NGO, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), my experience as a teacher in Ethiopia as a VSO-placed volunteer and a related review of education policy documents and critical literature on NGOs, it is suggested that INGOs (international NGOs) are in fact dominant institutions that primarily work in collaboration with and in the socio-political interests of the upper echelons of the state, higher education institutions and multilateral development agencies (in contra-distinction to their alleged grass-roots championing rhetoric). INGOs are subsequently implicated in the contemporary process of neo-colonial penetration of the country by aiding the process of reproducing an imported and externally driven schooling/educational policy.*

1. Introduction

NGOs have gradually begun to transform the sub-Saharan African political and educational landscape over the past twenty years or so. Education is seen as a general societal need by many, and few would argue against improving the formal educational system in African nations to educate the masses. NGOs work within this context,

taking up the challenge to educate the uneducated and free them from their subordination, initially intervening as educational service providers. When the development sector and some governments started to lament the lack of quality educational opportunities in Ethiopia, NGOs gradually moved beyond their role as service providers, making educational quality their new *raison d'être* and subsequently eased in to policy development work, thereby staking out a greater claim and control over educational direction/purposes, schooling experience and curricular/linguistic content, while simultaneously legitimizing their indispensability with respect to education and development in the country.

Based on a review of critical literature on NGO led development and education in the global South and Ethiopia and a related analysis of educational policy documents pertaining to formal education in Ethiopia, as well as an examination of my own experiences as a volunteer with the NGO Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) in Ethiopia, the attempt here is to demonstrate the role and impact of international NGOs on educational policy development and associated directions in education in Ethiopia through an examination of the policies of VSO. It is suggested here that NGOs could well have become the first (neo)colonizers of Ethiopia through their propagation of globalized education programs and contradictory assertions around encouraging participatory development and that Ethiopian education is in danger of severing its connection to its historical, linguistic and cultural lineage, in an attempt to insert an imported education philosophy/system predominantly aimed at modernizing Ethiopia; a process that circumvents the necessary participation of Ethiopians at large in helping to determine their educational and developmental paths. The paper and this guiding proposition/thesis is developed as follows: (a) a brief historical overview of key educational developments in Ethiopia, (b) a selective review of some propositions from the critical literature on development NGOs and educational NGOs in particular and their rise to prominence in education advocacy and policy development, (c) the NGOization of education/policy development in Ethiopia (post 1990) and (d) a specific examination (the case of VSO) of how an educational NGO (and other NGOs) has

and continues to shape educational policy development in Ethiopia and implications for Ethiopian sovereignty and cultural and educational development. Lastly, based on the preceding analysis, a few critical observations/discussion pertaining to the NGOization of education in lieu of Ethiopian sovereignty are given due consideration. This work represents an initial attempt to address the paucity of critical literature/studies (unlike in the case of Latin America and Asia) examining the role of NGOs in educational policy development and advocacy in the African context and in particular, sub-Saharan Africa.

2. Education in Ethiopia: A Historical Review of Key Developments

The earliest formal education systems in Ethiopia are attributed to the Christian Orthodox churches and mosques which were the centres of religious and social knowledge (Kassaye, 2000). It is due to the Church that Ethiopia became the only nation in sub-Saharan Africa to develop its own script for the traditional language of Ge'ez which is the origins for the national language of Amharic (Milkias, 2006). The development of a script to transform a formerly oral language into a written language should have signified a massive shift to literacy within Ethiopia. However, literacy remained within the purview of the elite.

Emperor Menelik II came to power in Ethiopia in 1889; Menelik wanted the expansion of education in order to modernize Ethiopia. Areaya (2008) argues that Menelik was determined to ensure the centralization of government, the reform of administrative apparatus, and the improvement of social conditions for the people as well as for the sovereignty of the country. Menelik valued education since it would ensure peace thereby reconstructing the country and enabling it to "exist as a great nation in the face of European powers" (Areaya, 2008: 37). Thus began the role of education as a tool for Ethiopian modernization and according to Asgedom (2005) as a tool for the marketization of Ethiopia. In 1908, Menelik opened the first state supported secular school in Ethiopia (Tefera, 1996: 2). Ethiopia was the only nation in Africa not colonized or occupied by a colonizing

force at the time. It is feasible to hypothesize that Menelik believed that by introducing a modernist education system, Ethiopians would learn the language and skills of the colonizers, thereby ensuring that they could fight future attempts by the European powers who had divided up the rest of Africa. Menelik started Ethiopia on the path towards modernization on the assumption that a Westernized education system would ensure Ethiopian sovereignty.

Ethiopians are extremely proud of their history, of having never been colonized with the exception of a brief military occupation by the Italians from 1935-1941. However, this brief occupation caused serious turmoil to Ethiopia's education system. The Italians killed thousands of educated Ethiopians, leading to the exile of educated survivors to England, France, and the United States (StateUniversity.com, 2010). The death and exile of thousands of educated Ethiopians along with the creation of a subpar education system incapacitated the Ethiopian education system. Prior to 1935, there were over 4000 students attending schools, a significant percentage as the population was approximately 16000 at the time; by 1941, enrolment was 1,400 (StateUniversity.com, 2010). These numbers are even more surprising considering the relatively low levels of urbanization in Ethiopia during this period.

Ethiopian education, following the introduction of the first national curriculum, was formulated according to a Westernized education system as the curriculum for grades one to six (elementary) was decided by a committee made up of foreign "experts". Furthermore, the curriculum emphasised non-Ethiopian concepts such as textbooks, classroom management and examinations with the language of instruction being English from grade three (Areaya, 2008). Education in Ethiopia remained in the decision making hands of foreign "experts", both as a result of the desires of numerous governments to educate the population in such a manner as well as the high numbers of foreign "experts" playing a role in decision-making. The educational system, with its plethora of foreign "experts", did not meet the needs of the Ethiopian population. In 1972, the system was critiqued as "wasteful as most students dropped out without having employable skills" (Areaya, 2008: 48). According to the goals of government and foreign "experts", the education

system was failing as it was not giving students the skills needed to be successful in the work force or to be leaders whose skills would lead to Ethiopia's economic revival.

Human capital theory/perspective is at the heart of the modern Ethiopian education policy (World Bank, 2008). On 20 November 2004 in a televised debate in Ethiopian Television (ETV), the Capacity Building Minister, Tefere Walwa (translated by and cited in Areaya, 2008: 66), stated:

Every individual who completed grade eight will not necessarily be admitted to secondary education because since we have to make and allow every citizen to complete grade eight for the purpose of rapid development, we then can't afford for every grade eight completer to join secondary education. The country doesn't have such capacity to absorb all primary education graduates into secondary level. If we let all primary school completers join secondary education, the majority of the people, in turn, will not get the opportunity of completing primary education. The majority of primary education graduates will join some kind of post primary technical and vocational education and prepare themselves for the world of work. Only a few will prepare for higher education. At the ends of grades 8 and 10, the majority of students are expected to embark on vocational training in order to bring about rapid development and achieve our goals.

It is the government's intention that Ethiopian education train individuals to enter the formal workforce in order to aid Ethiopia's economic development. Ethiopia is currently viewed as one the poorest nations in the world, ranking 171st out of 182 nations on the Human Development Index (Human Development Reports, 2009). According to UNDP statistics, 78% of the population currently lives on less than \$2 a day (Human Development Reports, 2009). This is not a nation which can afford to educate an ever increasing population without foreign funds. The Ethiopian government has mandated the need of a Westernized education system for development; by doing so they have also invited international donor organizations and non-

governmental organizations into Ethiopia in order to guarantee the necessary funds to ensure access to education and ensure that Ethiopia meets the millennium development goals (MDGs).

The Ethiopian government has an essentially top-down approach to development and educational decision-making, as seen by Proclamation 41/1993 of January 20, 1993 which stated that the Ministry of Education had the powers and duties to:

- Formulate the country's education policy and strategies and, upon approval follow up and supervise their implementation;
- Determine and supervise the implementation of the country's educational standard;
- Determine the educational curriculum offered at the level of Senior Secondary Schools, higher education institutions. (Areaya, 2008: 56)

This top-down approach to education has resulted in a nationalized, non-local education system which is not meeting the needs of students nor society at large. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has been instrumental in allowing international NGOs to play a significant role in educational policy-making decisions in the hopes that transforming Ethiopia's education system into a more Westernized system will ensure faster development and economic stability. In a 2004 report to UNESCO, the Ethiopian Government contends that the only way in which to meet the first millennium development goal (MDG) – the eradication of poverty – is through increased literacy levels, a goal which the government alone does not have the capacity to ensure; therefore NGOs must be actively involved (The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, 2004). Tobia (cited in Tefera, 1996) refers to a longtime Ethiopian educator who asserts that participation by a few passers-by does not mean that the people have been involved, and argues that an educational document in which teachers have not been directly involved will not be of much use. Hailu (2007) reiterates the lack of community participation in the decision-making processes of the selection of contents of the curriculum. The opinion of the majority of the Ethiopian

population has not been solicited, bringing into question the belief that NGOs support participatory development as well as the democratic credentials of the Ethiopian government.

3. Critical Perspectives on Development NGOs and Educational Advocacy and Policy Development

NGOs have become dominant actors in the development sector over the past three decades, a meteoric rise to prominence with the simultaneous increases in poverty, inequality and marginalization across the globe. They are part of a multi-billion dollar industry as international NGOs sit at the bargaining table with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, inter-governmental organizations such as USAID and CIDA and representatives of nation states. Riddell (2008) claims that NGOs hold an extremely privileged position and have the ability to influence other organizations and agencies to change their policies and approaches. Mundy and Murphy (2001: 128) assert that NGOs:

are frequently portrayed as the building blocks of a prototypical 'global civil society', with the power to influence, and perhaps democratize, the structure of world politics, both through increasing influence within existing international institutions and their capacity to use this influence to leverage change in individual nation states.

NGOs, as described above, are now clearly seen as extremely powerful organizations and hence the importance of taking a closer look at their various involvements in the lives/nations of the people in whose name they justify their very existence, i.e., many NGOs advertise themselves as the voice of civil society and local/marginal populations, subsequently deploying this rhetoric to maneuver themselves in to key inter/national policy and decision making forums.

An examination of critical literature pertaining to NGOs suggests that there is much debate and contradictory opinion among scholars as to the role of NGOs in

development, education advocacy and policy development. A study funded by USAID found that NGOs believe that education programs in Africa cannot meet the objectives outlined by donor agencies without changes in education policy, propelling them to “change policies that hamper their work or seek new policies that would enhance it” in order to realize educational goals (Academy for Educational Development, 2003). Mundy and Murphy (2001: 92) contend that NGOs act as the voices of civil society to governments and safeguard the public by “limiting the government’s ability to impose arbitrary rule by force”. Dibia (2008) argues that joint ventures between government, NGOs and civil society and the private sector are crucial to achieve sustainable development and increase standard of living.

While several scholars criticize any possible role for NGOs in policymaking and advocacy, others attempt to find a compromise. Kadzamira and Kunje (2002) claim that problems ensue when NGOs design programs with little interaction and collaboration with the state and when government offices do not involve the NGO community in the policy process, resulting in misunderstandings between the two sides. According to Kadzamira and Kunje (2002), NGOs implementing government-sanctioned programs are more likely to affect policy than those working on their own, and some NGOs programs have been successful in initiating debate and dialogue on policy issues, which they view as a positive development in the policy formulation process. According to Malhotra (2000), it is the responsibility of NGOs to hold governments accountable for the welfare of their citizens. Malhotra (2000) argues that cutting aid to NGOs will mean that NGOs will no longer have the resources to decide for themselves what programs to support, thus compelling NGOs to work with governments, a change which will allow NGOs to work in more appropriate contexts. Many scholars attempt to find ways in which NGOs can continue to work in development as their work is seen as extremely valuable to the populations they claim to serve.

Critics of NGOs view the NGOization¹ of education as the cultural, linguistic and economic domination of the

¹ NGOization, here, refers to the the role played by NGOs in encouraging a universalization of educational policies/approaches through the

global South. Petras and Veltmeyer (2001: 132) argue that NGOs are not “non-governmental” organizations since they “receive funds from overseas governments, work as private subcontractors for local governments and/or are subsidized by corporate-funded private foundations with close working relations with the state”; furthermore, NGO programs are accountable not to local people but to overseas donors. According to Petras and Veltmeyer (2001), NGOs reproduce the international and national power structure, thereby effectively becoming a part of the decision-making process as they neutralize political opposition at the bottom while promoting neo-liberalism at the top. According to Amutabi (2006), NGOs represent a new third sector initiative in the globalization process in which governments are being removed from certain spheres of involvement while at the same time allowing people freedom to initiate and choose what they want; this privileging of NGOs allows them to fill in the gaps left by governments in the development process, a process Amutabi refers to as ‘philanthrocracy’, arguing that NGOs have become such significant actors in development that little development occurs without NGO input, as acknowledged by the Kenyan government’s inclusion of NGOs in government development plans. Shivji (2007: 21) claims that World Bank accusations with respect to the corruption of African states has led to a situation in which “decision-making and policy-making slipped out of the hands of African states as the West financed policy and governance consultants in their thousands to produce policy blue prints, poverty reduction strategies and manuals on good governance”; subsequently, states would need foreign non-political development practitioners, such as NGOs to mentor, monitor, and oversee them. African states are no longer sovereign entities as policymaking and policing become the role of NGOs.

NGOs are sometimes criticized for transmitting global cultural norms. Schafer (1999: 81) argues that a “global polity or international civil society is continuously evolving,

provision of educational services, policy development and advocacy work which encourages the homogenization of educational systems across the globe thereby promoting educational, cultural and linguistic colonization and imperialism.

and as it does, it persuades its member states and societies to adhere to world cultural institutions and norms". Edwards (2008: 47) asserts that NGOs have failed in many respects; they have internalized functions that should have been distributed across local and national governments in developing countries and are franchising global brands as opposed to "supporting authentic expressions of indigenous society". Edwards (2008) sees NGOs as a conduit through which donor organizations can channel aid and their view of development into the global South. Furthermore, the changes brought about by NGOs tend to be more permanent than that initiated by agents of government. Kamat (2002: 155) argues that NGOs have been "identified as the preeminent, if not sole, organizational forms that can implement the global commitment to 'bottom up' development", claiming that the globalization of NGOs reflects a new policy consensus in which NGOs are "de facto agents of democracy rather than products of a thriving democratic culture" (156). She asserts that current debates on the role of NGOs delegitimize the state as there are no mechanisms by which NGOs can be made accountable to the people they claim to serve. Furthermore, Kamat (2002) discusses a report by the UN Commission on Global Governance (1995) which depicts global governance as involving NGOs, citizen movements, multi-national corporations and the global economy, each of which is seen as participating in the global governance process equally and without mention of the role of individual states. NGOs, it appears, are transplanting the state's role as policymakers while propelling a Westernized, non-localized education system.

The role of NGOs in education advocacy and policy development is currently being debated. However, both critics and supporters agree that NGOs are involved in advocacy and policy development. Supporters claim that the NGOization of education in the global South is necessary in order for modernization and for countries like Ethiopia to achieve the MDGs; this can only be achieved through NGO involvement in policymaking. Critics respond that the NGOization of education results in a specific knowledge system being promoted, a knowledge system which regards Euro-American knowledge as superior to indigenous/local

knowledges and ways of living. International NGOs steer educational policy towards homogeneity, and local/national culture is considered superficially as part of what is often a public relations exercise aimed at masking assimilationist educational and developmental projects.

4. The NGOization of Education in Ethiopia: Towards a Preliminary Critical Analysis of NGOs and Educational Policy in Ethiopia (post-1990s)

The defeat of the Communist government in 1991 and the subsequent rise to power of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) resulted in a shift in focus for NGOs. Prior to 1991, the majority of NGOs in Ethiopia were involved in humanitarian efforts; with the defeat of the Derg regime, while many NGOs continue to be devoted to humanitarian efforts, the vast majority are involved in service provision and advocacy work. Ethiopia is the beneficiary of aid funds from intergovernmental donor organizations such as USAID, DFID and CIDA as well as IFIs and international NGOs. The current government is in need of a massive influx of capital in order to maintain its modernizing education system. Furthermore, the government simply does not have the resources to implement a massive overhaul of the education system. This has resulted in an avalanche of NGOs in Ethiopia as educational service providers. The government has allowed NGOs into Ethiopia on the grounds that they will provide the much needed infrastructure to modernize Ethiopian education, thereby hopefully leading to economic and social development.

In the aftermath of the widespread famine of the 1970s and 1980s, the number of international humanitarian and aid NGOs in Ethiopia ballooned (Clark, 2000: 4). With the victory of the EPRDF and a decrease in the need for humanitarian aid, many NGOs switched focus and became employed in the education sector (van Beurden, 1998). Mundy and Murphy (2001: 124) argue that NGOs, "venue shopping" in the mid 1990s, "chose education precisely because it was an issue already adopted by government and intergovernmental organizations and, thus, capable of

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providing them increased legitimacy and leverage". According to Seboka (2004: 20), 35% of NGOs working in Ethiopia are engaged in education, and this increasing trend of "NGO engagement in the education sector shows that NGOs are now paying more attention to the development of human resources in the country, putting education as one of the priority areas of intervention in their poverty reduction strategies". The Ethiopian government is willing to simply continue the modernizing education program of previous governments, having been convinced by the international community that only "modern" education is the answer to the problems facing sub-Saharan African nations.

In January 2009, the Ethiopian Parliament passed the 'Charities and Societies Proclamation', restricting the activities of NGOs. Opponents of the proclamation argue that the new law will present severe obstacles to the provision of much needed aid. Proponents respond that while it will limit the ability of foreign funding agencies to influence policy, there is no restriction to the continued provision of much needed funding for programmes such as those aimed at improving quality education. NGOs working in education are seen as service providers whose main role is the modernizing of the Ethiopian education system in order to ensure economic and social development. Unlike NGOs working in human rights and governance issues, it appears that educational NGOs are not considered to be a threat to state sovereignty or to the present government's rule. However, in reality, NGOs are not simply just service providers. They work with government officials and play a major role in policy making, thereby having an impact on millions of Ethiopians who are attending government schools and who are learning a curriculum that has been influenced and often created by foreign "experts".

While the Ethiopian government may view the role of NGOs as that of service providers, numerous education NGOs in Ethiopia do have an impact on policy. SC/Norway and Action Aid Ethiopia have been successful in affecting policy by transferring their models into various other contexts (Seboka, 2004). Furthermore, Clark (2000) contends that in recent years NGOs are increasingly being contacted on policy decisions, arguing that the frequency of government-NGO consultation has increased substantially in

Ethiopia between 1998 and 2000. The Ethiopian government recognizes that NGOs are important partners in their quest to modernize and is, therefore, attempting to create a climate conducive to ensuring that educational NGOs can help the government meet the MDGs. However, believing that NGOs would be satisfied to merely remain as service providers illustrates either the government's own naiveté or the realization by the Ethiopian government that allowing NGOs an increased role with regards to policy-making would ensure that the MDGs are achieved at a faster pace. The Ethiopian government and NGOs place much faith in international "experts" who can implement ideas "needed" to transform Ethiopian education.

NGOs sell an image of themselves as acting only in conjunction with grassroots aspirations, an image that is of great appeal to the Ethiopian government as the Ministry of Education (2009) has identified community empowerment as one goal for the government. The Ministry of Education has identified this goal in order to allow *woredas* (local government) and communities to take responsibility for providing education, not because government believes that local populations should decide their own education system but because local communities would then be responsible to cover the cost of assuring access to education and not the national government. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education's so-called commitment to participatory decision-making is called into question when one analyzes the extent to which policies are formulated based on a top-down approaches to development. The current guidelines for educational policy in Ethiopia are defined in the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP), which was first formulated by federal education officials including foreign experts working with World Bank officials before being sent to regional and *woreda* officials for comments (World Bank, 2008). This belies the concept of participatory decision-making as the process begins at the top and local officials are asked to comment on policy already formulated. There is no inclusion in the decision-making process of local peoples who will be the supposed recipients of these policies. Furthermore, there are no structures in place which would permit local officials to alter central policies. NGOs are used as a tool to sell an image, an image of a government which

welcomes participation from grassroots organizations. NGOs that aid the government in undermining the process of participatory decision-making are in fact selling out the very peoples they claim to represent.

5. The Case of Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) in Education Advocacy and Policy Development

In 2007, I accepted a placement in Ethiopia as a volunteer teacher through VSO. VSO had begun its program in Ethiopia in 1997 and chose education as the main sector in need of VSO development “experts”, bringing in “expert” teachers from Great Britain and Canada to train Ethiopian in-service and pre-service teachers. This role of NGOs as service providers is usually in line with the mandate of the government. In 2005, the Ministry of Education stated that it was the mission of stakeholders such as NGOs to “extend quality and relevant primary education to all school-age children and expand standardized education and training programs at all levels to bring about rapid and sustainable development” (p. 5). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education sees the role of NGOs as strengthening and supporting government strategies and activities, not as active decision-makers or policymakers (Ministry of Education, 2002).

VSO Volunteers and Educational Policy-making/interventions

NGOs utilize several methods to influence stakeholders. Seboka (2004) argues that NGOs use various strategies – workshops, field visits, exposure tours and experimentation of successful pilot projects – to illustrate the positive effects of NGO led programs. VSO policy documents depict advocacy work as enabling NGOs to “draw on their programme experience to show the impact of existing policies on the poor and marginalised, and to suggest improvements” (VSO, 2009c: 9). VSO encourages their staff, partners and volunteers to be aware of the policymaking system in the countries in which they operate, including the formal and informal ways in which policies are formulated at different levels which helps those involved to better understand the opportunities that exist, including so-called “policy windows”

(VSO, 2009c). VSO has no desire to remain as an education service provider, understanding modernization has little chance of occurring if NGOs such as VSO cannot influence educational policy. In order to ensure that VSO continues to be able to influence policy development decisions in Ethiopia, it is integral that VSO not alienate the Ethiopian government. Ethiopia is one of the few countries in sub-Saharan Africa in which VSO places volunteers or foreign “experts” in the Ministry of Education. VSO documents clearly state that their core purpose in countries like Ethiopia is the provision of volunteers for the education ministry (VSO, 2009c).

Foreign “experts” working in the Ministry of Education in Ethiopia are best placed to effect policy change. NGOs like VSO understand this. Their main objective is policy development and advocacy; therefore, they ensure that their relationship with government remains conducive to continuing in this policy development and influencing role. In May 2006, the Ministry of Education published a manual for improving English language capability in Teacher Education Institutions. Of the six authors of the document, two – Judith Altshul and Genevieve Holmes – were VSO volunteers working in the Ministry of Education, two were foreign “experts” associated with other institutions, and two Ethiopians. VSO understands that placing foreign “experts” within the Ministry of Education allows them to play an integral role in policymaking decisions. Furthermore, VSO volunteers have become integral members of curriculum writing teams. In June 2008, I attended a Ministry of Education workshop on developing a new English curriculum for all higher education institutions. There were a handful of VSO volunteers present and approximately ten times as many Ethiopian university and college instructors. The workshop was facilitated by VSO volunteers working in the Ministry of Education. In each of the subgroups, VSO volunteers from universities and colleges facilitated the discussions; they were the “experts”. Volunteers working within the Ministry of Education ensured that volunteers lead the discussions and debates. Ethiopian teachers were still involved in the process; however, this involvement was superficial as it was VSO volunteers who were the primary agenda-setters. In March 2009, the Ministry of Education

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held a second workshop to discuss finalizing the new English curriculum. VSO Ethiopia head office staff encouraged VSO volunteers to attend by increasing the daily travel allowance given to VSO volunteers from ETB 70 (Ethiopian Birr) to ETB 130. This consideration was not available for Ethiopians planning to attend the workshop, not even when VSO volunteers themselves asked for their increased allowance to be redirected to their Ethiopian colleagues. VSO Ethiopia is well versed on the policy-making structures and ensures that those volunteers working within the Ministry of Education are aware of how to facilitate the inclusion of other VSO volunteers in the policy-making process.

VSO's Top-down Approach to Development and Education

Daniel Hailu (2007: 53) argues that the Ministry of Education has enjoyed a monopoly over the formulation of the syllabus, a monopoly “largely responsible for the fundamental differences between the worldview and value system of the community and what formal education seeks to inculcate”. VSO appears to be well aware of the fact that it is the Ministry of Education which controls policymaking decisions. During 2007/2008, VSO had 138 foreign “experts” volunteering in Ethiopia. Of those, 113 were involved in the education sector (VSO, 2008). These experts were placed in partner organizations; key partners include the Ministry of Education, the Institute of Curriculum Development and Research, and the Higher Education Institutions, Teacher Education Institutions, Regional Education Bureaus and City or Zone Education Bureaus (VSO, 2009a). VSO partner organizations in Ethiopia are large government organizations. VSO has effectively moved away from working in communities and individual schools as they do not view such work as sustainable and realize that the Ethiopian government does not welcome community involvement in policymaking. VSO “is playing a pivotal role in the implementation of the recently launched Ministry-developed National Adult Education Strategy ... [and] will start to work with Regional Education Bureaus to translate implementation guidelines into action plans at the regional level” (VSO, 2008: 11). The belief among VSO office staff

appears to be that a top down approach to development is the most cost effective and sustainable approach.

While in Ethiopia with VSO, I also worked at Mekelle University as an English Language Improvement Program (ELIP) Coordinator. My duties included providing English language training to pre-service teachers, in-service teachers as well as university instructors. The VSO mandate claimed that improving the English language capability of teachers at the different levels would improve their capability to teach in English as well as to improve the skills of their students. This top down approach to development does not consider the needs of students; it simply assumes that all Ethiopians only want to learn English. Students are invited to participate in decisions at only the most superficial levels as they, for instance, decide on how (approaches) they want to learn English as opposed to being invited to discuss critical cultural and linguistic questions in relation to the importation of English and its potential implications for local languages/culture. The one exception to this rule is with regards to the medium of instruction for primary school students. In the Tigray Region, students learn in their mother tongue until the end of grade eight, learning English as a foreign language. In grade nine, the medium of instruction becomes English. However, regardless of the language of instruction, students are still learning a curriculum that is outside of their context and foreign to the realities of their lives. Using mother tongue as the medium of instruction is sold on the basis that it is easier for students to learn foreign concepts first in their mother tongue before being asked to re-learn these concepts in English. The use of mother tongue is simply a tool to ensure that students are learning the skills they need to be more attractive in the labour market.

This top down market-driven modernization approach to educational/development in Ethiopia ensures that in order for NGOs to continue to influence the development agenda (and their concomitant indispensability), they must seek to influence and remained involved with policy development at the state level. Therefore, it is no surprise that NGOs such as VSO have made strong engagement in top-down education/development policy development their primary development objective.

How VSO Propels an Agenda

The failure to seriously commit to participatory development and decision-making is also made evident in other VSO documents. In March 2009, VSO held a stakeholders meeting to discuss various problems facing Ethiopian teachers. The ensuing report entitled "*How much is a good teacher worth? A report on the motivation and morale of teachers in Ethiopia*" concludes that teachers are undervalued, and want to see improvements in their pay, status and conditions of service. While the report asks teachers about possible improvements to the current educational system, no reference is made to an Ethiopian (indigenous) education system. VSO, in fact, recommends increased NGO influence as well as continued NGO and donor support through training in cluster-based supervision and other "innovative NGO-designed methods" and structures, such as through teacher development¹. VSO recruits foreign cluster coordinators to facilitate the process. VSO would begin to advocate on behalf of teachers, working in areas teachers and their families are marginalised, such as HIV and AIDS, disability, gender and minority discrimination, all areas in which VSO is already working and which are part and parcel of their overall international development interventions (VSO, 2009b). The solution already exists and VSO owns the solution. There is no need for teachers to look outside of VSO for help in improving their situation; why would teachers do so when not only does VSO have an answer but also a policy in place to ensure an increase in teacher motivation and happiness. The cluster program recommended by VSO is funded by the World Bank and other inter-governmental donor agencies such as USAID and DFID. The funding has already been guaranteed and is in place; now all that the Ethiopian government needs to do is accept the report and the coinciding policy changes which will allow VSO's recommendations to come into effect. The question that

¹ In Ethiopia, universities and colleges are responsible for providing continuous professional development to all teachers in primary and secondary schools located in specific areas closest to the higher education institutions.

must be asked is whether VSO's solution to teacher motivation is the correct solution or simply in the best interests of VSO in order to ensure continued funding of the cluster program. My experience as a volunteer in Ethiopia has led me to understand that the cluster program has been put into place to westernize the Ethiopian education system, with little concern for the culture and aspirations of local peoples.

VSO policies are not policies which are determined by those at the community level. These policies are determined by those in positions of power. This is in direct contradiction to VSO's own claims and volunteer training programs which emphasize that all work done by VSO employees and volunteers should be participatory and attentive to and inclusive of the local cultural context. In May 2008, VSO Ethiopia held a workshop to create a country strategic plan. Invited members to the workshop included volunteers VSO felt were performing well in their jobs and who were working in sectors which VSO believed should be the focus for their plan. VSO volunteers and Ethiopians from the Ministry of Education were present. Ethiopians invited to join the workshop were mainly those from organizations and institutions which had had a long history with VSO, such as Kifle Gebrekirstos (Dean) from Abi Adi College of Teacher Education, a college in which VSO has been placing volunteers since the start of VSO's program in Ethiopia in 1997 (VSO, 2008). Is the Dean of the college the right person to be invited to a session on strategic planning for the next five years? Does this illustrate community involvement in policy-making decisions? The country strategic plan put into place by VSO has since been used to direct those working with the Ministry of Education.

One result of the country strategic plan was the decision that Ethiopian schools need to learn about inclusion and special needs education. This has since been transferred to the Ministry of Education which is now requesting that teacher education institutions have a foreign "expert" come in who can teach in-service and pre-service teachers about inclusion. A colleague working at Abi Adi College of Teacher Education has informed me that the Dean of Abi Adi College has made a request for a VSO volunteer who can work in the area of special needs education. As a

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teacher trained in the Canadian education system, I myself believe that special needs education is important. Would the peoples of Abi Adi believe that their schools should have inclusive education? Is this a priority for these rural schools when many go without desks and chairs for their existing students?

In 2007, the Ministry of Education (MoE) developed a General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP), a five-year plan (2008/9 -2011/12) comprised of six pillars: Civics and Ethical Education, Curriculum, Information Communications Technology, Management and Leadership, School Improvement Programme (SIP) and Teacher Development. One of the development partners is the Department for International Development (DFID). According to a 2008 VSO review report, VSO volunteers based at the Ministry of Education have also been:

directly and indirectly contributing to the development and realisation of GEQIP ... in the preparation of the implementation plans, especially for the components of the Teacher Development pillar, such as the Higher Diploma Programme (HDP), English Language Improvement Programme (ELIP), Continuous Professional Development Programme (CPD), and Pre-service and In-service Teacher Training. (p. 3)

For VSO to increase its influence in Ethiopian education, it must become involved in educational policymaking and in advocacy issues, as has been seen by VSO's involvement in the Ministry of Education's GEQIP plan. Stagnancy will signal the beginning of the end for development NGOs such as VSO as continued engagement in service provision will nullify the influence VSO has and its ability to expand within the development sector. NGOs are businesses and like most business, believe in growth and in securing greater control over their sector and for NGOs, this is the development sector. Furthermore, the NGO mantra that they are attempting to work themselves out of a job no longer holds much truth, if it ever did. NGOs receive over \$10 billion annually in official aid from governments to support and fund development and humanitarian activities. In 2004, NGOs spent over \$23 billion for various projects (Riddell,

2008). Development is a multi-billion dollar industry, and those with power in the industry predictably have little desire to self-destruct. Therefore it unsurprisingly follows that continued NGO survival and growth makes it necessary that NGOs become involved in policy development in order to remain relevant.

6. The NGOization of Education and a Small Question of Ethiopian Sovereignty: Some Concluding Observations/Discussion

The Ethiopian Societies and Charities Proclamation mentioned earlier which came into effect in January 2009 illustrates the Ethiopian government's full awareness as to the influence NGOs can have. However, the Proclamation is restricted to those NGOs working in human rights and democracy issues and does not extend to NGOs working in the education sector. Is this the result of the power of NGOs which work in the education sector or the result of the deeply held belief by the Ethiopian government that a transformed education system is necessary for development? After all, according to modernization theorists, the development of society is a result of "literacy, education, increased communication, mass media exposure, and urbanization" (Huntington, 1971/2007: 63). Policymakers in the global South seem to accept that they are in need of development. Even a nation that has never been colonized by a European power, a nation which retained its sovereignty during the scramble for Africa in the 1800s, is finally falling prey to the known machinations of Western colonization. This colonization of the mind (a mono-cultural modernization of the educational system) has "destroyed all previously established systems of cultural reference [and] ... systematically discredited all previously established mechanisms that different cultures had created throughout their histories for fostering knowledge and culture" (Ki-Zerbo, Kane, Archibald, Lizop & Rahnema, 1997: 158). Ethiopia, like other sub-Saharan African nations has bought into the notion that it is in need of Euro-determined modern development. This makes Ethiopia unique in that it is a nation which is being colonized psychologically and culturally without direct military conquest and colonial

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control. The Ethiopian example reminds us that colonialism is not dead and a thing of the past but is very much a trend of the present.

Ethiopia has retained an extremely centralized education system. However, those with the power to design curriculum and policy – both local and foreign “experts” – reside in the capital, Addis Ababa. The decision-makers in power have little understanding of the educational needs of those in rural Ethiopia. “In a world consisting of dominating and dominated cultures, some cultures are bound to be considered more equal than others” (Alvares, 1992: 220). There is no single homogenous group of Ethiopians capable of deciding policy for an entire population of eighty million. NGOs frequently claim that they wish to change policies they believe are bad for the poor, a claim which:

assumes that ‘the poor’ comprise a single homogenous group, that policies affect all poor people in the same way, and [usually] that only the immediate impact of policies is of relevance. They also assume that the [external] policies that affect poor people can be simply identified. In practice, however, the issues are far more complex. ‘The poor’ invariably consist of different groups who are affected by different policies in different ways over different time periods. (Riddell, 2008: 300)

Ethiopia has become a nation where a Westernized education system is being championed by the power-elite and “educated” classes. This is the knowledge that is being disseminated through the national education system. NGOs have been instrumental and complicit in advocating for and helping to shape implement just such a system. NGOs position “themselves as ‘knowledge agencies’, attempting to enhance their role as intellectual actors and to be more responsive to ‘local knowledge’, the ‘voices of the poor’, and the needs and realities of developing countries” (Utting, 2006: 1). However, according to Senarclens (1997: 202), while:

NGOs claim to defend the indigenous cultures and even call for anthropological prudence ... it is easy to

see that, under this pretext of respect for indigenous culture, what they are really interested in is to disassociate the indigenous population from their economy based on reciprocity. To achieve this, they define the local ... in Western terms.

This denial of local cultures, beliefs and heritage is leading to the loss of language, culture and ways of living. It is slowly leading to the cultural impoverishment of a diverse people.

Not only do development projects usually reproduce “old power and knowledge asymmetries” (Escobar, 2008: 175), but instilling new values and attitudes leads students to reject their own cultural and personal identity, thereby acquiring a false sense of superiority, turning them away from manual work, and all unschooled people, whom they perceive as ignorant and underdeveloped (Ki-Zerbo et al., 1997; Nyerre, 1968). The imposition of the knowledge of a dominant culture leads to the subordination of other knowledges as fewer and fewer people remain versed in local knowledge systems, threatening the “identity and self-perception of the African student” (Shizha, 2005: 66). Students are taught to value foreign knowledge over local, taught to devalue their own cultures and identities, taught that becoming more like those in the North is the answer to the problems they may face. Development projects in the education sector “succeed” when they have managed to cleanse old knowledges and ways of knowing from education policies, curricula and pedagogical practices. An education system that defies the culture and history of nations such as Ethiopia is put into place by such development. Amutabi (2006: xxvi) contends that:

NGOs create images outside of history, and they do this by doctoring and manipulating local scenes, images, pictures and annual reports, that often exaggerate poverty and helplessness in order to draw donor attention and to justify their continued presence in Africa. ... therefore, NGOs strategically situate themselves at the door of knowledge in Africa, managing information, releasing and ‘unveiling’ what they want and keeping out what is not useful to their course. They are gate-keepers, situating themselves

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between Africans and donors, exercising so-called benevolent hegemony. They are used for the purpose of maintaining and extending Northern material, political, social and cultural influence while promoting a local comprador bourgeoisie, and yet there is no serious critique of these misrepresentations.

The education system that has come into being in Ethiopia is a Westernized system not suited to the ways of the majority of Ethiopians. This externally imposed and constructed homogeneity-project denies the “capacity of people to model their own behaviour and reproduce forms of discourse that contribute to the social and cultural domination” (Escobar, 1995: 94). The belief that an entire nation must be educated in a foreign language and using foreign teaching methodologies and cultural philosophies makes a mockery of NGO-claims to participatory development, grassroots actor and representative of marginalized majorities.

The colonization of Ethiopia is an ongoing phenomenon as the colonizer is no longer only from without but also emerges from within. The dominant elite that has been educated using the colonial educational system continues to reproduce colonial control/designs. “The local notion of development includes the acquisition of those tools of dominant knowledge systems that might empower them to envision and implement a viable future” (Escobar, 2008: 176). The consent of the dominated classes in accepting the hegemonic programs of the dominating classes further marginalizes the dominated classes (Kamat, 2002).

NGOs ironically continue to be viewed as organizations which work with peoples at the grassroots in order to ensure that people continue to have a role to play in the construction of their respective societies. However, as illustrated through the example of VSO Ethiopia which works closely with IFIs, government officials and higher education institutions in the country, there is almost no contact or conversation with community or grassroots organizations. VSO Ethiopia works primarily with the 18% of the population that is urbanized and formally educated. Furthermore, VSO openly admits that one of its main goals is involvement in advocacy and policy development, in order

to ensure their lasting presence and influence, if not indispensability.

NGOs are supported and funded by large numbers of people in the North due to the misconception that they work with and for the grassroots. NGOs such as VSO use this misconception to legitimize their continued engagement in policy development and advocacy. In fact, the policies advocated for by VSO are not policies grassroots groups help create and neither are they in the immediate interests of these groups. Furthermore, these policies are often initiatives created mainly by IFIs and donor organizations which then provide funding to NGOs to operationalize and implement these designs. It is hardly surprising then that NGOs in turn, seek to have maximal influence on education policy development in the recipient countries.

Ethiopians are extremely proud of never having been colonized. The European powers did not create a colony in Ethiopia during the scramble for Africa; however, Ethiopia has not escaped the tyranny of colonization. The difference is that the colonization of Ethiopia is taking place today and there appears to be little opposition to the devastation being wrought by this kind of “neo/colonial development”. The empire over which the sun never set no longer refers to the British Empire but to a world in which NGOs are now aiding and propelling the creation of a global knowledge empire wherein one national educational system will be indistinguishable from another.

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Theoretical Deployments, Caste Expositions and Research Agendas: Macro-scoping Neoliberal Globalization, Saffronization¹ and Dalit Poverty and Educational Prospects in India

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Abstract: *This article advances the proposition that theoretical productivity in relation to questions of caste/ism, Dalits, and Dalit poverty and educational prospects in India would be better served by critical sociological deployments that aim to expose (and subsequently point out tentative directions for a Dalit politics) casteism/untouchability by encouraging research agendas which macro-scope Dalit poverty and educational in/opportunity in relation to the current trajectories of neoliberal globalization and saffronization. Tentative contours of a critical-indigenous Gramscian-Marxist research agenda/approach (with examples of related foci) are mapped and briefly discussed to illustrate the likely contribution of such lines of inquiry towards a Dalit political and educational agenda squarely aimed at caste-class hegemony and the continued democratization of Indian society and political-economy.*

¹ Refers to the rise of Hindu fundamentalism in contemporary Indian electoral politics and beyond from the early 1980s and related responsibility for the post-Mandal (affirmative action/job reservations) backlash, the demolition of the Babri Masjid (1992) and Godhra communal violence (2002) as key examples of some defining moments of this trend. See Tanika Sarkar (2005); Radhika Desai (2004) for what she refers to as the systematic 'saffronization' of state and civil society; Sumit Sarkar (2002); Menon and Nigam (2007); and Guha (2008).

1. Introduction: Contemporary Caste Realities in India

The teacher would ask me to keep a distance from him so that he could not be touched. He would not accept my notebook from my hand—he would ask me to place it on the table after checking it, would throw it on the ground in front of me to pick up. He never hands me the notebook as he does with the others. He has never accepted water from my hand and I have been told not to use the common drinking glass and am always forced to sit in the last row of the class. (Bunty, 11-year-old boy)

During the mid-day meal I was standing first in the queue but the teacher, who was drunk, came and pinched my cheeks, dragged me out of the queue and started beating me saying, “The Chamar wants to become a Brahmin after studying in school, does she now?” (Mamta, 7-year-old girl)
(National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights/NCDHR, 2007, pp.20-29)

NCDHR had to persevere to try and ensure the inclusion of Dalit rights on the agenda for the World Conference against Racism held at Durban (2001) and eventually managed to do so with mixed results (Guru and Chakravarty, 2005). The Indian government’s position in international and UN forums has been to assert that caste is not race and therefore caste-discrimination fails to fall within the ambit of racism and racial discrimination. Furthermore, the state points to existing Constitutional and Legislative mechanisms in India as being adequate for the protection of Dalits and often resorts to pointing out that socio-cultural change is a slow process, i.e., there is no need to apply external human rights mechanisms to what is essentially seen to be within a realm of “cultural practice” (UN CERD, 2007: 3). According to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UN CERD, 2007: 3), however,

there is a strong comfort level in both society and the state that crimes against Dalits do not matter, and

need not be punished. This attitude of impunity is rooted in social and cultural values and though the Constitution has made a very conscious change, the mindset in society has not changed.... Protecting the rights of marginalized and vulnerable persons is probably the most overlooked and disregarded area of human rights in India.

For these reasons perhaps, Dalit movements and campaigns including the International Dalit Solidarity Network, the World Council of Churches Dalit Solidarity Program and the National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) systematically engage international forums and transnational alliances in a boomerang pattern of activism that aims to bring pressure to bear on the Indian State by activating transnational networks at UN forums and international conferences such as the Global Conference against Racism and Caste-based Discrimination (New Delhi, 2001) and various World Social Forum (e.g. Mumbai World Social Forum) events.

Our own work through the Center for Research and Development Solidarity (CRDS)², suggests that casteism in its various garbs, Dalit poverty/inequality and the practice of untouchability are manifest and prevalent in the state of Orissa (Kapoor, 2007a; 2007b). Caste-blind rhetoric that equates the legal ban on untouchability with its disappearance (Deshpande, 2003) and the subsequent relegation of critical caste conversations to the dustbin of history or to the work of an allegedly misguided or obsessive critical minority, is at the very least, naïve if not mischievous and/or simply casteist in a vain attempt to buttress caste-privilege while simultaneously denying its continued relevance in the perpetuation of caste-hegemony.

² An Adivasi-Dalit people's organization in South Orissa that supports Adivasi-Dalit social movement struggles (Adivasi-Dalit Ekta Abhijan or ADEA) to secure and push for Constitutional Rights and Safeguards, at least theoretically available to Scheduled Tribes (Adivasis) and Scheduled Castes (Dalits--literally meaning downtrodden or broken peoples, as defined by Dalit leader and Indian Constitutional architect, Dr.B.R. Ambedkar) in the Scheduled Areas to ways of life, water, forest and land.

Contrary to indulging in a gratuitous sensationalism or engaging in a production of a narrative of suffering as spectacle for commoditization through professional appropriation (Kleinman and Kleinman, 1997) or what other's have referred to as a "trafficking in national identity for international consumption" (Spivak, 1992: 803), the impetus for this paper is derived from the pressing and unfortunate reality, if not the sheer intensity, of caste-based atrocities and injustices in Orissa³ and the decibel level of the *mute appeals* of persevering victims (e.g. 2007/08 violence perpetrated by saffron groups against Dalit Christians for the most part and some Adivasi Christians in Kandhamal, Orissa). Every society and culture has its schisms and attendant oppressions which compel critical examination and the need to act to privilege the categories of those being oppressed (Nandy, 1987). Post-structural criticisms of caste/subaltern post-mortems while instructive in terms of the cultural politics of re/presentation by "caste/other outsiders" (etic perspectives), when taken to a political extreme, produce an "analytical standpoint" akin to "a theory-imposed disarticulation of social suffering" (Baxi, 2000: 37-39). Taking a page from Spivak (1992: 781-782) herself, "in a crisis, no hand is clean" and the onus, then, is on academics (scholar-activists and vice versa) for instance, to make the history and predicaments of the caste-subaltern known.

The changes and gains made during the post-independence period whether they be Constitutional, cultural, educational or political-economic are first and foremost a testimony to the perseverance of a multi-trajectory Dalit politics. Given the Vedic roots of the caste system going back to 1500BC, these changes over a relatively mere sixty three year period of independence from a British colonial experience that valorized caste and deployed it in the interest of colonial rule given the symbiotic political-economic and cultural links between cultural (Hindu/caste) nationalism, imperialism and colonialism (Deshpande, 2003; Guru, 2007; Sarkar, 2005), give continued cause for optimism for Dalits, Indians and radical

³ For instance, see Chatterji and Desai (2006) for a report on communalism in Orissa.

democrats alike who are concerned with the continual democratization of all forms of class, caste, gender-based inequality and the struggle to create political-economic and socio-cultural-religious structures that recognize, valorize and substantively nurture the dignity of communities and persons.

This paper considers the role of deploying (making productive) theory/academic perspective, research and scholarship in a politics of caste expositions and related prospects for a politics of social change that addresses the caste-class nexus of power and inequality in India. It is suggested that such an endeavor could benefit from a macro-scoping of the emergent imbrications and impacts of neoliberal globalization (i.e. the globalization of capitalism and privatization and marketization agendas post 1991 liberalization of the Indian economy) and saffronization (post-Mandal in the 1980s and after the 1992 demolition of the Babri Masjid and the concomitant rise of the party-political Hindu right) and their implications for Dalit poverty, educational prospects and assertion. This in turn (or simultaneously) requires a re-negotiation of theoretical/perspectival discourses that have guided caste scholarship; a re-negotiation that begins to privilege (or makes more space for) “critical sociological deployments” than has typically been the case to date (Deshpande, 2003). A *critical-indigenous Gramscian-Marxism* is proposed as an example of one possibility that would continue to help build momentum in this direction. It is suggested here that the conscious deployment of critical sociological perspective(s) is more likely to enable scholarship that seeks to understand and expose caste/ism, while pointing to the realm of possibility for political-economic and socio-cultural change in the interests of a Dalit political and educational agenda. Education and schooling spaces need to be subjected to similar analyses for both, the potential to encourage and produce socio-cultural change while paradoxically (or predictably—as per Gramscian notions of hegemony—see Peter Mayo, 1999: 35-57) also being implicated in the reproduction of caste privilege, untouchability and discrimination against Dalits.

After a brief excursion (as background for those unfamiliar with this territory) into caste constructions and

Constitutional provisions, the paper focuses on the question of critical sociological (theoretical) deployments and Dalit political and educational agendas; a discussion of perspectives that culminates in introducing/moving towards what could be referred to as a *critical-indigenous Gramscian-Marxism*. The following and final section considers how such a critical sociological deployment might lend itself to an examination and exposition of the imbrications and impacts of neoliberal globalization and saffronization on Dalit poverty, educational prospects and related avenues for socio-political assertion.

2. Caste Constructions and Constitutional Provisions

Derived from the Latin word *castas*, meaning chaste or unmixed, caste references the mainly segregated social groups of a hierarchical ordering of Indian society according to four *varnas* or broad caste categories, including *Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaishyas* and *Shudras*. Outside these four *varnas* are the casteless (outcast or *avarnas*) 'untouchables' (*achyut*) or Dalits, a term preferred by politically active anti-caste groups. The theological basis of caste is derived from the *Purushasukta* verse from the *Rig Veda* (ancient Hindu scriptures) and the Code of Manu (ethical and legal commandments pertaining to custom, caste and caste-institutional practical prescriptions inspired by the *Vedas*) which states that the *Brahmans* came from His mouth, the *Kshatriyas* from His arms, the *Vaishyas* from His thighs and the *Shudras* from His feet implying vertical hierarchy and corresponding occupational specialization as the *Brahmans* performed religious rituals and were the keepers of sacred knowledge, the *Kshatriyas* were warriors and protectors, the *Vaishyas* farmers and traders, while the *Shudras* performed menial/labor tasks. The 'outcasts' (Dalits) were relegated to performing polluted and polluting tasks such as sewage disposal, tanning of hides and the removal of carrion and refuse. Pollution-purity divides (e.g. refusal to share well-water or cooking utensils or refusing food from the hands of an *achyut*), caste endogamy, refusal of entry in to places of worship, denial of freedom of movement (e.g. use of certain village streets/thoroughfares) and even the curtailment of

spaces for defecation are some of the visible manifestations of casteism, untouchability and the daily assault on the dignity of persons (see Guru, 2009 for related theoretical/discussions on untouchability and “humiliation”), allegedly sanitized by appeals to the theological justifications for such degradations. Gupta observes (2000: 19), given that there are no natural differences that can be discerned by the naked eye to help distinguish between castes, practices of caste segregation continue to be employed to justify and perpetuate economic and social inequalities among people as “nature is forced by culture to act on its behest”.

The term Scheduled Caste (SC) was introduced by the British in the 18th century and today’s Constitutional Schedules list 1,116 SC groups who together constitute 17 percent of the Indian population (over 167 million Dalits). Article 46 of the Constitution recognizes that the state is obligated to protect these constitutionally recognized marginalized social groups from all types of exploitation and social injustices and must actively promote with special care the education and economic interests of SCs. Article 14, meanwhile, prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth and Article 17 states that the practice of untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. Article 23 prohibits any form of forced labor and this is significant given that over half the Dalit workforce are landless agricultural laborers, while some 66 percent of bonded laborers are Dalits (Sainath, 1996). Additionally, India ratified the Convention on All forms of Racial Discrimination in 1968, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1979 and the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1993, a significant commitment since Dalit women bear the brunt of caste prejudices and exploitation as “the boundaries and hierarchies of caste are articulated by gender” in contemporary Indian society (Dube, 1996: 21). However, state amelioration related to such commitments only applies to Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh Dalits, since the Indian state is yet to recognize Christian and Muslim Dalits as Scheduled Castes (SC) entitled to such protections (Massey, 1998: 6). Such communal conceptions of caste based on a sacral view

are misguided attempts to withdraw and limit the number of groups entitled to state support and protection, as studies have demonstrated that caste exists and affects the Christian community today, even though castes are rarely a part of the “Christian sacral order”, i.e., caste alone determines who a Dalit is and not class or religion as even if a Dalit moves up in social class or changes religion, the social stigma of caste remains (Webster, 2007).

3. Critical Sociological Deployments and Dalit Political and Educational Agendas

According to French Indologist and anthropologist Louis Dumont, the “caste system is a state of mind, a state of mind which is expressed by the emergence, in various situations, of groups of various orders generally called ‘castes’” (Dumont, 1972: 71). For Dumont, the “conscious model” is the most important level of reality determining how people are to act or will act in a given situation. The conscious structure of ideas and beliefs act as determinate infrastructure/base in pre-capitalist societies and subsequently, for him, Hindus avail of the benefits of industrialization only in areas which the caste system considers unimportant (Dumont, 1972). Beliefs (caste beliefs) then become the absolute determinants of human behavior. The very origins of the caste system are tracked to the “Hindu mind” which is guided solely by an original caste perspective of sorts and is perpetually bound by it. It follows that if a more just and egalitarian order is to be brought about through, for example, educational attainment and social mobility, the belief in the caste system will first have to be erased from the minds of Indians or relatedly, the constraining logic of the purity/pollution divide can only be exploded when “the purity of the Brahman is itself radically devalued” (Dumont, 1972: 92). “The road to their [caste] abolition is likely to lie in caste actions, and only the content of a caste action indicates whether it initiates for or against caste...” (Dumont, 1972: 270). By claiming the primacy of the ideological level, Dumont’s religio-culturological perspective worked towards crystallizing specific cultural traits peculiar to caste minds and “the finessing of

ideological details by returning to Hindu texts like Manusmriti... as if caste practices in everyday life are unquestioningly preordained by what Brahmanical texts have had to say” (Gupta, 2000: 181). Ideology as primary level of reality and the notion that all social action conforms to it, was hugely influential in sociological and anthropological theorizing/studies on caste, amplifying the belief that caste conditions material reality in its own image and that caste consciousness is delinked from all traces of economics and politics. By receding in to the mind (or Brahmanical texts) to unearth caste inscriptions and in the process simultaneously dehistoricizing caste construction, such scholarship depoliticized the prospects for progressive change in caste structures by indulging in a politically impotent descriptive prognosis of caste and the relatively mute prospects thereof for “caste action” and education for social change. Furthermore, by paying attention to ideological formations alone, Dumontian-Indologists failed to account for the possibility that traditional intelligentsia often seal knowledge from forces contrary to it thereby preserving the illusion that in tradition “thought remains the same” (Mannheim, 1960: 6). That is, Dumont is blind to the role of hegemonic possibility in social configurations, not to mention that he dismisses the significance of political-economic interplays as secondary aspects of the caste system and subsumes them within religious values and beliefs emergent from the Brahmanic ideology of purity and pollution: “Just as religion in a way encompasses politics, so politics encompasses economics within itself. The difference is that the politic-economic domain is separated, named in a subordinate position as against religion whilst economics remains undifferentiated within politics” (Dumont, 1988: 165).

Predictably, the architects of *Hindutva* (Hindu nationalism) capitalize on such conceptualizations of a social order not founded on a social compact but on an organic growth where “the structure is born, not made” (Sarkar, 2005: 71). Asymmetries are then fated to remain so (chaos and anarchy are posited as the alternative) and neither the individual nor the caste group should have educational aspirations to move beyond the predestined and born order which is akin to an organ of interrelated and mutually

sustaining parts (“Dumont’s Religious-Structuralist Holism”, Michael, 2007; Selvam, 2007). This conceptualization/logic precludes the possibility of a critical analysis of caste oppression, poverty, the class character of states or the contradictions within civil society and proposes little in the manner of possibilities for education and social change or indeed, even the need/possibility for change or education for Dalits, i.e., in an interesting inversion of approaches to postcolonial critique and directionality, Dumont does not see caste as an inexplicably unequal system that violates a fundamentally egalitarian human nature and suggests that “the idea of equality, even if it is thought superior, is artificial” (Dumont, 1970: 54-55), a realization that the West has been systematically denying for 300 years given its failure to recognize the legitimate innateness of homo hierarchicus. Dumont goes further in response to his critics when he states that they confuse inequality with exploitation by pointing to “their failure to see that the system assures subsistence to each proportionately to his status” (Dumont, 1988: 32) thereby borrowing from the karmic theory of compensation prescribed under Brahmanism which fails to acknowledge that appropriations at the top of the hierarchy are at the expense of those at the bottom (exploitation), not to mention that it is a system pronounced by self-appointed spokespersons (Brahmins) who stand the most to gain from such conceptions. Dumont’s conceptions would point to the futility of a pedagogy of the caste-oppressed, let alone a pedagogy of liberation for oppressors (dominant castes) and oppressed (Dalits) alike (Freire, 1970) and if nothing else, helps us “understand” dominant caste attitudes towards Dalit educational aspirations to better themselves and their lot in life or the self-evident convictions of a teacher who said, “What is the point in teaching Dalit children? Let them learn how to beat drums, that is good enough” or another who referred to Dalit’s as “kadu-jana” (forest people) incapable of learning with or without being beaten (NCDHR, 2007: 25). Such treatment and attitudes are, in turn, partially responsible for poor attendance and higher drop out rates among Dalit children, as high as a 66.6 percent drop out rates for Dalit-girls at the elementary stage or 50 percent Dalit-girl dropout rate in rural areas (Nambissan and Sedwal, 2002).

Liberal scholarship, notably the work of M.S.A Rao (1982) as suggested by Gopal Guru (2007), views the Dalit condition and prospects for change in terms of a sociology of regulation and incremental change founded in notions and concepts of relative deprivation, reference groups and social mobility that may have described/captured the Dalit condition at a particular historical juncture when Indian society was trying to release itself from the feudal ethos. This, however, fails to explain current situations of absolute deprivation (inadequate descriptions of social phenomena) as the total marginalization and annihilation of rural Dalits, the Hinduisation of the Dalit masses (given a resurgent Hindutva nationalism/politics) and the growing crisis of the Indian welfare state (neoliberal globalization and privatization impacts with deleterious consequences for weaker social segments relying on state ameliorative actions) have together created the conditions for the “total alienation and exclusion and the threat of physical liquidation” of Dalits (Guru, 2007: 153-54). Such liberal conceptions fail to appreciate the extent of marginalization and subsequently underplay the need for more drastic intervention through intensive (given the extent of marginalization) state provisions for livelihood and education and/or radical challenges to caste-structurations of selective deprivation/privileging in education, as when Dalit children are deprived of free school text books when there is an “orchestrated shortage” (NCDHR, 2007: 23). More significantly, such an approach “denies to sociology a critically subversive character” (Guru, 1988: 157) and it also

denies an emancipatory consciousness to the groups under reference...it impels Dalit groups to organize their thought and action not in their own authentic terms but in terms of those privileged sections whose hegemonic world view underlines the structures of domination (Guru, 2007: 157).

Additionally, the liberal conception of relative deprivation of Dalits and associated deficit-views of those “relatively deprived” provides a blue print for a meager caste-paternalistic state-reformist welfarism that shrewdly moves to re-distribute resources through welfare mechanisms at a

rate of trickle down that is just enough to mitigate the prospect of radical challenges to caste privilege, thereby all-the-while ensuring the place of such privilege. Perhaps it is a case in point when India ranks at the bottom (115th) with Bangladesh when it comes to its dismal 3.6% of GNP education allocation for countries with populations of 100 million or more (Tilak, 2002). Until the VIth plan, barely 0.52% of plan outlay was allocated as Special Central Assistance (SCA) exclusively for addressing the educational needs of Dalits, Tribes and other backward castes. Improvements to 12 percent by the VIIIth Plan are welcome trends (Nambissan and Sedwal, 2002: 76).

The functionalist sociology of M.N. Srinivas (1952), while presenting sociological insight in to Hindu religion and society by placing religious beliefs and practices in their socio-historical context, can be similarly criticized for the same excesses as liberal conceptions of caste and society. Moving from the onto-epistemic position that all society is functionally integrated to ensure social solidarity, Srinivas' work is preoccupied with explaining the spread of Hinduism all over India, primarily by Brahmans and through the concept of Sanskritization, whereby Hindu beliefs and ritual have been adopted by an ever increasing number of groups, including Dalits, in a relatively harmonious manner. In an expanded conception of Sanskritization, Srinivas (1966: 6) defines it as a

process by which a low Hindu caste or tribal or other group changes its customs, ritual and ideology and way of life in the direction of a high, frequently twice-born caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant by the local community.

As Hardiman notes, "One is made to believe that the goal towards which everyone is expected to strive is that of Brahmanical purity" (1984: 214) or to put it in Selvam's (2007: 186) words,

though he admits in a later study that economic and political conditions should be taken in to

consideration, his analysis is based mainly on cultural elements and does not provide an insight in to the origin, sustenance and hegemony of this specific cultural process that placed a group of castes above the rest and made their cultural practices influential.

In fact, Srinivas does not recognize the political function of the Brahmanical rituals and ideology and though he attempts to combine history, his analysis makes this cultural process appear as though it takes place outside the realm of ideology, politics and economy (Hardiman, 1984). Such renditions also fail to explain the rise in Dalitisation as a counter-force, as a new assertive identity and as part of an increasing sense of confidence and dignity among the people of lower castes.

Alternatively, Gupta (2000: 178) argues for a sociological approach that seeks to unearth the material and historical roots of the caste system in order to correct the “widespread impression that caste is somehow a peculiar ideological construction that the Hindu mind spontaneously conjured” and that the sociology of caste return to investigating the “social and historical forces responsible for the rise and transformations of different knowledge and belief systems” (p.179). By returning to the material and historical roots of the caste system and the specific features of India’s material history which were responsible for the genesis of the caste system and its development, Gupta (2000) points to the centrality of Marxism and Gramscian-Marxism that links ideology with material reality and seeks to locate ideological articulations and political expressions in relation to concrete social practices and struggles for dominance within the context of class struggle. However, he is quick to point out that there are certain Marxist and/or Gramscian conclusions that would need to be avoided. “It should not be assumed that the ideology of caste is a creation of Brahmins alone, or that it is thrust on others, either against their will, or that the lower castes are in the ideological thralldom of upper castes, to justify economic exploitation” (Gupta, 2000: 182). While Brahmins have played a major role in codifying the caste system, they are not the sole motivators. Similarly, while upper castes strain to maintain economic exploitation on caste grounds, this is

not blindly accepted by lower castes as had this been the case, there would have been little evidence of caste mobility in any form. While dominant castes work to hegemonize caste constructions and most castes abide by these norms, it does not mean they intrinsically believe (thick theories of hegemony) in them since lower castes are also kept in line through the use of violence and the threat of force, for example. The role of agency and the place for education and praxis addressing attempted caste-hegemonies is left open, despite the odds of a contest with historically-ossified caste-power, as has been made abundantly clear by Dalit campaigns and movements for access to education/schooling and employment (NCDHR, 2007) and adult education processes within these movements that nurture and magnify counter-hegemonic possibilities (Kapoor, 2009; Omvedt, 2006).

Dominant class analyses of Indian poverty have also generally tended to neglect the consequences and imbrications of caste and the economy. As Gopal Guru and Anuradha Chakravarty (2005) note, Marxist analysis has largely ignored the economic consequences of the caste system and is silent on many fronts, including for example, the links between caste and income distribution. Caste is explained away as the residue of feudal and semi-feudal modes of production (Asiatic modes), which in turn is seen to constrain our ability to understand the economic impact of caste under conditions of capitalism and the globalized market. And as noted by Gupta (2000), Marxist understandings of social relations as superstructure determined by economic base limit an appreciation of the independent impact of social structure (e.g. caste) on the control over the means of production. Furthermore, when it comes to prospects for class solidarity and struggle, the correspondence of class (stemming from occupation/occupational history) and caste can no longer be assumed as numerous studies have documented this among all castes. This problematizes the possibility for activating caste ideology for economic or class war as caste ideology separates classes over and above the fundamental classes of Marxism. If caste divisions do correspond with social class distinctions then such activation might prove useful as an instrument for caste-class social change processes.

Similarly, Deshpande (2003) notes the paucity of statistical aggregations, profiles and analysis based on caste categories as Marxist and other statistical compilations point to rural-urban divides and/or religious/communal divides in poverty and education but the “Dalitization of poverty” and education (Guru and Charavarty, 2005: 136) and its disproportionate impacts on the educational access, experience, completion and subsequent employment prospects of Dalits is a relatively recent development in terms of a sociology of poverty, education and inequality that is informed by caste-structuration of Indian society (Govinda, 2002; NCDHR, 2007). Marxist analysis, while quick to pick up on the impacts of the privatization of schooling in urban/rural areas on different classes/social stratifications, has been less forthcoming in terms of identifying similar impacts in terms of caste (Gupta, 2000; Jogdand and Michael, 2006).

Despite the short-comings, such insights can mostly be gleaned from a *critical-indigenous Gramscian-Marxist* scholarship/research agenda that politicizes the historical, political-economic and sociological appreciation (macro-scoping) of the shifting terrain and interests of caste ideology/culture (the exercise of caste-hegemony) and its material ramifications (links to an *indigenized* caste-conscious Marxist political-economy) and related prognosis for social change. That is, *critical-indigenous Gramscian-Marxism* recognizes the fundamental caste-Hindu structuration of Indian society (hence the importance of critical excavations of *saffronization*) and its shaping influences on class dynamics (political-economy) and the related prospects for radical struggle (counter-caste-class hegemonic politics of resistance) squarely aimed at the subversion of caste structurations of both. The relatively recent entry of the macro-dynamics of neoliberal globalization and its real/potential contribution towards the exacerbation and continued caste-class structuration of the impoverishment of Dalits (or the Dalitization of poverty) and educational marginalization/inequality also predictably becomes a key focus and defining element of caste-concerned research agendas and macro-scopes. Such *indigenized* critical-sociological deployments are more likely to excavate, expose and suggest directions for change in

educational spaces and in relation to how the education of Dalits can lead to a subversion of caste and a renewed political-economic and socio-cultural-religious engagement in the country.

4. Critical Sociological Perspectives, Research Agendas and Caste Expositions/Directions for Social Action: Neoliberal Globalization, Saffronization and Dalit Poverty and Educational Prospects

A critical-indigenous Gramscian-Marxism (see Selvam, 2007 for a possible partial-application/example in relation to Brahmanic hegemony and ideology and what I am alluding to here) that is cognizant of the centrality of caste structurations (ideological and political-economic), malleability and agency (as opposed to purely anthropological and religio-culturalogical standpoints or liberal-structural functionalist perspectives that speak *within and from* caste), will encourage scholarship that looks at Dalit-relevant questions and research pertaining to several possible and connected critical caste-expository foci (see Kapoor, 2008a), including (for instance): (a) the Dalitization of poverty (Guru and Chakravarty, 2005) and its implications for Dalit education and vice-versa and (b) the real (emergent) and potential impacts of the socio-political and economic trajectories being unleashed by neoliberal globalization (Guha, 2008; Menon and Nigam, 2007) and saffronization (Desai, 2004; Guru and Chakravarty, 2005; Sarkar, 2005) (as distinct and conjoint social vectors which compound socio-economic and educational marginalizations) with respect to the Dalitization of poverty, inequality and the structuration of dubious educational prospects for Dalits. As Ravi Kumar (2008: 9) notes, “The neoliberal onslaught on education in India has not only commodified education but has created a host of institutions to produce knowledge congenial for the new economy... and has also manipulated alternative discourses on education within a framework suited to its own ends”, i.e., educational policies need to be understood in relation to theoretical/research deployments (encouraged by relations of rule) that connect such policy to the ruling caste-class interests and the enactment of the current politics of domination and hegemony.

The Dalitization of Poverty and Educational Inequality/Marginalization

The state of poverty and inequality in India would need to be exposed and explained in terms of its caste-basis and its Dalit face. As the revolutionary poet, Narayan Survey says, for Dalits the roti/bhari (round bread) is not only round as the moon but is also just as distant, as they are forced to “consume poisoned bread, a symbol of the domination of human dignity, each time Dalits eat leftover food from the homes of upper castes as a routine course of survival, or are forced to consume wild leaves and the flesh of dead animals in times of drought” (quoted in Guru and Chakravarty, 2005: 139). Sixty-six percent of bonded labor in India is Dalit, while 66 percent of migrant agricultural laborers are Dalit women who earn 17-54 cents/day (Sainath, 1996). Forty-eight percent of Dalits in rural India live below the poverty line (Parikh and Radhakrishna, 2005). Three quarters of rural Dalits are agricultural laborers of whom 70 percent own less than an acre of land, while 1 percent have access to irrigation facilities and cultivation can not ensure enough food for even two meals a day (Guru and Chakravarty, 2005). Oommen notes (1984: 46-47) that Dalits as a group continue to be subjected to “cumulative domination” and experience multiple deprivations that stem from “low ritual status, appalling poverty and powerlessness”. On the job front, Deshpande (2003: 120) and Panini (1996) both note that “caste clustering” and the dominance of upper caste control continues to be true in engineering, medicine, banking journalism and academics. Despite public sector job reservations and affirmative action quotas, in 2001 60.45 percent of central government jobs held by Dalits was in the category of “sweepers” (NCDHR, 2006: 33).

Poverty and inequality shape Dalit prospects in education and the educational experiences themselves. Dalit women’s literacy rates are at 27 percent compared to 38 or higher for other women and in 1994, only 46 percent of Dalit girls in the 5-14 years age group attended school in rural areas compared to 61 percent for others (Govinda, 2002). While school attendance rates have been improving, drop out

rates for Dalit girls is at 66.6 percent at the elementary stage (49.9 percent for the same in rural areas), while 40.5 percent (rural) and 27 percent (urban) discontinue school (Nambisan and Sedwal, 2002: 83). According to the same study (p. 79), irregular income, frequent migration in search of work and the death/illness of a breadwinner places Dalit children and their education under pressure as Dalit poverty remains a huge deterrent to Dalit education. Untouchability and caste-discrimination in schools are other mitigating factors as caste-based segregation (due to pollution-purity divides) affect social and physical access to schools (Govinda, 2002) as Dalit children are forced to walk around (as opposed to through) dominant caste villages, teachers refuse to teach Dalit children (just 11 percent of teachers are scheduled caste) and Dalits are special targets of verbal abuse and physical punishment by teachers and higher caste classmates, not to mention one study's observation that children of the Balmiki caste (scavengers) were made to sit on their own mats outside the school room/at the door (Dreze and Gazdar, 1996; Govinda, 2002; Sainath, 1996). When it comes to Dalit students in higher education, Dalits constitute a mere 8.37 percent of graduate students and 2.77 percent at the doctoral and research levels (NCDHR quoting from the University Grant's Commission Annual Report of 1999-2000, 2006: 26).

Neoliberal Globalization, Saffronization and Dalit Poverty/Inequality and Educational Prospects

Unlike the emphasis on national production/building under the post-independence Nehruvian scheme where producers addressed the needs of the nation, the contemporary neoliberal policy regime values production for the global market place and foreign exchange earnings, as the patriotic producer gives way to the cosmopolitan consumer. The later is emblematic of a post-patriotic identity built upon the pro-globalist imaginary driven by transnational ideas and institutions or a patriotic pride derived from the ability to partake of global consumption patterns previously enjoyed by an international elite (Deshpande, 2004). The adoption of IMF-World Bank driven liberalization schemes by successive governments since the

1991 fiscal crisis has opened the economy (including education) to foreign investment on corporate terms and has led to:

(i) the shrinkage of the state/public sector which is the only sector obligated to carry out affirmative action and educational upliftment of Dalits, not to mention provision of food subsidies, health and agricultural supports/services to the poor which have been severely curtailed under IFI driven adjustments leading to poverty, hunger and malnutrition (Patnaik, 2007) (e.g. neoliberal globalization is encouraging a further decline in agricultural share of GDP from 53% in 1960-61 to just 13% in 2002-03, while the workforce in agriculture has declined only marginally and market rates of return have come down, prompting cotton-farmer suicides in the thousands in Andhra Pradesh and at least four other states, as the individual debt burden climbs--Kumar, 2008) and

(ii) the acceleration of development dispossession (e.g. TNC mining/dam displacements) in the rural hinterlands or market/economic violence (Kapoor, 2009, 2008b; Rajagopal, 2003) which have a disproportionate impact on marginalized castes/Dalits alike, who are then doubly challenged by virtue of development-led impoverishment and prior conditions of economic exploitation/impoverishment (as development-displaced-persons or what the state euphemistically refers to as DDPs) to seek an education for children in an increasingly privatized/fee paying school system.

Under the neoliberal regime, while higher education has been opened to private capital, the state is now encouraging public-private partnerships in secondary education subsequently paving the way for private providers and subsequent divestments by the state as per “the demands of private capital and the larger conglomeration of the ruling elite” (Kumar, 2008: 9). The franchising of parts of the education infrastructure to corporate and civil society/voluntary religious bodies (see related discussion on saffronization below) enables the Central Government to

“close down its schools, sell its assets and to deliberately allow government schools to deteriorate, allowing replacement of same by fee-charging private schools” (Sadgopal, 2006: 23). Micro studies on the privatization of schooling (there are now well over 38000 private unassisted schools/PUAs in the country according to the NCERT) suggest that the clientele in these schools is biased towards males and the privileged castes (Govinda, 2002) and that Dalit families sending children to these schools are doing so at considerable cost to the family as PUAs take advantage of the “perception of quality” (Nambissan and Sedwal, 2002: 79). Teltumbde’s (2006) analysis of higher education prospects and realities for Dalits points to a similar process of reproduction of caste privilege/discrimination as neoliberal globalization and privatization enhances dominant caste control over higher education while actively raising the barriers to entry by Dalits.

The privatization agenda encouraged through neoliberal globalization has also led to the concomitant enhancement of civil society (development NGO) involvements in education in pursuit of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), i.e. education has not only been opened up to private-for-profit investment in education markets (market-led privatizations) but liberalization has also meant an increase in funding/provision by international NGO actors and multilateral agents (voluntary/civil-society led non-profit privatizations) (Govinda, 2002; Jogdand and Michael, 2006; Kumar, 2008) as the neoliberal state is presented with two possible avenues for the abdication of what were considered a state welfarist responsibility for all citizens. While NGO-led education has opened up some opportunities (e.g. NGOs have improved access to basic education for Dalits/poorer segments—see Watkins, 2000), the proliferation of parallel systems of education, state provided and NGO or market-provided, encourages state withdrawal and the likely exacerbation of educational inequalities as the scale of provision is weakened (Watkins, 2000), not to mention that international/donor control over NGOs often ensures that such interventions are dependent on the donor-fad of the day (erratic provisions) and more significantly, can become portals for linguistic imperialism and neocolonial control

over the substance (curriculum and methods) of what is taught and learned (Wickens and Sandlin, 2007).

Gramscian/Marxist perspectives also point to the reality and continued possibility that service and charitable NGOs stifle movement struggles (dissent) directly aimed at the class-caste basis of society and related state policy (e.g. caste control over state education) while NGOs are also considered likely agents (educational and material) for the penetration of “small c” capitalism (e.g. micro-credit schemes) (Kamat, 2002; Kapoor, 2009; Petras and Veltmeyer, 2001), which, when taken in the Indian context, is tantamount to assisting with the continued entrenchment of caste control, given the interpolations of caste and economic domination. More importantly, when it comes to dealings with Eurocentric agencies (INGOs and national level NGOs) and western (including the affluent transnational modern-urban classes) “benevolence and charity”, this needs to be critical assessed in terms of the “politics of doing good”, given Gayatri Spivak’s (1992: 781) cautionary observation that “The most frightening thing about imperialism, its long-term toxic effect, what secures it, what cements it, is the benevolent self-representation of the imperialist as savior”.

The linkage between neoliberal globalization (marketization of education) and saffron agendas (saffronization of education via market and civil society/religious NGO privatizations) also needs thorough exploration (as has been alluded to already) when, for example, a study in the state of Orissa concludes that:

with the increasing impetus to privatize education (the neoliberal compulsion), the RSS has been ... actively inaugurating schools [and that the] government of Orissa has neglected to provide functioning, viable and affordable schools, therefore creating an educational vacuum and market for the education offered by Sangh-affiliated schools [which] seek to offer education that teaches hate and intolerance, and self-loathing (for Dalits) and uses education as a tactic in building citizenship that will rally to formulate an authoritarian state in India (Chatterjee and Desai, 2006: 17-18).

The same report points to the development of a “parallel structure of power to that of the state government” (p.17) and alludes to foreign funding of RSS and Sangh-affiliated schools made convenient through the globalization of capitalism and the privatization of education and the economy as Indian diaspora top the charts when it comes to non-resident Indian (NRI) remittances (\$29.6 billion in 2006) (William Kole, 2007). For instance, the US-based NGO, Campaign to Stop Funding Hate (CSFH), in its report “Foreign Exchange of Hate” (www.stopfundinghate.org) alleges that 83 percent of funds raised and disbursed by the India Development and Relief Fund (IDRF) between 1994 and 2000, went to Saffron organizations/front organizations aimed at assisting with Hindutva-education, re-conversions and the spread of an anti-minority sentiment. Research reports (see “In Bad Faith? British Charity and Hindu Extremism”, 2004) from the UK/London-based secular network, Awaaz-South Asia Watch Ltd., make similar substantiated allegations pertaining to monies raised in relation to major natural disasters such as the 1999 Orissa supercyclone and the Gujarat earthquake of 2001. Such possibilities begin to suggest avenues for research that examine and expose imbrications between neoliberal globalization and saffronization as privatization agendas create “civil society” spaces for such reproductions and could well be enabling a politics of caste-class-subordinations and the institutionalization of discrimination and inequality.

Such caste-based political-economic analysis of education along with a research agenda that highlights the contributions, gains and possibilities in education and beyond made by Dalit movements/campaign assertions (Guru and Chakravarty, 2005; Jogdand and Michael, 2006; Ray and Katzenstein, 2005) or of Dalit-based political party assertions (e.g. the rise of the BSP and its varied implications—see Guha, 2008; Sarkar, 2002) will make significant contributions towards the further development of Dalit political and educational agendas in India.

When taken together, these related projects will continue to expose the pervasiveness and intensity of caste-discrimination in the contemporary Indian scenario, while pointing to possibilities for change through state policy, institutional mechanisms and anti/caste assertions (in party

political and social movement spaces-local, national and transnational), including through the significant avenue of a liberatory education (as opposed to reproductory and caste-domesticating approaches) and schooling (Freire, 1970) for Dalit children waiting to take their place as equal citizens of India.

5. Conclusion

This paper makes the case for a *critical-indigenous Gramscian-Marxism* inspired caste scholarship and for the general deployment of a critical sociological research agenda committed to expositions (i.e., macro-scopic perspectives pertaining to the Dalitization of poverty/educational marginalization and related imbrications with neoliberal globalization and saffronization agendas in Indian society and political-economy) of casteism/untouchability in the interests of informing a Dalit politics (assertions) and educational agenda. While such a proposition is by no means definitive in any sense when it comes to “militating against the ontological hurt endured by untouchables” (V. Geetha, cited in Guru, 2009: 107), it is proffered as a minor contribution to a growing chorus of possibility and to a “celebration of reviled knowledge” (p. 107). Dr. Ambedkar’s indictment of Hindu society continues to pose a challenge that deserves an answer and subsequently bears repeating as a stark reminder of the difficult but necessary road ahead, quote, “I stand today absolutely convinced that for the depressed classes there can be no equality among the Hindus because on inequality rest the foundations of Hinduism. We no longer want to be a part of Hindu society” (quoted by T. Pantham in Guru, 2009: 186).

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Neoliberal Globalization and “Global Education” in Urban Secondary Schools in India: Colonial Reproductions or Anti-Colonial Possibilities?

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Abstract: *National educational systems across the globe are being influenced by neoliberal globalization. In North America and Europe, globalization is one of the themes that receives consideration under the rubric of what is referred to as global education. This article reports on some of the ways in which global education (utilizing Euro-American conceptions of global education as a point of departure) and more specifically, perspectives on globalization are being taken up (or not taken up) in schools in Delhi, India. Qualitative case study research (based on a preliminary/initial or early analysis of specific data sets across 4 school sites) suggests that despite decolonization in 1947, the neo/colonial project rooted in European capitalism (now in the guise of neoliberal globalization) is being reproduced in Indian schools in urban centers like Delhi. However, the research also points to potential spaces for critical intervention as would appear to be the case from (tentative) emergent themes shared by a smaller segment of student/teacher/other participants. Based on a critical colonial/anti-colonial engagement with emergent themes, this paper advances the perspective that it is both plausible and necessary to introduce an anti-colonial global education which allows for a multicentric framework of global education that extends beyond hegemonic Eurocentric onto-epistemologies (and attendant political-economic projects), i.e., global education can and needs to be enlisted in a counter-hegemonic project in order to address the colonial implications and impacts of a neo/colonial neoliberal globalization project. Such an approach would allow Indian schools, students and teachers to begin to play a part in an anti-colonial global education praxis for democratization and social change as opposed to remaining complicit in continuing to assist with the reproduction of neo/colonial realities in India; reproductions that were challenged, confronted and addressed during the nationalist struggles for independence from British/colonial rule in the early-mid 20th century.*

1. Introduction

The world has undergone a "great transformation" (Polanyi, 2001[1944]) which has resulted in a politically and economically interconnected globalized world. Unlike previous centuries in which societies governed their respective economies, today, the capitalist market economy governs nations and their societies at both the interstate and intrastate levels. The hegemonic economic, structural, and organizational integration of the "core and periphery," "North and South," "colonizer and colonized," "First World and Third World," "West and Rest," and/or "developed and developing" world based on trade, capital, labour, investment, production, consumption, and financial markets is referred to as globalization. Globalization is rooted in a set of worldwide historical socio-political and economic processes such that the local has been, and continues to be impacted by the global and vice versa" (Arnové and Torres, 2007; Held and McGrew, 2007; Steger, 2003). Improved modes of communication, transport, technology, and the enforcement of neoliberal globalization in which private foreign trade, investment, and export govern local economies with deregulated control by local governments within the last two decades have further expedited the process of globalization. Neoliberal globalization rooted in the core's "free market logic" has pressed the majority of the world's nations to move towards a "similar path of development" (Hopkins and Wallerstein, et al., 1982: 41) thereby making no country external to the world economy. Within Euro-America, this worldwide economic integration and universalization of Western liberal democracy has been referred to as the end of history with no existing alternatives to capitalism (Fukuyama, 1992).

It has been argued by some scholars that global economic integration has observed many positive features within a relatively short period of time. For example, life expectancy, literacy rates, food security, and GDP (gross domestic product) rates have all increased, whilst poverty rates and population growth have declined (see for example, Bhagwati, 2004; Norberg, 2003; Wolf, 2004). However,

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according to others (including some institutions that champion the process), the gap between the rich and the poor, both between and within nations, has widened (Arrighi, 2005; Peet and Hartwick, 2009; UNDP, 2008; World Bank, 2006). Many negative impacts of globalization on the majority of the world's peoples extend beyond impacts and changes in the economic realm (production, consumption, and investment) but also include the political, cultural, and environmental realms (Spring, 2009; Toh, 2004). This worldwide governance and organization based on the historical and asymmetrical juxtaposing of "core and periphery," "North and South," "colonizer and colonized," "First World and Third World," "West and Rest," and/or "developed and developing" divide is the root cause of structural violence (i.e., poverty, forced slavery, warfare, cultural annihilation, displacement, exploitation) particularly in the "developing" world, (Bales, 1999; Toh, 2004), despite the promises and projections of political peace and economic prosperity made by Western financial leaders at Bretton Woods post-colonization to the present (Bello, 2002; Foster, 2006; Harvey, 2003; Held and McGrew, 2007; Peet and Hartwick, 2009).

The increased economic interconnectedness is also having an impact on educational systems around the world. The "globalization of education" (Spring, 2009), where by national schools systems are being influenced by globalization's processes and ideologies, are not only posing structural and organizational challenges (i.e., financing, governance, curriculum, foreign privatization, demand for English medium schools) for nations, but are compounding problematics and issues concerning educational equality, access, opportunities, and outcomes for those already marginalized (Arnove and Torres, 2007; Burbules and Torres, 2000; Neeraj, 2007; Spring, 2009). It is clear that the intensification of neoliberal globalization is one of the most pressing issues of our times given the contradictions it presents for the future trajectory of education and human-social development worldwide.

In education in the West, the theme of "global education" has emerged to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and outlook for participation in a globalized world (Goldstein and Selby, 2000; Mundy and

Manion, 2008; Toh, 2004). Global education (as defined in the West) cultivates global literacy (Toh, 1993) through formal, informal, and/or non-formal education by emphasizing "the concept of interdependence and the need to set contemporary issues in a global context" (Hicks, 1993: 19). A comprehensive review of the literature indicates that the bulk of literature available on global education (as defined in the West) comes primarily from the perspectives and paradigms of the West (Hicks, 2004; Pike and Selby, 2000; Reardon, 1988). The lack of engagement with and inclusion of other perspectives and paradigms within global education has been heavily critiqued by some Western and non-Western scholars resulting in a widely recognized need for more intercultural approaches (Arnove and Torres, 2007; Burbules and Torres, 2000; Inayatullah, 1998; Scholte, 2005).

Given that neoliberal globalization is a pervasive force in global governance (including educational governance) today, this article reports on some of the ways in which global education (as defined in the West) is taken up in a "South" (developing) nation, by drawing on case study research conducted in urban secondary schools in Delhi, India. After providing a brief overview of the historical processes that have contributed to the formations of globalization, the paper focuses on neoliberalism in India and Indian education along with a brief overview of global education (as defined in the West) and related official curricular constructions in Indian education/schooling. The following section builds on this emerging understanding of global education in Indian schooling by elaborating on case study research-related perspectives and observations developed from 4 school sites in Delhi. The central and emergent thesis from this case study research is that although three centuries of British colonial rule in India ended in 1947, the neo/colonial project and accumulated violence rooted in the culture of European capitalism continues to work through neoliberal globalization metastasizing within Indian education at an accelerated pace vis-à-vis educational policies, practices and pedagogies. A critical engagement with anti-colonial education/praxis is called for along with a multicentric and multiperspectival framework of global education that extends beyond

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hegemonic Eurocentric onto-epistemes in order to address structural violence across the globe.

2. Situating the Formations of Neoliberal Globalization

Although the term globalization was not in use until the latter part of the twentieth century in 1985 by the economist Theodore Levitt, its processes and impacts were nevertheless underway. It is important then to trace its multicenturic formations to better understand how the world is currently structured and operationalized, and why. Its evolution, contours, and undertakings can be traced back to the fifteenth century with the onset of European enlightenment which observed a radical shift in power initiated by the commercial middle class from religion/church to business/economics alongside the Puritan religious movement which preached the religion of capitalism (Arrighi, 2005; Chase-Dunn and Gills, 2005; Hopkins and Wallerstein et al., 1982; Tawney, 1938; Wallerstein, 2004). By the seventeenth century, the devotional preachings by European fanatics of the duty of commerce “for the greater glory of God” propelled the onset of global capitalism (Tawney, 1938: 216; see also Beaud, 2001; Hall and Gieben, 2005; Robertson, 1986). Through political coercion and violent militaristic invasions, Western Europeans forcefully invaded resource rich non-European countries and annexed global control vis-à-vis colonialization (Blaut, 1993; Goldberg, 2002; Magdoff, 1978; Robertson, 1986). Within India, European invasion and colonization occurred in the 1600s. Through the monopoly of trade (i.e., spice, tea, silks, porcelain), British colonials formed the East India Company in 1600 via the Royal Charter (Lawson, 1998; Wild, 1999). Through incessant aggressive military force, India’s peoples, natural resources, socio-cultural, political and economic structures, and onto-epistemes were dominated and exploited for three centuries by this alien modern-like multinational corporation, not unlike today’s TNCs.

Europeans justified and legitimized the global colonial project by developing biological and cultural theories of race

(Gould, 1996; Back and Solomos, 2002; Quijano, 2000). Without any "evidence" or "scientific" basis, Europe created biological theories of human "races" in which "racial groups were [hierarchically] ranked according to their resemblance to white Europeans" (Bock, 1988: 7), and declared that "physical appearance was a reflection, even a determinant, of moral and intellectual character" (Back and Solomos, 2002: 34). Similarly, cultural theorists argued that cultures progressed from simple "primitive" cultures to complex "civilized" cultures with the former being "living fossils" of obsolete Europeans (Bock, 1988; Gould, 1996). It was here that a universal unilineal history for all humankind, otherwise known as the grand narrative was postulated which positioned the elite European man and his ontologies at the centre of the whole world (Hall and Gieben, 2005). The construction and implementation of this universal narrative ensured a common hegemonic ideological understanding between the colonizer and the colonized "rooted in the need to construct, in spite of the antagonism between them, an ideological 'world' shared by exploiters and exploited alike" (Balibar and Wallerstein, 2005: 4; see also Fanon, 1968; Freire, 1996; Memmi, 1991). It is widely known today that these biological and cultural theories of "race" rooted in a pseudo-science failed to produce any valid explanations of human diversity and evolution (Boas, 1911; Bohannan and Glazer, 1988), and were highly racist theories developed by armchair Europeans for Europeans to champion their own perceived evolutionary success, and justify the brutality of their colonial project (Blaut, 1993; Hall and Gieben, 2005). European colonialists' contact with non-Europeans not only marked changes in the political economy but also wrongfully birthed the local-global racism we observe and operate within today (Back and Solomos, 2002; Dei, 1996; Memmi, 1991; Said, 1979) in which the world's population is distributed into "ranks, places, and roles" (Quijano, 2000: 535). In the words of Blaut (1970: 118) colonization was the "white exploitation of the non-white world".

Today, the "new racism", or "differentialist racism" (Balibar and Wallerstein, 2005: 21) has conveniently gained rapid popularity. This contemporary racism is based on cultural differences in which the life-styles and traditions of

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the “Third World” are believed to be incompatible with those of the European culture given that “Third World” people possess obstacles and “cultural handicaps” (Balibar and Wallerstein, 2005: 25). This new racism divides humanity into two main clusters: “one [is] assumed to be universalistic and progressive, the other [is] supposed irremediably particularistic and primitive” (Balibar and Wallerstein, 2005: 25). The “new racism” not only echoes earlier theories of race, but it conveniently erases and dehistoricizes the multicentric colonial project that continues at present.

“World-system theory” (Wallerstein, 1974) is useful in sketching out how centuries of colonization have shaped, and continue to shape and sustain the asymmetrical juxtapositions of “core and periphery,” “North and South,” “colonizer and colonized,” “First World and Third World,” “West and Rest,” and/or “developed and developing”. For Wallerstein, the world economy is based on two integral structures: core (“developed” nations) and periphery (“developing” nations). His theory focuses in on the ways in which the accumulation of wealth and development in the core continues to economically sustain itself within the world market-system via the international division of labour resulting in a flow of surplus from the periphery to the core. Wallerstein’s model views the formation of the “world-system” solely as an economic entity, not a socio-political entity rooted in colonialism. As Blaut (1993: 206) points out:

capitalism arose as a world-scale process: as a world system. Capitalism became centred in Europe because colonialism gave Europeans the power both to develop their own society and to prevent development from occurring elsewhere. It is this dynamic of development and underdevelopment which mainly explains the modern world.

Wallerstein’s model is a negation of earlier world economies that operated with similar structural factors (i.e., wage, profit) thereby making the European modern capitalist world-system nothing really unique in its formation except for its centralizing hegemonic factor (Amin, 1991; Appelbaum and Robinson, 2005; Behdad, 2006; Mignolo,

2000; Robinson, 2008). Europe alone was not responsible for the "development" of modernization, but rather Europe's conscious colonial geographical expansion, human and resource exploitation, capital production and accumulation, and interdependence based on the unequal division of labour makes the development of the world-system multi-national and not solely Eurocentric (Dussel, 2000; Frank, 2000; Ikeda, 1996; Mignolo, 2000).

It must be noted that critics and global capital apologists have long downplayed the importance of the core-periphery persistence as they believe that the core-periphery inequality ended after World War II during the period of decolonization which is clearly not the case (Appelbaum and Robinson, 2005; Bello, 2002). In their pursuit for continued world domination and wealth, Western economic leaders met at Bretton Woods (a New Hampshire spa) immediately after World War II/"decolonization", to discuss the management of the world's economy, commerce, and trade (Foster, 2006; Harvey, 2003; Held and McGrew, 2007; McMichael, 2005). From their armchairs, multilateral International Financial Institutions (IFI), namely, the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) were formed in 1944, and in 1947 the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, now referred to as the World Trade Organization (WTO) since 1995) (Bello, 2002; Gélinas, 2002). Former colonies were pressed to keep their national borders open and economize from a mode of self-sufficiency to an export production economy for the global market. Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), rooted in the modernization/"development" paradigm, were imposed on to countries in the periphery to provide the "necessary conditions for western-style development and growth" (Hall and Gieben, 2005: 10; Peet and Hartwick, 2009). The totality of this global "restructuring" gave the Western geopolitical core an open license to a "free" liberalized market economy by imposing economic standards for the "Rest" of the world to adhere to.

It was argued by the West that global economic intercourse would cultivate a culture of peace given the increased economic, social, and political interdependence between nations (Bello, 2002). After over half a century, this

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clearly has not occurred as evidenced by ongoing warfare, militarization, structural violence, poverty, slavery, environmental destruction, cultural annihilation, and other socio-economic injustices (Bales, 1999; Bello, 2002; Groff and Smoker, 1996; Klare, 2001; Toh, 2004; World Bank, 2006). At its fiftieth year, a worldwide review of the economic restructuring revealed that “the World Bank’s own evaluations were highly critical of its performance” (World Bank, as cited in Robbins, 2008: 98). The debt crisis accumulated by the periphery from the IMFs/World Bank’s SAPs was identified as a root cause of the structural violence that is inflicted on to billions of people around the world (Kapoor, 2007, 2009; Neeraj, 2007; Sanyal, 2007; Singharoy, 2004). This is not surprising given that “the Bank is in the *business* of lending money for development” for profit (Gélinas, 2002: 107). This is referred to as neo-colonialism (Altbach and Kelly, 1978). Globalization, neo-colonialism, modernization are, to all intents and purposes, conceptually synonymous with “roots in the world-historical colonial project associated with the rise of capitalism” (McMichael, 2005: 111; see also Beaud, 2001; Capella, 2000; Dusell, 2000; Scholte, 2005; Stromquist and Monkman, 2000; Wallerstein, 2004). This calculated design by the West as a result of its dependency on the periphery for survival vis-à-vis resources (natural and human), has wrongfully trapped periphery countries into irrelevant economic systems that are at the root of the structural violence that is inflicted on to billions of peoples inhabiting the periphery (Robbins, 2008; World Bank, 2006). Furthermore, the rationale or lack of, of the obscene accumulation of debt accrued by “formerly” colonized countries requires further analysis and dialogue particularly since the colonizer exploited and robbed the resources (material and human) of the colonized for several centuries.

Neoliberal globalization took over from post-independence “developmentalism”, taking root in SAPs and IFI-sponsored penetrations of the South and has been actively pursued since the 1980s by the economic reform agenda of the Washington Consensus through which the “free market logic” continues to secure the interests of the developed world (colonial/imperial powers). Neoliberalists/hyperglobalists regard nations as borderless

"business units" and champion the capitalist logic of endless production, accumulation, and profit "through the establishment of transnational [corporations] and networks of production, trade and finance" in the global market economy with no interference from national governments (Held and McGrew, 2007: 189). Colonialism and neocolonialism are obsolete, and the concepts of core and periphery are no longer applicable given the decentralization of production and the uniting of the world market in which the flows of labour and capital have "fractured and multiplied so that it is no longer possible to demarcate large geographical zones as center and periphery, North and South" (Foster, 2006: 32). Neoliberalists/hyperglobalists believe that "those states that fail to make this [economic] adaptation will fall behind and stagnate, eroding the opportunities for their people" (Foster, 2006: 189).

Postglobalists such as Escobar (2004: 210), on the other hand, argue that modernity's problems do not require modern solutions; its failures have given rise to imperial globality, and globalization's inescapability needs to be questioned, and what is required is a shift "from the sociology of absences of subaltern knowledges to a politics of emergence of social movements". What Escobar and other critics of capitalism (see for example Dusell, 2000; Mignolo, 2000) are calling for in the face of global empire are the socially emancipatory enactments of "new anti-capitalist imaginaries...the emphasis on non-Eurocentric perspectives on globality...[and]...place-based epistemologies, economies and ecologies" (Escobar, 2004: 208; see also Loomba, et al., 2006).

With this brief look at the global neoliberal turn and related explanations for what it can and does mean in terms of the march of progress, development, modernization, continuing capitalist and racially-specific colonizations and core-periphery structurations, the following section addresses the implications of neoliberal globalization for India, Indian education and global education prospects and current trajectories in India.

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3. Neoliberal Globalization, Education in India and Global Education

Although India's economic liberalization policy can be traced back to the late 1970s, intense economic restructuring rooted in neoliberal globalization took shape in 1991 primarily as a result of the large accumulation of foreign debt (Panagariya, 2002; Prakash, 2009; Sikri, 2009). This economic restructuring was premised on the financial logic that foreign-exchange reserves would not only "develop" India and the Indian economy simultaneously, but eventually eliminate the debt (Panagariya, 2002; Prakash, 2009; Sikri, 2009). Today, India's neoliberal economy is an open economy with an emphasis on foreign trade and investment, export, and privatization with minimal government regulation. A post-1991 analysis indicates that India has the fifth largest economy in the world with a 3.611 trillion GDP, foreign exchange reserves exceeding \$170 trillion USD, 50 million investing shareholders, and a rapidly growing middle class (Prakash, 2009; Varma, 2007). It is believed that the process of neoliberal globalization and "development" are imperative to solve existing national problems such as the large gap between the rich and the poor, population explosion, and environmental pollution. In other words, the very processes that brought on these conditions are also regarded as being ameliorative. It must be noted that this relentless economic growth and restructuring "has bypassed hundreds of millions of Indians...[as] [g]lobalizaion is not only destroying millions of jobs in the organized sector and small-scale industries, it is also devastating the livelihood of hundreds of millions working in India's unorganized sector" (Neeraj, 2007: 141), and is exploiting, displacing, encroaching upon, and annihilating the epistemic-ontologies of the *Adwasis* (original dwellers), agri-based communities, and land-based subaltern constituencies of India (Kapoor, 2007, 2009; Neeraj, 2007; Singharoy, 2004).

Education played, and continues to play a major role in the formation and sustainability of globalization. From the onset, colonial education and schooling were sites of deculturalization and were "designed to serve the needs of the colonizer" (Altbach and Kelly, 1978: 2). Within India,

British colonial educational policies were instrumental in the formation, implementation, and sustainability of the British empire in India (Basu, 1978). Lord Macaulay's landmark speech in 1835 in which he openly discouraged Indian education and culture, set the course for colonial education in India (Basu, 1978; Young, 1935). His approach to mass colonization and deculturing of Indians entailed developing and using a small class of English-like men "Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect" to educate the Indian population and spread western onto-epistemes (Young, 1935: 359). The use of English language education was an essential tool for the colonizer in ruling the colonized as it provided "a positive bond between the rulers and the ruled...[and] would stop the Indians from regarding their rulers as foreigners and in fact make them 'intelligent and zealous co-operators'" (Basu, 1978: 57-58). English became the medium of instruction in higher education with a strong emphasis on a literary curriculum. The deliberate focus on western English literature and humanities, and not economics, production, and technical/vocational education, prevented the emergence of a qualified Indian ruling class equipped for economic leadership, which as desired by the colonizer, resulted in a knowledge dependency on foreign rulers for governance and direction (Basu, 1978; Kamat, 1985; Seth, 2007).

Since "decolonization," the history of Indian educational developments can be categorized into four distinct phases (1947 to 1967; 1967 to 1985; 1986 to 1998; and 1998 to the present) (Mukhopadhyay, 2007; Thakur and Berwal, 2008). From 1947 to 1967, an analysis of Indian national documents (e.g., Indian Planning Commission; Kothari Report on Education) and international documents (e.g., UNESCO) in the late forties and fifties indicate that both Indian and non-Indian social scientists, politicians, and educational planners believed that education was the site for socio-economic, political, and cultural transformation and the move towards modern "development" was key. The second phase (1967 to 1985) observed the first important national event in Indian education which was the adoption of the first National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1968 which "aimed to promote national progress, a sense of common

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citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration” (National Policy, 1986, p. 2). The third and fourth phases observed, and continue to observe, educational restructuring and trends aligned and embedded within neoliberal policies and orientation. It was the third phase of Indian education (1986 to 1998) which saw the introduction of the second National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986. Its landmark development was “the acceptance of a common structure of education throughout the country and the introduction of the [British] 10+2+3 system by most states...[and]...science and mathematics were incorporated as compulsory subjects and work experience assigned a place of importance” (National Policy, 1986: 3). A 1992 review of India’s National Policy on Education resulted in structural revisions in which local-state governments were empowered to self-manage education; education was enacted as a fundamental right; a recommitment to finance education was renewed; commitment to universalize secondary education and significantly expand higher education; ensure quality education at all levels and national institutes; and increased involvement of international agencies to mobilize resources for elementary education (Mukhopadhyay, 2007). Educational developments in the fourth phase (1998 to present) are not surprisingly dominated and being shaped by neoliberal orientations given India’s economic emphasis on foreign trade, investment, and privatization (Panagariya, 2002; Prakash, 2009; Sikri, 2009). The Indian government is moving towards state deinvestment and withdrawal in education to a heavy commitment towards the privatization and marketization of schools (government and private) by private companies. This movement is highly problematic as the state is failing to educate its children; education and knowledge (for the new economy) are becoming a commodity for sale by a powerful elite which can be purchased thereby further widening existing educational inequalities; and no educational *alternatives* outside of capitalism and capitalistic frameworks are provided (Kumar, 2008; Neeraj, 2007). This educational trajectory poses urgent critical questions that centre around whose education? Education for who? Education for what? As a result of neoliberalism in India, the government has appointed the Central Advisory Board of

Education (CABE) to examine the critical issues facing Indian education at present and what additional educational policies are required (Aggarwal, 2007, 2008; Mukhopadhyay, 2007). While global education (as per Euro-American definitions) has not been spelled out as such, nascent and emergent themes pertaining to peace, ecology, economic modernization/skilling for the global economy, gender equality, etc. are becoming a part of the official curriculum, prompted largely by UNESCO-inspired influences in Indian education and the National Curriculum Framework (NCERT, 2006; UNESCO, 2001).

Global Education and Related Constructions in Indian Education and Schooling

From a Western perspective, the area of global education is defined as a process of cultivation of "global literacy" (Toh, 1993) where by contemporary issues and realities are situated within a global context, given the growing interdependence in the world (Hicks, 1993; Toh, 2004). The origins of global education in the West are recent given that the focus on local-global issues was not a priority among western educators during the last quarter of the twentieth-century (Hicks, 2004). According to Western academic literature, key binding thematics center around peace, militarization, human rights, poverty/inequality, the environment, anti-racist education, cross-cultural and intercultural relations, and social justice (Hicks, 1993; Goldstein and Selby, 2000; Kniep, 1986; Toh, 2004). However, there are many practical, pedagogical, and praxiological challenges that still need to be addressed adequately (Hicks, 2004; Mundy and Manion, 2008). First, the available resources are scarce (the area is under-funded), and the global education curriculum is fragmented and shadowed by the demands of the core curriculum (Hicks, 2004; Mundy and Manion, 2008). Second, many teachers do not have an understanding of what 'global education' is nor a grasp over the issues and related thematics (i.e., cultural, environmental, militarization, colonization), and therefore often feel ill-equipped to teach to these themes (Hicks, 2004; Mundy and Manion, 2008; Scholte, 2005). Third, there is substantial research indicating that teachers in the west

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have little knowledge and understanding about racism, discrimination, inequality, and other worldviews/perspectives, and, possess stereotypical beliefs about various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups (Dei, 1996; Ghosh, 2002; Nieto and Bode, 2008; Sleeter, 2001), thereby stunting the prospects for cultivating global literacy and building international/intercultural solidarity. Lastly, global education remains heavily “west-centric” thereby excluding “Other” epistemologies and ontologies (Arnové and Torres, 2007; Burbules and Torres, 2000; Inayatullah, 1998; Scholte, 2005).

In Canadian classrooms for example, CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) produces educational materials for teachers. Findings from the National Advisory Committee on Development Education reports that despite the positive findings that global education is being actively pursued in some Canadian classrooms “it seems that the Canadian people still have very little idea of what this whole subject is about, very little idea of the globality involved, the integration of issues, and the connection of Canada to this world of changes. It is still seen in terms of foreign aid: we are aiding them (Cronkhite, 2000). Similarly, Mundy and Manion’s (2008) study with Canadian elementary school teachers and administrator’s found that although they recognized the term “global education,” they do not have a conceptual grasp of it. Teachers and administrators indicated that global education centred around the teaching of “Others” in different countries, educating Canadian students about how not to take things for granted comparatively, and is about “fundraising”.

A document analysis pertaining to India’s national curriculum indicates that there is no direct program of studies on global education (as defined in the West) per se. However, themes related specifically to global education such as education for peace, multiculturalism, human rights, gender equality, and environmental education, international solidarity are found in the 2005 National Curriculum Framework in the National Focus Group Position Paper 3.4 “Education for Peace” (NCERT, 2006). Core concepts of peace in Indian education as derived from UNESCO (2001) centre around

- i. Absence of tensions, conflicts and wars;
- ii. Non-violent societal system i.e., society without structural violence;
- iii. Absence of exploitation and injustice of any kind;
- iv. International cooperation and understanding;
- v. Ecological balance and conservation;
- vi. Peace of mind. (Pandey, 2004: 3-4)

Related values include love, compassion, harmony, tolerance, caring and sharing, interdependence, and spirituality (Pandey, 2004). It is important to note that the distinction between education for peace and peace education was emphasized given its pedagogical implications.

Education for peace is different from peace education. In the latter, peace is subject in the syllabus. In the former, peace becomes the shaping vision of education. This implies a paradigm shift in the total transaction of education. Currently, the enterprise of education is driven by market forces. Education for peace is not antagonistic to the market, but it does not recognise the market as the purpose of education. The market is only a part of our life-world. Education for peace is education for life, and not merely training for livelihood. Equipping individuals with the values, skills, and attitudes they need to be wholesome persons who live in harmony with others and as responsible citizens is the goal of education for peace (NCERT, 2006: 1).

Given the increased involvement of international agencies in Indian education, Grewal (2004: 36-37) expands on the above by articulating that the themes of peace education can also be integrated with UNESCO's themes of (1) armament – arms race, arms trade, disarmament; (2) political system – capitalism, globalisation, discrimination, oppression conflicts; and (3) developmental problems – poverty, exploitation, (neo)colonialism, liberalisation of economy. As Aggarwal (2009a: 191-192) points out, the thematics within the 2005 National Curriculum Framework and the National Focus Group Position Papers run alongside “the desire to live together in our society on the one hand, and the global

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village on the other”. Heavy investment in education by the Indian government post-1991 is creating educational shifts towards an emphasis on education for modernization and meeting the demands of the global economy (Aggarwal, 2009b; 2008; Mukhopadhyay, 2007). Examples include an emphasis on digital teaching methods, computerized instruction, science and technology, vocational education, access to the knowledge economy, and increased literacy rates (Aggarwal, 2009b; 2008; Mukhopadhyay, 2007).

Given this nascent and emergent nature of any form of “global education” in Indian schooling, is what prompted the study around this theme with the view to begin to uncover current constructions of the global/ization, global education and globalism and the prospects for critical approaches to global education that prompted questioning of global orders while adopting a historical perspective, i.e., the march of colonization and the place for a decolonizing and anti-colonial pedagogical approach to global education given India’s tryst with colonization.

4. Case Study Research: Preliminary Understandings of “Global Education” Pedagogy in Urban Indian Schools

Through interpretive case study research, the research examined ways in which Indian education is currently engaging in *global education* (as defined in the West) by focussing on urban secondary schools in Delhi vis-à-vis the perspectives and understandings of secondary education teachers and students, academics from higher education and research institutes, and educational administrators, planners and curriculum developers. The study was delimited to Delhi and select school sites given that it is the capital city of India and is the center for numerous national institutes and educational bodies, and secondly because of its diversified cosmopolitan demographics (urban, rural, religious and ethnic diversity) and associated socio-cultural dynamics, not to mention a segment of the population that has traveled abroad/has diasporic connectivity. Despite these observations, as stated by an Indian academic (research participant), it is important to note that “there are

many Indias in India...[and that]...Delhi is a very unique city in India in that it is more comparable to places like London, Germany, New York; it does not represent the vast diversity within India". Therefore, oversimplification and over-generalization of the findings of this study need to be avoided, not to mention that this are observations based on a preliminary analysis of a selection of some of the total data pool generated for/during this research.

A qualitative research methodology was employed to understand how participants "make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (Merriam, 2001: 6), and how they interpret and construct the world in which they live in. Four different schools in Delhi that focussed on global education (as defined in the West) were the case study sites for the research. Methods of data collection included: focus group sessions, in-depth open-ended interviews, school and classroom observations, as well as curricula/document analysis to examine "official knowledge" and pedagogy (Apple, 2000). Employing a multi-method approach to better understand participants' perspectives helps to not only ensure the trustworthiness of the research findings but gain stronger phenomenological insights in constructing total meanings (Creswell, 1994; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Given the existing heterogeneity of schools within India (i.e., government-run, Indian-run private schools, Western-run private schools, gender-based schools, CBSE vs ICSE curriculum, etc), the school site selection was purposive as the attempt was to find the most probable sites for "global education" inclusions in the curriculum. The common denominators between the four schools are as follows: (i) they are all Indian-run schools that follow the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) system, (ii) have student and teaching populations that are heterogeneous in terms of religious and cultural background, (iii) urban middle class schools catering to consumer-elite social groups and (iv) have English as the medium of instruction. *School 1* is a private, upper-middle class, gender-mixed school with primary and secondary age students. *School 2* is a renowned elite upper-middle class "brand-name" franchised private secondary school that is gender-mixed. *Schools 3 and 4* are both brother and sister

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gender-segregated Christian schools established during the colonial period with primary and secondary age students of all socio-economic backgrounds.

Data were collected from a total of 75 secondary students who were either enrolled in a political science and/or economics class given that Principals indicated that curriculum material on globalization (and some of the related themes) was located in these classes. In *School 1*, a focus group was conducted with 7 mixed gendered students; in *School 3*, a focus group was conducted with 8 male students; and in *School 4*, two separate focus groups were conducted with two sets of 30 female students during class time. A total of 11 female secondary school teachers from various disciplines, and 3 female school Principals were interviewed individually for 1.5 to 2 hours. Outside school settings, 26 academics were interviewed for their perspectives on global education/teaching in Delhi schools.

5. Research Findings

Data thematics centering around: (a) perspectives and understandings of globalization, (b) global education, and (c) the pedagogical prospects for an anti-colonial global education are introduced in the following segments. Select quotes and document-related data are presented as emergent themes with the understanding/caution that this is a preliminary analysis of select data sets and that the shared research findings, while indicative of some of the key “emergent themes” are still in a state of elaboration/explication.

Perspectives and Understandings of Globalization

A majority of participants were of the view that India is currently “undergoing a rapid transformation of some kind” rooted in globalization as evidenced by the overwhelming presence of “TNCs and their products.” As one academic explained:

Societally speaking, we know this change is here and for now, we are taking things as they come, and you can say there is some improvising as we go along

because we don't know what it (globalization) is suppose to be like within India. So together, we are all creating the society together based on what we see, based on what is happening around us, its impact, and our interpretation and interactions with the whole thing.

All participants articulated the beginnings of globalization in Europe, with acceleration after World War II which observed the global integration of "economics," "market demands," "trade," "investment," "exchange," "profit," and "development." However, the assessment of this integration differed significantly between participants. For instance, academics and most school teachers saw globalization as "a re-colonizing phenomena that is not favourable to the 'Third World'". For secondary school students, on the other hand, the material outcomes associated with globalization were "positive" and "exciting," particularly with regards to "development." As one student explained:

It is very wonderful for us because now we have malls everywhere and you can get whatever you want in there from any part of the world, this is good because you don't have to travel there to get what you want. We have all of the latest things here. Our metro system is rockin' and you can go anywhere in Delhi now, this is something which you couldn't do previously. These things are changing all around us and it is very good actually... Why should we not have these things in our country.

Furthermore, in defining globalization, some students regarded British colonization as "positive," given that the British provided "trains, roads, and English" though they did not agree with the British using Indians as a cheap source of human labour for their own gain. "Trains and roads make traveling easier and because of English we can compete in the global market economy." When this perspective was shared with teachers and academics, although it raised concerns for them, it was explained away as a "generation gap."

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We have seen so many things in India over the past decades. Children today, they are always with their computers and they have no interest in history. They are into the internet and studying. For them, it is something that happened long ago, but for us no. We have school functions in which we celebrate India's Independence, but that's all it is for these children; a historical day.

Although a small percentage of secondary school students were critical of globalization they indicated that they "do not have enough knowledge or background to make an informed argument...but want to definitely learn more about it."

When discussing Indian society's overall perspective on globalization, there was a general consensus (among teachers, students and academics) that it was regarded as "positive" because of the potential economic prospects it has to offer. As one academic explained:

There are people who believe that these latest economic reforms have done wonders for India than compared to previous economic policies. There use to be so much poverty here, you can't imagine; people had nothing to eat it was so bad at one time, I have seen this in my lifetime. We were struggling as a nation because of colonialism. We have joined the market, we have these TNCs that have come to India and I have seen with my own eyes how the kids are getting jobs and employment and how they are earning a living and becoming self-sufficient and what not.... There is still poverty yes, but it is reducing slowly than what it use to be, you can see the middle class here everywhere...but conditions for those already marginalized have worsened and this is of concern to us naturally. But even they too now believe that globalization is important...you see this everywhere in the schools today; even the poor want to send their children to English schools so they can have a good job and a better life than what they have now.

Globalization was also regarded as "inevitable" and so too was participation in the market economy both at the

national/international and individual level. However, participation in the market economy did not center around colonizing thematics such as those found in the West (TNCs, "helping," Christian-aid work), but rather as a depiction/manifestation of a "collective humanity". As one curriculum specialist explained:

Western society and Indian society have different perspectives. We are very much a values-based society, you have seen this in our curriculum now. We give much values when educating our children to make sure they develop certain values, ethics, and behaviour. For us in India we believe in *Vasudheive Kutumbkam*, which means the world as a family. For us, this is how we view the world and the people in it. For us, the whole world is one family, doesn't matter your country, your religion, your race, we are all part of the humanity and one family. Because of this, we believe in living together in peace.

"Global Education" (as Defined in the West) in Urban Delhi Schools

In the Indian context, the term "global education" is often defined as "going abroad to the West for post-secondary studies" (Administrator). Although there are a number of reputable Universities in India, a "brand name degree from a Western University like America, or Australia is preferred." The synonymy between "global" and "Western" was a noteworthy finding in relation to the general theoretical point around the continuity of the colonial project, as is made evident by statements like this.

Delving into research conversations with participants on "global education" required a brief conceptual explanation/backgrounder on my part. Although students, teachers and academics indicated that there is no such set/designated area of study within the Indian curriculum, all were clear on what "global education (based on my sharing around what it means in the West) meant. In discussing the ways in which such a "global education" is taken up in schools and curricula, participant teachers were keen to discuss this thematic by describing and showing the

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various classroom and school-based pedagogical activities they employ. Examples include:

- Tree planting.
- Afternoon science club. This year's theme was seeking alternative fuel sources that reduce pollution.
- Writing research reports on influential Indian women.
- Drawing and painting pictures of peace and/or constructing moulds that represent students' ideas of peace.
- Discussing world issues, such as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Acknowledging all cultural and religious days in the morning announcements by the School Principal. Teachers teach about them as well and celebrate them during school time.

School 1 has an existing exchange program with a British school in which to "learn about globalization and cultures." As one teacher explained:

We were approached by a British school some years back and agreed to have this cultural exchange with them. Their students come here and we also go there. Basically the British children get an opportunity to see how we live and our students also get an opportunity to see how they live. I don't think it will continue past this year because the (British) teacher has indicated their government will not be providing further funding....Overall I thought the exchange was okay to experience, but there were times that I felt that we were not treated very well...you know simple things like not regarding us as professionals as if only we had something to learn and they did not...Anyways, I believe some of the children still keep in touch with their friends abroad so at least that is something very good.

In, *School 2*, arguably the most elitist school (based on observable material indicators and school clientele), both Principal and teachers discussed how their students attend the annual United Nations' youth forums abroad in which

world issues are discussed and resolutions are sought and developed collectively with student representatives from other nations. Participants confidentially indicated that "our students represent all of the children in India at this global gathering."

For *Schools 3 and 4*, work related to the thematics of global education is addressed locally. These schools work to actively address global issues identified in the Millennium Development Goals such as HIV/AIDS, poverty and illiteracy, locally. For these school, the global is the local; this community service is carried out during assigned school time, for credit.

Pedagogical Prospects for Anti-Colonial Education

As previously indicated, secondary school students regarded globalization as an unproblematic positive, particularly given the "development" aspect. When discussing potentially negative aspects or impacts of globalization, students indicated they were not aware of any. To get at students' perspectives on pressing critical issues associated with neoliberalization in India, I engaged students in a conversation about the realities of mining, the encroachment of TNCs, displacement, and exploitation currently being experienced by of the Adivasis/Scheduled Tribes (see Kapoor, 2007; 2009). Students indicated that they were "not aware of these kinds of happenings in India" and were surprised to learn of this. Based on students' incessant questions, I provided a detailed background of the violations against the Adivasis as a result of the impacts of neoliberal globalization and economic "development" (Kapoor, 2007; 2009). On concluding our discussion, I asked students whether the knowledge and insights they just gained have affected their perspectives on neoliberal "development" in India in any way, and all of the students said "it did." I then asked students if they were open to having such discussions as a part of their school experience and they unanimously agreed that it would be a good idea. One student expressed his concerns around not fully understanding globalization and globalism as follows:

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We like that the companies from abroad are coming and developing India because we want the proper infrastructures that exist elsewhere in the world, so in that way globalization is very much needed here, so that is a positive aspect of globalization. Our government does nothing for us you see. They fight amongst themselves and they are completely unaware of what their duties are; what can we do? But this research and information you have told us, this is not right what the government is doing. It should not be treating Indians in this way. In fact, we really enjoyed learning about this and talking with you, we have learned something.

In discussing students' perspectives and understandings of globalization, both, during focus-group discussions and classroom teaching, it was found that students regarded the entry of TNCs in India as "one of the best things that is happening in India right now because of the job prospects." When we discussed the exploitation of resources and discrepancy in wage labour, or what is referred to as the "coloniality of labour" (Quijano, 2000), students accepted having TNCs in India given that "they create employment." As one student said "we will take whatever job we can get, what else are we going to do? We are not going to tell them this is wrong. They will find a thousand other people to do the job." In pursuing this further, a critical discussion of globalization ensued.

Our labour should not be exploited by these foreign companies. We should be given the same wages as everyone else for the job that we are doing. They are here in India using our resources and we are not saying anything to them when they export everything from here. In fact, I am better understanding why they are here...it is for their benefit basically, to make money through profiting from our inexpensive labour....You have to look at how the world is, we really can't do much right now. Our economy is rising which is good but to get at the same level as them in the market will take some time.

To further engage students during focus-group discussions and classroom discussions around the various thematic of globalization, we discussed the recent violent attacks on Indian post-secondary students in Australia. Initially, students were divided on the issue as to whether it was racially motivated or based on media (television and internet) reports they viewed, and secondly because of their perception of Indian success around the globe.

You see, we Indians are doing very well globally. If you look in America today for example, everybody is wearing Indian clothes and watching Indian movies like *Slumdog Millionaire*, and a lot of the music nowadays is mixed up with Indian beats and things, so they like our culture....I have family abroad and they are all very successful, so in this way, we are very successful people no matter where we go.

In response, a student who also has family abroad stated "...when I visit my family in the UK, there is racism there; people will tell you to your face...They see us Indians as inferior, I know this. So in that way it is not as wonderful as you have said it is." In facilitating a critical dialogue (classroom and group) in which multiple perspectives were collectively shared as to whether the attacks were racially-based or not, including a discussion on "race" and racism given that the majority of students had indicated they had not experienced at all, the majority of students indicated that the attacks were racially motivated and/or did not entirely dismiss "race" as a factor, and demonstrated an awareness that inequality does indeed exist in the world today. As one student stated "we are labeled a Third World developing country, it doesn't matter to them that our economy is doing very well. I don't think they have a right to treat us as Third class citizens; we never regard them in such a way. It is not how we are as Indians."

When the above findings were shared and discussed with teachers, they were pleased to learn about students' critical insights and their openness is engaging in such discussions. They indicated that a lack of engagement with local/national issues is primarily due to their professional

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obligations to adhere to the curriculum given the pressures associated with the year-end national examinations.

We are required to teach what is in the curriculum and textbooks....A very big part of our responsibility is to prep our students for their national exams; this is very important for these childrens' further studies and the competition is very high. These children are under so much pressure, it is really very unbelievable, and we must ensure we are always focusing on this when we teach....The majority of them will study further so we have to really work hard with them. It doesn't really leave much time for this unfortunately.

Based on teacher interviews, it is clear that there were three main categories of teachers represented among participants. Type one teaches strictly to the textbook and curriculum as it reflects her/his understanding of the material. Type two teaches strictly to the textbook and curriculum not because it is a reflection of her/his knowledge base but rather rather s/he is professionally bound despite knowing alternative perspectives. Type three, the most unique, teaches to the curriculum and provides alternative perspectives. As one type three teacher explained:

Students love my class! In fact these students enjoy talking about social and political topics and they want to learn something beyond just the test test test....All of my students receive good marks and do well on their exams.... I have never had a problem with a parent ever, and I have been teaching now for over 20 years. These are my children also, so I want all the best for them, so it is about making sure they understand the society they live in; not everything has to be about what is happening elsewhere in the world....My girls tell me about what is happening to women in America, or Africa, and I tell them back, what is happening to the women here? They know more about what is happening elsewhere; what kind of citizens am I creating if they don't even understand their own local environment? ... I know the exams are important but they are not everything. Until someone

tells me to stop, I will continue to open my girls' eyes to what is happening all around them here. I want that they have the knowledge to understand and live and grow in society.

During my school and classroom observations as a participant-observer, representations found in Western classrooms of global education (as defined in the West) such as white doves and peace symbols were also present in these schools. When I asked teachers how they arrived at such representations, I discovered that teachers access their resources "from the internet...UNESCO and those kinds of sites" as resources on global/peace education are not readily available locally.

6. Discussion

This research suggests although neoliberal globalization is increasingly evident in India, Indian education is not preparing students to critically understand the ways in which the local is being affected by the forces of neoliberal globalization. Disproportionate emphasis is placed on production, consumption, investment, and participation in the world economy, and school and classroom activities that centred around the thematics of global education (as defined in the West) were done so via UNESCO's framework and resources thereby securing the colonial project (Morrow and Torres, 2000; Spring, 2009) by not allowing space for local onto-epistemes as well as a platform to critically engage with the local-global issues, realities, impacts, root causes and solutions to increasing structural violence being encouraged, if not directly caused by neoliberalization. In the overall analysis of education and schooling in Delhi (based on the data for this study that has been analysed thus far), it is becoming increasingly evident that it is the hegemonic structures themselves that are being viewed and praxied as emancipatory given the belief of the permanence and inevitability of neoliberal globalization. What is therefore urgently required in Indian education and schooling is an interruption of the romantic fallacy "that the world is becoming a better place to live in through an

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intensification of economic interdependence, technological interconnectedness, and cultural linkage” (Behdad, 2006: 76).

It was clear that Macaulayan education continues to impact and shape Indian education, and as Krishna, John and Sundaram (1970: 2) point out “the real fact is that our educators and planners are themselves the products of a Macaulayan education which was oriented towards encouraging deracination, diffidence, and imitation”. At present, the findings suggest that recurrent impact of colonial education in India in which “western knowledge is no longer seen as only one mode of knowing but as knowledge itself” (Seth, 2007: 3) is deeply penetrated within the structures and educational agents themselves. In understanding the cognitive imperialistic relationship between colonialism and de-colonization, Nandy (1998: 63) reminds us that “national freedom, however, does not automatically reinstate the authentic self-hood of a culture.... India’s colonial past, too is part of its living history. Neither can the spirit of nationalism wipe it away”.

As indicated by this preliminary analysis of case study data, what seems to be required is heavy engagement with an “anti-colonial global education/praxis”, informed by the work of anti/critical colonial scholars (Dussel, 2000; Escobar, 2004; Mignolo, 2000; Nandy, 1998; Quijano, 2000). Anti-colonial education has as its foundation an anti and/or post-globalist perspective which suggests that modernity’s problems do not require modern solutions (Escobar, 2004: 208), but rather are calling for (in the face of global empire) “new anti-capitalist imaginaries...the emphasis on non-Eurocentric perspectives on globality...[and]...place-based epistemologies, economies and ecologies”. Furthermore, anti-colonial education requires as a whole “intra-modern perspectives” (Escobar, 2004: 210) which challenge the prevailing discourse on the inevitability of development, modernity, and globalism and offer prospects for “transition” (Escobar, 2004: 211). A case in point is Dussel’s (2000) conception of “transmodernity” and the “transmodern project” which opens epistemological and ontologically spaces around the hidden omitted side of modernity, namely the violence associated with the rise of Europe – colonialism, slavery, oppression of peripheral groups, etc vis-à-vis the

"coloniality of power" (Quijano, 2000: 473) and "unmask the hegemonic process of modernization" resulting in a "pluritopic hermeneutics" (Mignolo, 2000: 16-18) to allow for a multicentric framework of global education that extends beyond hegemonic Eurocentric onto-epistememes to address structural violence in North-South nations.

Engagement with "race" and racism remains a salient component of anti-colonial education which moves beyond the recognition of the existence of "race" and racism (biological, cultural, and the "new" racism) to an understanding of how and why "race" and racism continue to drive globalization, and encourages praxis which attempts to interrupt and dismantle the structure(s) which distributes the world's population into "ranks, places, and roles" (Quijano, 2000: 535) in the name of economics.

Anti-colonial global education provides a platform within educational institutions to disrupt its role as a site for reproducing colonial constructions vis-à-vis teaching, pedagogy, curriculum, policies, and practices, which have historically been, and continue to be used to sustain the "core and periphery," "North and South," "colonizer and colonized," "First World and Third World," "West and Rest," and/or "developed and developing" divide. Although India is emerging as a global economic power, it continues to be classified as a developing country (South) which is facing ever-the challenges of poverty and inequality as a result of centuries of foreign domination. "Southern states have become trapped in a system of exploitation that forces them to be dependent on the North for capital and locks them into an unfair trading relationship" (Sens and Stoett, 2005: 22) in which the uniqueness and relevance of their own respective economies are disregarded (Prakash, 2009), while the wealth accumulated by the "developed" world continues to come at the expense of those in the South (Arrighi, 2005). Anti-colonial global/education is imperative if education is to play a part in rupturing colonial control and the associated culture-race-economic violence.

Based on case study research conducted in urban secondary schools in Delhi, with secondary education teachers and students, academics from higher education and research institutes, and educational administrators, planners and curriculum developers, it would seem that the

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prospects for and necessity of an anti-colonial global education in India is plausible as is seemingly evident from emergent themes and findings pertaining to anti-colonial pedagogy (TNCs, unpacking racism, and violence on the Adivasis) wherein, for instance, some students indicated an openness to engage with such educational experiences. It is apparent that there is an urgent need to formally introduce anti-colonial global/education in Indian education/schooling given the dehistoricization around the history and legacy of colonialism that was clearly articulated by students. The absence of such a critical global pedagogy will otherwise ensure that all encounters with the “core” will continue to ignore centuries of accumulated violence and help to reproduce the illusion of an uncritical appraisal of global promise.

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Media and Youth Identity in Pakistan: Global-Local Dynamics and Disjuncture

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Abstract: *The paper critically analyzes the engagement of a group of Pakistani urban youth with global cultural flows through media, and their responses to those flows. The discussion mainly centres around an analysis of a re-make of a drama-skit performed by a group of Pakistani urban high school youth during their school's annual function which could be regarded as a kind of satire providing a cultural critique on the way cultural globalization, through media (especially cultural production through Indian Bollywood film/soap media-industry), is influencing urban Pakistani youth's perception of 'local' values, norms and identities. For the analysis, the paper draws upon Anthony Giddens's theory of structuration (Giddens, 1986) (relationship between structure-agency) as a framework to understand and analyze 'flows and disjuncture produced and experienced due to globalization and especially the interaction between media-scapes and idea-scape/value-scapes of 'local' youth agency who are found to be not only consumers of media, but also critical interpreters and agents, engaged in a relationship of structuration involving experience and interpretation of the media-texts that flow across and around them.*

The analysis is based on data generated through a year long critical ethnography conducted with urban Pakistani high school youth, who were studying in their final year of higher secondary education in a school in Karachi, especially with reference to exploring how media is functioning as a key globalizing site and how that, in turn, produces cultural hegemony in relation to constructing perceptions, attitudes, values and identities of the youth in question. The data collected was through focus group discussion and participant-made visual 'images'. The analysis suggests an interplay of global-local cultural dynamics operative at the levels of youth self-perceptions, values, meaning and norms of cross-gender socialization. The research reports on key debates through an analysis of discussions held with the youth participants about issues like; the role of women, youth socialization, imagined and mediated discourse of Muslim identity and its juxtaposition with self-assigned meanings and perceived realities of being Muslim. The paper concludes

by drawing some implications for the formation of gender and youth cultural identities in the Pakistani context.

1. Introduction

Youth have been identified as a social group, most influenced by the phenomenon of globalization, especially cultural globalization, through media (Dolby and Rizvi, 2008). They increasingly engage with different kinds of media, movies, news channels, the internet—which in turn, are linking their identities to the currents of globalization and political economies of culture that flow across and around them. The same holds true for the majority of youth living in Pakistan. In Pakistan, the youth population is estimated to be around 83 million, of which, 41 million are between the ages of 15-29 years (Qamar, Umrani, Fatima and Bashir, 2010). Social shifts/change are increasingly more evident as in the case of gender relationships and the rising incidence of unmarried couples (youth) from working class and lower-middle income backgrounds and/or the shift from extended family to the nuclear family structure, especially in urban context of Pakistan (Hasan, 2010), to name but a few examples.

Moreover, Pakistani youth, from urban as well as rural contexts, are actively engaged with media and information technology. Having said that, one can also not deny the fact that a substantial number of youth, due to the digital divide, cannot access media, as in some other developing countries.

Being active consumers of media and other forms of information technology, youth are likely developing a transnational subjectivity, which in turn is placing them 'betwixt and between' the global and the local, between the world out there, and the world at home/family. This paper will explore some ruptures or breaks that are experienced by the youth as they interact with the global media, especially with reference to their normative interpretations of the social world and ways of socialization in the contemporary world.

The paper draws upon an ethnographic study of a group of urban high school going Pakistani youth living in Karachi (a metropolis of Pakistan, with a population of 18 million people from diverse ethnic and linguistics

backgrounds) and their engagement with the global media and their responses to it, especially with respect to Bollywood and other global news channels. The data was collected through participant observation in and outside the school and classrooms (including some home visits), focus group discussions around youth engagement with the media and internet (including social media: Facebook and Orkut; social networking sites) and semi-structured interviews.

For the purposed of this paper, the analysis mainly focuses on the performance of a drama-skit by my research participants: high school youth. The skit was a re-make of an old Indian/Bollywood film titled “Mughal-e-Azam” (translated as the great Mughal), which is an epic tale around the story of the Mughal emperor Akber and his son Salem’s love affair with a courtesan called ‘Anar Kali’. The script performed by the youth was re-named “Anar Kali” (explanations follow below). The performance offers a satire, a cultural critique on the way globalization in general and media globalization in particular, is influencing Pakistani youth attitudes towards socialization and their family norms and values. A brief discussion centered around a particular data-set has been presented and analyzed in order to understand how the global media is influencing youth Muslim identity. The paper also elaborates on some critical ethnographic insights into the ways that media is functioning as a key globalizing force and the manner in which youth agency reacts/acts towards it.

Four related sections are considered. The first section presents theoretical/analytical references, specifically, the theoretical notion of “disjuncture” proposed by Appadurai (1996), to explore ‘breaks’/ruptures caused by interactions of various types of ‘scapes’ and the notion of ‘structuration’—a synthesis explaining the interrelationship between structure and agency (Giddens, 1986) to analyze how youth respond to media. The second section presents ethnographic data around the performance of a skit by the youth, as cultural ‘text’ produced by the youth themselves, ‘text’ which acts as a ‘critique’ of the dominant media in a globalizing world. The third section engages a critical analysis of the skit-text with a view to highlight the nature and complexity of local-global cultural dynamics and the ensuing ‘disjuncture’ experienced by the youth in question. The final

section is a deliberation on the emergent data-theory connectivities and some related conclusions.

2. Media and Youth Agency: Local-Global Dynamics and Disjuncture

Media and migrations have been identified as key globalizing forces (Appadurai, 1996). Through these forces global cultural flows across and around 'borders'-geographical, socio-psychological as well as cultural, influence the way individuals relate the self with the world. In this section, the focus is on discussing the youths' interaction with the global media, especially with reference to some ruptures that they experience and respond to as a result of their exposure to the media. In order to understand youth interaction with global cultural flows through media, the notion of 'disjuncture' as espoused by Appadurai (1996), will be used as theoretical construct to help analyze the complex processes and interrelationship involved in the youths' interaction with global media.

Notion of 'Disjuncture': Theoretical Foregrounding

Globalizing forces are generating processes of global cultural flows that are characterized by interaction of various kinds of 'scapes' (Appadurai, 1996). These 'scapes' include: a) *Ethnoscap*es that refer to the 'borderless' world and people of the move (through migration or travel) which in turn are influencing social, political and economic scenarios in the world; b) *Mediascap*es which refer to the context created by the flow of images, ideas and narratives of life-styles across the world through the electronic medium—these moving images and texts trigger 'new' desires and possibilities of being in the world; c) *Technoscap*es signify exchanges of machines, devices and information (techniques/knowledge) across time and space regarding development and the application of manufacturing and production processes in society; d) *Financescap*es refer to the complexities of the global capitalist economy, affecting local currency markets, national stock exchanges, and commodity prices; and e) *Ideoscap*es refer to the set of ideas and ideologies that are

often rooted in a philosophical outlook promoted in the period of the Enlightenment. These could be ideas/ideologies pertaining to notions such as: nation, democracy, freedom, rights and so forth, which in turn are often seen in use for addressing political motives articulated by certain social groups.

These 'scapes' are not only interactive in nature, but are at the same time disjunctive. The disjuncture gets generated due to overlapping and intersecting of 'scapes' in multidimensional and asymmetrical manner which in turn creates the disjuncture; a kind of rupture or break between the contexts and contents of 'scapes', and more importantly these are experienced by those who are nested amidst these 'scapes' in our contemporary globalizing world. The notion of disjuncture—as a complex rupture creating experience—and its multidimensionality (as discussed) provides a partial analytical optic to understand the complex processes that are involved in the way the youth group in the study encounters and responds to the global media (the focus of our analysis in this paper). In this regard, the notion of disjuncture is instrumental here as it relates to the idea of rupture or a break. This rupture refers to an occurrence that is disjunctive when different 'scapes' interact. For example, a certain way of dressing (fashion) promoted by the media, financed by a huge multi-national capital enterprise, may not be seen as acceptable within a particular mind-set or context as has happened recently on Facebook when certain actions by some (hurting Muslim sensitivities), disturbed Muslim sensibilities across the world, to such an extent that in Pakistan (at the time of writing this paper), Facebook is temporarily officially blocked. This is an example of how media-scape has generated an emotional and ideological 'disjuncture' amongst the people.

A second aspect to keep in mind, as I include this in my analysis, is an awareness regarding the notion of 'scapes', i.e., a particular perspectives in involved relative to a certain location from where 'viewing' is done. Therefore, like globalization, media too is not viewed by all from the same vantage point but rather from different historical, political and ideological locations from where youth exercise their agency. It is these disjunctive nodes where 'difference' gets generated (in terms of meanings, ways of socialization

and exercising gender relations, for instance, which in turn influences identity-making) as a result of the youth-media encounter, which is analysed in the following section. In the case addressed here, analysis of interaction between two 'scapes' will be considered specifically, i.e., primarily the disjunctures between media-scapes and ideo-scapes.

The disjuncture between media-scape and local ethno-scape/identity references or for that matter, between media-scape and local idea-scape or among media-scape, finance-scape and the very life style of agency, generates a world that now seems "rhizomic, even schizophrenic, calling for theories of rootless ness, alienation and psychological distance between individuals and groups on the one hand, and fantasies (or nightmares) of electronic propinquity on the other" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005: 10). Furthermore, Dolby and Rizvi (2008: 19), find that "media-scapes not only provide a resource out of which social agents "script" their own "possible lives" but also the "imagined lives" of others living elsewhere." Therefore, in this view, agency is not only influenced by the media-text that it receives from various scapes, particularly media-scapes through forces of cultural globalization, but youth are also active and innovative agents manoeuvring the same media-text for their own sake by creating spaces of their own (Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 1986).

With regards to the active role played by agency in and through the forces of cultural globalization as Giddens (1986) and Bourdieu (1977) point out, media-scapes have become vehicles for cultural power (Dolby and Rizvi, 2008) and globalization is thus characterized by competing tendencies of cultural homogenization (convergence) and heterogenization (divergence). In such a context, culture becomes a contested terrain; a site of power negotiation and production.

With respect to the above, the structuration perspective proposed by Giddens (1986) is a suitable framework to represent these tensions within the ongoing debates on global-local dynamics in relation to the active role of agency.

The structuration perspective views the global as partial (Giddens, 1986). It argues that the global is experienced, contested, appropriated and re-articulated in

the local (Arnové and Torres, 2003; Sassen, 2003). Hence, this view presumes a dialectic relationship between the local and the global. It acknowledges the role of the particular in its historic, political, and cultural expressions and manifestations. It presumes interpenetration between the local and the global, viewing the relationship between the global and the local as dialectic and not binary; opposite, or un-dialectical. This view accommodates the notion of a fluid cultural dynamics which is central to this inquiry. It perceives globalization as a process inherent with tensions, contradictions and countervailing forces and interests, having multiple centres and peripheries and therefore, multiple globals and locals.

Hence, in light of the above, agents/youth are not passive recipients of the dominant structures of media-scapes but are creatively using and reinventing media spaces for self-representation.

For instance, Abu-Lughod (2002) observes how generational conflict emerges in modern Egypt in the wake of the global and local dynamics through popular cultural songs and their commercialization on national media. In contrast, Ginsburg (2002) points out that different communities, traditionally being the objects of ethnographic representation, are now taking up media to screen their memories and thus, are creating an indigenous media. Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod and Larkin (2002: xv) go further to assert that:

[the structuration perspective] offered an exciting way to rethink some of the questions about reception, reflexivity, and the politics and poetics of representation that have been central to visual anthropology...indigenous media opened up thinking about the role of media as a dimension of cultural activism in identity-based social movements and became a major preoccupation.

The above remark is central to the theory of structuration. It highlights the important role that the structuration perspective offers to ethnographic representations: of representing how power oscillates between the structure and the agency in the contested

terrain of cultural production and reproduction. Moreover, it further emphasizes the neglected participation and space of “subjects” as central actors for cultural production and as generators of social and cultural activism. Above all, the works devoted to the role of media in cultural globalization seldom portray “the dialectic between the disciplinary power of technology...and the unexpected way technologies are reworked within local cultural logics” (Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod and Larkin, 2002: xv).

The following section deploys these theoretical/conceptual constructs in an analysis of a media-text, i.e., a drama-skit performed by the youth during the school’s annual function that I attended as a participant observer in relation to the development of this ethnographic study.

3. Exploring the Remaking of a Postcolonial Drama-Skit: A Tale of Anar Kali

For the purposes of the analysis that follows, I have selected ‘text’ data of a drama skit performed by the high school youth who were key informants in my research. The drama skit is a satire on the current influence of media (especially the impact of Bollywood films and Indian drama serials telecasted through channels like Star Plus, Zee and Sony television channels) on Pakistani society, especially with reference to its impact on socialization of youth and gender roles/relationships and on the traditional institution of the family (where elders typically have authority). Before sharing the skit-text, a brief background of the actor-participants is shared in order to give the reader some sense of location of these youth actors/agency in order to provide a sense of where they are acting out/critiquing/interpreting the world “from”.

The group, who directed and performed the skit included nine high school youth or five girls and four boys. These students were in their final years of higher secondary studies in the medical sciences track. Most of the students were aspiring to be medical professionals/doctors, except for a few who wanted to shift their field of studies from science to business management (in the near future). Majority of these students had had an opportunity to travel abroad to

the US or Middle-East countries and/or have relatives living there. One of the students had returned to Pakistan after living in the US for five years. Taken together, they represented four ethnic and linguistic groups. All the students were Pakistani nationals at that point in time.

The students were active consumers of media; they were watching Western and Bollywood movies, as well as soaps and drama serials produced by local and global media. While the students could be seen as consumers of media, they were not passive participants but active ones, who critiqued the media.

This critique was enacted/performed through a skit presented by the students titled *Anar Kali*. Anar Kali was the name of a courtesan in the Mughal King Akbar's—Akbar's son, Salem, fell in love with her. She met a tragic death on the path of this love, as the King buried her alive as punishment. Based on this love story, the Indian film industry (Bollywood) produced a film called *Mughl-e-Azam* (The Great Mughal). The skit was named *Anar Kali* by the students and was part of the activities presented at the school's Founder's Day celebration; an event that the school celebrates every year and where students and alumni get together.

The performance was video recorded. Below, I have reconstructed an account of the performance based on the field-notes and a viewing of the recorded video.

The students begin the skit with an announcement stating that they will transport the viewers to the olden days through the movie *Mughal-e-Azam*. The movie, *Mughal-e-Azam*, the students tell the audience, is a film-lover's delight. The students add that for those who haven't seen the movie, they will bring them up-to-date with this classic love story and proceed to do so. The female MC (master/mistress of ceremonies) asks the audience to imagine what would happen were this story to be portrayed in modern times. Soon the following number gets played in background "We will, we will rock you!" as King Akbar comes on to the stage.

The skit begins with the booming voice of King Akbar who is shouting for his son, Salem. Prince Salem, dressed in jeans, a hooded T-shirt, and wearing Nike shoes enters the stage, dancing to the popular Bollywood song: *Bachna ae hasino lo main agaya* [watch out beautiful ones here I come].

The music stops, and Prince Salem turns to his Father, “Hey Pops, I wanted to talk to you,” he says, “I want you to meet someone. Her name is Annie; she has a strange name, Anar Kali.”

At this very moment, Anar Kali or Annie enters the stage to a Punjabi song in the background: *Pitche pitche* [As I look for my nose ring, he follows me]. Annie is wearing a *gharaara* [long flowing skirt with a short tunic and a *dupatta* (shawl)]. She yells at Salem in Punjabi. Salem introduces Annie and the King to each other in English. Music with another popular Bollywood song: *Chand mera dil Chandni Ho tum* [Sweetheart you are my moon] is heard in the background. The King, falling in love at first sight, starts dancing to the tune chasing Annie around in circles in typical Bollywood fashion. Salem responds by saying “Hey dad, what you doing?” The King replies by telling Salem in Urdu: “Don’t you have any work to do, go away.” When Salem refuses, Akbar commands him to leave utilizing the excuse of sending him to get a CD so that he can be with Annie.

Salem leaves and another Bollywood song is heard in the background, depicting the romance between King Akbar and Annie. Annie flirts with the King, telling him in Punjabi, not to feel too bad, that it isn’t his fault but it is just the magic of her beauty that burns everyone.

Salem comes back, complaining to his father about his behaviour. He says to his father: “Hands off, this is my girl!” His father responds by saying in Urdu that he (Salem) would find many more beauties and wasn’t that the reason why he had sent Salem to America? “Bring a woman from America, this one is mine. Can’t you make this one sacrifice for your *pitah* (father)? Think how she would look in your mother’s role.” Salem protests, “But Dad, this is my girl!” Akbar responds with “So what?” (Actors start laughing and both actors exit the stage).

Birbal (Akbar’s *Vazir*, his minister) enters the stage, meets Annie, while in the background a Bollywood song is heard and a new romance begins. The skit ends with Birbal and Annie going off together (field-notes, August 6, 2006).

Based on the above representation of the experiences of the high school youth as a result of global cultural flows and disjuncture in particular, the following is an analytical

discussion pertaining to the above skit performed by the research participants.

4. Analyzing Nodes of Disjuncture: Local-global Dynamics

Disjuncture is experienced by agents when their own values, ideas, meanings of the world and the self, meet a counter narrative of the same, produced by the media. The skit issues a statement about the present state of socio-cultural affairs whereby, the media-scape has greatly influenced the domains of concepts of love and fidelity which in turn shape contemporary social relationships, values, authority structures and roles within the family (which is seen as a fading social structure in the local context among these youth). Hence, the skit demonstrates existing tensions between local perceptions concerning the social structure of the students' context and the global projection of multiple cultural spaces. I elaborate on this tension in the following segment by drawing on more details pertaining to the skit.

The Role of Women in Traditional and Modern Societies

The *Anar Kali* skit presented by the research participants portrays shifting images of the gendered self and social values in contemporary society. One of the dimensions highlighted in this data is the image of a modern woman represented through the character of Annie, who expresses herself openly and flirts with three males, irrespective of their social positioning: the son (the Prince), the father (the Emperor) and a minister (the *Vazir*). Such a portrayal attempts to reflect contemporary social dynamics between male and female members of the society. Such a depiction generates a disjuncture between the media projected global image of a woman and the local perception of the image of a woman. Moreover, related to the image, is a disjuncture represented between the manner in which gender and social dynamics and relationships are enacted in contemporary society and the locally held norms and perceptions about inter-gender social interactions and relationships.

In this regard, during a focus group discussion, when asked how she felt about Annie having three affairs, one female participant responded: So what's wrong with that? Haven't you heard the famous saying...? "Survival of the fittest"? So Annie flirted with Salem [the son], Akbar [the father of Salem] and Birbal [the *Vazir*/minister], and she found Birbal the fittest...so she went with him (Focus group discussion, September 7, 2006).

This survival of the fittest image, where a woman exercises her choice in selecting or rejecting men, seems to be conveyed by the very immediate media-context with which the students interact, especially the Bollywood films and dramas.

These media sources can be accessed very easily through the local cable operators. Some examples of such drama series that are very popular among the students are telecast products by a popular TV channel "Star Plus." Some examples include: *Kuon Kay Saass Bhi Kabhi Bahuu Thi* [Because mother-in-law was once a daughter in law], *Kahin to hoga* [Somewhere someone will be there], and *Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki* [Story of every home]. These media texts portray such images where a woman may have multiple relationships during her lifetime. Apart from the above, both locally and globally produced TV commercials expose females as highly contributing members, both, at home and at places of work and also show men as subordinate. Thus the image of the woman is represented as self-sufficient, confident and an opposite equal to men—a depiction that often comes into conflict with the local gender-based social structures.

Perceiving the role of woman in the local societal context, one male student remarked, "In Eastern culture, woman does home-management work and man goes outside to work." In reaction to the question that why that happens in the context of Eastern culture an interesting answer was produced: "According to our culture they are still less competent than males... [but] I am not saying that females should not work." As a result of this apologetic remark, a debate ensued with respect to the nature and competency of women. Some male members of the group were of the opinion that the role of woman is confined to do certain chores and not others because according to one group member: "she is biologically weak", as "she cannot lift the

bag/sack”, for example. One girl reacted to this statement forcefully and said, “She can lift [the sack] if she wants to.” The reference to biological ‘weakness’ was also somehow equated as referring to a lack of competence and hence, a justification for the limited role of women. Female group members reacted sharply and argued “Women can do everything. Women are joining military forces.” One male member added, “Women are also becoming pilots today” (Focus group discussion, October 31, 2006).

The discourse then went on to contrast the role of women in the West with the role of women in the local context. A female participant pointed out the following:

A Western woman has to work at home as well as outside. In the East, a woman’s priority is her house and they don’t actually have to work, they are not made to work, but it is an option for them if they want, but there is a compulsion in the West (Focus group discussion, October 31, 2006).

The Image of Islam and Muslim: Disjuncture Between Mediated and Lived Realities

Another aspect (beyond the skit now) that the students were quite critical about was the way global media in general and Western media (BBC and CNN) in particular were seen to be distorting the image of Islam and Muslims. The students were concerned about the narrow and misleading portrayal of Islam as negative; as a religion of conflict/terror, neglecting its broad and rich socio-cultural and lived diversity.

The media was critiqued for equating ‘Islam’ with terrorism and portraying ‘Muslims’ as suicide bombers/terrorists. This caricaturing of Islam/Muslim hurt the sensibilities of the Muslim youth students in this research and generated some strong emotions and reactions against the Western media. The students regarded these media-based images as a disjunction—a disjunction between what is portrayed by the media on the one hand and what was their perceived reality, where they felt the majority of Muslims were peace-loving, kind and ethical.

The Media and Islamophobia

Frustrated by this predicament, the students shared the following perspectives in a focus group discussion: One student said, “Media has blamed us, media tells, we are terrorists”. One of his colleagues added, “Those who keep beard are labelled as terrorist” (Focus group discussion, September 14, 2006). This was said in the context of the way the ‘beard’ has been politicized in and through media. Also, these stereotypes were confronted in travel practices/experiences or observed by some of the students, where it is a well known fact that often Pakistani citizens (with Green passports) in general, and those who wear beards are reported to have been treated suspiciously by the immigration authorities or during visa processing. The youth were well aware of these issues, and were blaming the media for manufacturing such images that could lead to such stereotypical thinking.

On a similar point, one female student lamented the media’s portrayal of Muslim women wearing the veil, since, according to her, such an image is depicted as a “sign of backwardness.” She went on critiquing this tendency of Western media by adding that “it is my choice whether I wear a scarf or not. I should have that freedom” (Focus group discussion, September 14, 2006).

Such media images of Muslim women were reproducing social stereotypes in the very locality where the students were situated, and were influencing intra-local socializing. Paradoxically, quite often, the peers in the school were seeing the boys who wore beards or the girls who wore *hijab* (scarf) with some sense of ridicule. As one girl who was wearing *hijab* lamented:

In our class those girls who wear scarf are known as “Talibans”. People think *mere baarey mai; ke is bandi se baat nahi karna, agar karo gey to chatat (slap) maar dey gi* [People think that we should not talk to this girl. If we do, she will slap us].

Her peer, a male student, interjected, “We call them Ninja Turtles” and the whole group laughed (Focus group discussion, September 14, 2006).

The disjuncture experienced by the students was between the way the media depicts Islam and Muslim identities and the students’ own lived experience of Islam and being a Muslim in the contemporary world. However, paradoxically, as illustrated above, although the majority of the students critique the Western media and its portrayal of Islam and Muslims (especially females), they themselves are not immune to the rhetoric, as some of them were making fun of their own female peers wearing scarves and were seeing them through a media-shaped/consistent stereotypical lens, while all along being aware of the critique.

5. Re-Conceptualizing Global-Local Dynamics and the Media Flows: Theoretical Rejoinders

Erosion of Socio-Cultural Values: Disjuncture between Modern and Traditional

The performance of *Anar-Kali* by the students can be regarded as a satire of their own contemporary society and culture. The performance produces two parallel and comparative discourses. It juxtaposes the old and the new narratives of *Anar-Kali*, each in its own way, reflecting a clash between what ought to be and what is. The clash can be seen in the realms of the modern and the traditional impacting socio-cultural norms and values pertaining to the father-son relationship, gender social interaction and relationships and the notion of love and fidelity.

Tension between Modern and Traditional

Describing the relevance of the skit *Anar-Kali*, the students mentioned in a focus group “it was re-made for modern times” (Focus group discussion, September 14, 2006). When asked what they meant by the term modern, one of the skit writers defined the term as that which is “current and in fashion and full of entertainment.” Tradition,

on the other hand, was anything that was “old and out of fashion” (Focus group discussion, September 14, 2006).

For the students, the notions of modern and traditional were also embodied in the names of the characters. Anar Kali, for example, was perceived as an old name, hence, as one student said smilingly:

We changed the name of Anar-Kali to Annie, because Anar-kali is a very old fashioned name, and Annie is short and mode. Here in our school also people use their nick, for example, Talat Jawed [one of the teachers] is called TJ and my friends call me Musfi. So the name should be short, because it sounds good and takes less time to call, as in today’s modern times everybody is so busy. (Focus group discussion, September 14, 2006)

In this manner, the student expressed a perceived difference between modern and traditional as binary terms, where the difference is expressed through the temporal and social dimensions of their lives.

Role of Women: Disjuncture between Global and Local Images/Roles

Many changes were observed in the students’ understanding of the gendered self, particularly relating to the role of women. Different opinions were pronounced about the role and social positioning of women in societies. The images that are globally circulated of a modern woman and the local perception of the image and role of a woman did not seem to align with each other, for some. Within this debate, the female participants were inclined towards adapting the modern role charged with the discourse of human rights in general and women’s rights in particular. Some resonance of such a debate can be seen in the reform case of the Hudood Ordinance that some female participants thought worth mentioning. This law reform was tabled by the Musharraf government as part of an effort to bring gender equality to Pakistani society. This event is a manifestation of the interplay between the local (Islamic legal discourse) and the global (international and domestic laws, human and

women's rights) discourses. In other words, this demonstrates a case where the Hudood Ordinance, which is based on Sharia (traditional Islamic law), has been appropriated, as being aligned with the modern global discourse of human rights.

Conversely, some male members of the group attempted to define the role of women in the light of locally prevalent socio-religious norms and practices, arguing for the re-claiming of the traditional role of women in society. It is interesting to note that both the female and the male participants were using history of Islam as a reference to advocate their respective perspectives (which again depended on their subjective readings of the past). The female members considered the origin of modern human rights discourse to have originated from Islamic teachings and hence, by doing so, authenticated their modern role. On the other hand, the male participants were doing the same to validate their own arguments against their female peers.

'Liquid' Relationships: Destabilization of the Local Social-Normative References of Father-Son Relationships

In the play, the contemporary relationship between father and son is described as being more informal and casual, even bordering on being disrespectful. This is acted out by the students through the use of slang, informal diction and through the very content of the dialogue. Salem tries to be modern and his sense of modernity is defined by speaking English, wearing Western clothes and adopting a casual attitude towards his father. His father, while claiming Eastern-ness through his dress, his speech and never having travelled abroad, demonstrates his perception of modern norms through his open flirtation with a young woman who is currently dating his son, his openness in replacing his wife for the younger woman and openly discussing his plans with his son. With true dramatic irony, neither of the characters is aware of what he is projecting; however, the student actors and the audience certainly are. The disjuncture is manifested by this clash of perceptions—lived, imagined and influenced by media.

Notions of Marriage, Love, and Fidelity

Through the dramatization of *Anar Kali*, the students were able to juxtapose two opposing perspectives: the traditional and the modern, and to explore their struggle to reconcile these perspectives. In the traditional world, the social institution of marriage, and the concepts of love and fidelity are solidly defined. Marriage, for example, is permanent and forever. One pledges one's love and fidelity to a single person. Contemporary times, however, have challenged these notions and the students' exposure to the media has enabled them to imagine more complex and fluid relationships. More importantly, the distribution of gender power that defines the institution of marriage and the traditional concepts of love and fidelity are also challenged. The data below explore three themes: 1) the understanding of marriage, love and fidelity; 2) challenging gender roles as defined by religion; and 3) the role of women in society.

The reconstructed narrative of *Anar-Kali*, demonstrated the fluidity of social relationships in the modern world. It debunked the previously held social norms and notions of love and fidelity as commitment to one and only one relationship. The students, again, largely blame this fluidity in relationships on the media. Explaining how they had envisioned the new *Anar Kali*, the modern *Anar Kali*, one of the student actors asked me:

Have you seen *Khushi*, a drama on Star Plus, where the girl Khushi got married to three men in her life [sic: after the death of each preceding partner]? So we thought why not we do the same with Annie [Anar-Kali], and therefore we came up with the idea that Annie flirts with Salem [the son], Akbar [the father] and Birbal [the minister] (Focus group discussion, September 14, 2006).

To this explanation, one male group member reacted strongly by asking: "But then, where is the loyalty in love? Our tradition doesn't allow it. Woman has to be sincere and loyal." He went on to blame Bollywood for creating such images of women and influencing what he called "our cultural values." He remarked "*Bollywood ne rishton ka satyanas kar diya haye*" [Bollywood has destroyed

relationships]. “Have you seen that movie *Kabhi Alvida na Kahena*? In that, husband – wife relationship has been destroyed. If one follows that, then anybody can have an affair with anybody else. This is crazy!” (Focus group discussion, September 14, 2006).

The institution of marriage and the notions of love and fidelity clash, when the students try to reconcile the notions of the past with the modern. Neither model seems to fit comfortably with the students as they try to re-define what marriage, love and fidelity mean to them. The resulting disjuncture occurs in trying to reconcile two opposing modes of behaviour.

The disjuncture causes further discord in the realm of religion which also defines social relationships. When I asked the students how they felt about this new flirtatious Anar Kali as compared to the old one, one of the female students responded (as stated earlier in this paper): “So what’s problem with that. Haven’t you heard the quote of Darwin ‘survival of the fittest’? So Anar Kali went [ultimately] with Birbal [the minister] as he was the fittest” (Focus group discussion, September 7, 2006).

Image of Islam and Muslim Identity

The research participants were also articulate about the misrepresentation by the global media when projecting Islam. For them, the West portrays distorted images of Islam as a religion whose followers are terrorists. Similar observations were voiced by Edward Said (1997: xxii) as he states:

Much of what one reads and sees in the media about Islam represents the aggression as coming from Islam because that is what “Islam” is. Local and concrete circumstances are thus obliterated.... [It] obscures what “we” [the West] do, and highlights instead what Muslims and Arabs by their very flawed nature *are*.

The above view clearly identifies what the students themselves were observing in their context concerning the power of representation that the West (global) has over Islam and Muslims (or local) (Ahmed and Donnan, 1994). It seems

that the process of orientalizing the other is still in progress. A female participant recalled one such event, where a high school youth was teasing girls who were wearing *hijab* (scarves), by labelling them as Ninja Turtles—characters in a globally acclaimed cartoon series. This shows how locals (local-self) see themselves through the lens of the global (others), which Sen (2006) describes as the projection of a reactive identity. In summary, the research identified a disjuncture experienced by the students between the globally mediated image of Islam and Muslims and their self-perception of being Muslims. Furthermore, paradoxically, the mediated image of the Muslim, at times, also becomes a standard lens through which a fellow Muslim is seen and judged.

6. Conclusion

This paper re-presented the students' interaction with the global cultural flow through media-scapes, where they experienced disjuncture: a sense and experience of rupture between the haves and have-nots, extra-local foreign norms and values and the local norms and values, imagined possibilities and realities between the global and the local. The high school youth participants experienced disjuncture mainly in the realms of socio-cultural values, their self-image as Muslims, between their past and present and a sense of the loss of local culture and heritage. Most of the students were experiencing ambivalence due to the disjuncture caused by local-global cultural interplay (Bauman, 1991). They seem to find tradition as a burden and modernity and modernization as direction-less and chaotic. Such a scenario depicts a sense of ambivalence, a characteristic feature of "liquid modernity" (Bauman, 2000), as solid social structures and relationships in which agency used to anchor itself remains no more solid but is becoming fluid, which in turn generates a sense of ambivalence; a state of confusion and in-between-ness for the students (Bhabha, 1994).

Hence, as a result of the above disjunctures or ruptures, the paper considers the interrelationship and the dialectic between the media-scapes and urban high school

youth agency. In this regard, the paper argues that the structuration perspective is at play between the media-text and the response-text, co-constructed by the students' agency (Bourdieu, 1977; Giddens, 1986). More so, it represents how global-local interaction is destabilizing a normative sense of values: the role of women in society is debated, boundaries of the modern and tradition are being blurred or the way tradition is reinvented to fit with the modern or how being modern is legitimized with appeals to religious tradition on occasion. Furthermore, in this struggle, students are using media-text to critique the global media, drawing normative reference from Mughals who again, are taken as representative of normative authorities; as the values of those times are revered (as implied by the meanings students seem to associate with the discourse). The very shift of AnarKali to Anny, as an Anglo-Saxon reconstruction of the signifier has come to be understood and reckoned with as a marker of modernity; a notion rooted in Western/modern global/colonial power dynamics and a colonization of the mind.

Hence, it can be concluded that the globalization of values is one of the most contested zones within processes of cultural globalization, where local is universalized through a re-invention of tradition or the traditional (for example, Islamic history and the role of women). In addition, "value paradoxes" are sites of cultural production and a field of inquiry vis-à-vis the other aspects of global/colonial inquiry (political-economic, for instance) along with the various discourses related to globalization (Gannon, 2008).

The values-related paradoxes studied in this exploration suggest that the audience/youth agency is reconstructing media to use the medium to carry out their own projects of self/identity. In this way, the very tools of globalization (e.g. media) are used to counter global/hegemonic narratives of norms and being (competing narratives of self). Therefore, the global media flow is creating both, a sense of anxiety and ambivalence of identity while nevertheless unleashing a reinvention of tradition, through a reinterpretation of history and values and a re-articulation of the same to mobilize some aspects of life—deploying a disjuncture which has emerged as a result of cultural globalization to rejuvenate local conceptions. In this

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sense, the structuration of global/local self, generates and perpetuates the dynamics of culture and power in which the self is reinvented and re-imagined and local/societies at large are reconfigured.

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Neoliberal Globalization, Higher Education Policies and International Student Flows: An Exploratory Case Study of Chinese Graduate Student Flows to Canada

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Abstract: *With the advent of neoliberal globalization commencing in the 1980s, international student mobility (ISM) has become a significant social and educational phenomenon. Given the increasing magnitude of international student flows from “developing countries” to the “developed” or major member countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), this paper explores Chinese graduate student flows to Canada. Chinese graduate student perspectives are also drawn upon to study the phenomenon of Chinese student migrations to Canada in pursuit of higher education. Given the focus on exploration, meanings and understandings, an interpretivist approach and qualitative case study strategy were utilized to examine relative policy positions and to understand the experiences of Chinese graduate students who study at the University of Alberta (U of A). The aim of this paper is to contribute qualitative studies pertaining to the phenomenon of ISM. This paper highlights the emergent themes from the data obtained from the qualitative case study of Chinese graduate student flows to Canada and presents preliminary reflections on neoliberal globalization, higher education policies and ISM.*

1. Introduction

The large numbers of international students who cross borders for the pursuit of higher education in recent years has been addressed and described by many scholars and non-governmental organizations. According to UNESCO (2009: 36),

In 2007, over 2.8 million students were enrolled in educational institutions outside of their country of origin. This presents 123,400 more students than in 2006, an increase of 4.6%. And the global number of mobile students has grown by 53% since 1999 (with an average annual increase of 5.5%) and by 2.5 times since 1975 with an average annual increase of 11.7% throughout this period.

Studying abroad also has a long history in China. The large scale Chinese student mobility abroad can be traced to the Qing Dynasty (1636-1912) (Tian, Xiao and Zhou, 2004). However, as a phenomenon, Chinese student mobility abroad became much more significant in the last ten years. Figures from the British Council (2008: 10) show that “in 2005, over 350,000 Chinese were studying abroad at the tertiary level alone”. Also according to the Ministry of Education of China (2010), the total number of Chinese studying abroad in 2009 was 229,300, 210,100 of whom are self-funded, 12,000 who are supported by the government and 7,200 who are sent by the work unit. This is an increase of 27.5% since just 2008.

The large scale of student mobility abroad is absolutely not purely an educational phenomenon in China. Based on the assumption that international student mobility (ISM) has been influenced by neoliberal globalization, this research focuses on the ISM in the Chinese-Canadian context. Reflecting on Marginson and Sawir’s (2005: 281-282) understanding of ‘flows’:

More than effects of globalization, ‘flows’ are carriers of global effects and creators of global effects that keep on circulating in continuous feedback loops, so that in a sense the flows are globalization and we begin to free ourselves from the notion of an invisible essence.

I regard ISM as a flow because it bears a specific social and educational meaning and has caused some global effects as an increasing number of international students cross borders for higher education every year.

The paper begins with the research questions and methodology. This is followed by a brief introduction to neoliberalism, neoliberal globalization and the influence of neoliberalism-doctrined public institutions, such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)/ World Trade Organization (WTO)/ General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), on higher education, internationalization of higher education (IHE) and ISM. In particular, the Chinese government and Canadian government's policy and position on the ISM phenomenon are analyzed. Chinese government policies and positions on overseas study are explored in order to investigate the involvement of policy in Chinese students' overseas studies. Emergent themes from Chinese graduate student perspectives on pursuing higher education in Canada are highlighted in this paper. Finally, theoretical considerations of ISM and future research related to ISM are discussed.

2. Research Questions and Research Methodology

From the perspective of neoliberal globalization, the purpose of this study is to explore and understand the social and educational phenomenon of student migrations from China to Canada. In relation to this broad objective, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the perspectives of Chinese graduate students concerning their decisions to pursue higher education in Canada?
- 2) How might Chinese graduate student perspectives regarding their experiences with higher education in Canada inform policy and practice in higher education in Canada and China?
- 3) How might higher education policies in China and Canada be playing a part in influencing ISM between these countries?

As the main purpose of this study is to explore understandings and interpretations of Chinese graduate student flows to Canada and other major OECD countries for higher education, an interpretivist approach was employed. The case study strategy was utilized because the

main thrust of a case study can be descriptive, exploratory or explanatory (Yin, 2009). Specifically, the methods of data collection were: document analysis, interviews and participant observation. Interviews and participant observations were employed to study student perspectives by focusing on a specific group - Chinese students at the U of A and specific country-related experiences or policies on higher education migrations of Chinese students (China and Canada with extensions to other OECD countries).

Data analysis is merged with data collection. Specifically, data was analyzed utilizing the following procedures. In terms of the timing of data analysis, analysis during data collection (conducting some basic analysis in order to guide research in the right direction and cover the research topic effectively), and analysis after data collection (intensifying the analysis with focus on more specific aspects of the research question) were conducted. As for analytical methods, iterative qualitative analysis was adopted and the approach of construction and deconstruction were used. In addition, conversation analysis was taken to analyze the data from interviews.

3. Neoliberalism, Neoliberal Globalization, Internationalization of Higher Education (IHE) and ISM

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism first appeared as a distinctive strand of liberal ideology in the 1940s with a major influence dating from the 1970s (Gamble, 2007). As an ideology, its key principles can be summarized as “free-market individualism, private property, constitutional order, and the minimal state” (Robertson and Scholte, 2007: 865). The scope of neoliberalism is not confined to the economic domain, however, but has been expanded to the political, cultural and ideological spheres. When discussing the rise of neoliberalism, Campbell and Pederson (2001: 1) comment that the period of the last two decades of the 20th century was described as the time of neoliberalism; that is, “a time of market deregulation, state decentralization, and reduced

state intervention into economic affairs in general". Scholte (2000: 35) pinpoints that "neoliberalism has generally prevailed as the reigning policy framework in contemporary globalization". Most governments have promoted neoliberal policies towards globalization and multilateral institutions, such as the IMF, the WTO and the OECD, have continually linked globalization with liberalization. Therefore, neoliberalism as a term has become the substitute of globalization in a particular interpretation and indicates a particular set of policies for global governance (Robertson and Scholte, 2007).

Neoliberal Globalization

Globalization has been studied from different angles since the 20th century, though this study regards globalization as a historical process, in which the interconnectedness of nation-states and regions has been strengthened through the international economic, social and cultural intercourse and flows across borders. Robertson (2003: 4), who focused on the historical and social context of globalization distinguished three waves of globalization: "the first, after 1500, centered on the globalization of regional trade; the second, after 1800, gained impetus from industrialization; the third derived from the architecture of a new world order after 1945". The present study looks at the impact of globalization on higher education policies and international student flows in the third wave of globalization.

The term neoliberal globalization is used because neoliberalism has been embedded in globalization since the 1950s. The propositions of free market and free trade were widely propagated by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan after 1980 and this still deeply influences today's political, economic and cultural systems. Under the guise of globalization, neoliberalism has become the dominant ideology and has been embraced by countries all over the world.

Impact of Neoliberal Globalization on Higher Education and ISM

Bloom (2005) argues that the relationship between higher education and globalization has recently intensified, putting pressure on universities to respond to global integration. Barrow, Didou-Aupetit and Mallea (2003: 13) think “globalization of the world economy, the pursuit of competitive advantage, and the investment policies of international organizations are each promoting the internationalization of higher education in the advanced countries”. The OECD (2004: 19) looks at cross-border education as the “second dimension of internationalization”. As such, some scholars, including myself, believe ISM is but one aspect of IHE.

Neoliberal globalization did not bring about the real free trade or free market among nations as its advocates promised, but has resulted in greater divergence between the “developed countries” and the “developing countries”. For instance, in conjunction with IHE and ISM, the “developed countries”, which dominate in scientific, engineering, and medical fields (Robertson and Sholte, 2007) by way of their advanced technology and modernization attract talented people from all over of the world and are always the greatest beneficiaries when it comes to global human capital flows, while “developing countries” suffer from “brain drain”. As Robertson and Scholte (2007: 104) elaborate, brain drain “combines elements of the global movement of labor and capital (via the flow of highly skilled and talented workers) with investment in human capital”.

The other influence from neoliberal globalization on higher education and ISM is “a vision of students as human capital” (Apple, 2000: 60). This vision of human capital undoubtedly stimulates international student migration from developing countries to developed countries for a better education so that the students can strengthen their skills for participation in the competitive labor market. In addition, the agenda of neoliberal globalization, promoted by multilateral or bilateral agencies, has impacted higher education and ISM. As Torres and Rhoads (2006: 10) argue, the World Bank and the OECD have pushed for more privatization and decentralization of education

include a push toward privatization and decentralization of public forms of education, a

movement toward educational standards, a strong emphasis on testing, and a focus on accountability. Specific to higher education, neoliberal versions of globalization suggest four primary reforms for universities related to efficiency and accountability, accreditation and universalization, international competitiveness, and privatization.

Also ISM across borders has been highly influenced by GATT, WTO and GATS, which propagate the removal of barriers and promote the liberalization of international trade. As institutional mechanisms, GATT, WTO and GATS play a key role in making the impact of neoliberal globalization on higher education possible, and the marketization of education has been put on the agenda.

Though GATS stresses that members of the WTO are not obliged to open the whole universe of services sectors, the influence of GATS is so pervasive and profound that national governments have to confront international pressures in certain fields, such as education, in the hopes of gaining economic benefits.

4. Student Migration from China to Canada

In the Report Foreign Students in Canada 1980-2001, Iturralde and Calvert (2003: 3) point out that:

Canada has experienced unprecedented growth in the number of foreign students in recent years. At the end of 2001, there were over 130,000 foreign students in Canada, rising from almost 57,000 in 1990 and 37,000 in 1980.

Countries like South Korea, China and Japan in East Asia have become the major source countries of foreign students. "In 2001, these countries accounted for 43 percent of foreign students studying in Canada" (Iturralde and Calvert, 2003: 3). Canada receives the most of its foreign students from China. In view of such a significant student migration from China to Canada, China's policies towards overseas studies

together with Canada's policy pertaining to recruiting international students are explored in the following sections.

A Brief Historical Review of China's Policy towards Overseas Studies

Before the Establishment of the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.)

During the early Qing period, western missionaries sent Chinese students to European countries to study religion and western culture. The government did not establish any educational policies or regulations on studying abroad. In the late Qing period (1840-1912), the emperors implemented a "closed-door policy", which meant cutting off the country from the outside world. This caused a sharp decrease in the diplomatic, cultural, scientific and technological communication between China and foreign countries, which made China an easy target for Western invaders. China's door was opened by western force in the late part of the 19th century. In light of the Opium Wars, some patriotic officials and scholars proclaimed "*Shi Yi Chang Ji Yi Zhi Yi*" (learning from foreigners to compete with them). The Qing government was pressured into dispatching students to Western countries to study their advanced technologies in order to revitalize the nation.

These students shouldered an important responsibility to change the status quo of the society and revitalize the country. Those who came back to China after World War II became either proficient scientists or engineers in modern technology and played an important role in the formation of China's science systems and industrial foundations.

After the Establishment of the P.R.C.

Students who had studied abroad and returned after the P.R.C. was formed in 1949 played a significant role in constructing the economy of the country and supporting its technological development (Li, 2004). Thus, overseas studies were given great consideration by the new communist government before the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). This, however, was seriously affected by the Cultural

Revolution, when overseas studies came mostly to a standstill (Tian, Xiao and Zhou, 2004).

In 1976, at the end of the Cultural Revolution, some specific regulations were made in terms of overseas studies, such as *Guan Yu 1977 Nian Xuan Pai Chu Guo Liu Xue Sheng De Tong Zhi* (Notice of the Selection of Chinese Student for Overseas Studies in 1977), reflecting the leaders' positive opinion towards international studies. In 1980, studying abroad at a student's own expense was allowed, though with strict reviews of applications, initially. The policy towards self-supported overseas studies became stricter because without the binds of the government's support, self-supported overseas students tend to stay abroad after they graduate, causing China's "brain drain" (Chan, 1990).

Since the 1990s, the adoption of a socialist market economy has improved China's economic situation, thus the number of students studying abroad at their own expense has risen rapidly. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education simplified the review process of applications for self-supported overseas studies in 2002. Since November 1, 2002, no higher education cultivation fee is paid by students who wish to study abroad. And the process of reviewing applicant's qualification was cancelled. In addition, China's government enacted new regulations to provide positive assistance to those who want to study abroad. Specifically, the Foreign Information Guardian Network of Ministry of Education has become the exclusive website to announce all kinds of foreign educational activities.

Canada's Policy towards International Students

In Canada, there isn't a singular national policy on higher education and "[i]nternationalization at Canadian universities has traditionally been institutionally driven and taken a bottom-up approach" (OECD, 2004: 47). However, the current economic situation has impacted the recruitment of international students. With the influence of the global recession of 2009 on the Canadian post-secondary education, Usher and Dunn (2009) show that the most immediate challenges facing the system are, for example, the decrease of institutional revenues and the increase of institutional costs. They further suggest that one of the

measures taken by governments to help institutions survive the worst of the crisis could be increasing income from commercialization of activities: “By far the more lucrative pot to chase is international students” (2009: 28). Economic pressure may result in the government adjusting its policy on the higher education export services by recruiting more international students.

As an immigrant country, there is always a domestic demand for human resources. In recent years, the Canadian government realized that international students could be an excellent resource. By taking new measures like adjusting immigration policy and introducing off-campus work permits, the Canadian government intends to attract more international students who will stay in and contribute to Canada after they complete their studies. I think the new off-campus work permit is Canada’s countermeasure to increasing tuition costs, in the hopes of maintain a certain number of international students in Canada.

Since September 2008, certain temporary foreign workers and students have been able to apply for permanent residence under the Canadian Experience Class. As a new policy, foreign students who graduated from a Canadian higher institution are considered to have the qualities to make a successful transition from temporary to permanent residence.

Chinese-Canadian Context of International Student Mobility

There are several reasons why studying in Canada has recently become an ideal choice for Chinese students. First, the large and beautiful, yet sparsely populated natural environment attract Chinese students who are from a populous country and care much about life quality. Besides, the multi-cultural and primarily English environments fascinate Chinese students who want to experience a different culture and improve their English.

Another reason is the lower costs and good quality of higher education in Canada. Normally, tuition fees of Canadian universities are about half of that of American universities. Thus Canada provides Chinese students who

are not from a wealthy family with a chance to study further in North America. Also in Canada, “[m]ost of the universities are established through provincial legislation and are therefore public and ‘recognized’. The term ‘recognized’ indicates that they meet governmental requirements and standards” (OECD, 2004: 42). Hence Canada’s public education system has a good image in China. Also, there are many awards and scholarships available for international students, particularly in the sciences. Besides, the off-campus work permit and Canadian experience class immigration policy attract Chinese students who want to live and work in the country.

The third reason is 9/11. Before 9/11, studying abroad with the financial support from the universities in the United States was number one choice for undergraduates in China. However, after 9/11, the American government adjusted the visa application policy, which led a number of excellent Chinese students fail to obtain a visa. These students went to Canada first and then could choose to later look for other chances to study in the United States.

Implications from Canada and China’s Policy towards Higher Education and ISM

Social-cultural and academic rationales of recruiting international students can be observed in ISM from China to Canada. China’s position on ISM from China to Canada has been shaped by the impact of neoliberal globalization on Chinese society. Some scholars like Harvey (2005) use neoliberalism with “Chinese characteristics” in discussion with the implementation of the open-up policy, the introduction of markets and related economic reforms, as well as China’s entry into the WTO. Also, political demands for liberalization in China began to emerge. Though the crackdown of Tiananmen Square signified that “neoliberalization in the economy was not to be accompanied by any progress in the fields of human, civil, or democratic rights [in China]” (Harvey, 2005: 123), thousands of students fled China to study abroad (Welch, 2002a).

The current Chinese policy on overseas studies supports “students to study abroad, encouraging them to return after they have finished, and allowing them to come and go of

their own accord” (Li, 1993). Still, studying abroad and serving the country are closely related. Even now, the government still encourages overseas students to return and join the construction of the country, which demonstrates China’s emphasis on national solidarity and nationalism. This is a theme that appeared in the present study.

5. Emergent Themes from Chinese Graduate Student Perspectives on Pursuing Higher Education in Canada

As the subject of ISM, international students should be studied to further examine the influence of policy on ISM and to explore the reasons of their choice of overseas studies. However, it is impossible to include all international students in this research. It will be more significant to ground this study in a concrete context. Hence, the Chinese graduate students’ perspectives on pursuing higher education at the U of A are specifically investigated in order to understand and explain the phenomenon of ISM. This can explain in detail their motivations for pursuing overseas studies, and further shed light on the policy and practice in higher education in both China and Canada. Data were collected from one focus group interview, eleven semi-structured individual interviews, one key informant interview and two participant observations. There were sample questions for interviewing, but the order and the content of questions could be changed or adjusted as the dialogue developed. The major research participants were the interviewees of the focus group and individual interviews. They are Chinese students who obtained a bachelor’s degree from a university in China and have been in a graduate program at the U of A under study permit for one year or more. The attached form in the appendix shows the main identifiers of the participants of interviews. The real names of all participants are replaced with Student plus serial number, such as Student 1.

In the following sections, I present data that emerged in relation to the research questions.

Motivations for Studying Abroad

The perspectives of Chinese graduate students concerning their decisions to pursue higher education in Canada are investigated through a couple of interview questions. During individual interviews, in response to the research question “what made you decide to come to Canada to pursue higher studies?” the respondents gave various answers about their motivations for studying abroad. Two types of motivations are classified. First, there are individual motivations that derived from cultural influence and personal worldviews, individual academic interest in North American higher institutions, and the pursuit of educational equity. For instance, S9 said, “[g]oing to the origins of western educational theories to learn theorists like Dewey is meaningful to me” (interview, December 22, 2008). As S7 stated: “My decision of going abroad is really influenced by my worldview, disposition and philosophy....As an old Chinese saying conveyed, ‘read ten thousand books, travel ten thousand miles’” (interview, December 22, 2008). S4 articulated, “I personally think the quality of postgraduate education in North America is generally higher than that in China and want to receive the best education in my research area there” (interview, March 12, 2009). S6 thought that her studying further abroad was motivated by the pursuit of educational equity. She recounts her experience:

I first attended the national selective examination for graduate students in China and got a high rank, but I was run out in the interviews, which followed the examination. ...Someone in power manipulated the admission process. Suffering from such unfairness, I rethought my motivation for further study and found I still wanted to do it. ... I chose to study education itself. I want to contribute to social justice and education for all because of my own bad experience in China. (interview, December 22, 2008)

The second type of motivation relates to employment pressures, the occupational demand for academic degree level and parental expectations. For example, S4 said:

The job market in China is getting increasingly competitive and tight. ...The situation in China is different from that in Canada. Students prefer to pursue a higher [academic] degree rather than look for a job [with the hope of being more competitive in the job market in the long run]. Then people with an overseas education background seem to have a brighter future. The reputation of the U of A is better than that of Chinese Universities. It is better for young men to study abroad and get more career chances abroad. I want a brighter future. (interview, January 21, 2009)

S9 further talked of this motivation for his studies abroad: "I was working in the university, but I only had a master's degree. Other colleagues have Ph.D degrees and the university needs professors to have Ph.Ds, so I feel great pressure" (interview, December 22, 2008).

The Main Factors Facilitating the Success of Overseas Studies

Looking back on their own decisions of pursuing further study abroad, research participants considered the factors that facilitate their success of overseas studies. Data from individual interviews and key informant interview show that the main factors facilitating the success of overseas studies are economic reasons and the assistance of the Chinese Student and Scholar Association (CSSA).

Studying abroad is not a simple personal choice as it involves a big investment. All participants came to Canada with the financial support from the U of A in the form of doing research assistant (RA) or teaching assistant (TA) work except one public-funded participant with the financial support from both the U of A and the Chinese government. In answer to the interview question "do you think the socio-economic status of your parents/family has anything to do with your ability to come to Canada to pursue higher education?", although the data varied from person to person, certain relationships exist between the participants' socio-

economic status and their overseas studies. S3 confirmed the family influence on his studying abroad: "Good family education background will let parents understand why kids are willing to study abroad and they will support the kids with all their resources" (interview, January 21, 2009). S1 thought the economic status of his parents might help him to a certain degree. As he narrated, "I took important exams including TOFEL and GRE and with great marks got accepted and funded by the current department...I tried very hard to get here, but my parents did help me pay the fee for those tests" (interview, September 28, 2008).

Though S4 expressed there was not too much influence from his parents because he received scholarship for his studies, he still thought that family background would affect the personal decision to study abroad because "after all you have to pay application fee, test fees, and so forth" (interview, March 12, 2009). S10 also believed there was certain impact from his parents' social and economic status since "If I cannot get scholarship but still want to study in Canada, the Canadian Embassy will require me to show them the financial evidence to certify that I have enough money to study and live in Canada... Normally this financial support is from students' parents" (interview, September 9, 2009).

The second key factor facilitating Chinese student study abroad is the existence of the Chinese Student and Scholar Association (CSSA), which provides useful information to prospective students. It is an organization of overseas Chinese students and scholars in foreign higher institutions. During the key informant interview, the chairman of the CSSA (2004-2005 and 2008-2009) at the U of A considered that the organization of CSSA at the U of A was not set up by students and scholars spontaneously, but kept close contact with the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Calgary. Every year, the CSSA at the U of A can get around CA\$5,000 from the Consulate. And the Consulate's purpose of providing funding to the CSSA, according to the chairman, is "to bring Chinese students and scholars together and keep their ties with the motherland" (key informant interview, November 12, 2008). In this sense, the establishment of CSSA creates a sense of belonging for Chinese students abroad. Also the organization shoulders

the communicative mission between overseas Chinese students and the home country.

Experience with Higher Education at the University of Alberta

To elicit Chinese graduate student perspectives on their experiences with higher education in Canada and to explore the implications from student experiences related to policy and practice in higher education in Canada and China, the following question was asked during individual interviews: How would you describe your experience with higher education in Canada up until now? Positive feedback on the academic environment was given, yet some difficulties were mentioned as well. S2 reflected on the differences in higher education between Canada and China:

In Canada, the academic environment is quite good. There are many academic conferences, meetings, workshops and algebra courses. Compared to China...if you want to get a PhD, you must have at least one publication in one top journal... In Canada, you are given a TA or RA. In China, you do not have that kind of thing. Here you can support yourself and can gain many teaching experiences. (interview, October 1, 2008)

S10 realized that his way of thinking has been changed through further studies at the U of A. As he stated, "The academic environment is very rigorous here.... I formed a rigorous way of thinking as well, which is a big gain to me" (interview, September 9, 2009).

All participants appreciated the rigorous academic environment at the U of A except S3 and S7. S3 thought the curriculum is too Euro-centric and US-centric in his department. He argued that perspectives from other countries should also be incorporated. S7 held a distinctive perspective based on his own experience and considered that there is not a big difference in academia between Canada and China. He stated that:

There is also dark side here.... The way of seeking the truth is so different between the East and the West. In

the East, we believe the authority and respect what the authority says. While in the West, people challenge the authority and would like to seek the truth from their individual experience. From my personal experience in seeking the truth, there is no bad or no good in either way. If we can perceive the two ways of thinking, that will be good. Actually here also has academic corruption. And some professors do not publish a lot after they get tenure. (interview, December 22, 2008)

Difficulties and problems in overseas studies were mentioned in the interviews. The difficulties that respondents talked of concentrate on language and cultural communication, scholarship applications and job hunting. Fewer mentioned problems in academic studies. Such as one participant said,

There is no problem with my academic English. I can discuss with my classmates by accurately using technical terms in my major in class, but the embarrassing thing is that I later found I could not communicate with native speakers smoothly in my daily life, such as talking to kids. I just could not understand jokes and idioms. (Observation, June 23, 2009)

Two participants in the focus group interviewing (December 22, 2008) talked of their problems as well. S8 felt “very frustrated when I tried to talk to some local students because they said several times ‘pardon me’”. S9 commented on how

culture and language are the biggest barriers in foreign students’ studies. They generate a pressure, which is invisible.... For example, when we join a discussion with a group of local students, we will find our speaking chance is very little... but we need friends in life and study, in particular in study, but it is very difficult to find a native partner. A sense of being isolated exists when you are in a group of local students.

During the observation, several students mentioned the difficulties in applying for scholarships in Canada. For example, one stressed that he “cannot apply for those big awards, because of my international student status. Those big awards are only open to Canadian students or permanent residents” (Observation, June 23, 2009). Also one respondent shared his experience in looking for a job in Canada. He said, “though it is not my research area, I have some knowledge in computer science. When I tried to look for a job here, I found it is really hard for me to find a job in my real research area” (Observation, September 11, 2008).

Chinese Graduate Student Perspectives on Policy towards ISM and Consideration of International Student Flows

The role of higher education policies in China and Canada in influencing ISM was also investigated through individual interviews with the questions: What specific higher education policies/official supports (Canadian and Chinese) played a part in making it possible for you to come here? Do you have any other suggestions to make in this regard? Participants wish the governments of the two countries could invest more in support of international students. They hope the communication between the governments and universities of the two countries could be strengthened. Generally, as S3 expected, “Governments should provide information to everyone. Through supportive programs like exchange programs, they can encourage students to explore the outside world. In addition, I consider visa application is an essential thing. It is more about two countries’ regulations [negotiations]” (interview, January 21, 2009). Specifically, S1 held the idea that, “the Chinese government should... increase people’s income and solve poverty... [the] Canadian government should consider improving the policy towards international students, such as making it easier to get a visa to come here” (interview, September 28, 2008). S2 said that the Canadian government should “increase the number of scholarships and make their universities more popular and diverse” (interview, October 1, 2008).

With respect to the participants' views on student flows from China to Canada, most agreed that it was not a bad thing for China, though some of them realized the problem of talent loss for China (see section below on "brain drain"). In relation to the increasing trend of Chinese students pursuing higher education in countries like Canada, most students thought the tendency might be good for China, or at least the benefits would exceed the losses. S8 thought, "generally, it is beneficial to China... [People's] ideas and mind will become more open. This will contribute to the nation-state's development... more overseas students choose to come back to China after their graduation" (interview, December 22, 2008).

S10 also held an optimistic view and said: "I think it is a good thing. After all, China's continuous rapid development may attract more and more overseas Chinese students to come back" (interview, September 9, 2009). S6 thought "in the long run, it will be good to China in some way. For instance, students who stay abroad and get a faculty job can still contribute to China's academia through all kinds of transnational education activities" (interview, December 22, 2008). S1 observed that there are more positive impacts to the flow of students than negative ones because "China is a developing country. On its way to modernization, it needs more knowledge and skills for development. Also China needs to learn experience from developed countries like Canada... for students who will come back to China, they can contribute a lot in this regard" (interview, September 28, 2008).

S2 thought the number of students flowing from China to overseas higher institutions was not a big problem for China. In his opinion, China is a country with a great population and "many students cannot be admitted to a good university, but they can come to Canada and study in a Canadian university" (interview, October 1, 2008).

Beyond the recognition of the positive aspect of studying abroad, some participants further reflected on the problems in China's higher education and thought of "brain drain". This is discussed below.

Response to "Brain Drain" and Critiques of Un/patriotism

Chinese graduate student perspectives on pursuing higher education in Canada were further explored with the question: What is your response to those who say that studying further abroad is a negative trend for China (“brain drain” of China to the west) or to those who might suggest that such a decision is unpatriotic? Some thought it narrow-minded to use “brain-drain” to depict the trend of pursuing study abroad. One participant even denied “brain-drain” in China. Specifically, as for “brain drain,” some of the participants thought the Chinese government should take actions to solve this problem and that the Chinese higher education system should be improved in order to retain excellent students. Some critiqued the domestic measures of managing human resources and argued that the government should create more opportunities and provide a sound system and support to the returned overseas Chinese students. Moreover, for the unpatriotic critiques, most participants considered that continuing to study abroad or staying abroad is not unpatriotic; on the contrary, they thought overseas students are very supportive when China is in trouble. They believed they could still contribute to China even they chose to stay abroad after graduation, such as taking advanced foreign management experience and technology back to China through different channels, enhancing China’s influence in the West, deepening the understanding between the West and the East and diminishing misunderstanding in human society.

With respect to “brain drain”, S5 stated, “If someone originally from China goes back to China after he or she has done school, that contributes to the country. If not, it represents the “brain drain”... If the government feels it is a loss, it should think out a way to improve higher education” (interview, July 25, 2009).

S7 thought communication is a good channel for the world to get a better understanding of China. In relation to his own experience, he said:

We can be the mass media to present a real China to the people abroad. Similarly, through us, our family and relatives in China can learn more about Canada. Years later, when we have overseas working experience and come back to China our return would become a

immeasurable wealth to our motherland. Even if we do not come back and more and more Chinese settle down abroad, we will gather and become a strength to support China in foreign countries. (interview, December 22, 2008)

S1 articulated that using “brain drain” to describe the phenomenon of ISM is very narrow-minded because it neglects the advantages that ISM will bring to China. He also comments on the issue of students being critiqued as ‘unpatriotic’: “I do not think students are unpatriotic at all. According to my observation, they are patriotic and quite support the government’s decisions, such as the Olympics” (interview, September 28, 2008).

There are more comments on patriotism and ISM. S4 explained that his studying abroad is not a problem concerning patriotism: “When something happens to China, even though we are here, we will get together and support our country. Lots of things happened this year, such as Olympic Games, and the earthquake in Sichuan province” (interview, March 12, 2009).

S11 thought the phenomenon of “brain drain” in China was valid and criticized the current Chinese government policy towards the returned overseas students:

If patriotism is used as a tactics to force us come back, then we come back. But I do not think China can make the best use of our talented people. In China, promotion by playing politics and power is common, which is unfair to us. The flow of talented people is much freer now. The retaining of talented people is not by using the big cap of patriotism to call on us, but by providing a sound system and good support for us. Then we will be willing to come back. Also I believe an old Chinese saying, “downwards water flows while upwards man goes”. People who chose to go abroad may have not got a good development in China. When they were in China, they were never called talented people. In many places of China only those in power can develop themselves very well. It is ironic that people call those who stay abroad talented people. If they do not go back to

China, people call this phenomenon “brain drain”.
(interview, September 12, 2009)

6. Discussion

This study explored the social and educational phenomenon of Chinese student mobility for further studies in the west. By using a qualitative case study strategy, Chinese graduate students at the U of A were selected as the research participants in order to address: 1) Chinese student rationales for further study abroad; 2) Chinese graduate student learning experiences at a foreign institution and implications for policy and practice in higher education in Canada and China; and 3) Chinese graduate student perspectives on China’s government policy towards overseas studies and Canadian government policy towards international students.

Major host countries of international students are active in promoting the liberalization of higher education and free ISM in a real sense by marketing and internationalizing their higher educational institutions. They do this by introducing differential fees for international students and adopting an open policy towards work permits and immigration applications. The formation of the global international student market and the higher education export service industry certify that higher education in those host countries has been commoditized. This provides certain opportunities for international students to study abroad. But at the same time, it creates inequity in higher education. From the interviews with Chinese graduate students at the U of A, the socio-economic status of participants weighs heavily on the potential to study abroad. The majority of participants are from the middle-class even though the U of A also funded them. In addition, they confirmed the influence of their families’ socio-economic status on their studies abroad. Thus, higher education in the major OECD countries offers more opportunities to international students from rich families than those from poor families.

Drawing on Chinese graduate students’ experiences and perspectives, some aspects such as the impact of

neoliberalism on students' point of view should be further reflected on. To a certain degree, the ideology of neoliberalism influenced students' perspectives on ISM. Most participants expected a free mobility for pursuing higher education between China and Canada. Some of them did not recognize the phenomenon of "brain drain". Some even denied "brain drain" and thought that using "brain-drain" was too narrow-minded to describe ISM. With the implementation of the "reform and opening-up policy," the concepts like "individuality" and "freedom" in the Western culture have challenged the mainstream of the socialist culture and values in China, and impacted the youth since the 1980s and reinforced the youth's aspiration for an individual freedom. Hence, students expected a freer mobility abroad for higher education. The idea of human capital can also be applied to this flow of people from one country to the next. Most participants expressed their hopes to improve or strengthen themselves through overseas studies in order to enhance their competitiveness in the future labor market. This means they agree with the investment in overseas studies.

The impact of cultural globalization can also be seen from some participants' high recognition of the academic degree from higher institutions in North America. The dominance of North American academic higher education systems and standards influenced most participants' choice of the destination for overseas studies. Also Western culture and values flooded the participants' studies. English as the only communicative language resulted some of the participants having difficulties communicating with the local students. It was also noted by one participant that the curriculum in some departments was very Euro-centric or US-centric.

However, it should be noted that when it came to patriotism, most participants showed great passion for their motherland. They disagreed with the Western tones but presented a strong defensive stance to those problems such as the past Olympics. This position reflected that most participants still adhere to Chinese nationalism and national solidarity, which is also a resistance against Western culture and values.

Different from the ISM mainly supported by the Chinese government before, contemporary ISM is impacted by neoliberalism and a freer mobility shapes students' pursuit of overseas studies. Also distinguished from the ISM in Western countries, Chinese students' study abroad is influenced by Chinese traditional culture and values and most students (in my study) are still concerned about serving their country.

7. Conclusion

To conclude, this qualitative case study focused on Chinese graduate student perspectives on pursuing higher education in Canada within the perspective of neoliberal globalization. The research was primarily descriptive and interpretive. In terms of future research, the following directions need addressing: first, in light of the multi-dimensions of IHE, qualitative research could be expanded to the study of the international movement of academic staff and researchers and internationalization of higher education curricula; second, even though many Chinese students pursue overseas studies every year, there are quite a number of Chinese students who choose to study further in a domestic higher institution whose perspectives could be incorporated in future research as a comparative study; third, it would be relevant to explore the questions: "what knowledge is of most worth...[and] how far can we be sure that the knowledge that is acquired by students in the North is applicable to contexts to which they may return, in the South?" (Welch, 2002b: xi-xii). The number of overseas Chinese students returning to China after their graduation as China has kept a steady economic growth over the recent decade has increased; thus it would also be meaningful to study the phenomenon of the reverse flow of overseas Chinese students to China. Fourth, this research discussed the IHE in one of the major OECD countries; however, every year a number of foreign students from different countries come to China's higher institutions for studies. This could be understood as the start of an internationalization of China's

higher education, which could become a new research topic or area of future study.

Beyond these possible research directions, more critical insights and perspectives on ISM should guide future studies in ISM. For instance, the impact of a culture of credentialing and the economic rationalization imperative for ISM must be considered. Unquestioned economic rationalization should not be the only motivator for overseas academic degrees as the role of education should lie in its contribution to the cultivation of human beings and a society that does not simply exist to serve certain privileged social classes while succumbing to economic reductionism and the blind pursuit of individual freedom.

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II. Social Movement /Action, NGO and Community Contexts of Education

Subaltern Biopolitics in the Networks of the Commonwealth¹

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Abstract: *This essay plots an encounter between two insurrective characters: The subaltern and the multitude. Both figures articulate a politics of the common and so name collective bodies of resistance and opposition to neoliberal led processes of globalization. As such, the disjuncture between the theoretical and political registers from which these two concepts of agency emerge demand reflection. The essay first critically discusses Hardt and Negri's (2009) concepts of biopolitical production and the common. The second section takes up the figure of the subaltern tracking the vicissitudes of this conception of agency. The third section, based on field research in 2006 and 2010 at a software technology park in the suburbs of Kolkata, India (Rajarhat New Town), locates both figures of multitude and subaltern at a specific site of production and its politics. The focus here is on a description of the complex structure of exploitation on which Kolkata's articulation with the world economy rests via IT outsourcing. The final part of this essay argues that multitude and subaltern, as mediatory allegorical figures, pose a narrative form problem without generic solution. Rather, the experimental social movement learning process that the left today needs to undergo, demands an encounter between these characters through a local mode of theoretical construction and cultural production in which each character mediates the other as its symptomatic imposter or problematic allegorical double.*

1. Introduction

For those who seek to understand the prospects of any of the innumerable demands for social justice that quicken our era of defeat and dispossession, two figures of political agency are today unavoidable points of departure: the

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multitude and the subaltern. This essay endeavours to plot an encounter between these two insurrective characters. On the one hand, they are both figures articulating what may be called a politics of the common (rather than a politics of identity or any other essentialized particularity) and so name collective bodies of resistance and opposition to neoliberal led processes of globalization. In this regard, both figures entail an elaboration and complication (if not a veritable *aufhebung*) of the conceptual resources hitherto available to class politics, pointing the way ahead for its reinvention on a field of struggle composed of unprecedented proximities, speeds, heterogeneities and inequalities. To this end, both assert the centrality and diversity of the world's poor to politics today, a modern invention socially engineered in recent years at a scale that is both massive and unprecedented. On the other hand, the former has always seemed suspiciously northbound, even if globalized and well travelled, a frequent flyer to the most elite of theoretical resorts, but unable to break out of a certain epic transcendence. Whereas the latter is a refugee from the project of decolonization which most everyone now considers to have reached its desperate dead end so long ago that all that remains is a kind of militant memory to brood over, uselessly. But perhaps, today, things have so fallen apart that an attempt to tell some story where both these characters meet will lead to a situation of leftist theory from which something worthwhile can be learned.

The argument of this essay unfolds over four parts. I first turn to a critical engagement with the figure of the multitude, examining especially its formulation with respect to Hardt and Negri's (2009) concepts of biopolitical production and of the common. My discussion focuses mostly on the more recent developments of their theory in *Commonwealth* (2009) though I draw on their previous books as well. The second section then takes up the figure of the subaltern, first in the work of the subaltern studies collective in India and then subsequently by others, tracking the vicissitudes and developments of this conception of agency. The third section takes us to a software technology park in the suburbs of Kolkata, India called Sector Five (or more officially, Rajarhat New Town), in order to locate both figures of multitude and subaltern at a specific site of production

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and its politics. Based on field research I carried out with my colleague Dr. Gail Faurschou in 2006 and 2010, this section of the essay presents a case study. I examine the international and local division of labour through which middle class software professionals and information technology enabled service clerks are articulated to a transnational ruling class, on the one hand, and a large, informalized, marginal subsistence sector of petty manufacturing and services on the other. The focus here is on a description of the complex structure of exploitation on which Kolkata's articulation with the world economy rests via Sector Five and on the conjunctural processes through which these arrangements were put into place. The fourth and final part of this essay tries to draw lessons from this case study and the more theoretical discussions preceding it. I return here to the issues raised in the first two sections and argue that multitude and subaltern, as mediatory figures, pose a narrative form problem without generic solution. Rather, for the experimental social movement learning processes the Left today needs to undergo, the encounter of multitude and subaltern demands a kind of storytelling and cultural production where each character mediates the other as its symptomatic imposter or problematic allegorical double.

2. Globalization and Biopolitical Production

Have we just crossed the threshold of what Giovanni Arrighi (1994) calls the terminal crisis of U.S. hegemony in the modern world system? Are we on the brink of a major re-organization of the geo-political arrangements of global capital accumulation, whether polycentric or Sino-Pacific as Gunder Frank (1998) and others argue? The importance of Hardt and Negri's "multitude trilogy" (*Empire*, 2000; *Multitude*, 2004; and *Commonwealth*, 2009) is its compelling theorization of transformations of similar magnitude. They take several steps further forward the well-nigh Copernican revolution achieved by the dependency theorists, the world system analysis collaborators, and postcolonial theorists (though inaugurated, indeed, by Marx) which grasps axiomatically the necessity of the prescription that the

present cannot be understood, whether culturally or social-scientifically, in terms of particular cultures, civilizations or national societies and histories. Rather, the basic “unit of analysis” must be global in scale (or what Wallerstein (1974) calls the modern world-system). Now, however, it is precisely this world scale point of departure that, very paradoxically, has given urgency and intelligibility to innumerable and various local histories and local studies, since the world scale does not present itself anywhere immediately; This paradox will remain at the core of our argument as it unfolds below. For the moment, let us only note that Hardt and Negri’s work carries this critique of provincialism into the very heartland of contemporary Anglo-American political theory. Secondly, they throw cold water onto the symptomatic ideological fantasy of abject paralysis that has captivated several streams of contemporary Anglophone theory by constructing a sophisticated theory of agency through an astute re-reading of Foucault’s analyses of biopolitics. Foucault himself used the terms “biopower” and “biopolitics” interchangeably. But Hardt and Negri impose a more rigorous and systematic distinction between these terms in order to foreground those moments in Foucault’s work where he conceived the productivity of power in terms of the event of liberation: “Events of resistance have the power not only to escape control but also create a new world” (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 61). Crucial to their new conception of agency is their theorization of the emergence of just such a new world of capitalist production.

At the very outset, Hardt and Negri’s formulation of the epochal transformation in capitalist production presents formidable difficulties: “Economic production is going through a period of transition in which increasingly the results of capitalist production are social relations and forms of life. Capitalist production, in other words, is becoming biopolitical” (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 131). But, of course, in one way or another, the results of capitalist production, like any other mode of production, must be social relations and forms of life, as always, and virtually by definition. The historically new emergence therefore needs to be found somewhere else, in contemporary processes re-making the forms of social life. To this end, Hardt and Negri specify

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three characteristic features of the epochal change through their analysis of technical and organic composition of capital.

Services, or the “immaterial production” of images, information, ideas, affects, codes, knowledge, the “labor of the head and heart”, are said to increasingly subordinate the value of industrial production in the valorization process. So it is not quite the ascendance of finance capital that is being invoked here. Rather it is its very opposite. Many other observers (Arrighi, 1994; Brenner, 2006; Harvey, 2003) have argued that the characteristically postmodern feature of our contemporary wave of neoliberal, U.S. led, globalization crucially involves the expansion and autonomization of the circuit $M \rightarrow M'$, now floating aloft from the circuit $M \rightarrow C \rightarrow M'$, on the hot winds of speculation and other rent-seeking scams. For Hardt and Negri though, the power of finance capital is not itself the crucial new key feature of our times. The new power of finance is only one aspect of an emergence immanent to the production process, to the circuit $M \rightarrow C \rightarrow M'$ itself, said to be now increasingly “anthropogenetic”; in which the “production of forms of life is becoming the basis of added value”; in which “putting to work human faculties, competences, and knowledges – those acquired on the job but, more important, those accumulated outside work interacting with automated and computerized productive systems — is directly productive of value (Hardt and Negri, 2009). But the production of services in the world economy encompasses a vast range of different kinds of production, under very different circumstances and arrangements. We will look closely at one location of such articulations below.

The second feature of the emergent mode of production Hardt and Negri point toward they call the feminization of work. But this could just as pertinently be described as the global defeat of mass struggles over the length of the working day. Their account of this, however, is very symptomatic and makes clear that a northbound monocentric perspective is being normalized theoretically: “Part-time and informal employment, irregular hours, and multiple jobs —aspects that have long been typical of labor in the subordinated parts of the world— are now becoming generalized even in the dominant countries” (Hardt and

Negri, 2009: 133). Conditions of production ‘that have long been typical of labor’ in most of the world become characteristics of a major trend, an index of the new, only when they appear in ‘the dominant countries’. We will return to unfold the implications of this logic later.

The third feature Hardt and Negri cite as characteristic of the biopoliticization of production involve “new patterns of migration and processes of social and racial mixture” (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 134). Here, the difficulties are manifold, even though Hardt and Negri have revised their position in the face of criticism.¹ They now acknowledge the political significance of the full spectrum of labour migration rather than the privilege Empire had given before to the south to north flows. Consequently, they also now grasp more cogently the political significance of racism, especially for their theory of the multitude. Nevertheless, patterns of migration and processes of social and “racial mixture” are long-standing processes of historical capitalism, even the south to north flows much discussed in recent years. Instead of merely denying their novelty for that reason, however, what might be a more promising and productive reading of this argument would be to insist that the newly emergent, as the new and the emergent, has its own slow-motion temporality of occurrence which we can no longer ignore. I will return to this issue as well.

Together, these three characteristic processes of the present are grasped as strategically potent contradictions of Empire’s domination, giving rise to crises which have all been extensively discussed in the social scientific literature on globalization. They therefore need only brief mention here: The immaterialization of work makes the private control of ideas, images, symbolic systems, cooperative familiarities extremely difficult to fence and police through patents, contracts, and surveillance since their value consists primarily in their public circulation. The precarious feminization of work condemns households to live in the prison of a perpetual present undermining their capacity to nurture the maturation of children and the ageing of adults, so that illness, death, distress escalate state repression and

¹ For further discussion of Hardt and Negri’s account of migration in *Empire*, see Mookerjea (2007).

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violence. Lastly immigration is structurally necessary as a growth strategy and so promoted, only to provoke a racist backlash.

For Hardt and Negri, these crises of rule attending service, precarity and migration constitute both objective and subjective “transcendental” historical conditions of possibility for a political project of the making of the multitude. There are two main steps to their argument here. The first involves their innovative intervention in contemporary discussions of privatization and commodification that understand them to entail new enclosures of the commons. Hardt and Negri connect these critical analyses with the key insight underlying Marx’s critique of both political economy and German ideology. This critique draws its political lessons from its demystifying recognition of the social character of all production, whether of goods, services or images and ideas. Marx (1973) draws out the full implications of this insight in his concept of general intellect and this serves as Hardt and Negri’s point of departure for their elaboration of a concept of the commons that includes but goes beyond the idea of the common bounty of nature. Their concept of the commons, rather, is “dynamic, involving both the product of labor and the means of future production. This common is not only the earth we share but also the languages we create, the social practices we establish, the modes of sociality that define our relationships . . . This form of the common does not lend itself to a logic of scarcity as does the first.” Such a concept of the common “blurs the division between nature and culture” (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 139) and, in relation to the crises of rule connected to service, precarity and migration, point the way toward the autonomy of biopoliticized production from capitalist power and class inequality. Insofar as services require the autonomous organization of networks of cooperation, insofar as precarity requires the autonomous management of time, insofar as migration depends on the autonomous negotiation of differences in urban life, the intensified dependence of biopolitical production on the common also intensifies and augments the possibility for biopolitical production to reproduce the common and produce ever new kinds of commons without the mediation of capitalist institutions.

These aspects of production together constitute a common power that various ruling class governmental instruments of command and control are said to be increasingly having a harder time subsuming and exploiting:

All three of these contradictions point to the fact that capital's strategies and techniques of exploitation and control tend to be fetters on the productivity of biopolitical labor. Capital fails to generate a virtuous cycle of accumulation, which would lead from the existing common through biopolitical production to a new expanded common that serves in turn as the basis of a new productive process (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 149).

The transnational ruling classes cannot ride these contemporary processes with mastery; their very efforts to steer and reign the common powers deepens the crises and makes them more explosive. While capital accumulation depends upon the dominance of biopolitical production, increasingly production does not need Empire. This then is the objective situation of our present, as Hardt and Negri describe it. Let us note in passing the apparent dialectical character of the inversion on which the argument here turns: it is the very intensified dependence of biopolitical production on the common that is said to amplify and intensify the common's capacity to serve as a platform of liberation. This impression is only deepened by their description of this boomerang effect as a "vertiginous loop" in the production of subjectivity unleashed by biopoliticization: "One might still conceive of economic production as an engagement of the subject with nature, a transformation of the object through labor, but increasingly the "nature" that biopolitical labor transforms is subjectivity itself" (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 172-73). Indeed, it would seem that, against the drift of their own rhetoric throughout the trilogy, their concept of the common now concedes a dialectical formulation: Biopolitical production depends on the common and to this extent it is immanent to Empire. But the common is also what makes biopolitical production creatively excessive to itself so that biopolitical production is already on the road to autonomy from Empire: "Crossing the

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threshold gives us a first definition of the process of biopolitical exceeding, which overflows the barriers that the tradition of modern political economy built to control labor-power and the production of value” (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 317). In the first two books of the trilogy, the slogan had been “there is no outside” to Empire. But now the common is posited crucially as *outside-in* Empire. We will also return to this issue below. For the moment, let us only note that it is because the common is for them a social world of “historical and ontological overflowing” that they insist that biopolitical production entails the production of subjectivity and that for them “multitude” names nothing else than its own “perpetual becoming other, an uninterrupted process of collective self-transformation” (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 173). In this precise sense, the multitude then is a figure of political agency and a political project to be organized, rather than an identity position.

This line of argument no doubt raises several questions. Before I outline those I want to take up here, let me underscore what I think makes their theoretical construction crucially important. Political theory in the dominant northern countries, unlike the more empirical social sciences of globalization, has had virtually nothing interesting to say about the politics of production or class in the last few decades, so that this theoretical effort, especially insofar as it also endeavors to avoid being parochial, deserves critical engagement by postcolonial scholars and social scientists studying global inequality. Most important in this regard is that Hardt and Negri’s theoretical construction attempts to describe and define what they call a “materialist telos” for the agency of the multitude. This line of argument that we have been following regarding the technical and organic composition of capital seeks to describe the historical conditions of possibility for a path of liberation from the contemporary catastrophes and destitutions of global capitalism. As such, their work does not offer normative platitudes nor dress up ethical banalities in brand new logos, let alone culminate in the pathos of another “figure for our modernity”. Rather, their theoretical construction produces concept-characters that are utopian and experimental. Consequently, our critical engagement with the trilogy needs to closely scrutinize their construction

of the materialist telos and their account of the historical emergence of biopolitical production.

Here, several questions can be raised. The main one I will take up in the discussion below has to do with how we understand the hegemonic ascendancy of biopoliticized production. The contemporary world system is made up of many different modes of production articulated with industrial and post-industrial or biopolitical production. How are these modes of production articulated together and what does that tell us about the organization of exploitation and domination on local and world scales? Does the growth of services always and everywhere promote the autonomous organization of cooperation or is cooperation obtained through assemblages of political and economic dependency? Does precarity in fact promote the autonomous management of time or is the timing of practices being organized at some more abstract level? Indeed, does not the recolonization of leisure and the economization of ever more aspects of social and cultural practices result in a time now so completely homogenous and empty that it is, not a bare life, but nothing but a sheerly pointless working to die? Moreover, does the consecration of the migrant's metropolis as the privileged social space of the common lead the materialist telos toward a dead-end, especially on ecological matters? Questions such as these, however, cannot be answered in general but only in relation to the singularity of local situations. I will return to them in my discussion of the new urban forms that are being constructed for the global and Indian IT industry in Kolkata, West Bengal. But first, let us allow our second figure of agency to step onstage for a turn.

3. The Subaltern Line of Fight

In the early work of the Subaltern Studies Collective, the Gramscian category of the subaltern is revitalized and deployed by way of a critique of elitist historiography, whether colonialist or nationalist. In this first stage of the collective's research practice in which the influences of British Marxist history from below are explicitly registered, the problematic of agency occupies center stage. This point of departure was not nearly as original a break with leftist

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historiography on the subcontinent as international readers have sometimes been led to think. In fact, the collective's practice emerges out of a rich and flourishing tradition of labour social history. Nevertheless, the strategic turn to the category of subaltern history seemed to be full of promise as it was made in response to a peasant uprising, the Naxalite movement (1967-76) and the crisis this presented for the organized mass communist movements. The emphasis on insurgent peasant culture, myth and ritual as well as insistence on a domain of politics "autonomous" from elite organization and leadership indeed broke new ground, as did the new focus on overlooked and marginalized events such as struggles over forest rights, hill tribe revolts, food riots, communal conflicts, and insubordination against landlord domination. The subaltern, in Ranajit Guha's redefinition, referred to a popular configuration of social locations "as a name for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way" (Guha and Spivak, 1988: 35). On the one hand, the problem of subaltern agency then presents itself as a methodological issue: Insofar as an oral culture and a non-literate collectivity leaves behind no documents of their own authorship in the archives, how is their insurrective participation both in the Indian nationalist movement but also beyond it in direct revolts against landlord and colonial domination to be studied? The need to invent a hermeneutic strategy capable of deciphering this absent presence leads to Guha's theoretical innovations, drawing on Barthes and Foucault, which finds a way to read various symptoms in the texts of colonial administration and rule for traces of subaltern agency.

The main point we need to note here about Guha's theoretical intervention, however, is the link it establishes between the question of mediation and the problematic agency. Insurrective agency cannot be accessed directly and immediately. Rather, its effectivity and intelligibility must be reconstructed on a distinct register of representations and codes that have their own internal history.

Now the problematic of agency presents a further dilemma which the subaltern studies project in its first phase thematizes and tackles through its critique of

colonialist and nationalist historiography. This is the dawning recognition, widespread among twentieth century and especially postcolonial historians, that the practice of history writing itself folds back and begins to have effects on the unfolding of history; in the project of nation-building and its characteristic pedagogic methods of domination, for example. For subaltern studies, this was the common point of “nationalist” collusion between bourgeois and Marxist historiography and this is what gave urgency to the project of retrieving an autonomous domain of subaltern politics able to slip the leash of elite leadership. (No doubt, the fact that the Communist Party of India was able to accommodate itself to the Congress-led postcolonial state and so opt for the parliamentary road in 1950 and that the dissenting splinter Communist Party of India, Marxist repeated the same trauma in 1966 were crucial conditions for the elaboration of these historiographical-theoretical positions). In Dipesh Chakrabarty’s (2000) work, this line of critique is developed theoretically into a critique of the discipline itself. What the subaltern studies project then enables us to grasp clearly and cogently is that these two facets of the problematic of agency are connected but not reducible to one another. How and why does the past matter in and to the present? Agency in the past and agency of the past pose linked but not the same narrative problem for historiography and the historical turn in the social sciences. Between them is an incommensurable or heteroclitic space demanding the invention of some dialectic that would allow us to plot a trajectory through the interaction of the two force fields of these two narrative problems.

The subaltern studies project, however, proved to be unequal to the task of confronting the very conditions it had initially established for its historiography. As numerous commentators and critics have observed (Lal, 2003; O’Hanlon, 1988; Ortner, 1995; Sarkar, 1997; Sivaramakrishnan, 1995), the subsequent work of the collective, especially after Ranajit Guha’s resignation from his editorial position there, became mired in various reified binary oppositions. Indeed, the major binary oppositions structuring the core concerns of subaltern studies subsequently — subaltern religiosity versus elite secularism, community versus class, myth versus

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rationalism, the West versus the indigenous — are all derivatives of the hoariest ideological and orientalist binary of them all, that of tradition and modernity. As a result, the slippage from locating a practical space of autonomy from elite political leadership to a quest for the authenticity of traditional consciousness was easily made. The potential of the category of the subaltern to lead to a more concrete determination of class relations as a social multiplicity dissipated instead into another ideal type with even less analytic usefulness. Adrift in the ambivalences and dead-ends of the dominant Anglo-American reading of Foucault, unable to locate the crucial movement in Foucault's thought underscored by Hardt and Negri's terminological distinction between biopower and biopolitics, the critical energies of the collective relaxed in this second stage of its career into an Americanized area-studies cultural nationalism, drawing withering criticism from both feminist and Dalit scholarship (Bannerji et al., 2001; Nanda, 2003).

Two silences in particular have been deafening. Over the 1990s, the Hindu fundamentalist movement (Hindutva) was on its murderous march to state power. As part of its propaganda campaign on the subcontinent and throughout the diaspora, Hindutva ideologues mobilized falsified historical "evidence" in support of its twinned fantasies of a Hindu golden age and a subsequent Muslim barbarism. Indian historians dramatically entered the public stage in numbers to contest Hindutva claims but in this collective disciplinary effort the subaltern studies historians were conspicuously absent. Secondly, liberalization of the Indian economy in 1991 has deepened social inequality in India over the ensuing decades during which resource extraction, contract farming, and industrialization has especially immiserated forest dwellers, landless cultivators, and migrant labourers. (Bremar, 2010) So much so that a renewed Naxalite insurrection or Maoist movement has emerged and now controls a substantial band of rural India, the so-called Red Corridor, from UP to Andhra Pradesh. Until recently, the subaltern studies collective have also had little to say about this neoliberal project of accumulation by dispossession despite the very active and determined subaltern movements of protest against it.

Breaking this silence, a newer generation of historically oriented social scientists (Bannerjee-Dube, 2007; Da Costa, 2008; Dube, 2004a, 2004b; Ghosh, 2006; Kapoor, 2009a; Mayaram, 2004; Munda and Mullick, 2003; Shah, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) have re-appropriated the figure of subaltern and have sought to understand and theorize the trajectories and prospects of these contemporary subaltern social movements. For this new third stage of the subaltern problematic, the emphasis is on the one hand on locating subaltern agency in relation to domination and exploitation institutionalized on regional, national and transnational scales. On the other hand, instead of a focus on cultural alterity and primordial or authentic religiosity, there is a return to question of political autonomy, now understood in relation to a world-wide struggle in defense of the commons. Indeed, these new thematics connect the studies of subaltern social movements of the subcontinent to research on contemporary subaltern movements in Latin America, Africa, Asia and elsewhere (Kapoor, 2009b; Lee, 2005; Mignolo, 2005). Scholars around the world have globalized their otherwise rigorously localized research in order to better understand the local impact of neoliberalized political economies and the global significance of the struggles for the common that very often make up their sites of study. In many respects, the theory of the multitude will stand or fall on the question of whether it can yield new perspectives on subaltern politics and subaltern anti-systemic movements. In order to probe such possibilities, I will now turn first to a critical discussion of the information technology industry in Kolkata, West Bengal.

4. Sector Five, or, a Subaltern Right to the Metropolis

While India's 8.8 percent annual growth rate has been making headline news in the business press world wide, India's information technology industry has shared much of this limelight. In fact, the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) and other industry representatives like to claim that IT and software exports in particular have served as the main engine of growth. Such claims can and have been disputed. Some scholars observe

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that India's growth rate was on an upward swing well before liberalization policies were introduced (let alone had a chance to take effect) (Basu, 2008, Subramanian, 2008) and that domestic demand, particularly for old-economy industrial production, has been the more significant driver (Basu, 2008). Nonetheless, the size and growth of software exports has been striking, growing 28.7% (compound annual growth rate) in the last five years and totaling 71.7 billion US dollars in 2008-9 alone, comprising now 5.8% of India's GDP (India Brand Equity Foundation [IBEF], 2009) Direct employment in the IT sector has grown by 26% (compound annual growth rate) over the last decade, employing now more than two million Indians. However, not only IT but the entire formally organized sector, public and private, employs at most ten percent of India's population while the rest are located in informal modes of production (Bhaduri and Patkar, 2009).

The IT and ITES (information technology enabled services) industries in India have their roots in a constellation of circumstances. A crucial precondition was the establishment of a network of advanced research and teaching campuses, the famed Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT), by the postcolonial state. Bangalore, the most renowned of Indian IT centers, however, was where the Indian Air Force and the Indian Space Research Organization had located its research and development labs, and was therefore a major center of computational research going back to the 1960s. All of the other major centers of IT in New Delhi (Gurgaon), Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad and Kolkata are home to either IIT campuses or major Indian universities. Secondly, the Y2 K2 problem was largely addressed by U.S. based industries by importing large numbers of Indian engineers to grind through the algorithms on cheaper contracts. According to industry insiders we interviewed, this set in place the personal networks between Indian engineers in Silicon Valley, corporate America and corporate India that would be crucial to the emergence of IT/ITES startups with access to U.S. markets at one end and Indian labour, capital and political will at the other. Thirdly, the dot-com bust of 2000 suddenly and precipitously dropped the cost of transmitting data through trans-oceanic fiber optic cables. Lobbied by interests sensitive to the

opportunities, (NASSCOM was founded in 1988), the central government launched its Software and Technology Parks of India initiative (seeding tax free export processing zones) in 1991, opened a special ministry dedicated to overseeing foreign investment in information technology in 1997, and introduced a new IT/ITES policy in 2003. In intense competition with other states for capital investment, the government of West Bengal soon began reclaiming wetlands, expropriating farmland and developing infrastructure for a new Special Economic Zone, called "Sector Five", on the marshy edges of Kolkata's suburb of Salt Lake in order to locate the IT/ITES firms it was trying to attract. As investment began to flow into the generously subsidized gridwork, plans for the expansion of Sector Five into Rajarhat New Town, encompassing over 3000 hectares of prime agricultural land, were set into motion by dispossessing farmers by stealth and by force.

In the view of the dedicated ministries for information technology at both levels of government, industry insiders and observers alike, the main reason by far for the dramatic growth of IT and ITES industries in India is the labor cost saving realized when the work is done in India compared to the U.S. or the E.U. According to the Indian government's own estimates, this cost saving ranges from twenty-five to sixty percent of an invested dollar. So a politically crucial question to ask is where does the saving on the cost of production go? Workers in the north who are losing their jobs to relocation are told that new, better jobs are on the horizon and that it is poor India's turn to have a slice of the pie. Middle class Indians are led to believe that the wealth produced by this industry is trickling down. Our research, along with that of others, however, suggests that wealth is rather trickling up and out (Upadhyia and Vasavi, 2006). The policy framework for the industry in fact ensures such a flow, as only formal sector incomes and consumption is taxed but not export sales or profits where the margins are incomparably larger. Nor does the policy framework ensure that any of the expected technology transfer to Indian MNCs will ever become a public resource. While it is the case that India has gained many higher paying jobs as a result of outsourcing, two aspects of the situation offset this gain as well. First of all, ever since India accepted an IMF loan after

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the oil price hike following the first Gulf War, the Indian government has scaled back social security programs under pressure from the World Bank and redirected public resources to the needs of the corporates (Chandra, 2010; Ray, 2010). In the case of West Bengal in particular, public spending on the development of infrastructure for Sector Five (roads and highways, power grids, fibre optic networks, water and sewage works) has entailed the reallocation of budgets from other public commitments. Secondly, liberalization has meant the arrival of global brands and consumption patterns as well, so some of the gains in higher wages are repatriated through nonlocal consumption, though how much is difficult to ascertain. But in order to gain a deeper understanding of the structure of exploitation through which the IT/ITES industry in Kolkata is articulated to the world economy, we need to take a closer look at the social relationships on which it depends and which link Sector Five not only to the older urban fabric of Kolkata but beyond that metropolis to rural India as well.

Industry observers and ministry officials classify formal occupations in the IT/ITES sector into three broad categories. First of all there are the relatively lower skilled and lower paid jobs in call centers and data entry stations. Secondly there are middle skill level jobs in technical support and back office business processing operations. Thirdly there are relatively higher skilled, higher paying jobs in IT-enabled professional (legal, financial, research) services and in IT software development, product design and engineering firms. There are significant differences in conditions of work and remuneration between these three strata of employment. While attrition is high in call center and data entry operations, employment in top tier jobs are more secure and sometimes offer opportunities to move up into management positions. Top tier employees are also more likely to receive health insurance and pension benefits. Nonetheless, as far as the production process itself is concerned, all of these kinds of service work are examples of what Hardt and Negri call biopolitical production. Not only do these processes of production involve information technology and its world spanning networks of cooperation but also the predominance of symbolic operations and affective production. While call centers and back office

business process operations usually run rotating shifts “24-7”, engineers, designers and other professional service providers regularly take work home with them or find themselves responding to “emergency” work demands on a regular basis. We find here the very production of subjectivity itself said to be the signature of biopoliticization, whether as an Americanized or Anglicized friendly neighbourhood character on a service or sales call, or as corporate team player sucking it up to make the deal for the chief. If there is a multitude in the making in Kolkata, these workers are certainly potential subjects of such a process of becoming, according to the definitions.

But this entire location of biopolitical production depends for its condition of possibility on several other social spaces we now need to consider. Most immediately, there is another vast body of service work without which Sector Five’s internally differentiated division of biopolitical virtual labour power could not be mobilized into production at all. These are the cooks, the cleaners, drivers, bearers, security guards, domestic workers, construction workers, carriers, rickshaw and autorickshawallahs, bus drivers, and street vendors who all play their crucial part in the everyday social reproduction of the very space of immaterial service production. Not only is the availability and accessibility of IT/ITES labour power to the globalized production process dependent upon this other branch of the social division of biopolitical labour but, just as crucially, the all-important cost saving the Indian IT worker offers the world economy is a saving drawn from this vast urban sprawl of subsistence wage production and pooled and concentrated in the biopolitical virtual labour power brought to market in Sector Five, from where it is transferred up and out. (Patnaik 2010) After all, why is the Indian IT worker ten times cheaper than their U.S. counterparts, if not because their needs are met that much more inexpensively locally? The IT workers thus serve as the mediation by which this saving is converted into profit. As such, the exploitation and domination articulating the local division of labour is also re-instrumentalized through them, as we shall see.

One of the main reasons for this cheapness is the precarious situation of this broad array of services. This precarity, in turn, is mainly predicated on a cluster of

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conjunctural conditions: de-industrialization and informalization; political disarticulation and a renewed rural crises. Let us briefly examine the implications of each of these processes.

At the time of national independence, West Bengal was one of the most highly industrialized states in India, where British managed, colonial era export oriented processing industries predominated, especially in jute and tea (Chakravarty, 2010). Postcolonial India's emphasis on import substitution industrialization resulted in neglect for Bengal's export industries, already floundering from the recession of the 1930s, the disruptions of Second World War and Partition in 1947. Through a period of protracted class conflict throughout the first half of the twentieth century, industrial manufacturing in West Bengal nonetheless emerged politically well organized through several mass trade unions; so much so that the organized labour movement provided crucial support enabling a Left Front to be elected into government in 1977 and to keep winning elections until recently. But the ascendance of the Left to state level governmental power was punished by capital flight and West Bengal lost ground to other states, ending up with a concentration of labour intensive but low productivity, low wage manufacturing units in the national division of industrial labour. Liberalization brought two political changes that have dramatically transformed West Bengal's labour market. First of all, it has to be understood that whereas most observers expect the Left Front to lose power for the first time since 1977 in the next elections, in fact the Left had already been defeated a long time ago in West Bengal and that it has been a zombie communism that has been governing after Jyoti Basu's (Chief Minister 1977-2000) faction faded from power. For the CPI-M, the leading party of the Left Front, then embraced neoliberalism with relish (or at least its politburo did) and has assiduously worked to create a favourable investment climate for national and multinational corporations. One of the main tasks in this, of course, was the government's attack on organized labour. Here we come face to face with a couple of remarkable contradictions, for the attack was relentless, and yet West Bengal had and still has one of the most pro-labour codes on the books. In so far the CPI-M's popular front alliances in

particular, and Left Front hegemony more generally, depended on a militantly pro-labour and militantly pro-poor public political platform, the cultivation of a favourable investment climate was a delicate matter. Here the very arrangement that had been instrumental to consolidating labour's power proved to be its undoing. This was the subordination of the main trade union organization, Congress of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) to the CPI-M. In the 1950s and 1960s, CITU had earned a reputation for being a militant union able to win the big battles. In the 1980s, with the Left Front in power, West Bengal gained a reputation for its labour peace, though in a context of a prolonged capital strike and rising unemployment. While industrial strikes then declined, over the 1990s, lockouts dramatically increased. Deepita Chakravarty's (2010) study of trade unions in West Bengal provides key insight into these changes out of which the informal sector expanded prodigiously. For it was CITU's close ties with the CPI-M that ensured collaboration so that permanent workers' positions were replaced by contract/casual positions through lockouts and attrition. CITU continued to bargain adamantly for wage increases for its core permanent constituency but collaborated with the government in refusing to organize the growing ranks of casual and contract workers. As workers continued to be locked out by firms, they eventually returned casualized or joined the main trend moving into (mostly subsistence) informal manufacturing and service sectors (Chakravarty, 2010).

This flow from formal industrial manufacturing into informal manufacturing and services is being joined by another flow from agriculture, as rural West Bengal has also slid into crisis over the last two decades. Along with labour militancy of 1960s and 70s, another political force that initially brought the Left Front to power was an armed peasant revolt (the Naxal movement, 1967-76). The roots of this revolt go back to the very depths of the modern construction of world-scale poverty, to the fact that industrialization, as led by the European bourgeoisie, could not but create crisis and destitution throughout all other modes of production around the world as it did in rural Bengal (and as Ranajit Guha's study of the Permanent Settlement, *A Rule of Property for Bengal* (1996 [1963]), helps

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us better understand). Thus subaltern revolts have been a constant and recurrent feature of the modern world system ever since and the Naxalbari movement was one of a series of uprisings in India that has currently reincarnated itself as the Maoist “peoples’ war”. Eventually brutally suppressed, the Naxals nevertheless were crucially influential in defining the initial character of Left Front hegemony. They ensured a radicalization of the CPI-M, especially with regard to its rural policies, even though the parliamentary party splintered on the question of whether and how to ally itself with the Naxalites. While a few among the urban middle and elite classes may have voted for the CPI-M in the expectation that they would be the most effective at coopting and containing the Naxalites, the Left Front won several convincing majorities because of their land reform, social justice and social equality policies. Indeed the extent of the Left Front’s land reform program and panchayati raj initiatives (decentralized rural participatory democracy) have been unprecedented in India. In the late 1960s, a spontaneous subaltern uprising, supported by left United Front parties, distributed 500,000 acres of ‘benami’ land to landless cultivators in rural West Bengal (Dasgupta, 1984). The Left Front came to power riding this tide of revolt and among its key initiatives of agrarian reform was “operation barga” where share tenants were registered in order to break the exploitative relation between landlords and sharecroppers. Secondly, the new government re-distributed surplus land beyond a negotiated ceiling to the landless which also reduced agrarian inequality somewhat without dismantling landlord power any further (Bhattacharyya, 2007). Moreover, the Left Front imposed a minimum wage rate for agricultural labourers. These agrarian reforms were implemented through the local self-government institution of panchyati raj. Not without their own contradictions, limitations and problems, land reform and panchayati raj did transform rural West Bengal, so that researchers and other observers could claim by the late 1980s that the Left Front government had achieved impressive agricultural growth and significant poverty alleviation in the countryside. (Chattopadhyay, 2005; Khasnabis, 2008)

However, these improvements began to rollback once liberalization policies began to take effect, as Maumita and

Sudipta Bhattacharyya's (2007) study of West Bengal's "agrarian impasse" shows. As the public food distribution system, an institution designed to avert famine and endemic hunger, was dismantled under orders from the World Bank, and as food, fertilizer and credit subsidies were withdrawn and the market opened to agricultural imports, agricultural producers faced rising costs of production and declining prices for their produce simultaneously (Bhattacharyya and Bhattacharyya, 2007). The resulting shock has been especially devastating for landless agricultural labourers as rural employment began to shrink. This unfolding crisis has then resulted in a flow of migrant labour from the countryside to metropolitan Kolkata where they too seek a place in the informal service economy. This indeed was the biography of most of the women construction workers we interviewed building Sector Five's IT parks and executive condominiums. (Several of the younger drivers and security guards we interviewed, on the other hand, told us their fathers had lost their jobs in manufacturing many years ago). Joining this steady flow of migrants are not only those from the countryside of adjacent states of Assam, Bihar, Orissa, but also from a vast and densely populated rural belt stretching as far north as Nepal and Bhutan and east into Bangladesh who are being displaced from agriculture for similar reasons. All these migrants form a reserve army of service workers in the streets and slums of Kolkata who ensure that the broad base of the division of labour remains at the most meagre of subsistence. In Kolkata, then, service, precarity and migration come together, articulating the agrarian to the metropolitan through the "contingent structuring" of these conjunctural processes.

5. Subaltern and the Multitude: Vanishing Mediators of the Political

Kolkata and its environs then may be thought of a vast, predominantly informal, biopolitical service and manufacturing metropolis onto which Sector Five and its satellite townships have been implanted as one node of articulation with the world economy. The sons and daughters of relative privilege who work long, odd and variable hours in state of the art IT campuses are mostly

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distinguished from the security guards, drivers, clerks, construction workers, cooks and domestic servants who work among them and the small manufacturers and scavengers all around them primarily by their command of English, the quality and extent of their education, as well as their caste and class backgrounds. The IT workers hail from every strata and location of India's middle class which, contrary to the claims of North American journalism, is not a new formation but one with roots that go well back into the nineteenth century. What is new is their global brand consumption, the only thing that catches the eyes of the business press. Also new, in a way, is the *growing* inequality between the small core of the IT sector and the large mass of the labouring urban poor variously serving it. What we find, then, is a clear segmentation in the division of labour of biopolitical production in which both segments are exploited by a transnational capitalist class (in which non-resident Indians figure prominently) but also articulated by a structure of exploitation between them.

How then are we to now mobilize the categories of class, multitude or subaltern in order to grasp the possibilities here, if any, of social transformation, liberation, or even of some rupturing event revolutionary becoming? The well-nigh infinite gradations of the stratification of class and status inequality that we find here in Kolkata is but the local appearance of the fine gradations of inequality now characteristic of the world economy. These have proven over the twentieth century to be so durably inheritable that one is tempted to think them as new social formations of caste hierarchy, if one really insisted on dispensing with class as an obsolete nineteenth century problem.

But both names "multitude" and "subaltern" are arguments for the continued relevance and pertinence of class politics in the present conjuncture. So let us first consider how Hardt and Negri themselves raise the problem of coordinating the two figures: The postcolonial criticism of their theory of the multitude, they say, is that it excludes the subaltern, that their analysis forgets about the subalterns and about the subordinated global south, etc. They understand this criticism to claim that they have failed to be fully dialectical, of grasping the remainder through which the multitude as a concept becomes delimited and intelligible.

Hardt and Negri's response to their own characterization of this criticism is two-fold. On the one hand, *Multitude* and *Commonwealth* do attempt to bring histories of colonialism and processes of the development of underdevelopment more comprehensively into their analyses of contemporary politics. Indeed, in this regard, their trilogy is a welcome and important advance over many other major positions in political theory today (such as Agamben, in whose work these issues are largely and typically absent, or even Žižek, who reads it all through *Avatar*). On the other hand, they argue that the concept of the multitude somehow "transposes the exclusive and limiting logic of identity-difference into the open and expansive logic of singularity-commonality" (Hardt and Negri, 2004: 225); that it may be the case that there happens to be nodes outside a given network, such exclusions are not necessary and structural. On this ground, they underscore their argument that multital organization names a task of political organization that the multitude must be made. Consequently, we are invited to suppose that the theory calls for some project or process of articulation between subaltern and multitude. Nevertheless, the problem with their theory is not only one of exclusion, of forgetting about the South, but rather one of obscuring or erasing the complex structure of exploitations constituting the very multiplicity of the social on a world scale.

For example, the predominance of service, or actually of the informal sector whether in services or small scale manufacturing, may provoke the self-organization of networks of cooperation without the direct intervention of capital in some situations but this is clearly not the case in the IT industry in Kolkata. To the extent that it is so in the ancillary services such as with drivers and autorickshawallahs, these remain entirely dependent on the IT boom. For example, men and women who had been able to set up street food stalls across from the gates of the campuses preparing meals for the IT workers had organized their own management committee to collectively solve problems like refuse removal, water and produce delivery, and to settle minor disputes. Such self-organization has the potential to raise and press for other political demands. Nonetheless, the stall proprietors and their staff cannot be

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said to possess even the most rudimentary autonomy from the FDI flows into Sector Five.

Nor can we say that precarity universally enables workers to regain control over their management of time. It may be a stunning achievement of North American civilization that now enables people to bring their work with them on their vacations in order to get ahead, or catch up on their blackberries in the toilet, but these freedoms are hard to find in Kolkata. As is notoriously well known, the work schedule of IT workers are set by their clients in North America or Europe whereas the marginal subsistence nature of much of the supporting services requires ceaseless engagement in production. Domestic workers we interviewed, for example, without exception complained of being at the beck and call of their employers, of not getting any time to give their own families; as did private household drivers, whereas those working for car pool companies reported that they frequently worked through the one day off they are supposed to get.

The lesson to be learned from this case study, then, is that social multiplicity must be understood not as an open series of positions on a number line (race, class, sex, gender, one thousand and one ethnicities, etc.) as most postmodern social theories presume (Hardt and Negri, 2009: 167), but rather as a multiplicity of exploitations, crises and contradictions. For social multiplicity is not a matter of the multiplicity of positions but rather of positionality. In this, the multiplicity of exploitation mediates all other political multiplicities insofar as the (international) social division of labour is the very nonsensical objectivity of all histories at their world scale. The division of labour is both a historically given result of subaltern and class struggles of the past as well as the very site of ongoing subaltern class struggles of the present. As such it is, indifferently, a cultural, political, economic, juridical and ideological artefact of such struggles, the very body of their occurrence. No mode of subjectivization can escape being decentered and relativized by it, for there is no transcendent heaven or hell outside of social reproduction. Any specific point or place in the division of labour, after all, crucially depends on other places or points on the division of labour, some very obviously and heavily, but also ultimately on most if not

every other point as well. Any singular configuration of movements of production can be set into motion only through their determination by all other movements of production. After all, this is precisely what a division of labour in effect is: The very fact that somebody doing one thing enables someone else to do something else. This is precisely where the main potential for gains in productivity lies – in multiplying the power of cooperation through differentiation. The crucial point to be underscored here, though, is that part and whole of the division of labour cannot be represented or understood separately or discretely. Rather the representational challenge is precisely that of figuring the multiplicity of exploitations that relates part to whole and vice versa.¹

If the figure of the multitude is to be distinguished, then, from the concept of the people, on basis of the imposed unity of the latter versus the open network multiplicity of the former as Hardt and Negri insist, then, this distinction can only turn on the very objectivity of the social division of labour as historically and politically constructed and given to all possible subjective becomings. For this body of accumulated human history on a world scale, as a crucial transcendental condition of possibility of the common, can never be completely subjectified itself. The objectivity of histories at their world scale is a dimension of the common but this is why the common exceeds itself. Here, the key argument of postcolonial subalternist critique must be kept clearly in focus. For contemporary eurocentric cultural and political theory mystifies in two ways: Either capitalism is assumed to be eternal, inscribed in human nature; or the break of industrial capitalism is assumed to be a total one that completely transcends its own historical situation. But as a broad range of scholarship in historical sociology, postcolonial studies and the world history movement has demonstrated, this very break creates its own world scale context by bringing all other modes of production into an equally new machinic assemblage as its ground. Thus it is that any relationship of exploitation or domination is never identical to itself but supplemented by some other kind of accumulated violence.

¹ For a discussion of these representational issues see Mookerjee (2001).

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Returning then to Kolkata, we can say that “multitude” and “subaltern” are two alternate ways of totalizing this complex articulation of exploitations and fine stratification of inequality into utopian figures of agency. As elsewhere, the left in India faces a cultural, educational and ideological task, as much as an economic, political or organizational one, of constructing some kind of new politics based on new solidarities and new identifications. In West Bengal, the left now has split between those who have gone over to support the main opposition party, Trinamool Congress, (with even more deeply entrenched ties with the business mafia, whose policies favour crony capitalism more ardently than the current Left Front government, and which would, in any case, face the same structural constraints at the national and global level) and those who are in despair that their politics have been stolen from them. Most commentators expect Trinamool Congress to sweep the next state level elections as result of their opportunistic manipulation of the Left Front’s own contradictions. Whether or not this comes to pass, the time is now ripe for a root and branch reconstruction of the left in India (a task that will require both solidarity and critical engagement with the ongoing Maoist insurgency currently being subjected to brutal scattershot repression from the state). In such a situation, both multitude and subaltern are utopian figures, in Fredric Jameson’s (2005) sense of a cultural and aesthetic pedagogy on which all political movements cannot but depend. As agents, neither are available without cultural-pedagogical mediation. But as mediating pedagogical figures, they are both alternate ways of telling the story of social and political change, of struggling to defend the common, of plotting a political future. Subaltern and multitude then are two ways of mapping how the conjunctural processes and ongoing struggles unfolding in Kolkata may be organized to lead into a transformative event, how a passive revolution might be turned into active revolution. They are both figures operating at local and global scales simultaneously. But the two figures do not add up to a complementary unity nor do they coincide with each other, nor can we choose between them. Rather, each posits a different chronotope of agency insofar as we read each figure as a vanishing mediator in relation to the other. The two figures pose a narrative form

problem without a generic solution. For this very reason, it is in the allegorical mediation of each figure by the other, that we need to search for a new political pedagogy and social movement learning process for the left that is both locally grounded and yet not provincial.

Let us begin by observing that the core experiences and raw materials of the new solidarities to be made still remain unclear but they will nevertheless have something to do with the conjunctural processes we have discussed above. Any programmatic story that one could then try to learn to tell of the multitude's liberation will at some point fall apart, as we have seen above, because an unplaceable figure of the subaltern will eventually turn up as a symptom, a ghost, a geoperspectival aporia with its own local pedagogical lessons, re-articulating the metropolis to its agrarian and forest ecologies.¹ As a mediating figure for the multitude, the subaltern then is a supplementary historiographical figure which forestalls the multitude's reification into unity and its transcendence into northbound epic discourse. On the other hand, similarly, any story of the subaltern's liberation will breakdown and grind to a halt before it can slide back into some renewed nationalism, ethnocentrism, communalism, or populism, insofar as the subaltern will keep setting off on a line of flight and keep melting away into the multitude and into insurgencies breaking out across the planetary common. In this regard, the multitude, as a mediation of the subaltern, is a supplementary sociological figure which forestalls the subaltern's reification into culture, ethnicity, and community by networking subalternity into the common.

As a result, left cultural production and social movement learning today, whether in West Bengal or elsewhere, will have to assume this oscillation between these two figures, this narrative form problem, for its pedagogical aesthetic. If only for the good reason that any figure of agency, if it is not to relax into a facile discursivist platitude about "undoing fixity", needs to face squarely not only the unimaginable weight and glacial duration of our human history; of accumulated violence; of subaltern defeat and

¹ For a discussion of geoperspectival aporias (and the Jamesonian idea of narrative form problems) see Mookerjea (2001).

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dispossession whether from the neolithic revolution or even before; but also the historically unprecedented quantum leap in inequality and in the imbalance of power between the transnational ruling classes and the multitude that has emerged over the neoliberal decades into what Samir Amin (2003) calls global apartheid. Narratives which foreclose the future consequences of both this historical duration and these conjunctural processes, such narratives of transcendence (whether of biopolitical production floating free of all other modes of production that comprise it, or of this or that posthuman or technopoetic overcoming of production itself, or any other fleshless event without conjuncture) will be sites at which the figure of the subaltern will continue to emerge as a symptom of that foreclosure. Badiou writes somewhere that events are never miraculous. The figure of subaltern agency is there to remind us of the long revolution of the past that must take place before the future can arrive; of the geological slowness of the multitude's event as it emerges across the duration of accumulated violence and out of the contradictions of conjunctural processes. The agency of the past is not reducible to agency in the past, but we cannot escape determination by the former without understanding the latter. But this is precisely the wide open space where the prodigious force animating the figure of the multitude by sheer theoretical will becomes most necessary and advantageous to the left's learning processes and cultural-political production today: Equally utopian, the multitude names the event of the subaltern's disappearance through its own autonomous, networked, world-scale struggle for liberation.

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Fighting FTAs, Educating for Action: The Challenges of Building Resistance to Bilateral Free Trade Agreements

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Abstract: *Considerable scholarly research (e.g. Starr, 2000; Goodman, 2002; McNally, 2002; Polet and CETRI, 2004; Bandy and Smith, 2005; Day, 2005) has gone into examining the “anti-globalization”, or “global justice” movement, including campaigns against the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the WTO, NAFTA and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Yet relatively little attention has been paid to newer movements against bilateral free trade and investment agreements (FTAs). Drawing from the author’s extensive engagement in struggles against FTAs, this article critically discusses the spread of bilateral free trade and investment agreements in the wake of the breakdown of multilateral (WTO) and regional (e.g. FTAA) negotiations, and the rise in social movement activism against these agreements. Drawing on examples from the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, this article dispels the assumption that bilateral free trade and investment agreements are less of a threat than multilateral agreements. Moreover, it argues that in spite of a multitude of such movements and mobilizations against these agreements, particularly (though not exclusively) in the Third World, the transnational NGO/activist networks that have actively contested the WTO and FTAA have largely failed to connect such struggles with each other, and are largely inconsequential in relation to anti-FTA activism. It suggests that there is a disconnect between major mobilizations against FTAs and NGO networks on globalization which have generally been slow to react or seriously address the bilateral deals. This article highlights some challenges to educating for mobilization against these agreements, and shares some insights that arise from grounded struggles against FTAs, outlining growing connections and collaborations for education and action between movements opposing FTAs.*

1. Introduction

“For the WTO resistance, it is easier to gather people across countries to mobilize together. But with FTAs, we are struggling on our own” (participant, Fighting FTAs international strategy workshop, July 2006, Bangkok).

During the 1990s, the rising opposition to free trade and investment agreements came to be known in many quarters as the “anti-globalization” or “global justice” movement. In Canada, the USA and Mexico, opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the bilateral free trade and investment deals preceding them arose from many sectors of the three societies, including Indigenous Peoples, women’s movements, trade unions, students and peasant/family farmers. In the Asia-Pacific region, a range of social movements and non-government organizations (NGOs) mobilized against the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, which some had felt had the potential to become a free trade and investment agreement – although APEC often seemed far more hype than substance (Kelsey, 1999; Choudry, 2008). Globally, during the Uruguay Round of negotiations on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which set up the WTO in January 1995, many activists, social movements, trade unions and NGOs turned their attention to contest and oppose this multilateral institution and the negative social, ecological, political and economic impacts of its agreements. In many ways, the scope and depth of commitments under NAFTA, which covered a range of areas (notably its controversial investment chapter) which were not covered under World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, set the stage as a model for a new wave of bilateral free trade agreements with equally or more expansive scope.

While indeed there had been many campaigns against free trade and GATT in many countries, particularly in the Third World, the 1999 mobilizations in Seattle and the failure of the Seattle WTO Ministerial meeting to launch a so-called Millennium Round of negotiations was viewed by many in the global North as the birth of the anti-globalization movement. A number of networks of both direct action-oriented groups and people’s movements such as Peoples’ Global Action (PGA) (Wood, 2005), the

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international small and peasant farmers' movement network La Via Campesina (Desmarais, 2007), and the NGO-dominated Our World is Not for Sale network arose during the 1990s or the start of this century to coordinate and network international¹ opposition to the WTO. The claims of newness surrounding "globalization" and "anti-globalization" obfuscated the fact that in many contexts, particularly in the Third World, there had been long and ongoing resistance to neoliberalism in its different manifestations spanning several decades (Flusty, 2004; Choudry, 2008).

Considerable scholarly research (e.g. Starr, 2000; Goodman, 2002; McNally, 2002; Polet and CETRI, 2004; Bandy and Smith, 2005; Day, 2005) has gone into examining popular struggles against capitalist globalization, including campaigns against the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the WTO and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Yet relatively little attention has been paid to newer movements against bilateral free trade and investment agreements (FTAs). This article critically discusses the spread of bilateral free trade and investment agreements in the wake of the breakdown of multilateral (WTO) and regional (e.g. FTAA) negotiations, and the rise in social movement activism against these agreements. Drawing on examples from Latin America, Asia and the Pacific, I dispel the assumption that bilateral free trade and investment agreements are less of a threat than multilateral agreements. I will argue that in spite of a multitude of such movements and mobilizations against these agreements, particularly (though not exclusively) in the Third World, the transnational NGO/activist networks that have actively contested the WTO and FTAA have largely failed to connect such struggles with each other, and are largely inconsequential in relation to anti-FTA activism. There has been a disconnect between major mobilizations against FTAs and established NGO networks on globalization, which have generally been slow to react or seriously address the bilateral deals. On the contrary, some of these NGOs have issued triumphalist statements responding to the state of WTO talks which have suggested that neoliberalism is on the defensive, which completely ignore the commitments being

¹ See <http://www.ourworldisnotforsale.org>

made in bilateral free trade negotiations (e.g. IATP, 2008; Menotti, 2008). However, as I outline, connections are slowly being made between movement activists fighting FTAs.

First, rather than grounding my analysis in dominant strands of social movement theory or policy discussions put forward by professionalized NGOs, this article is informed by my engagement in activism against bilateral FTAs, which evolved from work in Aotearoa/New Zealand with activist groups GATT Watchdog and the Aotearoa/New Zealand APEC Monitoring Group opposition to GATT/WTO, APEC, the failed OECD Multilateral Agreement on Investment. In situating my analysis in this way, I concur with Flacks (2004) and Bevington and Dixon's (2005) critiques of the shortcomings of much social movement theory as being driven by attempts to define and refine theoretical concepts which are likely to be "irrelevant or obvious to organizers" (Flacks, 2004: 147), and the latter's call for the recognition of existing movement-generated theory and dynamic reciprocal engagement by theorists and movement activists in formulating, producing, refining and applying research. Second, drawing upon my involvement with campaigns and collaborative initiatives against bilateral free trade and investment agreements in Aotearoa/New Zealand and internationally, this chapter will also outline specific challenges for education and mobilization campaigns against bilateral free trade and investment agreements by comparison to activism targeting more established global agreements and institutions such as the WTO, the World Bank and the IMF.

Mobilizations against FTAs have taken place in many countries, yet the relatively well-known transnational NGO/activist networks which have formed around the WTO such as Our World Is Not For Sale, and regional networks such as the Hemispheric Social Alliance (in the Americas) have not played any significant role in these. The trajectory of transnational networks contesting free trade that has accompanied mobilizations against the WTO operates on a different track from the locally grounded struggles against FTAs, which have sometimes seemed quite isolated from each other. In spite of commonalities of these agreements, and the fact that activists in, for example, Thailand and Colombia are campaigning against deals with the US, there

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has been little opportunity to learn from each other's struggles. Given the fact that the US essentially modifies its deals from a template, and yet the specifics of these deals are shrouded in secrecy during negotiations, analysis of the texts of other already concluded FTAs has been important in order to make educated guesses as to the exact nature of the disciplines in current FTA negotiations. Because of their very nature, bilateral deals pose some specific challenges for educating and mobilizing transnational networks and alliances against capitalist globalization.

2.Global Capitalism, Global War: Challenges for movements

Today, the capitalist crises and strategies of previous decades continue, alongside new aspects – or rather, newer versions of older forms of imperialist aggression. Boron (2005: 12) suggests that we are experiencing “the old practice of conquest and plunder [is] repeated for the umpteenth time by the same old actors wearing new costumes and showing some technical innovations.” Regional and global free trade and investment initiatives have made slow progress because of internal divisions among governments and overbearing demands of imperialist powers in WTO, APEC, and FTAA negotiations. APEC continues in a fairly low-profile fashion, largely as a talk shop for economic and security concerns, and partly as a launch pad for new bilateral free trade and investment negotiations (APEC, 2002).

The September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, and the subsequent ‘war on terror’ have been used to justify renewed militarization and war, as well as various forms of domestic state intervention in the US economy. Meanwhile, repressive domestic national security and immigration legislation is being ratcheted up in many countries, North and South (Tujan, Gaughran and Mollett, 2004; Petras and Veltmeyer, 2003; Boron, 2005; Mathew, 2005; Thobani, 2007). This has had worldwide consequences for the political space in which NGOs and ‘anti-globalization’ movements exist. The momentum behind major mobilizations against meetings of the World

Bank/IMF, G8, WTO, the Summit of the Americas¹, the World Economic Forum and other conferences of economic and political elites, mainly in the North, that carried from Seattle into late 2001 faltered somewhat after 9/11. Nonetheless, such mobilizations – and the cycle of ‘alternative’ NGO/civil society summits have continued, often on a smaller scale, as have questions as to how connected these mobilizations were with mass social movements or everyday resistance against capitalist exploitation, and just how representative they were of the most marginalized voices of the societies for whom they sometimes claimed to speak (Martinez, 2000; Prashad, 2003; Hewson, 2005). In the North, much of the momentum and focus directed against the institutions (and their cyclical meetings) most closely identified with the promotion and maintenance of capitalist globalization has been channelled into anti-war movements (Solnit, 2004; Wood, 2004).

Immediately after 9/11, a number of free trade’s strongest proponents, notably former US Trade Representative (now World Bank President) Robert Zoellick, drew dubious connections between opposition to neoliberalism and ‘terrorism’, and insisted that further trade and investment liberalization (by the USA’s trading partners, at least) was the most effective way to fight ‘terror’. “[M]any people will struggle to understand why terrorists hate the ideas America has championed around the world,” Zoellick (2001) said. “It is inevitable that people will wonder if there are intellectual connections with others who have turned to violence to attack international finance, globalization and the United States.” For Petras and Veltmeyer (2003: 228), after 9/11, the divisions between NGOs and labour unions calling for moderate reform of the system, and anti-capitalists or anti-imperialists seeking radical changes “seriously deepened, creating a fundamental rift within the [antiglobalization movement], with an increasing intolerance for radical change and confrontationalist politics.” Some NGOs urged others to abandon direct action tactics and

¹ Initiated in 1994, the Summit of the Americas has met a number of times to lay the groundwork for a (stalled) US-led proposal for a free trade and investment agreement covering all the nations in the Americas except for Cuba – known as the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

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more confrontational positions. Debates within networks in North America and Europe regarding “diversity of tactics” and the parameters of direct action in mobilizations continued, but often with an air of caution and self-censorship after 9/11 (McNally, 2002, Petras and Veltmeyer, 2003; Kinsman, 2006).

3. Geopolitics, Terror and Trade

While attempts to link commitments to further advance economic liberalization under the WTO with support for the “war on terror” failed to translate into tangible results in that arena since 2001, the bilateral FTA strategies, in particular, those of the US and EU, have clearly been as geopolitically driven as they have been driven by narrow economic concerns. The US has been using FTAs with Middle Eastern countries to undermine social and political opposition to Israel, and wants to merge these agreements into a regional Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA). The EU is pursuing its own regional agreement through FTAs with North African and Middle Eastern governments. The US FTA with Morocco was supposed to signal Washington’s support for “open, optimistic and tolerant Islamic societies” (USTR, 2004). The EU’s current FTAs based on the 2006 ‘Global Europe’ vision insists that parties (e.g. India, Korea, and ASEAN) sign a Political Cooperation Agreement before an FTA. Energy security is emerging as an important element in the FTA strategies of countries like Japan, China, the EU and the USA, with separate chapters of FTAs between Japan and Indonesia and Japan and Brunei guaranteeing the Japanese government a supply of gas and oil, for example. The world’s most powerful governments are competing to sign bilateral deals with the same countries in order to serve their distinct geopolitical and military agendas. FTAs often have little to do with trade and much to do with securing spheres of political influence and control. Access to “natural resources” such as oil, gas, agro fuels, minerals and biodiversity can be seen as significant in terms of both economic aspects as well as their geopolitical implications.

As Sidney Weintraub (2003), of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C., puts it:

The sense that is now being conveyed around the world is that US policy is to sign free trade agreements with other countries only if they are prepared to adhere to US foreign policy positions. An FTA, in other words, is not necessarily an agreement in which all parties benefit from trade expansion, but rather a favor to be bestowed based on support of US foreign policy.” There are few signs that the Obama Administration is taking a substantively different direction on trade policy. The latest global economic crisis has led many people to question the claimed benefits of free market capitalism, even as world leaders gathered at the 2010 G-20 Summit in Toronto on the theme of “recovery and new beginnings.

4. Bilateral FTAs: From the WTO’s Poor Cousins, to Tool of Choice

Initially seen as a default for slow-moving WTO negotiations, observers and activists came to see the bilateral free trade and investment strategy as being a preferred option. Former EU trade commissioner and current Director-General of the WTO, Pascal Lamy said of EU trade policy: “We always use bilateral FTAs to move negotiations beyond WTO standards. By definition, a bilateral trade agreement is ‘WTO plus’. Whether it’s about investment, intellectual property rights, tariff structure or trade instrument, in each bilateral FTA we have the ‘WTO plus’ provision” (Jakarta Post, 2004). Transnational capital has always forum-shopped to get what it wants in terms of international regulatory frameworks enforcing protection of investment and property rights. Through these deals, it is possible to isolate and divide governments outside of a forum where they could on some level bond together to resist demands of Northern governments within the WTO. Bilateral deals conveniently had far lower profiles than WTO negotiations and so came under the radar of many activists and popular mobilizations against capitalist globalization.

Another factor is the imbalance/asymmetry between governments such as the US and EU that have a small army of trade negotiators at their disposal, and smaller countries

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in the Third World who may have less than a handful of officials dealing simultaneously with multilateral, regional and bilateral negotiations. The FTA process is often more of an imposition by a larger power than a real “negotiation”. Like WTO agreements, and given their lower profile, perhaps even more so, they are negotiated in virtual secrecy, with negotiating texts routinely unavailable for public scrutiny in either country until it is much too late – or, in some cases, not even available for a significant period of time after the agreement has taken effect. Smaller countries face negotiations fatigue when overstretched and under resourced officials have to deal with agreements with multiple countries, bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally.

Bilateral agreements typically allow for deeper and faster levels of liberalization and deregulation than could be achieved in the WTO, (‘WTO-plus’) and specific measures and policies could be targeted. FTAs often break new ground. As governments commit to standards of liberalization that go further than the WTO through FTAs, this has implications for negotiating positions in multilateral trade talks should WTO talks get more momentum: countries will not be able to stand up to demands from Northern governments for WTO expansion when they have already signed onto WTO-plus commitments bilaterally. Bilaterally, it is sometimes easier to set precedents on a range of issues which can then at some point be multilateralized. For example, when the US negotiates a bilateral agreement with a WTO developing member country, the most-favored nation principle of the WTO - whereby any privilege granted to one WTO member has to apply to all others – assures the EU that it gains the benefit of the standards that the US obtains. For all practical purposes then, these WTO- plus standards may become the “new minimum standards from which any future WTO trade round will have to proceed” (Drahos, undated). There is thus a built-in snowball and ratchet effect of FTAs that allows for the bottom-up development of new international rules and standards.

The US has comprehensive bilateral free trade and investment agreements with several countries, including Vietnam, Singapore, Chile and Jordan, Australia, Bahrain, as well as the Central American Free Trade Agreement

(CAFTA-DR) - a fusion of several bilateral FTAs into a sub regional FTA. FTAs with South Korea, Colombia and Peru have been signed but await ratification by the US administration (and in Korea's case, by Seoul). Washington is pursuing FTAs with Thailand and Malaysia while also moving ahead with a number of Bilateral Investment Treaties with Pakistan, China and India, and Trade and Investment Framework Agreements with countries such as Mozambique that are precursors to full FTA negotiations.

Meanwhile, the EU, through its "Economic Partnership Agreements" with 77 former European colonies in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries, is pushing these nations to further liberalize their agriculture and open up their services and other sectors to European companies for investment and takeover. Australia and New Zealand are also regional players in the Asia-Pacific, through a free trade deal with Pacific Island nations, the Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) which is triggered by the entering into effect of the EU-Pacific EPA, and both Wellington and Canberra have concluded, or are currently in talks towards, free trade and investment agreements with other countries.

Japan has become an active bilateral player and recently concluded "economic partnership agreements" with the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. Canada has also concluded several bilateral free trade agreements with Israel, Chile, Costa Rica, Jordan and Colombia and is negotiating on several other fronts as well. Emerging powers like China, India and Brazil are becoming more and more active in pursuing bilateral free trade deals with smaller Asian neighbours and outside the region. Other FTAs between "developing" countries in different regions, such as between Asian governments and Latin American governments are also growing.

With the seventh WTO Ministerial in late 2009 failing once again to kick-start negotiations at the multilateral level came continued statements and reassertions by a number of governments that they would be taking the bilateral route for trade and investment liberalization.

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5. FTAs – new threats for people, new opportunities for corporate capital

Compliance with WTO agreements has been hard for many countries, but bilateral deals with WTO-plus provisions are even tougher. Through FTAs and bilateral investment treaties (BITs), EU and US trade negotiators push governments into going further and faster in adopting what are essentially corporate wish lists on areas such as intellectual property (further endangering access to treatment to millions of people living with HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening diseases, undermining traditional agriculture by imposing agribusiness monopoly rights on areas such as seeds, and expanding patent protection over all life forms), financial liberalization, and issues (e.g. government procurement and investment) which have been kept out of WTO negotiations or severely limited in their scope due to Third World governments' opposition to industrialized government demands.

US agribusiness and pharmaceutical corporations are both the scripters and cheerleaders of TRIPs-plus provisions. For example, Monsanto urged US trade negotiators to seek an end to Thailand's moratorium on large-scale field trials of genetically-modified crops either "in a parallel fashion with the FTA negotiations or directly within the context of the negotiations. Monsanto (2004) said that "in the current context of free trade...it is imperative that the US work with Thailand to eliminate the current barriers to biotechnology-improved crops and establish a science-based regulatory system – including field trials of new crops – consistent with their international trade obligations in order to bring the benefits of these products to market in Thailand and to further promote consistent access to American agricultural technologies and products." Former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra announced his intention to reverse Thailand's moratorium on GM field trials (which came into effect after pressure from farmers and consumer groups in April 2001). While he and his Cabinet were forced to uphold the moratorium after Thai farmers, Buddhist organizations, consumers and anti-GMO activists protested, US and Monsanto officials – who seek to make Thailand its regional base for GM Roundup-Ready corn and Bt corn – continue to

have the moratorium in their sights in the context of on-again, off-again FTA talks.

The Secretariat of the US-Thailand FTA Business Coalition comprises the US-ASEAN Business Council, representing US corporations with interests in ASEAN, and National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the USA's largest industrial trade lobby group. NAM boasts: "Our voice is not compromised by non-industry interests". Business lobbies view unions, NGOs, communities as 'special interests' which should be subordinated to the interests of the corporate sector in relation to trade and economic policymaking processes¹. BusinessEurope (formerly the Union of Industrial and Employers' Federations of Europe – UNICE) states: Given the increasingly important role of services in EU exports, all future FTAs must ensure comprehensive liberalization of key sectors including financial services, telecommunications, professional and business services and express delivery services...The EU has a comparative advantage across the board in services and needs to ensure that this advantage is pressed home in future FTAs" (UNICE, 2006).

6. Movements Against FTAs

Investment Threats and People's Resistance

FTAs and BITs contain broad definitions of "investment" which throw the door wide open for disgruntled corporations based in one signatory country to take a case against the other signatory government to a binding disputes tribunal. Thus far, these have often related to conflicts after the privatization of state-owned enterprises and public

¹ To cite one more example of the corporate machinery behind FTAs, FedEx, General Electric Company, New York Life, Time Warner and Unocal are US-Thailand FTA Business Coalition corporate chairs. Steering Committee members include: AIG, Cargill, Caterpillar, Citigroup, Corn Refiners Association, CSI, Dow Chemical, Ford, National Pork Producers Council, PhRMA, PricewaterhouseCoopers, SIA, UPS and the US Chamber of Commerce.

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utilities such as water, but could extend to include almost anything.

Argentina and Bolivia have already been sued under obscure BITs. Canadian investment analyst Luke Eric Peterson (2001) says: "It seems the high-profile disputes under the NAFTA appear to have inspired many litigators to dust off the NAFTA's more obscure predecessors." A number of innocuous-seeming bilateral investment agreements which few had even heard had been signed included clauses allowing for private investors to initiate binding dispute arbitration against governments. Such disputes are fought out behind closed doors in arbitration proceedings at the World Bank's International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

Azurix, a former subsidiary of Enron won a bid to run the privatized water and sewage system for 2.5 million people in parts of Buenos Aires province, Argentina, in May 1999. Bahia Blanca residents complained that their water smelt bad and looked brown, while regulators considered sanctions against Azurix for very low water pressure. After the water supply was found to be contaminated, health authorities warned people not to drink or bathe in the water. The local regulating agency forced the company to deliver free bottled water to all those affected, not to charge for a period when the water was of poor quality, and also fined Azurix for breach of contract. In October 2001, Azurix stated that it would withdraw from the contract, complaining that the province would not let it charge rates according to the tariff specified in the contract and would not deliver infrastructure. The province rejected the termination notice. Then, under a 1991 US-Argentina bilateral investment treaty, Azurix sued Argentina's bankrupt government for US \$550 million. Azurix said that the authorities' actions amount to interference with its investment. In July 2006, ICSID awarded Azurix \$165 million against Argentina.

The popular struggle against the privatized water system of Bolivia's third largest city, Cochabamba, is a symbol of the fight back against neoliberalism and privatization. This followed Aguas del Tunari (an affiliate of US water corporation Bechtel) sharply increasing prices. But after the privatization was reversed, the water system handed back to the public and it was forced to leave Bolivia,

Aguas del Tunari/Bechtel lodged a “request for arbitration” against Bolivia at ICSID. It sought \$50 million, claiming as “expropriated investment” the millions of dollars in potential profits it had hoped to make. (For the same amount, 125,000 Bolivian families without access to water could be connected.) The company turned to a 1992 BIT between Holland and Bolivia. While it was establishing its operations in Cochabamba, Bechtel was filing papers to shift its subsidiary’s corporate registration to Holland from the Cayman Islands. After international protests and pressure, at the end of 2005, Bechtel abandoned its claim against Bolivia.

Challenges to Resistance Movements Against FTAs

Despite the fact that these bilateral deals are being signed and implemented in many countries, the focus of many international NGO and trade union networks critical of free trade often seems to remain on the multilateral talks that have failed to advance very much. There has been some belated focus on EPAs being signed between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries among European and Australasian NGOs but relatively few connections have been made with local grassroots struggles against these agreements. It has been difficult to coordinate national-level opposition to EU EPAs, and much of the international campaign work on this has been driven by Northern-based NGOs which have had varying levels of connection with social movements in the countries affected. Conceptually, this weakness can partly be attributed to these organizations’ overemphasis on the WTO, and a failure to take a clear stance against neoliberal capitalism, with a spectrum of platforms calling for anything between mild reform to complete rejection, coupled with funding and institutional focus on these institutions which were traditional targets of mobilizations.

While many of the stronger campaigns against FTAs build upon and draw from mobilization against the WTO, FTAA, other neoliberal reforms at international and domestic levels, the lower profile of these deals has allowed negotiations to take place well under the radar of many activist movements and organizations. Notwithstanding the

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fact that some of the largest and most militant mobilizations against capitalist globalization in recent years have been anti-FTA protests, for example in Korea, where street protests against the recently concluded FTA with the US numbered in the tens of thousands regularly and sometimes more in Seoul, in CAFTA countries (200,000 demonstrated in San Jose, Costa Rica on 26 February 2007 against CAFTA), mobilizing transnationally or internationally against these agreements has not had the same momentum or focus as anti-World Bank or WTO demos. The question is often asked how to maximize leverage/opposition against these agreements by cooperating with activists in the other country, but there has been very little sustained joint activism in this regard.

In at least two cases, in Ecuador (Gutierrez) and Thailand (Thaksin Shinawatra), anti-FTA movements and sentiments have contributed to the overthrow of governments. Subsequently, after popular pressure led to the cancellation of Occidental Petroleum's oil extraction contract in Ecuador, the proposed FTA with the US was effectively scuttled. The geopolitical aspects of these deals, such as the US-Korea FTA, become mobilization targets in themselves. In Korea, opposition was also related to older struggles against US domination and military bases. By comparison with multilateral talks, such aspects have been in clearer focus in bilateral FTA struggles because of the close attention paid to other aspects of foreign affairs linkages with the other signatory government.

In many ways resistance to the Chile-Korea FTA set the stage for an even larger phase of mobilization against Korea's FTA with the US. Korea-Chile FTA negotiations began in 1998 and a deal was eventually concluded in 2003. Although the agreement was quite comprehensive (including services, investment and other areas), it was its agriculture provisions – and particularly the implications for Korea's domestic fruit growers – that were the focus of opposition in Korea. The FTA reduced tariffs on South Korean manufactured products in return for reduced barriers to Chile's agricultural exports. This FTA was opposed by farmers outside of the National Assembly (NA) in Seoul. Farmers occupied a bridge over the Han river and conducted daily rallies in front of the NA. They conducted a relay sit-in

strike in front of the NA and spoke to the public about their concerns. During their campaign, farmers used thousands of trucks to block highways and tunnels to hold up traffic in protest, and also let pigs loose inside the National Assembly. Some farmers chained themselves to pillars, while the farmers' movement also wrote to MPs and occupied the offices of some legislators to pressure them to oppose the agreement. Protests were frequently met with police violence, but helped to delay the ratification of the deal several times. While over 50% of Korea's lawmakers promised that they would oppose the FTA, they ratified the agreement. From this experience, the Korean Peasant League (KPL) drew two lessons for future FTA fights: firstly, a struggle by small farmers alone (10% of Korea's population) would not lead to victory. The majority of the population were made to believe that sacrifice of the farmers was a necessary evil to achieve economic growth. Secondly, one cannot rely solely on parliamentarians – despite all the mobilizations, the government ratified the deal anyway. So KPL learnt that it is vital to build a mass struggle with other sectors to defeat current and future FTAs. According to Korea's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, in a report less than a year after the Korea-Chile FTA took effect, 12, 644 peach, kiwi and grape farms across Korea shut down because of the adverse effects of the FTA on domestic fruit growers. Korean farmers, unsurprisingly, were at the forefront of struggles against an FTA with US.

Even before the fight against the Chile and US FTAs, Korean social movements had mobilized against the imposition of neoliberal reforms since the 1980s, whether imposed by Seoul, or, after the 1997-1998 economic crisis, by the IMF. The Korean fight back against the US-Korea FTA (still to be ratified by US Congress at the time of writing) has been a major multi-sectoral struggle, illustrating the importance of strong national movements in the context of cross/binational networks against a deal. While there is a strong movement in Korea, there is far less social movement activism in the US. There were some joint actions and statements by Korean and US unions against the FTA, and Korean protest expeditions to the USA during negotiating rounds, but little sustained focus in US. Similarly a small symbolic protest action in Brussels was held against the EU-

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Korea FTA, and an Australian Council of Trade Unions and AFL-CIO joint media statement critical of the Australia-US FTA was issued, but was more or less a one-off action.

Just as there is a great diversity in positions, ideologies, perspectives and tactics among opposition movements against the WTO, so too, we can find among opposition to bilateral FTAs those who call for reform of these agreements (largely major trade union bureaucracies and Northern NGOs) and those who reject these agreements altogether. Arguably, in many cases there has been an overemphasis on the individual institutions such as the Bretton Woods trio. NGO technical policy analyses of these agreements, institutions and processes are often detached from political economy/geopolitical factors, and lack a systemic critique of capitalism and imperialism which understand ALL of these institutions, agreements and processes – global regional, sub regional, bilateral, national and sub national (i.e. state/province/municipal level) as demanding oppositional responses.

Compartmentalized approaches to addressing capitalist globalization which do not confront the systemic nature of capitalism can only be of limited effectiveness. For many NGO campaigns, this compartmentalization occurs around issues (e.g. agriculture, services), sectors (women, workers, farmers, Indigenous Peoples) and institutions and agreements (WTO, FTAA, etc) without a broader underlying framework of analysis necessarily informing action against global capitalism per se. This tends towards a rather fragmented analysis. Certainly, in some anti-FTA struggles, particular aspects of these agreements attract more attention than others, such as intellectual property provisions of the US-Thailand agreement, and the toxic waste dumping provisions of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement, but many of the most vibrant and sustained anti-FTA mobilizations have seen broad fronts of opposition grow through an understanding of the comprehensive threats posed by these agreements. For example, movements of people living with HIV/AIDS in Thailand found common cause and forged alliances with farmers because of the intellectual property chapter in the proposed US-Thai FTA. Meanwhile, the Korean government's removal of the film quota (to promote Korean films) as part of FTA negotiations,

and commitments to further liberalize Korean agriculture brought film actors, directors and producers together with farmers and trade unionists in the streets against the US-Korea FTA.

On the other hand, in Northern campaigns on FTAs, such as in Canada, there is relatively little mobilization or awareness, and positions of NGOs and trade unions have focused on rather narrow platforms such as the Canadian Autoworkers Union focus against the proposed Canada-Korea FTA because of threats to the Ontario auto assembly sector and Canadian labour/NGO framings of the Canada-Colombia FTA agreement around human rights situation in Colombia. Such conceptualizations of these agreements obscure broader and deeper instruments of neoliberalism which impact the lives of peoples in both signatory countries.

7. Bilaterals.org and Fighting FTAs projects

Given the challenges to organizing cross-nationally on bilateral free trade and investment agreements, a major concern among some opponents of FTAs has been how to facilitate the sharing of research, analysis and experience with each other around struggles against FTAs. In September 2004, a number of organizations¹ initiated a collaborative website to support peoples' struggles against bilateral free trade and investment agreements <http://www.bilaterals.org>. Behind the establishment of the website was a concern that in the celebration of the stalling of the WTO and FTAA negotiations, there was little focus on the bilateral free trade and investment agreements actually being signed.

bilaterals.org is an open-publishing site where people fighting bilateral trade and investment agreements exchange information and analysis and build cooperation. Those campaigning against bilateral deals had found it hard to link up with others around the world to share analysis and

¹ The initiators included the [Asia-Pacific Research Network](#), [GATT Watchdog](#) (New Zealand), [Global Justice Ecology Project](#) (USA), [GRAIN](#), [IBON Foundation](#) (Philippines) and [XminY Solidariteitsfonds](#) (Netherlands).

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develop broader and complementary strategies. By early 2008, the site was attracting around 200,000 hits a month. It has been used to leak draft negotiating texts which have otherwise not been made public, such as a draft IPR chapter of the US-Thailand FTA (The Nation, 2006). It is also a forum for activists to directly alert others about developments in their struggles, not least during intense periods of mobilization and state repression in Korea and Costa Rica in 2007 and 2008, more recent mass mobilizations in Peru against proposed FTAs with the EU and the USA, and a wave of anti-FTA protests in India in 2009-2010.

People's movements to stop FTAs are often isolated from each other, a direct reflection of the 'divide and conquer' strategy that bilateralism thrives on. A number of anti-FTA movements have made it a priority to break the isolation and link with others fighting such agreements in order to share analysis and learning's from each other's struggles. The Thai anti-FTA movement has been quite proactive in this respect, organizing several events which have brought activists from different countries together to strategize on FTAs (Similar collaboration has also taken place in Latin America among movements fighting bilateral deals). FTA Watch, a Thai coalition, invited bilaterals.org, GRAIN and the Bangkok office of Médecins Sans Frontières to help co-organize a global strategy meeting of anti-FTA movements. Dubbed 'Fighting FTAs', the three-day workshop was held at the end of July 2006 in Bangkok. It brought together around 60 social movement activists from 20 countries of Africa, the Americas and the Asia-Pacific region to share experiences in grassroots struggles against FTAs and to build international strategies and cooperation. For many participants, it was the first time they had been able to physically sit down with other movement activists fighting FTAs and discuss strategy and experiences. In February 2008, GRAIN, bilaterals.org and BIOTHAI (Biodiversity Action Thailand) produced a collaborative publication and launched a multimedia website called "Fighting FTAs: the growing resistance to bilateral free trade and investment agreements" which provides both a global overview of the spread of FTAs and maps the growing resistance and

learning's from people's experiences of fighting FTAs¹. This resource was merged into a relaunched and redesigned bilaterals.org website in 2009.

8. Growing Attention to the Spread of Bilateral FTAs

There are further signs that a number of significant international movement networks are taking the threat of bilateral free trade and investment agreements seriously. A critique of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement issued by the Asian Peasant Coalition on 26 November 2006 denounced the Philippines' first bilateral free trade pact as "a very onerous deal ... worse than the impositions by the WTO itself", and called upon the Philippine government to scrap it. Predicting that Filipino farmers would be hardest hit by the deal, the statement predicted that JPEPA would "further sink the Philippines into being a beggar state." Starting in October 2006, militant Filipino farmers, led by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), launched several protest actions at the Japanese embassy. Members of the APC have joined Filipino farmers in protest actions against JPEPA.

La Via Campesina has also made a number of statements explicitly opposing bilateral FTAs. A number of its member organizations, particularly in Central America, Korea and Africa are engaged in struggles against (mainly) US and EU-driven FTAs. For example, in a statement issued from a meeting in Dijon, France, on January 13 2008, entitled "No to Free-Trade Agreements, Yes to Food Sovereignty and People's Rights!" Via Campesina members from Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America stated that "all bilateral and bi-regional free-trade agreements, be they called "Tratados de libre-comercio" (TLC), "Free-trade agreements" (FTA) or "Economic Partnership Agreements" (EPAs), are of the same nature. They lead to the plundering of natural resources and only serve transnational companies at the expense of all the world's peoples and environment. These are not partnership agreements but Economic Plundering Agreements". The organizations demanded "that

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governments not sign or withdraw from these agreements”. In a statement by the Asian regional conference on “Informalization of Work Through Free Trade Agreements: Eroding Labour Rights, organized by the Committee for Asian Women, in Bangkok in June 2008 delegates declared:

We strongly urge sovereign governments to resist the pressure from international corporations and international financial institutions to sign onto FTAs on dubious promises of growth, development and poverty reduction.

We demand a moratorium on existing trade agreements and reject any new unequal bilateral and regional trade agreements, particularly in view of climate change and rising energy prices which are incompatible with international transport of goods.

9. Conclusion

The responses of movements to bilateral FTAs in the post-9/11 climate illustrate a growing disconnect between anti-neoliberal activism in the North and South. As McNally, 2002; Petras and Veltmeyer (2003, 2005), Boron (2005), Desmarais (2007) and *bilaterals.org*, *BIOTHAI* and *GRAIN* (2008) illustrate, people’s struggles against neoliberalism, particularly peasant movements, Indigenous Peoples, and militant trade unionists in Latin America and Asia, have continued to vigorously challenge states and transnational capital, notwithstanding increasing militarization and the use of anti-terror legislation against activists and communities of resistance. Major popular struggles in several countries throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America continue against bilateral free trade and investment agreements (*bilaterals.org*, *BIOTHAI* and *GRAIN*, 2008). With few exceptions, (often lobbying campaigns by NGOs such as those on EPAs in Europe, for example, Dür and De Bièvre, 2007) there has been very little activism addressing these agreements in the North. While in many Northern activist networks, campaign focuses around the connections between war and links to questions of political economy and

neoliberal capitalism has often been limited to articulating US oil interests in the Middle East with the invasion of Iraq. Yet for many on the frontlines against FTAs in Colombia, for example, South Korea or the Philippines, and in the daily struggles of Indigenous Peoples and immigrant communities in the North, these links are often identified and articulated in a far more sophisticated manner (McNally, 2002; Petras and Veltmeyer, 2003; Mathew, 2005; Choudry, 2007; bilaterals.org, BIOTHAI and GRAIN, 2008).

Yet even critically engaged scholars in the North tend to normalize, centre, and universalize their analyses of the modalities of activism in the North against the major summits. As McNally (2002) and Katsiaficas (2002) contend, within 'anti-globalization' networks, a disproportionate focus and awareness about the modalities of mobilizations and activism in North America and Europe lends itself to overlooking what are often far more complex, mass-based and sustained forms of resistance to capitalism and colonialism in the Third World, including new fronts of struggle against bilateral free trade and investment agreements. Since most of these mobilizations have taken place in Asia and Latin America, and with little sustained major mobilization against such deals in Northern countries, these struggles have also escaped attention in both activist and broader public circles, and scholarly attention.

Bilateral agreements represent an intensification of capitalist globalization. The comprehensiveness of many FTAs has engendered the building of common fronts of struggle at national levels in many countries. Internationally, however, there is a tendency of NGO campaigns to be compartmentalized around individual institutions, and "issues" (agriculture, human rights intellectual property rights, labour, women, etc). There is another tendency for a rather standard formulation or platform of opposition to be mounted against the WTO, IMF/World Bank but still relatively little focus placed on FTAs although these impose more immediate threats. There remains a reticence to reconceptualize 'globalization' to include threats detached from the global institutions such as the WTO, World Bank and IMF, and to see dangers inherent in what appeared to be smaller deals. The question remains how to conceptualize capitalist globalization equally driven

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by a web of smaller agreements and to target this process in a concerted manner.

In understanding the significance of many of these anti-FTA movements, the question of their success may hinge on whether they can build long-term alliances against neoliberalism rather than stopping an FTA, and sustain a critique of capitalist globalization in whatever form it may take - and as we can see with NAFTA, the fight is not over when the deal is signed. The extent to which academic interest will be piqued by these movements in a similar way to the extensive focus on anti-WTO activism remains to be seen.

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Contesting Globalization in Ghana: Communal Resource Defense and Social Movement Learning

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Abstract: *Globalization has serious implications for rural populations in countries throughout the Global South. Rural spaces simultaneously reveal the resource appetite of global market forces while holding the greatest potential for direct resistance. Grounded in a recently completed participatory study of social movement dynamics and learning in Ghana, this article explores a rural natural resource defence movement and its ability to contest the shifting interests of capital over time in the name of communal access to resources. The ability to contest capital is shown to be grounded not only in connection to the livelihood implications but also to the local epistemic understanding of the resource as something that can not be owned outright. The article also explores the learning dimensions associated with the evolving strategies of the movement in order to demonstrate how processes of movement organization are connected to the ways movements learn.*

1. Introduction

The “globalization project,” as Philip McMichael has termed it (2008: 21), is deeply intertwined with the rise of neoliberal thought, and their dual ascendancy has had a dramatic effect on livelihoods throughout the Global South. While much contemporary critical writing focuses on the implications of these intertwined forces for urban populations – contributing directly to the creation of what Mike Davis (2006) has called the “Planet of Slums” – globalization has been equally devastating to rural populations pushed off their lands in order to make way for extractive industries, export-oriented cash crops and/or national development plans. In the article that follows an

argument is made that it is in rural contexts that the resource appetite of neoliberal globalization is most clearly revealed, and is therefore at its most vulnerable to resistance. The Ghanaian case that is used to make this argument builds on the conclusions of a recent participatory study of social movement activism and learning that shows the strongest movements contesting globalization are embedded in the defence of rural communal resources, and further that this defence draws strength not only from potential impacts on livelihoods, but also from advancing alternative epistemic understandings of the value of these resources.

As an illustration of these conclusions, the article lays out the case of a rural-based communal resource defence movement in Ada, Ghana. In order to provide a complex representation of this movement a historical and contemporary pattern of the movement struggle with attempts to privatize and/or capitalize the resource, as well as strategies to contest these attempts are elaborated. This description is contrasted through repeated references to an urban based movement defending public ownership of water. There are four aims of this elaboration: 1) to illustrate the link between rural livelihood and epistemic sources of mobilization as forms of strength for contesting neoliberal capitalization processes; 2) to reveal the way in which a movement's structure over time impacts the continuity of its strength; 3) to show how learning and organizing processes within a movement are potentially ambiguous – a point connected to Griff Foley's (1999) notion of learning in struggle; 4) to underscore the potential of using participatory action research to reflect on these learning processes and generate dialogue within the Ada resource defence movement towards addressing the most recent challenge to the resource by market-led interests.

Returning to connect this case to contestation of neoliberal globalization in Ghana, the article concludes by arguing the Ada example is instructive and potentially catalytic for other similar rural resource defence movements, such as those contesting concessions to mining companies.

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2. Where Globalization Touches the Lives of Ghanaians

Recent literature suggests that globalization has its most profound impact and its greatest resistance in the locations from which globalized capital aims to extract resources (Cowen and Shenton, 1998; Ferguson and Gupta, 2002; McMichael, 2006; Peet and Watts, 2004). The participatory study of Ghanaian social movements and their learning that this paper relies on also lends credence to this observation and hence the need to begin by amplifying the implications of neoliberal globalization for rural dwellers.

In describing the creation of huge urban slums throughout the Global South, Davis (2006) points to the massive influx of rural dwellers to urban centres as a result of displacement due to extractive industries, shifts to export oriented cash crop production, and/or large-scale national development projects. While being cognizant of the ways in which this displacement and rural impoverishment contribute directly to these slums, it is also critical to focus on the points of origin of this displacement, as well as on the ways in which processes behind these displacements are generating resistance (McMichael, 2006). In this sense, following McMichael (2006: 475), one can envisage a different “Agrarian question” that does not see rural life as anachronistic, needing to be incorporated into the global market, but rather an “epistemic challenge” to this way of organizing the world. Kamat (2002) has described how much writing on protest movements in the south has focused on urban based movements and where it has focused on rural based movements, there has been a tendency to categorize these movements too quickly as either identity based movements, or class based movements. Kapoor (2007) has shown how Adivasi (forest dweller) movements in the Indian context contest the penetration of capital, and state disciplining on multiple registers that include both material and cultural/epistemic grounds. Peet and Watts (2004) have further elaborated how the defence of communally owned and managed natural resources is a strong base for building local movements.

At the same time, Cowen and Shenton (1998) have shown how in the African context the colonial and post-

colonial state has been deeply implicated in managing rural African populations to suit the needs of capital. Similarly, although from a more Foucauldian perspective, Ferguson and Gupta (2002) note how neoliberal globalization in the African context has constituted a new topography of power, where the streamlined neoliberal state is reconfigured as either an enabler of capital, or is by-passed by transnational capital altogether. They call this process transnational governmentality, a term which builds on the work of Foucault (1991), and that focuses on the “mentality,” or the “how” of governance (Dean, 1999: 2). Importantly for the case described below, it is the way in which this neoliberal transnational governmentality enables the emergence of new forms of capital that is at stake. Likewise, and here building on Foucault’s (1980) notion of subjugated knowledges as the way in which disciplining systems such as transnational governmentality are resisted, it is argued below that it is the coupling of epistemic contestation with livelihood protection that lends these rural movements their strength.

This last point echoes McMichael’s construction above, but also builds on other literature that has noted this powerful combination; for instance, Taussig’s (1980) work documenting the way in which Columbian and Bolivian peasants used local legends to develop explicit critiques of capital. More explicitly, Mignolo (2000) has connected the Foucauldian notion of subjugated knowledges to his idea of local histories that contest global designs, such as neoliberal globalization. Mignolo (2000) further links this framework to subaltern studies. Kapoor (2007) has noted the importance of subaltern studies in bringing material and epistemic challenges to power. For instance, Partha Chatterjee of the subaltern studies group (as cited in Lunden, 2005: 229) describes the importance of local religion as “an ontology, an epistemology” through which “subalterns act politically.” In this sense, there is a strong emergent case for examining the ways in which capital is reconfiguring itself in the local, often either by using or by-passing the state, and the ways in which local movements are emerging to contest attempts to enclose, privatize or expropriate communal resources. Finally, this framework suggests it is not only based on material effect, nor cultural/epistemic dissonance, but

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rather a combination of both through which this contestation draws strength.

The participatory study that informs this article builds a set of conclusions very much in dialogue with this framework. However, it needs to be understood that these are conclusions emanating not from a review of the most recent critical literature – such as the brief snapshot above – but rather from the rich experience of the participatory collective that made up the core of this study. Before going on, a brief description of this participatory study is called for. The study builds on a strong tradition in social movement learning literature in using a participatory approach, yet, importantly adds to under-researched African movement contexts (Hall and Turray, 2006; Walter, 2007). The study took a broad look at social movement dynamics in Ghana since the country returned to democracy in 1992, as well as the way these movements learned throughout this period (Langdon, 2009a). It took place from 2007 to 2008, and brought together 5 activist-educators embedded in different Ghanaian social movements, who provided the core analysis of the research, and together with the author made up the study's Participatory Research (PR) group. The PR group members are Kofi Larweh, Al-Hassan Adam, Gifty Emefa Dzah, Tanko Iddrisu and Coleman Agyeyomah, and they draw on experience from the women's movement, the socialist movements of the 1980s, the democracy movement, various student movements, the anti-privatization of water movement and local anti-neoliberal natural resource defence movements – such as the Ada case examined below. They have also been involved in and supportive of the people with disability movement. 22 activist-educators embedded in these and other Ghanaian movements were also consulted, and their participation became the starting point for collective deliberation and analysis by the PR group – a technique used in similar ways by Fine, Torre, Boudin, Bowen, Clark, Hylton, Martinez, "Missy," Rivera, Roberts, Smart, and Upegui (2004).

From the PR group's perspective, a key conclusion to be drawn from the reflections on close to 20 years of activism in the Ghanaian democratic context is that it is when the livelihoods of Ghanaians are threatened directly by neoliberal globalization that movement resistance is

strongest. Kofi Larweh, who is associated with the Ada communal resource defence movement examined below, notes “when people’s livelihoods are at stake, then they see that look we have to do something, that is when the movement becomes strongest, and so there is a little spark and then it goes off” (PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008). However, it is not the livelihood issue alone that reveals why rural spaces are among the most important sites of resistance to globalization. The PR group sees the livelihood question having implications for both rural and urban populations

For instance, in the urban context, the privatization of social services has generated much activism and resistance. A case in point, according to the PR group, is Ghana’s National Coalition Against Privatization of Water (NCAP-W) (c.f. Prempeh, 2006). Al-Hassan Adam, a key figure in the NCAP-W, notes the movement is currently successfully drawing thousands of urban dwellers out to contest the management contract the previous National Patriotic Party (NPP) government put in place for water, which has seen partial-privatization lead to massive service-cost hikes with no commensurate improvement of service (PR group meeting, Feb 23, 2008).

Yet, despite this important example of urban contestation, the PR group came to the conclusion that while urban resistance could generate much pressure, it remained locked in debates around modernization, where social change is dominated by Eurocentric models of change (either by the state or market). As such, debates tend to remain rooted in public/private infrastructure development and ownership dichotomies. This dichotomy is most tellingly revealed in the shift in development discourse in Ghana in the mid-1980s, when a purportedly socialist revolutionary state transitioned from a state-interventionist model to embrace a market-led structural adjustment program called the Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) – a quintessential cornerstone of neoliberal globalization’s architecture in Ghana. Suddenly state rhetoric transitioned from state-led planning to export-oriented market led development. An important piece of this transition was the downsizing of the public sector, including massive lay-offs in state-run industries, and the selling off of these industries to private

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capital (Hutchful, 2002). Additionally, this transition was predicated on major relaxation of restrictions on foreign investment, a regulatory shift that saw the rise of foreign mining company activity of 500% (Hilson, 2004). With the transition to democracy, the access of foreign mining firms has continued to increase, culminating in the recent opening of protected forest reserves – another public asset – for mining exploration and exploitation by the current government (Tienhaara, 2006). In this sense, the choice that has been laid at the feet of Ghanaians has been between a state-led or market led model of development, yet both of these models have appropriated assets (such as land and natural resources) through different discourses of the national good – a process indicative of the topographies of power discussed by Ferguson and Gupta (2002). This point is discussed briefly below in connection with the Ada case, as well as further elaborated elsewhere (Langdon, forthcoming; Harvey & Langdon, 2010), but suffice it to say that Ghana's current democratic constitution continues a long tradition dating back to colonial times where government intervention has consistently benefited the interests of capital (foreign and domestic) over the interests of local communal approaches to land and resource use.

In contrast to this, rural ways of being in the Ghanaian context are often (but certainly not always) founded on different value systems. For instance, the communal access and control of natural resources remains an important feature of the land tenure system in much of Ghana (Songsore, 2001). As Hilson (2004: 54) has noted, this is why the socio-cultural as well as economic implications of extractive industries on land is so problematic:

[The] perpetual expansion of mining and mineral exploration activity has displaced numerous subsistence groups outright and destroyed a wide range of cultural resources. Operations have caused widespread environmental problems, including excessive land degradation, contamination, and chemical pollution.

One of the key cultural resources that is at stake in such mining activities is the communal access to land and other

assets. However, in threatening it, mining activity is also strengthening rural community resistance. As Al-Hassan¹ notes, “anti-neoliberal movements are stronger when you have collective access to assets” (PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008).

The strength of this defence of collective assets deeply informed the PR group’s analysis of Ghanaian movement dynamics, and led the group to focus on the movements that evolve from the processes of defence, and the ways in which this defence contests neoliberal globalization. In shifting to focus on anti-neoliberal movements that are defending communal assets, the PR group is echoing the analysis of McMichael (2006) and others in locating the greatest challenge to neoliberal globalization not in urban movements like the NCAP-W, but rather in movements that challenge not only the policy directions of neoliberalism, but the entire basis of its epistemic foundation. In the Ghanaian context, these are “Unbranded ... Indigenous or organic movements ... which [are so localized that they] don’t have any names,” who resist because their way of life is challenged (Al-Hassan, PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008). Kofi explains, “These [communal defence] movements are embedded in people’s livelihoods” (PR group meeting, Feb 23, 2008), meaning that it is in the communities where the direct effects of neoliberalism are being felt that organic unbranded movements are mobilizing. And as Kofi notes above, it is this threat to livelihoods that “sparks” movement mobilization and generates its strength. Here, critique of the global and national economy is intertwined with the issue-based critique of the rights of rural communities to land access and decision-making rights to their land and natural resources. When this is coupled with strong spiritual and ancestral connections to these resources and land, as well as deep localized knowledge about the land and resources, the implications not only on everyday livelihood issues but also on cultural reproduction become clear. Coleman Agyeyomah connects this point to other anti-neoliberal rural-based movements, such as those generated by the effects of mining

¹ In order to highlight the contributions of members of the PR group, their first rather than last names are used, after they have been introduced.

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activity. He notes, “Most of the farmer based associations [in mining areas] have turned overnight into anti-neoliberal movements. They are doing that because it has been necessitated in the current [neoliberal] environment” where their livelihoods have been destroyed (PR group meeting, Feb 23, 2008). These movements are emerging in communities affected directly by mining activity, where displacement from land, destruction of sacred sites and the poisoning of water sources has had a dramatic effect on rural communities (Hilson, 2004; CHRAJ, 2008).

From these and other communal resource defence movements, a concluding critique has emerged from the participatory research group that combines movement resistance to the erosion of cultural ways of life as well as livelihoods into a strong and remarkably resilient source from which to contest neoliberal globalization (c.f. Boateng, 2008; Owusu-Koranteng, 2007; Langdon, 2009a). As a result of this conclusion, the PR group made a collective decision to turn reflections into action, whereby it focused on one particular communal defence movement in order to discuss its particularities and begin to develop a participatory action research process to deepen movement reflections on learning and strategies. The Ada salt flat defence movement – a name generated by the PR group as it is unnamed – is a perfect example of an organic, unbranded movement drawing on both of these lines of critique, and it invited discussions with the PR group that began in 2008 and are still ongoing.

In the sections that follow the Ada movement is discussed using three primary sources of quotes. First, there are the collective deliberations of the PR group through which a common understanding of general dynamics of social movements in Ghana since 1992 is articulated. Connected to this is an analysis of the Ada movement drawn from the direct experience of a PR group member who has been involved in the Ada movement since its inception, as well as tangential experience of other PR group members. Second, a meeting between PR group members and Ada movement members lays out the intricacies of the Ada movement. Third, this movement description is further contextualized by a radio documentary on conflicts surrounding the Songor Lagoon. Additionally, two academic sources historicizing the situation in the Songor as well as

the emergence of the resource defense movement supplement these voices.

It is hoped that the analysis and description of the movement will be deepened through the process of the emerging participatory research currently being designed. As such, the snapshots and interpretations presented here may not capture all the complexity of the movement's context; they are grounded in only a dozen voices connected with the movement. It is hoped that over time the dialogue this process engenders will provoke not only a deeper engagement with this issue, but also a reflective process on movement priorities, identity, structure and learning. In this sense, the participatory research will ultimately be movement owned and directed, and as such will serve movement purposes – something Kapoor and Jordan (2009) have noted is an important ethical dimension for PAR work with social movements.

3. Overview of the Ada Movement

Ada is a collection of coastal communities located roughly 150km from Ghana's capital, Accra, and surrounding the Songor lagoon. It is also the hub of the traditional Ada state (Manuh, 1992). Unlike many other coastal peoples whose livelihood is dependent on fishing, according to Amate (1999) the Adas rely heavily on winning salt from the Songor lagoon for their livelihood. Amate (1999: 166) notes:

The Songor lagoon is by far the single highest income-generating natural asset... of the Ada nation ... its inexhaustible natural salt yielding capacity ... is unique.

The Songor salt flat is also an integral part of the Ada peoples' history. For generations they have defended their ownership of the Songor lagoon and salt flat, through pre-colonial wars, colonial attempts at expropriation, and contemporary struggles against government and private capital attempts to enclose the lagoon (Amate, 1999; Manuh, 1992). While these efforts at defence have been to ensure ongoing communal access to the salt flats by the Adas, as

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will be expanded upon below, this access in both historical and contemporary times has never been limited to only the Adas. In fact, in the past as well as in contemporary times, people wishing to win salt from the lagoon travelled from far and wide to the Songor without being turned away. This openness has led members of the movement as well as the PR group to describe the traditional salt flat management system as an alternative model to national capitalist and statist expropriations of natural resources (Songor group meeting, March 20th, 2008; PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008).

In attempting to describe the Ada movement it is important to begin by focusing on the historical past of the Ada people as well as the Songor lagoon. Amate (1999: vi) has provided one of the few detailed accounts of the “Making of Ada,” including a deeply informative description of the evolving relationship of the Adas with the Songor. There two salient points from Amate’s work that are important in contextualizing the emergence of the Ada movement. First, he provides an important historicized account of the precolonial authority structure associated with the Songor, as well as in the Ada nation more broadly. Amate (1999: 41) notes:

The early kings of Ada were... not free agents. Their areas of competence and activity were circumscribed by the parameters laid down for them by the high priests.

This was especially true of the Songor, where the Libi *wornor*, the Songor high priest, and the Tekperbiawe clan from which he came were “accepted from time immemorial by all the Ada clans” as the main authority of the lagoon (Amate, 1999: 166). This authority structure is important as it emerges as an important cultural point of mobilization in the movement struggles described below.

Second, Amate’s (1999) work provides another important historical frame for situating discussions of the Songor and the Ada nation as he describes the evolution of chieftaincy in the British colonial period (1868-1957), especially in connection with the Songor as the main livelihood generator. He notes that despite its precolonial

acceptance, the Libi *wornor's* authority "began to be seriously challenged" in the colonial period (1999: 166). Much like Geschiere's (1993: 151) account of British manipulation of "customary law" in Cameroon, where the British used their position as mediators between different leadership factions to destabilize local authority, Amate (1999) describes repeated mediation by the British with regards to the Songor, where alternatively the Libi *worno's* authority was reinforced, and then eroded through subsequent decisions. Again, this historical context is crucial not only in understanding how competing claims of authority over the Songor continue today – a genealogy Amate describes vividly; but more importantly for the account being shared here, this account illustrates how the colonial method of divide and rule continues to inform contemporary attempts to enclose and privatize the lagoon in the interests of capital. However, in order to fully elaborate the historical factors that set the stage for the emergence of the Ada salt flat defence movement, one more detail connected to statist national development is needed.

Takyiwaa Manuh (1992) has shown how the decision to build a major dam on the Volta River by Ghana's first (statist) government in the 1960s led to a dramatic change in the ecology of the Songor salt flats and lagoon in the 1970s, with a massive reduction in salt provision. According to her, it is partially as a result of this dramatic change that a local traditional chieftaincy authority, the Ada Traditional Council, decided to grant leases of land to two companies in the 1970s with the hopes that these companies would bring investment and jobs to the area – not try to prevent access to the resource. Kofi Larweh notes that despite this intent, something else came out of this agreement:

There had been attempts, especially in the 70s to take over the lagoon. At some point the local chiefs said they were approached, when government came in to allow privatization. The discussion was for a small parcel, but on paper it was something huge. Ok, that was one of the reasons for the [formation of the movement] because what was discussed was not what was put on paper, and the people were being prevented from winning salt even from the larger

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portions that was for the local people. (PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008)

Amate (1999) further adds that this entire leasing process was fraught with competing claims, and lawsuits between different elements in the chieftaincy and priestly authority structures. However, in the years following this concession, the prevention of access to the lagoon by one company in particular, Vacuum Salt Limited (VSL) largely precipitated the formation of the Songor movement. Also instrumental to the formation of this movement were the shifts in power at the national level, when a socialist military uprising in 1981, led by the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), took control of the country from a civilian administration. Its leader Jerry Rawlings declared the PNDC espoused socialist goals meant to “transform the social and economic order of [the] country” (cited in Shillington, 1992: 80).

This shift, according to Manuh (1992: 115), opened the door for one of the local People’s Defence Committees (PDCs) “formed in communities and workplaces following the events of 31 December 1981” to take “over the operations of Vacuum Salt Limited.” However, when the PNDC and Rawlings later took an abrupt right turn in 1984, introducing Ghana’s first structural adjustment policy (the ERP discussed above), the tables were turned. The owners of Vacuum Salt Limited returned and again prevented access to the lagoon, but this time with the backing of local police and military forces. It was at this point that many of those involved in the PDCs left the PNDC and began to work with local salt-winners to organize a loose co-operative. While many other cooperatives existed at the local level in Ghana during this period – a tacit connection to a leftist rhetoric of the PNDC – the salt co-operatives were different and “arose from the struggle of Ada people ... to regain sovereignty over the lagoon” (Manuh, 1992: 115). At its height, the main co-operative boasted 3200 members, and also fostered many smaller collectives (Manuh, 1992). In contemporary times, despite the much looser organizational framework, this history of struggle along with the co-operatives that emerged help ensure the ongoing presence of the movement – though its existence is largely unnamed, indicating its unbranded nature (Al-Hassan & Kofi, PR group meeting, February 23rd,

2008). In this sense, the co-operative structure provided the mechanism through which a movement could be formed, even in an era where many of those opposing the new neoliberal focus on deregulation were targeted, tortured and imprisoned (Haynes, 1991). It was through this cooperative that the growing arrogance of VSL and the Apenteng family that owned it were resisted.

In recounting this resistance, it is best to draw on the voices of members of this era of resistance. Albert Adinortey Apetorgbor, a member of the older generation of the movement, describes how:

The late Apenteng, especially his son Stephen, would not allow anybody to win salt, let alone keep it in stock around the Lagoon for a better price. One day ... he brought some soldiers to the Kasseh market some 20 kilometres away from the Lagoon...The soldiers started beating all the women selling salt at the market and all the vehicles loaded with salt were attacked. (Radio Ada, 2002: 3)

The violence used by VSL helped spark the formation of the cooperative described above. It also provoked an intervention by the local priests, the Libi *womo*, who guarded the spiritual essence of the lagoon (Manuh, 1992). Apetorgbor further describes how the local knowledge of preserving the salt formation to ensure equitable distribution as well as maintenance of the ecosystem became a rallying point during the conflict with VSL (Songor group meeting, March 20th, 2008). The practice of fetish priests placing sticks in the lagoon in order to indicate a “ban on entering the lagoon” was used to symbolically challenge the use of the lagoon by VSL (Manuh, 1992: 113). When the company removed the sticks, it sparked large scale anger and acts of resistance against the company and its local police and military allies (Songor group meeting, March 20th, 2008). These acts included burning “a heap of salt kept in storage ... most of which belonged to Apenteng [of VSL]” (Radio Ada, 2002: 5). As a result, Apetorgbor describes how:

Anybody found in the Lagoon was arrested ...They were sent to the Vacuum Salt Company's office. The

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suspects were given salt to chew and salt concentrates to drink. They were given other unspeakable punishments, as Apenteng directed. Thereafter, they were taken to ... Accra, where they were put in cells for three weeks. (Radio Ada, 2002: 5)

On May 17th, 1985, the violence of VSL against the people of Ada culminated in the death of Maggie Lanuer – a pregnant woman killed by a stray bullet fired by a raiding police officer. After her death, the government formed a commission to investigate the complaints being made by Ada residents, and ultimately banned the VSL owners from operating in and around the lagoon (Manuh, 1992). Yet, this victory is hollow, as what was and continues to be at stake in this conflict is not a simple movement against a particular company, but rather a contestation of an overarching logic that it is government or private capital that knows best how the salt flats in the Songor should be used. In order to explain this, it is necessary to further detail how this resource has been managed in the past – something Amate alluded to above.

“In the past,” notes Takyiwaa Manuh, “the process of collecting salt from the lagoon demonstrated community management of a natural resource” (1992: 104). Yet, as Apetorgbor notes, this was not the only implication of this way of knowing and being:

People from all walks of life come to the Songor Lagoon for salt. Some come from as far as Tamale, Ewe land, Kumasi and other places (Radio Ada, 2002: 3).¹

Kofi notes how the traditional resource management system helped guarantee this sense of collective ownership and access:

The [Songor] movement is deeply rooted in the culture of the people, why? Because of the way ownership is conceived. Ada is made up of different clans, ... and

¹ This description implies the wide-scale national use of this resource since Tamale is in Ghana’s North, while Ewe-land refers to Eastern Ghana, and Kumasi is in the middle of the country.

one clan is seen as the owner of the water body. And there are four others who are owners of the surrounding lands. You look at the wisdom in this ... So when you say the owner of the water body is there, and the surrounding lands have also got owners it is a convenient agreement for joint ownership (PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008).

No one clan can claim outright ownership of the resource. This ownership process not only benefits all those living in the Ada area, but also other Ghanaians. According to Kofi, this makes the salt flats of Songor a “national asset” (PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008).

However, this national character was interpreted differently by the PNDC government in the aftermath of Maggie Lanuer’s death. Instead of returning the management of this resource to the communities and people who had been successfully maintaining, defending, and sharing it for generations, the government enacted PNDC law 287 that was later to inform the 1992 Constitution (Langdon, forthcoming). The essence of law 287 is that salt should be considered like any other natural resource, and it was therefore claimed by the central PNDC government in the name of all Ghanaians. Yet, as Manuh (1992) notes, this claim is actually for hire, as the central government changes sides in local conflicts based on the transnational powers of the day. This unpredictability worries those fighting for local control of the Songor lagoon. For instance, Maggie Lanuer’s husband, Thomas Ocloo, states that “it was the death of my wife that led the former President [Rawlings] to make a law to take over the Songor and hold it in trust for the people of Ada,” thereby taking the resource away from VSL and the Apentengs (Radio Ada, 2002: 6). Yet, Ocloo believes having the resource held in trust by the central government leaves it open to abuse by whoever is in the Presidency and the interests he or she represents. He notes, “the present [New Patriotic Party] government and for that matter the current President Kufuor is doing all he can to take over the resource completely to deprive the Adas of ownership” (6). This has led the people of Ada to realize they cannot trust the national government. As a result, according to Ocloo, “The Adas want the government to hand over the resource to them” (6). Al-

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Hassan points out that this resistance by the people of Ada means they are not just fighting the government of the day, but “fighting against the constitution” (PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008). It is precisely this larger implication that makes working with the Songor defence movement so important, as the movement’s struggle has implications not only on the ongoing history of defending this resource, but also on the national framework through which transnational neoliberal governmentality is enacted. From the PR group’s perspective, of additional importance is the organizational structure of the movement, including how it is led and how it learns.

4. Contrasting Social Movement Approaches to Leadership

A key aspect of the Ada story and of the story of other unbranded organic movements is the relationship between leadership and the wider movement. As the description above suggests, with the mushrooming of the salt cooperatives, as well as continued community interest, leadership has remained decentralized in the Ada case, and is therefore quite amorphous – even though there is certainly an older generation of activists who play leadership roles based on their experience in the conflict with VSL. In this sense, rural-based unbranded organic movements are a striking contrast to urban movements. Based on the analysis of the PR group, this difference can be described as a leadership and organizational style that is dialogue-based as opposed to strategic and didactic (Langdon, 2009a). A further exploration of recent challenges within NCAP-W will help reveal these differences. Al-Hassan describes how NCAP-W is becoming institutionalized:

We are beginning to face [institutionalization] in NCAP[-W] because NCAP[-W] is becoming more elitist. So this is what ... we have been battling with, how to get back into that route of horizontal organization. (PR group meeting, Feb 23rd, 2008)

Tanko underscores another dimension of this battle by describing how some elements in the NCAP-W leadership are

willing to sacrifice the issue of privatization and with it the needs of the many, so long as the asset remains Ghanaian owned:

There was a point in time, where we were opposed to privatization of water, but you hear ... muted voices within the NCAP[-W] fraternity who said, “look, if it is nationals who have money and can ...” so then the principle is not against privatization, but that we don’t want some foreigner coming in. (PR group meeting, Feb 24th, 2008)

From this what has been a modernization urban debate over public or private infrastructure ownership becomes reconfigured as a conflict between capitalist elites – national or foreign. The potential for this type of cooptation is a reality of any social movement mobilization; yet, what is at issue here is the composition of a given movement and the ways in which this composition prevents potential cooptation by leadership – in essence keeps the leaders of the movement constantly re-prioritizing based on the felt needs of the broader membership as opposed to their own strategic decision concerning “what is best for the people” (Coleman, PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008).

It was based on these differentiations that the PR group elaborated the two descriptions, or typologies, of movements in the Ghanaian context captured above (Langdon, 2009a). The first of these, exemplified to some degree by the recent institutionalizational pressure in NCAP, involves a movement leadership becoming strategic and didactic in its thinking. The consequences of this can be positive, in being able to react to external issues in a timely and pointed manner, but are ultimately negative as this approach can lead the movement to become deracinated from people’s felt needs. In contrast to this, the PR group described a dialogue-based typology, described further below, where leadership is diffuse and is therefore more directly in touch with the wider felt needs of members. The ongoing dialogue between this amorphous level of leadership and the broader movement regenerates momentum on an ongoing basis. The Ada movement is a strong example of this.

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Organization and Leadership in the Ada Movement

Returning to the Ada case, this typology helps highlight the ways in which power within this movement is diffuse, with important implications for movement leadership and dialogue. There are no particular leadership names that surface when the movement is described – even as the movement remains itself unnamed/unbranded. Instead, there is a description of actions that emerge from struggle. For instance, the salt burning Apetorgbor describes above revealed the pluralistic character of the movement. He notes, “Some of those arrested came from Matsekope, Luhour, Kopehem, Koluedor and some of the coastal villages” (Radio Ada, 2002: 3). This is an important indication of how this movement connected with community felt-needs across the Ada spectrum. It is also indicative of the diffuse, organic and pluralistic nature of the movement that Manuh’s description outlined, where the emergence of other salt winning co-operatives complemented and challenged the first co-operative. This multiplying of co-ops both mushroomed the activism around the salt lagoon, making it more difficult for one particular group to be targeted by police, and also helped ensure the power of the first co-op was restrained.

The strength of this approach is critical in the most recent challenge facing the movement. Kofi describes this new challenge by connecting it to a critique of the link between chieftaincy and the interests of capital (a description that echoes Amate’s (1999) laid out above):

Adas originally were being ruled by the Libi *worno*, fetish priests ... [I]t was the wars that brought in chieftaincy. The modern practice has eroded the authority of the fetish priest and has imposed some new roles and powers on the emerging chiefs ... There was a big meeting [that] has to do with this cannibalization of the lagoon by some of the new chiefs who see that “I am a chief and there is no collective resource that I am controlling so let me, once I know that I have part of the resource of the lagoon as one let me bring in some crude technology [to make salt]”. So what the companies [such as VSL] are doing some of the chiefs have started ... [S]o it is bringing conflict, so

local people who can walk into the lagoon to win salt are finding it difficult because the surrounding lands that produce salt are now all being controlled. (PR group meeting, Feb 23rd, 2008)

A segment of youth associated with the movement destroyed some of these enclosures and were subsequently arrested, and the older generation of activists were quite slow in coming to their aid (Harvey and Langdon, 2010; Langdon, 2009a). This has led to tensions within the movement between an older generation that is wary of openly attacking chieftaincy institutions, and a younger generation that sees challenging them as critical part in contesting attempts to disinherit the collective ownership of the resource. Echoing Amate's (1999) second point made above, Al-Hassan points out how much of this tension stems from the way in which chieftaincy has been co-opted by colonial and capital interests in Ghana:

The introduction of private capital control, which was being encouraged by the chiefs ... people have that kind of recognition of leadership rule by chiefs and clans, once, you just gave us the history of the place, which from the beginning there was nothing like chieftaincy, and chieftaincy is a recent creation. (PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008)

Al-Hassan is helping to illustrate how the tendency to respect the institution of chieftaincy, even where it clearly "is a recent creation," enables unscrupulous connections with private capital that undermine collective asset control. While the older generation of revolutionaries and salt-winners contested decisions made by chiefs they still nonetheless paid homage to the institution; for instance, Manuh (1992) notes that the main salt-cooperative sometimes even paid upkeep costs of the chiefs. With certain chiefs now behaving like VSL, the younger generation has reinterpreted chiefs as a threat to access and therefore livelihoods *and* the epistemic origins of the traditional collective resource management system. Revealing an emergent tension between the actions of the youth and the more respectful dialogue of the older generation, community members have largely supported the

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analysis of the youth. Indicating the dialogue-based nature of this movement, these community members, as well as users of the resource from outside the Ada area have all been using the medium of the community radio to air their concerns. Kofi describes this deep level of community concern in his description of recent calls to the radio:

In fact, on Monday of this week, part of the morning program, part of the morning breakfast show was what is happening in the Songor because we have had calls, and people have been calling in on some other programs that we have organized in the community people have hinted, and so they say ... if action is not taken, if people do not, if the people who are cheating us are not prevented there will be war in the Songor. (Kofi, PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008)

It is through informal dialogue processes such as these that the actions of the youth are being supported, and pressure is being brought to bear on the cooperatives to reconsider whether to even negotiate with chiefs. The tension at the heart of the relationship between the movement and chiefs is reflected in statements like this one by Apetorgbor:

We bow today, reminding the elders of the Traditional Council that they are occupying their stools as our heads. Without us, they are nothing ... In yesteryears, our forefathers went to war, but today there are no such wars... The new war is not the usual use of guns and cutlasses; it is a war of malicious schemes and the lure of money to deprive the Adas of their birthright. The elders must be firm and resolute. They must not give themselves up to be lured. I wish to remind them again of their oath. (Radio Ada, 2002: 7)

5. Learning Re-embedded in Struggle

According to the PR group, this dialogue-based typology is grounded in fundamentally different approaches to learning within movements. Where strategic and didactic movements determine specific ways of conceiving of their struggle – stifling dissent through authoritative structures –

dialogue-based movements are grounded in a framework of ongoing discussion that resists ownership of learning, and democratizes it. This differentiation has important implications for the ways in which movement members *learn to struggle*. Learning to struggle is one of three analytical lenses of informal learning within social movements that emerged in the PR group discussions – all three of whom build on the work of Griff Foley (1999: 9) and his notion of “learning in struggle.” For Foley, studying the often-overlooked informal learning that emerges in social movement struggles and actions is critical to understanding the challenges movements face and the implications of the strategies they use to grapple with these strategies. Foley (1999: 143) argues that analyzing learning in struggle can reveal the “complex, ambiguous and contradictory character of social movements,” where a successful campaign may stop a particular project, but may also entrench new forms of neoliberal power in a movement. Much like the literature mentioned at the outset of this article, Foley’s (1999: 4) approach focuses on the effects of capital, but also recognizes the importance of what he calls “people’s everyday experiences,” and like the subjugated knowledges described above, he sees these as being the source of “recognitions which enable people to critique and challenge the existing order.” Importantly, it is through processes of informal learning in the face of struggles that he sees these recognitions emerging, even if their emergence can have ambiguous consequences.

In the analysis of the PR group “learning in struggle” was kept as the way to describe the long term process of movement learning in social action; meanwhile, “learning through struggle” was advanced as a way to describe the particular and often ambiguous learning that occurs during the course of a particular conflict or event (i.e. a strike, a campaign, or a particular demonstration), and “learning to struggle” emerged as a way to describe the normative thoughts on, as well as processes through which, movement members actually learn to engage in struggle (Langdon, 2009a and b).

In this sense, “learning to struggle” captures both thinking on *how* movements *should* learn to struggle, as well as reflections on *how* movements *do* learn to struggle. In

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combining both of these inflections, the PR group identified unbranded and organic movements – with their dialogue-based organizational and leadership structure – as a key source of inspiration for the ways in which movements not only *do* learn, but *should* learn to struggle. As with sections above, the Ada movement provides an example of this approach to social movement learning, and its implications for learning to struggle.

Snapshots of Learning to Struggle in the Ada Movement

Broadly speaking, three snapshots of learning to struggle in the Ada movement have emerged in discussions between movement members and members of the PR group. These snapshots have yet to be interrogated and deepened through a PAR process which is in the process of being designed. Nonetheless, these snapshots provide a complex enough picture to be useful.

First, the revolutionary youth and workers of the early days of the PNDC who had briefly taken over the running of the VSL compound joined with local salt-winners in contesting and then resisting the return of the VSL owners in 1984. In challenging both company and hired police and military, this new alliance formed strong bonds, yet these bonds remained pluralistic as the first salt cooperative mushroomed into the formation of other cooperatives. A key component to the mobilization around this learning in action and struggle was the way defending the traditional management of the resource drew support from broader community members. While the most telling demonstration of this was the removal of the sticks placed in the lagoon by the priests – as described above – it is also clear that part of the mobilizing force was also a defense of the resource management system and the way in which the original agreement with VSL was misinterpreted. The key to draw away here is that the traditional resource management system provided an important rhetorical platform from which this pluralistic group argued for local control of the resource (Manuh, 1992).

Second, over time, the group of salt-winners and former members of the local revolutionary core have used the rhetorical link with the traditional resource management

system to conduct a dual set of engagements. On the one side, this older core has been involved in trying to convince government to cede the resource to local control (Manuh, 1992); on the other, this core has worked on chiefs to respect their roles, and not over step them. This second aspect is reflected in the Apetorgbor statement quoted above. However, this second approach has been configured more as an appeal to chiefs, even as it reminds them of the history. In contrast to this approach that still respects the authority of chiefs, the youthful element within the movement has taken a much more radical stance in identifying chieftaincy as a threat to communal access (Kofi, PR group meeting, February 23rd, 2008). This disconnection between the older generation of movement leaders and youth has emerged as a major challenge to the movement's continued relevance. It has also emerged as an important moment where the movement membership is regenerating, and thereby re-learning to struggle. This process of challenge and potential regeneration remains open-ended.

However, the third emerging snapshot of learning to struggle suggests the direction that this regeneration between generations might take. The reaction of community members to this most recent threat to communal ownership of the salt flats, as described by Kofi above, indicates the analysis and actions of the youth are more deeply grounded in the current felt needs of the wider community. This connection with felt needs also has potential rhetorical recourse to a reconfigured concept of ownership of the lagoon which draws on precolonial societal structures where it is not chiefs but rather the *Libi worno* who has the authority over lagoon access (Apetorgbor, Songor group meeting, March 20th, 2008; Amate, 1999). This is a key re-articulation of the past epistemic challenge the movement and the *Libi worno* launched against VSL, where chiefs along with the *Libi worno* were accorded a place; now this challenge is being re-configured to contest expropriation attempts by local chiefs on the basis of challenging the foundations of their authority. With this argument beginning to emerge in public discourse, the older generation of movement leaders is already beginning to reconfigure their relationship with the broader chieftaincy system (Kofi, personal communication, July 2009). The re-articulation will

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certainly be necessary to remain in dialogue with the articulated felt needs of the broader community to maintain communal access to the salt flat.

Unlike a more institutionalized movement, the moment a more diffuse and dialogue-based movement stops being embedded in the broader felt needs, the momentum and collective strength of the movement will disappear – a point Al-Hassan underscored above. Therefore, the Ada movement is well positioned to learn to struggle in new ways because it is rooted in the ongoing collective defense of community felt needs; yet this process is not straight forward, nor is it without its own ambiguous power dynamics. What this example shows is the potential that exists for collective resource defense movements to challenge not only the material reality but also the epistemic logic of neoliberal globalized resource alienation. It also reveals the very real power stratification of the local, where the realities of globalization are felt, and where these realities can lead to cooptation.

6. Reflections on Globalization

Connecting back to the issue of globalization, the complex representation of the Ada movement is indicative of the rich strength of movements defending not only economic ways of life, but also alternative ways of being in the world. The key mobilizing factors of this movement are directly connected to these two strengths. The initial mobilization period was sparked by the dual challenge of VSL to communal access to the natural resource, and the longstanding and balanced natural resource management system deeply informed by the regenerative spirit of the lagoon as interpreted by the Libi *worno* – the custodians of this spirit. This management system belies logics of outright land ownership and rather places responsibility for resource use and maintenance in collective hands – entrenching a custodial rather than exploitative relationship with the resource. It is not surprising that this first challenge arose at the dawn of the neoliberal age, when structural adjustment programs, such as Ghana's ERP, were clearly privileging and encouraging the penetration of extractive and exploitive relationships with land and resources over alternative logics.

Following on from this, it should not also be surprising that in the contemporary era, as globalization has reconfigured capital's topographic relationship with African states through transnational governmentality, it is local elites who are leading the latest efforts of resource enclosure – in much the same way that it should not be surprising to see certain members of NCAP-W beginning to suggest local capital control is as good as keeping water a public asset. Yet, despite the fact that in the Ada case these elites are members of chieftaincy structures, the strength of the dialogue-based movement process is ensuring local analysis of this new strategy of capital is the same: it is an attempt to reconfigure the communal nature of this resource, and regardless of the position of these chiefs, their behavior contravenes the pre-colonial balanced approach to resource ownership. The mobilizing strength of this challenge is telling, as one recent Radio Ada caller said, "If this situation is not addressed, there will be war in the Songor." In this sense, both in the recent past and in contemporary times, the connection between the defense of communal assets and a long-established alternative way of being and valuing the world provides the strength for challenges to globalization in the Ada case, in particular, and the Ghanaian context, more generally; after all, the Ada case is only one example of rural unbranded movements the PR group identified in Ghana, such as in communities impacted by mining. These challenges globalization are most pointed, most embedded in peoples felt needs and alternative epistemologies/ontologies, in rural locations in Ghana. In this sense, the Ghanaian centered research presented here, as exemplified by the Ada case, buttresses other contemporary research and theorizing that sees agrarian locations resisting the logic of neoliberal capitalist resource extraction as the greatest challenge to globalization – precisely because these spaces are where the needs of neoliberal capitalism are greatest, and where their discursive and material power are weakest as people still have recourse to other ways of knowing, being and building livelihoods.

Studies of globalization must focus not only on resistance emerging in urban contexts, where it is often most visible, but also in rural locations where neoliberal capitalism draws its resources – and where the logic of this

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resource extraction is being questioned by unbranded and unnamed movements and communities with alternative and regenerative relations with the land of their own.

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Learning from Power in Development Cooperation: Lessons from Senegal

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***Abstract:** This paper considers how inter-institutional power relations, managerial discourses, and informal learning coalesce within a network of development actors. To do so it explores examples from within a progressive Non Governmental Organisation in Senegal and a farmer's Federation which they support in ways which produced complex outcomes, but also present opportunities for learning and critical reflection. These moments of informal and incidental learning, I argue, can play an invaluable role in making visible relations of power and domination, informing future struggle, strengthening collective strategy and resolve, and ultimately helping to strengthen or reassert peoples' independence, agency, and ability to provide for themselves. I examine where these learning opportunities presented themselves and were acted upon within these cases, and identify factors that affected peoples' ability to successfully draw upon learning and critical reflection.*

1. Introduction

This paper draws together lessons learned from doctoral research conducted in Senegal in 2007-2008. The research sought to explore how power is exercised through relations of development cooperation and coordinates peoples' activities at various sites within networks of international, regional and local institutions and actors. More specifically, it aimed to provide a concrete illustration of how development practice – imbued with an institutionalised model of operation, largely established extra-locally and disembedded from the context where the development is actually being “done” – has increasingly homogenised its norms and forms of practice. Drawing on these examples of how power has coordinated peoples'

activities and aligned their practices with institutionalised norms, the study reflected upon the ways that institutions and collectives in the South might draw upon these experiences to “speak back” to the development process, and the conditions and processes that enabled or constrained them in doing so.

The paper reflects on this exploration of how inter-institutional power relations, managerial discourses and their associated technologies, and informal learning coalesce within a particular network of development actors with the following aims: Better understanding how the subjectivity of the development practitioner is constituted through the complex range of networked actors and institutions that he/she must engage with; Considering the scope for transforming the institutionally-driven or mediated initiatives aimed at effecting social change, and; Identifying the conditions and scope for engaging in transformative learning processes from within the development apparatus. In doing so, it aims to draw a conceptual link between ethnographic accounts of the influence of power as it circulates through the development apparatus (cf. Eyben, 2000; Ferguson, 1994; Mosse, 2005) and Foley’s (2001: 84) call for “contextualised ethnographic accounts of learning in social action that —enable us to see the warp and weft of emancipatory and reproductive learning that occurs as people struggle against various forms of oppression”.

Drawing on Foley’s (1999, 2001) work on learning in counter-hegemonic struggle, I argue that moments of struggle have an instructive dimension that is important to reflect upon. However, the learning these struggles present is often embedded in the complex processes at hand and is therefore easily overlooked. When reflected upon collectively, however, these moments of informal and incidental learning can play an invaluable role in rendering visible relations of power and domination, informing future struggle, strengthening collective strategy and resolve, and ultimately helping to strengthen or reassert peoples’ independence, agency, and ability to provide for themselves (Kapoor, 2004). I consider specific examples from fieldwork conducted with a progressive Environmental Non Governmental Organisation (ENGO) in Senegal committed to promoting the agency of marginalised peoples, and a farmer’s Federation which they

support in ways which produced complex and mixed outcomes. In looking at these contexts I explore where these learning opportunities presented themselves and were – or could have been – acted upon, and consider the factors that affected peoples’ ability to successfully draw upon learning and critical reflection.

2. Institutions, Networks and Power

Underlying the investigation I have described above is a need to better understand the complex ways that power relations and knowledge production are constructed, transmitted, and put into action across multiple levels of action within a particular setting. Susan Vincent’s research on development actors in Peru has drawn similar conclusions to this proposed starting point:

[U]nderstandings of the political roles of individuals, communities, and governments has changed over the last century, leading to a political contract in which locals are supplicants while outsiders are patrons. The multiple levels of this contract imply that a focus on the local, however complexly contextualized and empowering, cannot fully solve local problems. These problems have at least part of their origin and means of reproduction elsewhere, and I propose that the search for a solution must begin with the form of political relationship or contract between the multiple levels of action. (Vincent, 2004: 112)

This has meant developing a theoretical and methodological approach that is dynamic and multi-focal, and importantly, that avoids imposing reductionist theoretical frameworks upon a research context that springs from different locales, ideologies, and forms of social and institutional organisation. To address these concerns I have drawn upon a Foucaultian analysis of discourse and power (particularly disciplinary power) as an analytical starting point, while at the same time drawing upon competing and complementary perspectives to expose other ways of perceiving the issues I have examined.

For Foucault (1980: 236), “power is not an institution, a structure, or a certain force with which certain people are endowed; it is the name given to a complex strategic relation”. Rather, power is understood to be both a repressive and productive force; one which induces pleasure and produces discourse, but also enables the domination of one group by another. Foucault’s interests laid primarily in making visible the *exercise* of power; in the tactics, techniques, and functionings that we impose upon ourselves and on others in a wide range of forms and fields. His investigation of power “in its ultimate destinations, [at] those points where it becomes capillary, that is, in its more regional and local forms and institutions” (Foucault, 1980: 96), paired with a *bottom up* analysis of capillary power, from its “infinitesimal mechanisms” as they are displaced and extended into ever more general and global forms of domination – provides a powerful lens with which local articulations of power can be mapped across web-like networks. This form of analysis allows for the association of groups, institutions and actors with the exercise of specific strategies of power without depending upon binary, uniquely structuralist, or exclusively capital-focused frames of analysis, which I argue overlook and even obscure the complexity of these relations (cf. Mosse, 2005). This does not deny the relevance of structural relations and capital to the contexts which I have investigated, but rather aims to situate them within a broader web of relations and interdependencies.

Power is also understood to flow *through* institutions and actors, rather than being born *from* and resident *within* them. This distinction avoids the potential oversimplification of identifying particular institutions as being the sole sources and agents of particular forms of power, and the premature conclusion that it is the physical dismantling of these institutions that would address the exercise of these forms of power. “The exercise of power” Foucault (1983: 224) argues, “is not a naked fact, an institutional right, nor is it a structure which holds out or is smashed: it is elaborated, transformed, organized; it endows itself with processes which are more or less adjusted to the situation”. In analysing power relationships within specific institutional contexts, according to Foucault, one can begin to reveal the

topography of capillary power and its mechanisms. This offers such analyses a privileged point of observation of such mechanisms are “diversified, concentrated, put in order, and carried through to the highest point of their efficacy” (Foucault, 1980: 222). In the field of international development, where actors implement policy at the level of often isolated and disparate communities, while major development policy-making bodies are centralised in a few of the world’s major cities, primarily in the global North, this form of analysis appears particularly relevant.

While Foucault’s (1980) analysis of power can uncover important insights into the unseen or *normalized* ways in which power shapes the everyday ways of working between actors, it stops short of addressing the question of what specific outcomes resistance and agency might produce in responding to these relations, arguing that the intellectual’s role lies in providing instruments of analysis, not defining the project of resistance or its goals. It is here that I feel the linking of a complex analysis of institutional power with approaches to collective *learning in action* (Foley, 1999) or *learning in/through/from struggle* (Foley, 2001; Von Kotze, 2000) can provide a means to extending the analysis through a critical engagement with peoples’ experience and learning. Pettit (2006: p. 72-73, emphasis in original) notes the value of this form of extension:

If we accept that power is multidimensional, defined by various forms of agency and socialization, then the learning process should enable us to access, explore and understand as many of these dimensions as possible. [...] [U]nderstanding and addressing power calls for more innovative learning processes, which stimulate not only the *conceptual* and *rational* re-evaluation of one’s assumed perspective, but also the more *experiential*, *embodied*, *creative*, *practical* and other *non-dialogical* means of reflection, or making sense of one’s experiences of power, and of realising one’s capacity to shift power.

Learning and Critical Reflection in Development Practice

The value of informal and incidental learning, particularly within professionalised or workplace contexts is well documented. Schön (1983) argued that workplace learning develops through reflection upon the ambiguous dilemmas of practice, and that this reflection during and after the doing provides the process through which experience can be transformed into knowledge. This observation is extended and expanded by theories of praxis, such as Holford's (1995) extension of "organisational" knowledge into the realm of social movements, which sees movements as sites of "cognitive praxis," and allowing for the generation of both identity and new knowledge. However, it is important to recall that neither *learning* nor *change* are inherently positive concepts. Praxis can itself be understood as either reproductive or revolutionary, or as Shaul (as cited in Freire, 1972[1996]: 16), drawing on Freire, has put it "education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate integration...into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the 'practice of freedom,' the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world".

The discourses of lifelong and experiential learning in the workplace have been amply shown to create a potential avenue toward further socialisation or skilling of adults in line with the dictates of global labour management (flexible, adaptive, transferable, etc.) (Murphy, 2000; Welton, 1991). Edwards (1998), Fenwick (2001) and others have also highlighted the increasing use of reflective practice as both a "technology of the self" within modern professional environments. Edwards (1998: 387) notes that "self-management within organization frameworks displaces the forms of autonomous activity which are often associated with professional work. In this sense, reflective practice may be well part of the moral technology and forms of governmentality through which work is intensified and regulated". Even learning termed "transformative" can be understood as a pathway of personal emancipation rather than collective social change (Finger, 1989), or ultimately disempowering if it fails to actually help people change their situations (Bevins, Moriarty and Taylor, 2009). As a result, it is imperative that we better understand the perspectives on

learning which might strengthen collective voice and agency and expand the limits of what is deemed possible at specific sites and instances of struggle and contestation. The concrete impacts (both real and potential) and challenges of engaging in these forms of reflection and analysis are explored through the investigation which follows below.

3. Shaping the Development Institution

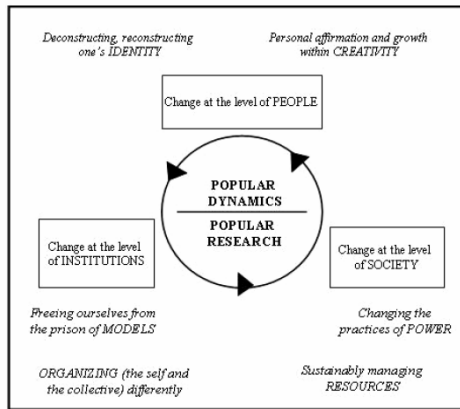
As development *brokerage* has become an increasingly lucrative and professionalized endeavour, the number of NGOs and agencies working in Senegal has grown dramatically, from fewer than twenty in the 1970s, to over 250 NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) in 1994, and with still more operating today (Guèye and Dieng, 1994). In the process, the influence of larger international NGOs and Inter-governmental Organisations (IGOs) with country or regional offices in Senegal has shaped the broader landscape of development cooperation (both actors and institutions) and civil society engagement more broadly, in line with the international norms of practice they have established – what Sonia Alvarez (1988) has aptly referred to this transformation as “NGOisation” (cf. Fall, 2004). Uma Kothari (2005: 438; see also Bebbington, Hickey & Mitlin 2008) has explored the process of NGOisation at a more global level, noting how the professionalization and accelerating expansion of institutionalized development practice after the 1980s “encompass[ed] alternative approaches which were previously marginal to the development mainstream”. Kothari (2005: 439) notes how radical and alternative discourses were co-opted by mainstream multi- and bilateral development agencies and:

became increasingly technicalised in order to fit into the more formalized development planning frameworks and models favoured by these organisations. [...] This strategy of appropriation reduced spaces of critique and dissent, since the inclusion and appropriation of ostensibly radical discourses limited the potential for any challenge from outside the mainstream to orthodox development planning and practices.

In the case of *Environment and Development Action in the Third World* (ENDA-TM), whose work has explicitly sought to develop alternative development models, the pressure (both direct and indirect) that has resulted from this shifting landscape has produced a number of challenges which will be briefly explored.

ENDA is an international non-profit organisation, founded in 1972, and headquartered in Dakar, Senegal. Drawing upon the strong post-colonial standpoints of its founding architects, Jacques Bugnicourt, Samir Amin, and Cheikh Hamidou Kane, ENDA committed itself to establishing a clear Southern (and particularly African) focus with a particular attention to the concerns of poor, marginalised populations and the environmental issues that affect them. Bugnicourt described the niche and originality of ENDA's work in the global South as "implementing certain techniques with peasants and slum-dwellers based upon the needs they express... and, at the same time, publishing works and articles on technology or taking part in the debates of agencies and specialist at the level of the Third World"; adding that a great challenge lies in ensuring that these activities "constantly retain their sense of solidarity and retain ongoing close contact with what is happening in the countryside or the slums, and that the concerns of those who inhabit these areas constitute the *defining elements* of the range of research, training and action undertaken" (*Trans.* Bugnicourt and Mhlanga, 1980: 1). A theory of change emerging from these aims sees locally oriented research and popular dynamics embedded within social and institutional, and is captured in the figure below.

Figure 1: Theory of Change



Source: ENDA Graf, 2005 (trans.), www.enda.sn/graf/presenta/theo.html

Today ENDA has grown into one of the largest Southern-based NGOs worldwide. It collaborates with grassroots groups in search of alternative development models on the basis of the experience, expectations and objectives of marginalised peoples, activities closely in line with what Escobar (1998) terms “progressive” Southern NGOs. Accompanying its growth and spreading engagement in the South (particularly in West Africa) has been a growing recognition of the institution as a “centre of excellence” for partnerships with International and Intergovernmental organisations including UN agencies, the World Bank, and others. This has presented an ever-expanding range of new opportunities for partnership and engagement, but has, at the same time, introduced challenges to the retention of its clear and locally-oriented vision for social change amid the growing “intellectual hegemony” (Chambers & Pettit, 2004) of institutionalised development practice described above. Some of the key challenges which have emerged include engaging and retaining staff members committed to developing transformative and experimental approaches to effecting change amid this broader climate of homogenization

of development practice; maintaining a spirit of collaboration within and between ENDA's teams rather than the free-market-inspired competitiveness that current funding protocols have encouraged; and balancing resistance to dominant development frameworks in favour of locally articulated alternatives while remaining accessible to funders upon whose funding their work depends. It is through their engagement with these networks of differently situated actors and their accompanying protocols that the team both shaped and defended its identity, as I will explore below.

Balancing Resistance and Viability

The mediation of tensions between external pressures from institutional partners and the institute's own articulation of meaningful social engagement teams, presented challenges, but also opened opportunities for collective reflection and informal learning. In the case of one ENDA team, this took the form of weekly meetings for reviewing current and upcoming work; meetings which occasionally shifted to debates over the direction in which particular initiatives were leading the team. Numerous examples could be cited here, including collaborative research with Northern institutions which attempted to shift the focus of contracted research toward issues that contravened ENDA's core principles (such as the promotion of nuclear energy as "clean energy"); partnerships seeking to engage them as a community intermediary for the introduction of potentially objectionable initiatives (such as large-scale biofuels projects); and invitations to work with Northern research institutions that have previously engaged in highly extractive forms of collaboration with ENDA.

This points to ways that opportunities for relatively open discussion and debate over the broader question of program direction sometimes afforded by the team's weekly meetings served an important and often-unacknowledged purpose. On those occasions when the team was allowed (or allowed itself) to forego the expediency of running through the agenda of "to-do" items for the week and delve into the messier and less immediate questions of direction and principles, members were able to challenge each other's

views, present arguments for their positions based upon their interpretation of ENDA's purpose, on their own experiences, or on their understanding of local needs and concerns. In doing so they reflected upon and began to assert its agency in the face of external pressure, and helped shape the contemporary identity of the team and the institution more broadly. Conversely, it seemed that those moments where the opportunity to delve into greater detail about such thorny questions was passed over for the sake of concision or expediency (perhaps, for example, in avoiding an extended discussion around the principles that might govern engagement with outside institutions) represented lost opportunities for collective learning and strengthening of solidarity within the team.

The institutional challenges noted here represent a site of struggle *within* the institution and its teams where the constancy of external pressure and micro-technologies of institutional power threaten to uproot and de-legitimise the transformative potential of critical and creative social engagement. Driving and giving direction to this resistance within the team is a (sometimes sporadic) critical reflection over the principles and theories that the team wishes to uphold, the threats to these principles and appropriate responses. If, as their principles suggest, one of the institute's aims is to help people bring about changes in power relations through critical reflection and learning about themselves and their environment to better understand the obstacles they face (ENDA Graf, 2005), then it would seem that more dedicated attention on this resistance *within the team* could serve as an important starting point.

3.1 Engaging with Community

Serving as a counterpoint to the internal challenges described above, the second section of this examination considers the ways that another ENDA team has worked to shape the sustainability and environmentally sound practices of a community of cotton producers in rural Senegal over a period of approximately 14 years. In this context, where ENDA's perceived roles as facilitator, capacity builder, funding conduit and advocate placed them in a position of authority and influence, it becomes possible to

see how individuals and groups “are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising power” (Foucault 1980: 98). It also serves to illustrate how this particular community struggles to balance the desire for autonomy and self-definition with the perceived security of partnership with NGOs and other external institutions and the models of development they espouse (cf. Marsden, 2004).

Here, I argue, in a community where reliance on outside support is so deeply engrained and articulated through a wide range of processes, the degree to which identities and roles of community members have been shaped by outside forces and institutions is especially high; and this reliance is exacerbated on two fronts, each revealing some of the complexities of development relations. The first I will explore is through the Federation of producers’ willingness to subject themselves to new, often complex forms of scrutiny and accountability in the hope of securing safer and more equitable livelihoods through organic and fairtrade cotton production. The second arises from the fact that locally-active NGOs and development brokers are themselves financially and professionally reliant on facilitating the implementation of aid initiatives at the community level (and thus, of representing the community’s needs and potential for “successful development” within the international development community).

It is important to note that this critique is not necessarily aimed at advocating against organic cotton production in the region. Clearly there are important health, financial and environmental justifications for its pursuit among those who pursue these forms of livelihood activity and remain engaged in global trade markets. Further, given the current situation of conventional cotton markets (globally and nationally) and the current status of conventional cotton farming in Senegal, Federation members, by their own admission, would most likely still be subjected to other forms of external coordination with perhaps even less opportunity for response were they engaged in conventional production as it is currently structured (cf. Williamson, Ferrigno and Vodouhe, 2005). Instead, this discussion aims to highlight the ways that the nascent organic and fairtrade cotton markets, established partly under the premise of empowering local producers (through a fairer income, safer

working conditions, more democratic decision-making processes, etc.) activates a new and different series of power dynamics that must be better understood when reflecting on its potential impacts and benefits. It also considers how this process is enacted through the Federation's engagement with ENDA, and the implications this has on their capacity to shape a vision of the future.

Community Collaboration

ENDA first began their collaboration with cotton producers about 450km east of Dakar in 1995. They initially helped a small group of peasants produce organic cotton with an aim of responding to environmental and health concerns related to pesticide use in the cotton production process, resulting in the establishment of the first organic cotton project in West Africa. In 1997 a Federation of organic farmers was established, and has since grown to nearly 2000 producers from over 80 villages in the region. In this time it has received both organic and "fairtrade" certification for its cotton; and has expanded its livelihood activities to include the production alternative indigenous crop varieties, as well as initial ventures into the production of value-added cotton-based products such as thread and clothing.

However, the development of a market and strong production base for organic/fairtrade cotton has proven difficult. Organic agriculture represents a miniscule percentage of agricultural production in Senegal; costs related to training, regular inspection, certification and processing of crops are high; and there is virtually no domestic market willing to pay the additional premiums for organic/fairtrade commodities (cf. Ferrigno, Ratter, Ton, Vodouhê, Williamson and Wilson, 2005). Thus, the Federation remains highly dependent upon external support, both for finding exporters for their harvests, or, barring that, for paying the difference in price between conventional and organic cotton should they be forced to sell their crops on the conventional market. The need for ENDA's guidance and regular intervention extends beyond the need for financial and marketing support, however, and in fact arises at the level of the day-to-day management and monitoring of farmer's crops in line with the much stricter regulations of

organic farming. Farmers now opting into organic agriculture find themselves essentially forced to re-learn more traditional approaches to their trade, now re-presented through the scientific/managerial technologies of formally-educated agricultural *specialists*.

Modern-day production of organic cotton is an exacting and highly regulated practice. The degree of control over production processes is, foremost, justified by the need to guarantee that the product has not come into contact with the more commonly-grown conventional cotton or its chemical treatments, sometimes being grown only a few metres away from organic crops. Cotton must be formally certified as organic (and/or fairtrade) to be saleable as such on the global market. These forms of certification and the processes required for obtaining them have been developed in the North and are frequently delivered by Northern institutional representatives, and are not well adapted to the socio-economic contexts found in places like rural Senegal. Producers are expected to abide by strict transparency protocols, providing a meticulous paper-trail documenting the conditions in which the cotton was produced, treatments it received, and the environment in which it was grown. In the case of fairtrade cotton, as is produced by the Federation, producers are also expected to provide documentary proof of the democratic and equitable processes through which they work together (meeting minutes, vote tallies, annual reporting, etc.) (cf. Bassett, 2010). Given high rate of illiteracy among cotton producers in the area, and the costly certification processes, it becomes obvious that the process is nearly impossible without extensive outside support from individuals or organisations accustomed to working within these types of norms (ENDA, 2007).

In examining the standardised precision with which crop treatments, surroundings and history must be recorded, compiled and submitted for inspection, it becomes clear how heavily the process is controlled from outside/above, demanding the “compulsory visibility” (Foucault, 1977) of producers and their collectives. Bassett (2010: 51), drawing on research in West Africa, also notes that:

Fairtrade certification largely focuses on the democratic and transparent operations of *producer groups*. The conduct of other actors in the commodity chain (ginning companies, traders, and national producer associations) is not as closely monitored. Although one [...] extension agent found “laughable” the suggestion that cotton companies would be willing to let producers scrutinize their financial records, it is not a laughing matter for cotton growers.

While Bassett’s study and others (cf. ENDA, 2007) focus on questions of equity within such international trade arrangements and rightly question to what extent these arrangements actually challenge the marginalising trade practices of conventional cotton, less has been said on how these processes (and the NGO support that often accompanies them) “re-organise” farmers’ lives in line with external norms. This point seems highly relevant in considering how this support relates to ENDA’s stated aim of helping people bring about changes in power relations through critical reflection and learning about themselves and their environment. Here, Dorothy Smith’s (1984, 2001) work on how replicable texts organise people across space and time proves particularly appropriate in considering the protocols noted above, which are developed in Europe, translated in Dakar, and intervene daily at the level of the local farmer across a whole region of Senegal. Smith (2001: 174-175) posits that:

Reproducing the same managerial and accounting procedures across many local settings hooks [people’s] local work organization into ‘centralized’ regulatory and decision processes that are themselves located in particular settings. [...] The multiple replication of exactly the same text that technologies of print made possible enable an organization of social relations independent of local time, place and person [and] suture[s] modes of social action organized extra-locally and co-ordinating multiple local sites of people’s work to the local actualities of our necessarily embodied lives.

The result, says Smith (2001: 180), is that “people’s doings are no longer just that, but become interpretable as expressions or instances of a higher order organization, independent of particular people”. Smith’s comments also shed light upon another phenomenon observed within the individual cotton producers that highlights how central ENDA’s role is perceived to be; the fact that a great deal of the producers refer to the crop they produce as “ENDA Cotton.” This seems to suggest both how distant the concept of organic cotton is from the daily reality of these farmers, as well as the degree to which ENDA represents or embodies this “higher order of organization” to which Smith refers, and how the processes that regulate their farming practice are seen to come from and be enforced on behalf of them.

The Struggle for Self-Definition

The Federation’s dependence upon ENDA’s support is well-recognized by its current leaders (themselves farmers), and is a source of concern and frustration. Federation Secretariat members described the challenges they currently face in shaping their own identity, having a greater role in the production, processing and distribution of the crops they produce, and avoiding being themselves “traded” as a development commodity among NGOs and funders (as I will discuss in the section below). The Federation’s President described his ultimate vision of them becoming “75% self-sufficient,” allowing for occasional and limited support from outside agencies. In speaking of the capacities that they need to achieve this desired independence, they noted a need to obtain internet access, and develop capacity in ICTs so that they could begin reaching out on their own to the foreign markets that purchase their cotton. Their capacity to do so thus far has been extremely limited, given the physical distance (two days of travel from Europe) from prospective buyers, their lack of capital (economic, political, social) for developing new markets, and their lack of local infrastructure. As such, international access to the Federation is generally initiated through ENDA’s office in Dakar. However, members noted that these issues were rarely given priority in the assessment of their capacities and needs, with focus instead being directed toward enabling

them to better meet the inspection requirements mandated through organic/fairtrade protocols.

“Inventing” the Peasant

Funders and cooperants such as ENDA often bring pre-conceived notions about the priorities, values and needs of subsistence farmers and their communities, and how best to help them to improve their lives. These groups, who tend to have clearly-defined political or epistemological orientations toward notions such as progress, development, and the environment can often privilege these orientations (perhaps unsurprisingly), over the agency of the communities with whom they are working. This tendency is particularly pronounced if these communities are perceived as vulnerable, limited in capacity, and of a static identity (e.g. peasants and farmers, not “businessmen” as the assumption appeared to be here). The tendency to pre-suppose the community’s lack of interest or aptitude in negotiating the purchase of crops or pre-financing agreements with potential buyers was evident in this relation, and was central to the re-representation of the Federation’s identity to outsiders, and thus served as a vehicle for the construction of their subjectivity. Alvesson (1996: 102), drawing on Foucault, notes that “in the creation of subjectivity, the individual is made into an object for subordination as well as developing (being provided with) a particular identity. [...] Power is thus exercised by binding the subject to a particular identity or form. Here, I would argue, the identities of individuals that made up the Federation’s Secretariat and membership are fundamentally shaped by and kept in line with the discursive practices associated to them by the broader development apparatus within which they are embedded.

To be clear, this assertion does not necessarily imply a violent or even overt restriction of the mobility or agency of the Federation’s members. Nor is the shaping inherently inaccurate or exclusively constraining. The Federation has, in this case, been cast as a model for successful and empowering rural agricultural development by ENDA and a range of other champions of organic farming and environmental development, and thus as innovative,

empowered, democratic, etc. However, the Federation's depiction is always embedded within a broader network of actors, described above, including certification agents, funding agencies, national *sociétés*, and collaborating NGOs, and the complex patterns of textual and discursive organisation that assigns each of them their roles and identities. It is here that it seems that these funders, cooperating agencies, and the like have a vested interest in ensuring that individuals, communities and peasants' organisations *do remain* as they have been discursively framed; incrementally improving the quality of their livelihoods and embodying the agreed-upon principles of "good practice", without evolving to such an extent as to rupture the continuity of their cooperation, or each other's *raison d'être*.

This would be particularly true in cases heralded externally as "success stories" such as that of the Federation. Let us recall that development funding in Africa (and throughout the global South) is highly lucrative in comparison to the subsistence activities the majority of these "vulnerable communities" are involved in, and employs thousands worldwide. In the context of international development practice, it may be fair to say that the community itself (or the discursive identity in which it has beencast) has become a resource for (sustainable) exploitation. The question of capital, however, is not the only incentive that explains the need to ensure the discursive construction of these actors remains intact. Rather, as noted at the outset of this paper, these forms of coordination and subjugation are fundamental to the maintenance of the "regime of truth" that justifies the entire development endeavour.

While this discussion has sought to demonstrate the forms of dependence that have stemmed from the Federation's compliance with the international protocols on organic/fairtrade agriculture; ENDA, like the Federation, is also subject to the same discursive framing, as are the agencies that fund these initiatives. Thus, both subordinates and those 'in power' (at times, as this paper has sought to illustrate, one being both at once) find themselves being bound to discourse and its structures. As such, in order for ENDA to continue being a development NGO, they need

communities in need of “developing” and who are responsive to their strategies of action.

One of the questions that arises in considering these dynamics of power is how the Federation and community members can therefore “speak back” to power, and strengthen their positions as advocates and spokespeople for their own agency. What different arrangement of actors (if any) would facilitate this ability to draw into question the shaping influence of the development apparatus? What strategies or practices might better position them to respond to these outside pressures with a clearly articulated collective vision? In concluding, I turn to the learning dimension of these challenges to consider how collective informal and incidental learning might help to identify and challenge the processes and systems that constrain their abilities to remain “independent, self-provisioning, and agents of their own histories” (Kapoor, 2004: 43). These questions cannot be answered easily or definitely, particularly from a community outsider. Indeed, given the urgency of current pressures upon the community (near-subsistence-level incomes, extreme vulnerability to environmental, political, or social stresses and shocks, etc.) alongside the deeper concerns of autonomy and self-determination, it would seem that one of the key challenges is balancing the short-term urgency of self/community-improvement with a long-time, experimental aim of effecting deeper changes in social order (Lindeman, 1961). This question appears to have been identified by Federation leaders, but they have struggled to create spaces and opportunities where they could consider them collectively and independently of the institutional players whose vested interest in their activities has deeply organised their daily activity and visions of the future. I would argue that collective reflection on these points of contention and struggle could provide an entry point for learning, and re-orientation. This process could inform both the current and longer-term visions of the Federation and its associated communities and open discussion about the impact of “allied” institutions and global market forces on their livelihood activities.

4. Challenges to Learning and Collective Action

The story of [counter-hegemonic] struggle is one of gains and losses, of progress and retreat, and of a growing recognition of the continually contested, complex, ambiguous and contradictory nature of the struggle between domination and liberation. This struggle also has a learning and educational dimension which emerges when we examine concrete situations. I say 'emerges' advisedly, because the learning is often embedded in other activities and has to be uncovered. (Foley, 2001, p. 77)

Learning and Power

It seems that in the case highlighted by this paper, a clearer understanding of how relations of power within partnerships shaped the options that were (or were not) being presented, the ease with which certain choices could be made, or the degree to which assistance would be offered for particular forms of action, may have helped participants to make sense of their lived experience and struggles. A more formalised reflection upon the struggles that arose in the course of social action could help to schematise the collective informal and incidental learning that is inherently embedded in these moments of struggle (as noted in the quote from Foley above) and inform future courses of action. I would argue that in order to appropriately engage with this larger sphere of the development apparatus, as ENDA's own principles of action call upon it to do, or for the cotton producer's Federation to engage with the community and institutions beyond its membership, there must first be a clarified understanding of its own relationship with power and capacity to affect change, as well as an appreciation of the internal dynamics and meaning-making processes of those who constitute these collectives.

Pettit's (2006) assertion that understanding and addressing power requires innovative ways to think about learning provides a useful opening to shift this discussion toward a more detailed exploration of how this process can be put into action, and what conditions can either support or constrain it. In reflecting on the actions, inactions, and outcomes that figured in the contexts described above, I am

drawn to Klouda's (2004: 2) challenge that the development community's continued attention to critical reflection as a means to stimulating social change has failed to address two key questions: "Why, if people really are capable of doing this, don't they do it more often"? This concluding discussion does not purport to provide a complete answer to Klouda's question, but it does aim to clarify some of the preconditions that played a role in taking those who were involved in this study from recognising the need for change toward feeling equipped and motivated to act accordingly.

4.1 Factors which Enable and Constrain Learning in Action

Spaces for Change

The notion of space emerged repeatedly over the course of this study. Its presence, absence, colonisation, and defence, as well as its nature and origin have proven to be fundamental factors in determining the scope for reflection and consultation and, consequently, it shapes peoples' capacity to re-imagine the terms of their engagement with others. Thus, space has a potential productive value as the site where groups can engage in radical rethinking and the acquisition of skills to put this thinking into action, making it at once constitutive and expressive of power relations and people's agency (Cornwall, 2004).

The question of *physical* space emerged in discussions about the potentials and limits of the meeting space at the cotton Federation headquarters, which had previously been shared with ENDA but was now their own. Its value was also visible in the weekly meetings convened in ENDA's offices, where all team members could gather and debate the impacts of the work they were in engaged in. *Temporal* space was constantly at a premium within the ENDA offices, as can be found nearly anywhere that a culture of managerialism has become embedded. This meant that extended discussions on the aims and direction of the team, reflections on new ways to engage with partners, and opportunities to collaborate and dialogue with potential collaborators from within the institution all found

themselves in competition with the demands placed upon the team by others. The limited and limiting notions of what constitutes “productive” time in dominant managerial frameworks (generally utilitarian, capital driven, linear, etc.) often exclude the types of temporal space required for collective reflection and deliberation on change. Perhaps most important, however, is the *conceptual* space for imagining new terms and forms of engagement. On this point, it is important to recognise the intimate link between space and praxis (which is central to our ability to reflect upon change and put it into action). As Mayo (2009: 100) notes, “praxis constitutes the means of gaining critical distance from one’s world of action to engage in reflection geared toward transformative action”. This was particularly relevant to the Federation’s relationship with ENDA, one which was so deeply embedded, that it left little opportunity for members to gain this critical distance and reflect on the options they might have.

A second approach to assessing the form and role of particular spaces, as articulated by Gaventa (2006) and Cornwall (2002), among others, distinguishes between *closed* (which restrict access to decision making or participation to an elite few), *invited* (which have been regularised or institutionalised, and are open on a restricted basis), and *claimed/created* spaces (which may come from popular mobilisation around sets of common concerns or a rejection of hegemonic spaces). This categorisation can be useful in highlighting the link between learning and the struggle for participation and recalls Tembo’s (2004) assertion that marginalised groups lack space within which they can exercise their images of reality rather than simply affirming the plans established by others. Further, the degree to which invited or claimed spaces are seen as “safe” for those engaged in a learning and reflection process to take on the risk and challenge of being critical of themselves and others (cf. Langdon and Harvey, 2009). It is important to note here that space is a dynamic construct and always subject to transformation. Thus, it can be understood not only as a site where learning, reflection, and planning for change are enabled, but also as a site of incidental learning around struggles over it. To quote Bebbington (2004: 280): “Only by understanding how spaces that are won are then lost will it

be possible to win spaces that are more resilient to capture by conservative forces". This can be as true about forces from outside the group in question as from within it.

Acknowledgement and Appreciation of Risk

Risk has often been cited as a potential barrier to poor or vulnerable people's willingness to adopt alternative practices in community-based agricultural and environmental adaptation and disaster management (Fafchamps, 2003), and risk has been explored in literature on action research (Denzin, 2005; Fine, 2006), but its role in collective learning and action within development literature has been less widely recognised. For Kluda (2004: 6) this oversight is fundamental. He argues that:

It is not critical thinking or even consciousness of reality that is the issue: it is the ability to speak out and act for change in relation to one's own social situation that poses the difficulty. The difficulty is there precisely because an individual has to make an assessment of the level of risk involved in making that challenge.

Risk (or perception of risk) is not uniform across a particular group of actors, as individuals are differently positioned vis-à-vis the change or action under consideration, and differently exposed to the struggle at hand. It is closely related to people's relative ability to dictate their own pathways and the tenuousness with which they hold their current positions, as in the case of the Federation, whose members very livelihoods were in question. It cannot simply be dismissed as conservativeness or a lack of criticality, and must be recognised and addressed in order to enable people to fully engage with processes of learning and change. Doing so is dependent upon the fulfillment of some of the other preconditions noted here, particularly the availability of a space to dialogically explore people's varying interpretations of risk, and the presence of appropriate leadership and support to help people navigate their understanding of risk, and to help attenuate this risk when possible.

Leadership and Support

The notion of leadership and support as a potential enabling or constraining force in transformational learning has been thoroughly debated in the fields of adult education (Brookfield, 2001; Mezirow, 1994; Tennant, 1998) and action research (Kapoor, 2009). In relations of leadership and support I would argue, much like education, “the task is to encourage human agency, not mold it in the manner of Pygmalion” (Aronowitz, 1998: 10). Where the line must be drawn between encouragement and moulding, however, is a more challenging question; one which recalls Foucault’s (1978) question of whether the growth of human capabilities *can* be disconnected from the intensification of power relations, and what forms of supportive arrangement might achieve this effect. Opinions are divergent on two important points here: a) The degree to which leadership can be directive in struggle, and b) the sites from which this leadership can legitimately arise. Rahman, among others, argues that it is “absolutely essential that the people develop their own endogenous process of consciousness raising and knowledge generation and this process acquires the social power to assert itself vis-à-vis all elite consciousness and knowledge” (in Kapoor, 2009), implying a restrictive view of the scope to which outside leadership and support might be engaged. Holford (1995: 106), by contrast, calls for a stronger leadership role among what he terms “movement intellectuals” in articulating and leading struggle, arguing against seeing educators as merely “equal participants in movements”, and sees these leaders as operating at the margins of a particular movement or struggle and the “wider world,” but stresses the need for reflexive and self-conscious leadership (or educators) that recognizes the partiality of its own knowledge. I find myself aligned with Rahman and others who argue that strategies for struggle must arise from and reflect the lived experience of those engaged in that particular struggle and facing the forms of domination which make that struggle necessary. I do feel, however, building upon Denzin’s (2005) notion of the “allied other,” that there is scope to act in solidarity with that particular struggle and from the locations where our life experience positions us, if we are continuously reflective of our own embeddedness

within relations of power and subjugation and the effects that this may be having.

A Common Articulated Vision of Change

Reflecting upon the internal discussions that were initiated within ENDA team describe earlier in this paper, I feel that the articulation of a shared vision of change allows groups engaged in struggles with power to come to a common understanding of where they stand and what they hope to achieve, to guard against institutional *drift*, and to better communicate their perspectives outside of the sphere of the group and its allies. “Non-negotiables” among community groups engaged in development cooperation, for example, can help to demarcate the terms and limits to their engagement with others (Chambers and Pettit, 2004). Hardy, Palmer and Phillips’ (2000) depiction of *strategy discourse* as a resource that can be used to construct social reality may also be helpful seeing how the construction of a vision of change (through the production of texts and discursive “acts”), the practices that arise from this vision and strategy, and the interplay of these with broader societal discourses can ultimately change an organisation and its environment. These impacts are demonstrable not only to those inside the organisation but also to those outside of it. This is not to say that changing reality is as simple as one day changing discursive acts, but rather that discourse can serve as a tool to eventually detach “truth” from particular relations of power, and that the power to generate new forms of discourse is fundamental to the strategic reversibility of truth regimes.

Equity and Democracy within the Community of Actors

The final point upon which I would like to elaborate on here is the importance of sustained efforts toward equity and democracy within the community of actors. If the articulation of the common vision discussed above must be the product of a dialogical process that leaves space for participation and voice if it is to stimulate a genuine propensity to act, then questions of equity and democracy within this process are fundamental. Further, on the basis of

the theory of power upon which I have developed this study, even spaces characterised by a shared vision and sense of identity are subject to relations of power that hold one person or sub-group in a dominant position over another. Equity and democracy in this context are best understood as *processes* rather than fixed endpoints, particularly given a view of power that sees it as continuously in flux. Normative understandings of these concepts can prove difficult and often inappropriate, particularly within post-colonial contexts, and their imposition can become a tool for silencing rather than for the flourishing of dialogue (Brookfield, 1995). Thus, the implications of this precondition will vary according to setting, and will need to be the product of a collective meaning-making that may not necessarily match with the expectations/understandings of outside participants, and must be open to re-evaluation.

5. Conclusions

This paper has highlighted links between an ethnographic account of the influence of power on networks of development actors and institutions, and Foley's (2001: 84) call for "contextualised ethnographic accounts of learning in social action" to explore the opportunities and conditions for drawing on collective learning to contest the subjugating power of development. Using the case an NGO with a stated commitment to challenging relations that marginalise communities in the South, I have sought to illustrate the complexity of negotiating these relations, demonstrating how individuals and institutions are constantly engaged in processes of undergoing and exercising power (Foucault, 1980). On this basis, I argue, it is imperative that people engage in critical reflection about their own agency and the ways in which they have been situated by the development apparatus in order to work toward change. While this aim is laudable, it is no easy task, and better understanding the factors which enable or constrain these forms of reflection and action is a project which must remain central to rethinking development.

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Development Intervention and Ethnic Communities in Bangladesh and Thailand: A Critique

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Abstract: *This paper critically examines development interventions and their implications for ethnic communities within the framework of people-centered development in specific contexts of southeastern Bangladesh and northern Thailand. The development interventions did not contribute to poverty alleviation and they undermined viable alternative approaches to the livelihoods of the ethnic communities. Moreover, these development interventions failed to or did not recognize the psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual aspects of the concerned communities. It is suggested that development needs to be embedded in and based on local knowledge, culture and bio-physical environments.*

1. Introduction

Over the last four decades, the conventional growth-centered development (Korten, 1990) model has neglected diverse local economics and indigenous knowledge in order to modernize ethnic communities in the southeastern part of Bangladesh and northern Thailand. Such conventional interventions have been accelerated through the construction of dams, implementation of forestry programs, establishing land controls, and the framing of rules and regulations in the name of investment, growth and extension of market. This massive process was designed to regulate the lives of ethnic communities/minorities and hill tribes (e.g. the *Marma*, *Chakma*, *Issan-Lao* speaking people, and *Karen*) through centralized policies of development that undermined people's decision-making capacity, participation, creativity, knowledge, and livelihoods in the regions of Bangladesh and Thailand (Buergin, 2000; Dewan, 1993; Moshin, 2003;

Poffenberger, 2006; Trakarnsuphakorn, 2007; Sato, 2000; Sudham, 2002, 2007; Tripura, 2000). Despite the huge extension of the growth model of development interventions, there has been increasing social and cultural resistance among the ethnic communities to revitalize their cultural knowledge, cultural rights and livelihoods through a participatory development approach (Barua in press, 2010; Barney, 2007; Buergin, 2000; Darlington, 1998, 2000; Sudham, 2002). Eventually, the proclamation of the World Decade for Cultural Development (WDCD) in the mid 1980s, the Social Summit in Copenhagen in 1990 and the Earth Summit of Rio in 1995 also augmented consciousness among development actors to acknowledge the issues of indigenous culture, knowledge, and sustainable development within development interventions (UNESCO, 1995; United Nations, 1990). I believe it is important to value the perspective of the ethnic communities in the construction of knowledge within the process of development. If development planners and actors fail to design programs based on the local context, it is naturally geared towards failure. Thus, I concur with the observation that “a strongly holistic tradition and tendency to identify with the indigenous peoples (or ethnic communities) provide anthropologists (sociologists and development specialists), with a unique perspective on development process” (Wilson-Moore, 1997: 486)—one that needs to be seriously deployed in the interests of a more honest process of people-centered-development.

This paper attempts to critique conventional assumptions about development that dislocated ethnic communities, local knowledge, and livelihoods in the southeastern part of Bangladesh and northern Thailand. More importantly, I attempt to construct knowledge from the socio-cultural perspective of a Buddhist society as the people of these geographical regions practice *Theravada* Buddhism, which does not advocate *pseudo-desire* and *unbridled desire* (*tanha*) among the people (Barua, 2009; Goulet, 1993). The paper is based on my practical observation(s) and field research experience(s) (Barua and Wilson, 2005; Barua, 2007, 2009). The analytical perspective/ discourse of the Buddhist notion of development as it promotes an *eco-centric* development approach that nurtures diversity for sustainable livelihoods is what is deployed to assess

dominant modernization-oriented development interventions in these regions (Barua and Wilson, 2005). The Buddhist traditions, in fact, germinated as a spiritual power against social injustice and oppression (including oppression in the name of modern developmentalism) and emerged as a “movement of renouncers” in ancient India (Wijayartna, 1990: 1). The discussion here is limited to the issues and problematics raised by post-colonial development discourses/debates pertaining to peoples’ knowledge, dams, forests and livelihoods, development interventions, and socio-cultural aspects. For convenience of discussion, the terms ‘ethnic minorities’, ‘ethnic communities’, ‘Buddhists’ ‘forest communities’, and ‘hill tribes’ are used interchangeably in the paper. The terms ‘*modernization*’ and ‘*globalization*’ are also used interchangeably since they are deeply rooted in development discourse.

2. Development Discourses and Post-colonial Agendas: Toward Eurocentrism or People-Centered Development?

The post-colonial nation-state emerged with the hope and aspiration of attaining rapid economic growth similar to the west after the end of formal colonialism in Asia and Africa. In time, bilateral development agencies were established in the 1950s to continue to implement processes of colonial control and modernization, i.e., the Western-style development model in Asia, Africa and Caribbean Islands (Burkey, 1993).

Modernization theory emerged in the late 1930s with the initiatives of colonial administration (Parpart, Connelly and Barriteau, 2000). It became more dominant in the late 1950s and the early 1960s (Harrison, 1988; Learner, 1958; Parsons, 1971). The theory of modernization is deeply ingrained in the environment of western society and culture. In other words, it was fully constructed from within the milieu of western society. The central concern of the modernization model is that development is a natural, linear progression away from traditional socio-economic practices and toward economic growth. Socio-cultural values are seen as fatalistic and endemic to traditional societies.

Additionally, the process of modernization was seen as creating a space for each individual for higher economic growth (Rostow, 1960). The model of modernization was adopted with the understanding that it would improve the standard of living of all people in the developing countries regardless of their gender and ethnic identity. The main focus was on economic growth through a process of industrialization and urbanization in order to ensure cultural and social change in society (Learner, 1958).

The growth oriented modernization model was further supported by the “human capital” approach in order to develop human resources (Rathgeber, 1990; Schultz, 1961). In this effort, education and training have long been considered an essential precondition for the modernization of an economy through the introduction of technology and behavioral change (Hallack, 1990; Rahman, 1996). Modernization theory claims that economic, socio-cultural and political changes are mutual and coherent in their impacts with respect to change (Inglehart, 1997). Education is perceived as the provider of modern values, within the framework of modernization theory—an intervention to change the traditional values of people in developing countries (Barua, 2009). In most cases, this modernization theory favored the approach of a *transfer of technology* in order to diffuse the western values among the people in the rural societies, while following indigenous knowledge and culture was considered backward and irrational (Selener, 1997). Through this process, modernization theory ignored the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts of the societies seen to be in need of development. Traditional cultural practices and values were labeled as impediments to economic growth and social development. Over the post-independence years, the theory of modernization continued to influence the newly independent nation states in Africa and Asia. This modernization model was pushed forward by the western-dominated nation states after World War II, replicating the socio-cultural values of the corporate economy that eventually forced the post-colonial nation states to assimilate western values and traditions in a passive manner (Parpart, Connelly and Barriteau, 2000). As Pieterse (2001: 23) elaborates:

modernization is essentially social engineering from above and an operation of political containment rather than democratization. American modernization projects such as community development and the Green Revolution exemplify this character of White revolution.

Modernization policies tend to destroy existing social capital and local economic resources for the sake of economic growth in order to construct artificial social fabrics through the application of liberal productivism in developing countries (Pieterse, 2001). Over the years, such an economic growth model has not improved the quality of life, but has created an environmental disaster and social and economic inequality within the social structure of developing countries.

Northern versus Southern Discourse

In the 1960s, social scientists in Latin America raised critical questions about modernization theory due to the continuing under-development of their society. Among these proponents, Frank (1969), Amin (1976) and Rodney (1982), rejected the Eurocentric model of modernization. They argued that underdevelopment was mainly the result of unequal and exploitative economic relations between the northern states and the southern states (Handelman, 2003; Parpart, Connelly and Barriteau, 2000). Dependency theory openly questioned the assumed mutual benefits of international trade and development stressed by European and American proponents of modernization and growth theories. The key argument of dependency theory was that socio-economic dependency (neo-colonialism) created under-development within the rural peripheries in Latin American nations in the name of modernization (Burkey, 1993). The dependency theorists outwardly rejected the acceptance of the western model of development in southern countries. They argued that underdevelopment was caused by the capitalist system of the northern world. This process created an environment of dependency within the system of southern nation states (Handelman, 2003). Dependency theory criticized the modernization model for concealing the relationship between development and under-development,

as if modernization happened independently in the developed world without exploitation (Pieterse, 2001). Frank (1969: 46) argued:

if the underdeveloped were really to follow the stages of growth of the now developed ones, they would have to find still other peoples to exploit into underdevelopment, as the now developed countries did before them.

Dependency theory emphasized the issue of un/equal distribution of wealth and social in/justice and predicted that the economic modernization model could only help a minority of the population in the developing countries. It redefined the notion of economic development for the benefit of impoverished populations (Handelman, 2003). In the words of Pieterse (2001: 61-62):

dependency theory—which serves by and large as the political economy of Third World nationalism—is stretched to apply to culture: protectionism, dissociation, endogenous development are prescribed for national culture as they have been for the national economy.

Despite its critical contribution to the development debate, dependency theory has failed to offer any meaningful clarification as to why, how and under what circumstances underdevelopment and development transpire. Furthermore, this theory failed to speak of the issue of interaction between power and income within and outside the home. Interestingly, both “modernization theory and Marxism, development thinking and dependency theory have in common is economism, centrism, and teleology” (Pieterse, 2001: 25). Similarly, the dependency theory ignores the issues of the internal dynamics of clan, race, ethnic oppression, and gender at the community level. It also disregards the question/place for non-capitalist modes of production.

Over the years, both theories have not addressed the contribution of people’s knowledge, science and culture to the national development process (Barua, 2009). By and

large, the Eurocentric model of economic development engendered and discouraged people-centered development in the developing countries (e.g. Bangladesh and Thailand). Shiva (2000: vii) clearly mentioned that, “the priorities of scientific development and R&D (rural development) efforts, guided by a western bias, transformed the plurality of knowledge systems into a hierarchy of knowledge systems”. Rather, the growth model of economic development created dependency within cultures on the prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. In fact, economic development based on the Eurocentric model could not address the economic crisis of the Asian tigers in the 1990s, despite its ambitious goals for high economic growth (Laird, 2000; Sudham, 2002).

As the growth model created a crisis in Asia in 1997, it raised critical questions for local thinkers and development planners regarding the survival of rural economy and culture on the Asian continent (Barua, 2009). Despite this fact, the King of Thailand in his annual address stated, “we have to go backwards, have to be careful and have to return to unsophisticated business ... We need to go back so that we can go forward” (The Nation, 1997). Despite this, the so-called developed nation states have become more arrogant in an effort to transplant their knowledge and model without acknowledging ‘local-specific knowledge’ and ‘cultural context’ in the developing countries (Norberg-Hodge, 1991). If development is not designed within the context of existing socio-cultural perspectives, it will be impossible to implement eco-centric and people-centered development for a community (Barua and Wilson, 2005). This is especially true for Buddhist societies in the southeastern part of Bangladesh and northern Thailand. “To ignore people’s knowledge (and culture) is almost to ensure failure in development” (Agrawal, 1995: 2). Thus, development must be orientated towards the social, cultural, spiritual and political conditions of people. Freire (1970: 4) explicitly mentioned that “ideas coming from another part of the world cannot simply be transplanted”. In truth, external impositions are not acceptable in ideal Buddhist societies.

People-Centered Development: Towards a People’s Science and Knowledge

The people-centered development model is grounded in the principles of social justice, inclusiveness and eco-centric development. It places emphasis on local knowledge, local economics, people's participation, spirituality and the self-reliance of the community (Barua, 2009; Barua and Wilson, 2005; Korten, 1990; Rahman, 1994). "People-centered development does not look into international charity (aid) as the answer to poverty. It seeks the productive use of local resources to meet local needs"¹ (Korten, 1990: 18) and it avoids massive expansion, high growth and profit. "There is no self-reliant way of development without primary reliance on peoples' resources including their own knowledge" (Rahman, 1994: 70). More importantly, people-centered development encourages people's knowledge, organization, and promotes participatory decision-making processes for achieving sustainable development and biodiversity. Its vision is quite relevant to the Buddhist notion of *eco-centric* development based on simplicity and the preservation of natural resources and towards the promotion of self-reliance and local cultural values. In an ideal Buddhist society, poverty is undesirable. More importantly, it does not propose to create *pseudo-desires* in order to create delusion within the society (Barua, 2009; Barua and Wilson, 2005). The Buddhist practice of economic development is very different from growth-centered development. It emphasizes liberation and refinement of human quality in order to control materialistic desires and greed in society for the welfare of all, without discrimination and disparity. The production of local resources for local needs is the most appropriate mode of economic life in a Buddhist society. Dependence on imports from a great distance and exports to unknown destinations are uneconomical from the Buddhist point of view. Buddhist economy stresses minimum consumption of natural resources in order to maintain harmony with nature

¹ For further clarification, see "The Manila Declaration on People's Participation and Sustainable Development" (A statement of the participants in the Inter-Regional Consultation on People's Participation in Environmentally Sustainable Development sponsored by the Asian NGO Coalition (ANGOC), Manila, Philippines and the Environmental Liaison Center International, Nairobi, Kenya).

and society. The minimum utilization of resources also helps to sustain a locally self-sufficient economy and to protect the natural environment. It confronts commodification of knowledge, science and the consumer paradigm (Jones, 1988; Norberg-Hodge, 1991; Schumacher, 1973; Sponsel and Natadecha-Sponsel, 1993). Schumacher (1973: 49) further contends that:

people who live in highly self-sufficient local communities are less likely to get involved in large-scale violence than people whose existence depends on world-wide systems of trade.

In this perspective, the theory of development must be of practical relevance to the local context and environment based on compassion for the benefit of the community (Ariyaratne, 1996; Barua, 2009; Sivaraksa, 1990). In other words, local knowledge, social values and wisdom are considered to be the key elements to the success of development in Buddhist societies. From this perspective, equitable distribution of resources within a community is the central theme of development (Barua and Wilson, 2005). There is no question of property or individual ownership even for the Buddhist monk according to the *Vinaya Pitak* (Niyogi, 1980). It advocates for the equality of all people in a society. Buddhist notion of development is “based on unity and mutual interdependence” (Matthiessen, 1991: xvi) in order to preserve “natural balance, appropriate technology, community life, and economic self-reliance” for eco-centric and people-centered development (Barua and Wilson, 2005: 238). It does not take life out of the context of its social, political and economic aspects of the people (Rahula, 1994). It is deeply rooted in the notion of *ahimsa* or non-injury for the welfare of all (Barua, 2003; Barua and Wilson, 2005). In explaining the Buddhist notion of development, Macy (1994: 149) states that “development is waking up – waking up to our true wealth and true potential as persons and as a society”. In this process, development cannot be separated from lands, plants and rivers (Kabilishing, 1990; Macy, 1990; Sponsel and Natadecha-Sponsel, 1997; Swearer, 1997). More importantly, the “knowledge gained through spiritual means can serve economic as well as the

psychological (social, cultural and political) needs” (Castellano, 2000: 24) of people.

Having considered some of the major differences between northern modernist discourses and practices of development and a people-centered Buddhist discourse and related practices of development, the following sections take up lived realities pertaining to development interventions around dams and forest-based livelihoods in Bangladesh and Thailand to substantiate the critique of the former and to propose the need for/viability of the later approach to development discourse and practice in these contexts.

3. Dams, Development, and Displacement of Ethnic Minorities

While promoting development interventions in developing countries, about 300,000 dams were built by 1997 in order to accelerate the process of industrialization through the scheme of hydropower for more economic growth and development out of which more than 45,000 were large dams. Such projects led to large-scale displacement of rural and indigenous people from their native lands. In Asia the construction of such large dams, in the name of economic development and modernization, mainly affected ethnic minorities (Carino, 1999; Hirsch, 1999). For example, the building of *Kaptai Hydro Power Dam* in southeastern Bangladesh in the 1960s displaced the *Chakma* and the *Marma* communities in the hills (Dewan, 1990; Moshin and Ahmed, 1996; Sopher, 1963; Zaman, 1996), including the inundation of some 10 square miles of reserved forest, 54,000 acres of cultivable land, and the displacement of approximately 100,000 ethnic communities of the hills (Bangladesh District Gazetteers, 1975; B.P. Barua, 2001; Samad 1994, 2000). Furthermore, Moshin and Ahmed (1996: 279) state:

The construction of the dam had far-reaching consequences for the tribal (ethnic communities) people. ... It made nearly 10,000 *Chakma* ploughing families having proprietary rights, and 8,000 *Chakma jhumia* families comprising more than 10,000 *Chakma*

persons landless and homeless. It also affected...1,000 *Marmas*.

This dam was constructed in 1964 with the financial assistance of international donor agencies, submerging 250 square miles of prime farming land in the hilly districts, which account for 40 percent of the total cultivable land belonging to ethnic communities. Such dislocation changed the ecology, geography and livelihoods of the people (Barua and Wilson, 2005). Because of this dislocation, some members of the *Chakma* and the *Marma* communities are forced to practice *jum* or shifting cultivation due to the scarcity of land in the valley even though many had earlier embraced plough cultivation. Such scarcity resulted mainly from the construction of Kaptai dam for hydropower. The dam itself may become useless because of sedimentation of the Kaptai Lake. Although the dam was supposed to produce 230 MW, it currently generates 50 to 100MW for industry (Gain, 1998).

Similarly, *Park Moon Dam* project of *Ubonrachathani* displaced and dislocated the ethnic minorities in northeast Thailand. Over five million people were relocated by force and thousands of Lao-speaking Isan people have been moved out due to the construction of the dam (Sudham, 2002; Walsh, undated). The dam was built in 1994 with the financial support of the World Bank. Although the dam was built to produce 316 megawatts of electricity, it produces only 40.93 megawatts (World Commission on Dams [WCD], 2000). Sudham (2007: 4) explicitly states:

The Dam has been proven to be a disastrous flop since it could not generate sufficient electricity as purported at the expenses of human sufferings and ecological disaster while the World Bank continues to make a handsome return from the loan.

The dam has seriously displaced local communities whose livelihoods traditionally relied on fishing in the Mun River.¹ Moreover, the numbers of fish species and

¹ Despite the protests, the dam was completed. Moreover, the Electricity Authority of Thailand (EGT) had also sought to build the Nam Choam on

populations have declined. Since the construction of the dam the livelihoods of the people have been adversely affected (Lohmann, 1998; Walsh, undated). Although compensation was offered by the government agencies to the people to relocate, this was seen by the affected communities as being economically unfeasible. Such development interventions have been implemented with the support of multilateral donors, projects that have destroyed forests, trees, and contaminated rivers in the name of development of rural communities (B.P. Barua, 2001; Barney, 2007; Kripakorn, 2007; Dewan, 1993; Moshin, 2003). Such rehabilitation program for the non-ethnic communities created more precarious conditions for the Hill people and instigated problems of land disputes in the area (Haque, 1990; Mohsin, 1997). Amar (cited in Barua, 2010 in press), a member of Chakma community reflects:

We became refugees in our own land. Our cultivable lands were submerged under water. ... Moreover, the outside people were rehabilitated in our lands. We constantly encounter problems from the settlers.

Similarly, Kiang of northeastern Thailand expresses (cited in Sudham, 2002:106):

The dammed dam could not generate electricity in the summer months due to insufficient flow of water. As a result it is left to rust and for taxpayers to pay the debt plus interest, despite immeasurable human suffering and the damage done to the people and the ecology.

Predictably, these destructive development projects triggered violence in southeastern Bangladesh and northern Thailand.¹ Such developmental structural violence (Kripakorn,

the upper Kwai River. The Nam Choan dam destroyed Thung Yai reserve and the forced to relocate the Karen minority. Despite the protests, Nam Chon Dam project was abandoned. (See Kripakorn, 2007)

¹ When Thailand stepped into a development process in accordance with the various five-year National Development Plan starting in the late 1950s onward, all natural resources were monopolized by the state for the benefit of economic expansion on its terms. The state did not consider the

2007) has displaced several ethnic communities and destroyed their self-sufficient local economies.¹ The people of these regions have lost access to common property resources and right of entry to grazing lands for cattle. More importantly, it has dehumanized and undermined people's aspiration, local science and knowledge. These culturally-biased mega projects (Shiva, 1989) are destroying the sustainable livelihoods and lifestyles of ethnic communities. In other words, the construction of *dams* neither offered sustainable livelihoods to the ethnic minorities of southeastern Bangladesh and northern Thailand nor has it been ecologically sustainable. Rather, western science-based development projects, in the quest for universalization in the name of progress and development has disregarded people's science and knowledge. On other hand, the primary quest of a people's science and knowledge is to search and look in to the nature of human beings as being an inseparable part of nature – a search for sustainable development (Barua in press, 2010). Despite these revelations, western science has been engaged in the promotion of industrial exploitation for growth and profit alone (Ariyaratne, 1996; Norberg-Hodge, 1991). Furthermore, development programs financed by international donors have neither rehabilitated nor addressed the needs and demands of rural ethnic communities in their homeland. Moreover, these development interventions also encouraged migration and settlement of non-ethnic communities/low land people in the lands of ethnic communities, favoring the settlers over the local inhabitants who have, as a result been marginalized even further in their own territories². Consequently, the ethnic communities became isolated as the settlers dominate

aspirations of the people whose way of life is one with nature (see Kripakorn, 2007).

¹ Cultural resistance to these developments in southeastern Bangladesh and northern Thailand by these groups is commonplace (for examples, see Brown, 2006; Darlington, 1998, 2000; Kripakorn, 2007; Moshin, 2003).

² The institutionalization of development was a strategic intervention as a counter-measure against insurgency of the hill people of northern Thailand and southeastern Bangladesh. Development agencies did not include the local people while implementing these projects and programs (see Sato, 2000; Tripura, 2000).

on their lands (Brown, 1992; Dewan, 1993; Haque, 1990; Kripakorn, 2007; Moshin 1997; Zaman, 1984).

4. Development, Forests and Livelihoods of Ethnic Communities

The enclosure, encroachment, and reservation of forests and lands were introduced with the assistance of the British colonial administration in southeastern Bangladesh and northern Thailand¹ to commercialize timber and teak (Brown, 1992; Darlington, 1998; Mustafa, 2002; Royal Forest Department, 2001; Sato, 2000). In other words, these encroachments of forests and lands were initiated in the name of scientific management in order to cultivate cash crops and practice commercial farming in these countries. While introducing market driven strategies and policies in the hills of southeastern Bangladesh and northern Thailand, ethnic minorities have not only been sidelined and alienated in the process of economic development; their traditional customary rights have been overlooked (Barney, 2007; Mustafa, 2002; Sato, 2000). While introducing these regulations, in these countries, the European colonizers never realized that the Buddha was born, became enlightened and died under these very trees in the forest. In Buddhist cultures and societies of South and Southeast Asia, trees, rivers, and forests are valued, honored and worshipped as the Buddha generated his knowledge in this diverse natural setting through meditation (Barua and Wilson, 2005; Sivaraksa, 1992; Sponsel and Natadecha-Sponsel, 1993). In other words, the natural environment of the forests and rivers have helped the intellectual evolution that energizes and promotes South and Southeast Asian

¹ Although Thailand was able to resist the physical colonization processes of the Europeans (British and French), it could not avoid the adoption of a western-styled property system and development model. Additionally, the Bowring Treaty signed between the United Kingdom and Siam (Thailand) on April 18, 1855 accelerated the western development agenda in Thailand. The British model of forestry was initiated in Thailand with the assistance of British Government for production of mainly timber and teak as cash crops. (See Sato, 2000; Sivaraksa, 1990)

Buddhist culture (Barua and Wilson, 2005; Macy, 1990; Panya and Sirisai, 2003).

The culture that has arisen from the forest has been influenced by the diverse processes of renewal of life, which are always at play in the forest, varying from species to species, from season to season, in sight and sound and smell. (Tagore,¹ cited in Shiva, 1989: 55)

Local knowledge on forest science did not perceive trees as merely wood and market commodities. Rather, it focused on diversity of form and function as the survival of the human species was dependent on the continuation of natural forests (Shiva, 1989). For this reason, the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPE) adopted the element 1.3 program for the development of forests:

Consistent with the terms of the Convention on Biological Diversity...encourages countries to consider ways and means for the effective protection and use of traditional forest-related knowledge, innovations and practices of forest-dwellers, Indigenous people and local communities, as well as fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from such knowledge, innovations and practices. (Battiste and Henderson, 2000: 260)

Despite this, forest policies have been modified and re-organized in order to displace local forest-dwellers for industrial growth and modernization. The process of modernization and industrialization led to intense deforestation in these regions through the building of dams and the plantations of fast-growing eucalyptus trees, rubber plants, timber or teak for markets and cash that effectively undermined natural forests. As a result, plant life has turned into a nonrenewable resource. Diverse varieties of

¹ The Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore was noted for his deep respect for Buddhism. He built the Visva-Bharti University in West Bengal on the model of the Buddhist monasteries of ancient India. The Visva-Bharati University is well known for its education and community orientated programs (see Banerjee, 1973).

trees have been replaced by mono-crop cultivation in the forests of northeast/northern Thailand and southeastern Bangladesh (Barua and Wilson, 2005; Barney, 2007; Gain, 2000; Mohammud, 2005; Poffenberger, 2006; Sudham, 2007; Taylor, 1993; Trakarnsuphakorn, 2007). Aung (cited in Barua 2010, in press), a member of the *Marma* community explicitly mentions:

In the past, villagers lead a simple life through the *jhum* cultivation (swidden agriculture) and plough cultivation. Our economy was deeply rooted in the forest and land. Unfortunately, the state authority restricted our access to the forest and land. Hence, our livelihoods have been dislocated. Money economy has become dominant. Now people are struggling to survive in our lands.

Likewise, Kiang (cited in Sudham, 2002:104), a member of Lao-speaking Issan community states:

Some of these wealthy and influential people have awesome power to log the forests, force millions of powerless beings off the land ...to plant the harmful and fast growing eucalypts trees in order to feed pulp and paper mills and exploit us to get rich fast. It is sheer greed that makes them do this.

The extension of commercial plantation has not only restricted community access to the forests, it has also driven away the hill people from their livelihoods (e.g. swidden agriculture/slash-and-burn, raising livestock and natural gardening). Moreover, this commercialization process has facilitated private ownership by the non-ethnic communities from low land areas for the production of cash crops. This commercialization practically displaced the natural forests in which more than fifty natural species of plants used to grow. Two or three types of trees that were destroyed used to provide fruit or lumber for people while a few other plants protected the surface soil and its fertility (Barney, 2007; Brown, 1992; Khemchalem, 1988). Moreover, the destruction of the forest created economic and environmental hardship for five million forest-dwellers in

Thailand (Asian Forest Network, undated). In other words, these development policies initiated the process of “detrribalization of tribal lands and forests” through such development encroachments in to tribal areas (Kapoor, 2007: 17). Additionally, western-style development interventions also disconnected the ethnic communities from the environment of nature and *siladhamma*.¹ In the view of Pongsak (1992: 90), a Thai forest Monk:

The balance of nature is achieved and regulated by the functions of the forest. So, the survival of the forest is essential to the survival of *siladhamma* and our environment. It’s all interdependent. When we protect our forest, we protect the world. When we destroy the forest, we destroy that balance, causing drastic changes in global weather and soil condition, causing severe hardships to the people.

Similarly, the loss of natural forests and encroachments of lands has further exacerbated the decline of the Buddhist ethical practice of the *dhutanga* (ascetic) of monks and Buddhist ethnic communities in the southeastern part of Bangladesh that provided the foundation for contemplative learning and knowledge in order to help build healthy communities without greed (Barua and Wilson, 2005)². A similar situation was also observed in Northeastern Thailand due to the influx of timber export business. While reflecting on the condition of Thailand, Taylor (1993: 169) states, “since the rapid expansion of cash-cropping and corresponding deforestation in the 1960s many of the traditional *dhutanga* sites in the northeast have disappeared”. This ascetic practice used to provide reflective education for the ordinary members of the community. They were educated to nurture the simple life

¹ *Sila* refers to morality/ethics and *Dhamma* refers to truth or justice or teaching.

² The Santi Asoka Buddhist ecological movement has been actively engaged in Thailand for forest preservation in northern Thailand. Such ecological movements are not active in the southeastern part of Bangladesh. (See Darlington, 1998, 2000; Barua and Wilson, 2005)

and preserve the forest for the well being of all creatures without discrimination.

As a result, the balance of the natural environment and the spiritual peace of people were lost to economic growth. In Buddhist culture, nature was considered sanctified and sacred (Aariyaratne and Macy, 1992; Sivaraksa, 1992). When nature is degraded, people tend to suffer. Kabilsingh (1990: 8) says that, “when we abuse nature, we abuse ourselves”. A human being is likely to make rightful use of nature so that he or she can grow above nature and realize his or her intrinsic spiritual potential. Buddhism promotes a calm and non-violent attitude toward nature. “Nature is the manifestation of truth and of the teachings. ... when we protect nature, we protect the truth and teachings” (Pongsak, 1992: 99). For Buddhists, the forest is the sacred place where the Buddha was enlightened. The Buddha lived with the wild animals in the forest. The preservation of forests and trees always has a place in Buddhist texts. In Buddhist education, nature is not separated from all living beings (Ariyaratne and Macy, 1992; Nash, 1987; Sponsel and Natadecha-Sponsel, 1997; Swearer, 1997; UNESCO, 1995). Plants, animals and human beings were considered to have the same inheritance. In other words, the forest is not a place for destruction or plundering but it is for animals and plants to live, and where human beings can live with animals and plants for ascetic practice (Bloom, 1970; De-Silva, 1992; Gomez, 1992).

Today, what we see in this region is the aggressive way of modern economic development and a disregard of local spiritual and ethical values. For Buddhists, it is not a question of choosing between “modern growth” and the “traditional way of life” – it is a question of finding the right path of development, the middle way between materialistic illusions and a nonviolent means for achieving the right livelihood in society (Barua and Wilson, 2005). In his famous *Mongal Suttas* (Blessing discourse), the Buddha speaks of the “happiness of living in an appropriate environment” (*Patirupa des vasoca*) (Aariyaratne and Macy, 1992: 80). In the Buddhist view, the natural environment should not be destroyed. It must be beautified and preserved for the benefit of all living beings in the world without disturbing the flora, fauna and rhythm of life (Barua and Wilson, 2005).

5. Concluding Reflections

In this paper, I have critically examined modern development interventions and its impact on the livelihoods of ethnic communities utilizing the discursive framework of Buddhist oriented people-centered development, cultural knowledge and politics in southeastern Bangladesh and northern Thailand. It has been argued that development policies and programs have followed the path of the colonial legacy and market driven model promoting centralized control through the process of imposition and domination. Dams and large-scale plantation schemes have not contributed to poverty alleviation – they have undermined viable alternative approaches and livelihoods of local communities. Moreover, these development interventions failed to recognize the psychological, social, cultural and spiritual aspects of local ethnic communities in the region. In other words, this development model disregarded the local knowledge, culture and natural environment. Conventional development actors are neither promoting *people-centered development* nor *nurturing cultural knowledge* for sustainable livelihood of ethnic communities in the hills and forests of Bangladesh and Thailand. Rather, all development interventions tend to promote the *trickle-down approach* to economic growth and progress, which continues to fail the communities in these regions in the name of development.

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"Thailand's Crisis and the Fight for Democracy"

Giles Ji Ungpakorn

Associate Professor Giles Ji Ungpakorn is a political commentator and dissident from Thailand. In February 2009 he had to leave Thailand for exile in Britain because he was charged with lèse majesté for writing a book criticising the 2006 military coup. His latest book will be of interest to academics, journalists and activists who have an interest in Thai politics, democratisation and NGOs.

"Thailand's Crisis and the Fight for Democracy"

Chapter 1: Red Shirts vs Yellow Shirts

Chapter 2: The PAD, NGOs and the Peoples' Movement

Chapter 3: The Crisis for the Monarchy

Chapter 4: Historical changes in Thailand

Chapter 5: The Civil War in the South

Chapter 6: A Personal Note

"Thailand's Crisis and the Fight for Democracy" is Giles Ji Ungpakorn's latest work concerning the on-going political crisis that has engulfed Thailand since the coup of 2006. The book analyses the nature of the deep political divisions between the "Red Shirts" and the royalist "Yellow Shirts", starting from the creation of the Peoples Alliance for Democracy (PAD), through the 2006 coup and up to the end of 2009. It argues against the idea that former Prime Minister Taksin is somehow anti-Monarchy and that this was the root cause of the 2006 coup. In trying to understand the political crisis, it must be seen in its entirety, including elite divisions and disputes, but also the roles of Civil Society activists and the constantly developing social movements which are made up of ordinary people.

The first chapter argues that Taksin's pro-poor policies and repeated election victories threatened the entrenched interests of the conservative ruling elites, including the military, the civilian bureaucracy and the political establishment. Although Taksin was no socialist and had no plan to build his political party into an activist movement, his overthrow by the military in 2006 sparked the building of a self-organised Red Shirt mass movement. To some extent this movement has moved beyond Taksin's control, some sections becoming radical and republican.

The second chapter deals with the politics of the Peoples' Movement and analyses how major sections of this movement, which include the NGOs, came to side with the royalist authoritarians against the majority of the poor and the democratic system as a whole. It questions mainstream democratisation theory and critiques previous views about

NGOs in the light of Thai events. This chapter discusses the extreme right-wing PAD movement which closed the international airports in late 2008. There is also a discussion of the labour movement.

The third chapter discusses the difficult issue of the Thai Monarchy. Unlike most academic commentators, Giles Ji Ungpakorn argues that the King is weak and lacking in character. His key role is the ideological justification for elite rule. He symbolises the “legitimacy” of coups and anti-democratic actions, especially those carried out by the military. The 2006 coup and the King’s old age and ill health have resulted in a crisis for the royalists. There is a growing republican movement in Thailand today. The chapter also discusses the *lèse majesté* law which the elites use against their political opponents.

The fourth chapter gives an historical background to Thai politics from the pre-capitalist era, through the turmoil of the 1930s and 1970s, up to the present day. This historical understanding is important in locating the dynamics of the ruling class and the changing politics of revolt from the time of the Communist Party through to the creation of the NGOs.

The civil war in the Muslim Malay south is discussed in chapter 5. Giles Ji Ungpakorn shows that the fundamental issue is Thai state repression and until this is dealt with politically, there can be no long term peace. Yet mainstream policy in Thailand is still aimed at a military solution.

The final chapter deals with personal political experiences and memories of his father, Dr Puey Ungpakorn. This chapter has the English version of the Red Siam Manifesto, which was issued immediately after leaving Thailand in February 2009. It also contains an appendix with the 8 paragraphs from Giles Ji Ungpakorn’s previous book, *A Coup for the Rich*, which the Thai police deemed to be *lèse majesté*.

The analysis in this book is unique and is not covered by mainstream books on Thai politics.

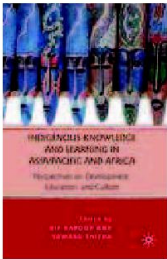
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Indigenous Knowledge and Learning in Asia/Pacific and Africa

Perspectives on Development, Education, and Culture

Edited by Dip Kapoor and Edward Shizha

Based on the research and relationships of primarily diasporic and indigenous authors, this interdisciplinary collection on indigenous knowledge and learning is a rare attempt at bringing together indigenous perspectives on development, education and culture and related indigenist-critiques of compulsory modernization, neoliberalism and colonialism from the Asia/Pacific and African contexts of indigeneity. Organized in relation to perspectives on/knowledge & learning concerning: development, formal education, communicative mediums, gender and health, this collection foregrounds the rich

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(CAI-APS)

The International University of Humanities and Social Sciences has recently established the **Central American Institute of Asia Pacific Studies (CAI-APS)** to promote Asia Pacific Studies in Central America through academic and research programs, publications and international conferences. The Asia Pacific region is very diverse therefore the CAI-APS will have a few specialized sub-regional academic and research programs e.g. South Asian Studies, Southeast Asian Studies etc.

The CAI-APS will continue to expand the scope of Asia Pacific Studies through international networking and outreach programs. Therefore, presently the CAI-APS is active in forging academic and research collaborations with relevant academic institutes and research organizations in Central America and the Asia Pacific region. Through cooperation with academic institutions, we wish to offer opportunities to students of Asia Pacific Studies from universities across the world to come and benefit from rich academic resources at the CAI-APS in the beautiful Costa Rica. Through research collaborations, the staff at the CAI-APS offers the opportunity to students to interact with our highly qualified research faculty to enhance the scope of their research. Also research institutions and individual researcher are invited to contact us to further discuss the possibility of collaboration in the area of Asia Pacific Studies.

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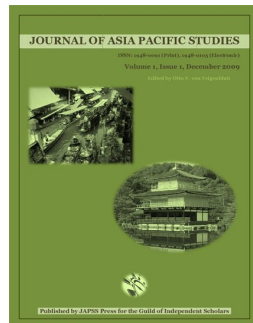
We are proud to announce that two faculty members, Professors Zahid Shahab Ahmed and Otto F. von Feigenblatt, have been elected Fellows of the prestigious Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland in 2009 for their contribution to Asia Pacific Studies. The Royal Asiatic Society is considered to be the oldest and most prestigious learned society dealing with Asian Studies and membership is highly selective. IUHS is proud to have the only Fellows of the Royal Asiatic Society in Central America as part of its faculty.



In a picture, director of the CAI-APS meeting the SAARC Secretary General, Dr. Sheel Kant Sharma at the SAARC Secretariat in Kathmandu, Nepal, 14 September 2009

CAI-APS Publications

The institute is proud to have launched the Journal of Asia Pacific Studies (JAPS) which is published in collaboration with the Guild of Independent Scholars. You can access the JAPS issues online: <http://www.iapss.org/iapsdec09.html>



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For more information about the CAI-APS please contact the director, Zahid Shahab Ahmed at: shahab@iuhss.edu.net

South Asia Centre for Peace (SACP)



South Asia Centre for Peace (SACP) is a non-government and not-for-profit organization based in Pakistan. *While striving for peace in South Asia*, SACP is working at the regional level through collaborations with likeminded individuals and organizations across the region. The organization aims to become not only a regional think-tank in the area of peace studies but also a centre on peace education and peace awareness through research and media campaigns. The key objectives of the centre are to:

1. build and work in collaboration with a network of peace organizations and individuals in South Asia;
2. develop an exclusive peace education curriculum for South Asia to eliminate all kinds of social evils such as stereotypes, prejudices, violence against women, religious extremism etc. Special emphasis will be made to develop first of its kind curriculum on rural peacebuilding;
3. spread the message of de-nuclearization, disarmament and non-violence by lobbying against growing nuclearization, arms race and violence in the region;
4. facilitate further study on the conflict issues by bringing together diverse viewpoints and encourage creative thinking to enhance the peace process faced with impasse. The aim is to put forward a set of recommendations for policymaking at bilateral level and regional level through SAARC.
5. foster inter-faith and inter-cultural harmony through dialogues on inter-faith harmony and cultural exchange programmes;
6. engage with journalists from South Asia by offering training workshops on “peace journalism” because by acquiring necessary skills journalists have a potential to contribute to peace in South Asia; and to
7. collaborate with extra-regional organizations and interested individuals to understand regional dynamics so as to contribute towards peacebuilding in South Asia.

Mission

The mission of the SACP is to bring together organizations and individuals having a common cause of promoting peace in South Asia. Our mission is not only to end wars and violent conflicts in the region, both at intrastate and interstate levels, but also to address increasing poverty besides emerging human security threats such as water, food, health and environmental security vis-à-vis climate change, and terrorism which is as much a human security as a traditional security threat.

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