

CORPORATE, TECHNOLOGICAL, EPISTEMIC AND
DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES:
Mapping the Political Economy Of University Futures

In

in Jaishree Odin and Peter Manicas, eds., *Globalization and Higher Education*
(Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 202-223.

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Trends of changing student expectations (access to global systems of knowledge, including transparency and international accreditation), the internet (virtual education, moving from campus center to person centered, and far more customized, individually tailored), global corporatization (reduced state funding for universities and the development of a market culture on campuses) and transformed content (multicultural education) will dramatically influence all the world's universities. Indeed the potential for dramatic transformation is so great that in the next fifteen to twenty years, it is far from certain that universities as currently constituted - campus based, nation-funded, and local student-oriented - will exist. Certainly, the current model for the university will cease to be the hegemonic one.

Of course, rich universities like Harvard will be able to continue without too much challenge, but the state-supported University will be challenged. Asian nations where education is defined by the dictates of the Ministry of Education too will face the efficiency oriented, privatization forces of globalization. Their command and control structure will be challenged by globalization – market pressures, technological innovations and the brain gain (that is, from graduates returning home from the USA and England).

Corporatization:

Corporatization will create far more competition than traditional universities have been prepared for. Corporatization is the entrance of huge multinational players into the educational market. Total spending in education in America was 800\$ billion US in 2001, estimates *The Economist*. By 2003, the private capital invested in the US will total 10 billion dollars, just for the virtual higher education market and 11 billion dollars in the private sector serving the corporate market. Indeed, John Chambers, CEO of Cisco systems, calls “online education the killer application of the internet.” Jeanne Meister, president of Corporate University Xchange(CUX), expects that by 2010 there will be more corporate universities in the United States than traditional ones. They are and will continue to challenge the academy’s monopolization of accreditation.. Globalization thus provides the structure and the Net the vehicle. Pearson, for example, a large British media group that owns 50% of the Economist, is betting its future on it, hoping that it can provide the online material for the annual two million people that will be seeking a degree online. Motorola, Accenture, Cisco and McDonolds as well as News Corporation all seek to become respectable universities. Cisco Networking Academies have trained 135000 students in 94 countries. Motorola has a new division called Motorola Learning and Certification which resells educational programs. Accenture has purchased a former college campus and spends 6.5% of its revenues on educating employees.

Of course, much of this is not new. Corporation education has always been big. What is new is that corporate universities seek to enter markets traditionally monopolized by academics. And, given pressures on corporation to be more inclusive of minorities, to be more multicultural and more triple bottom line oriented (prosperity, planet plus people), it may be that corporate universities embrace diversity at a quicker pace than traditional universities.

Clearly when billion dollar corporations want to enter the market – a rapidly growing market, especially with the aging of the population and with national barriers to education slowly breaking down – the challenge to

the traditional university becomes dramatic, indeed, mission, if not life threatening. With an expanding market of hundreds of millions of learners, money will follow future money. Money will transform education, at the very least, dominate the discourse who and what values are most important – is the student, academic, administrator, community or are corporate interests first, remains the answered question.

For community education and for communities - traditionally tied to a local regional university – seeking economic vitality, their future will become far more daunting. As universities globalize, corporatize and virtualize – moving services to low cost areas - place will more and more disappear.

This is a far cry from the classical European, Islamic or Indic university, concerned mostly with moral education. Moreover, as in Bologna in the 10th century, the university was student-run. If the professor was late, he was fined by students, some teachers were even forced to leave the city. Paradoxically, corporatization with its customer-first ideology may return us to a student-run university. The Academy beware!

University Dimensions:

The point is that at one time the university was student-run, we know that it is no longer so, if anything it is administration-run. Who will run it in the future? To understand this we need to explore the different dimensions of the University. The University is partly about social control, and it is also about baby-sitting. What to do with teenagers? How to keep them out of trouble? The other dimension is national development. We have schools to convince everyone that we're a good people, that we have the best system. Each nation engages in social control, it uses education to give legitimacy to the nation-state, to make good patriots. We also have university for job training, the entire practical education moment. - the small community colleges, where the goal is to go to a small college to get practical education so that one can get a real job after graduation.

Thus the classical view of knowledge for the cultivation of the mind has been supplanted by the industrial model. And, as you might expect the big

growth in jobs in the university are in the area of the bureaucracy. Whereas tenure is being eliminated in favor of part-time employment throughout the world, the university administration continues to expand.

Of course, the nature of administration is as well changing: it is being forced to become far more student-friendly, as with government subsidies of education being reduced, it is students who pay academic and administration wages. Fees provide the backbone of the private university. Customer satisfaction and student retention become far more important as compared to the traditional state subsidized university. As Flora Chang of Tamkang University said: "Student satisfaction through customer surveys, student retention data, and alumni loyalty are crucial factors" for our future success.

One key question will be: what can be automated? Who can be replaced by the internet and web education? Perhaps both - faculty and the administration - will be in trouble. This is the debate: too many administrators or too many professors. A third perspective is - a market perspective - not enough students and thus each university believes it must globalize and seduce students from all over the world attend their physical campus as well as take courses from their virtual campuses. However, generally, most universities still think of students in narrow ways. As young people or as students from one's own nation. But with the ageing population and with the internet (with bandwidth likely to keep on increasing), one's paying students can be from anywhere.

The other classical view of university was academic-led - a shared culture focused on scholarship and science - but that too is been challenged. And of course the .com model even challenges what the university should look like. Should it be physical-based or virtual? Should it be based on a model of hierarchy or a networked model?

But for academics, the biggest challenge is the university as a corporation. And we know in the U.S. corporate funding for the University has increased from 850 million in 1985 to 4.25 billion US\$ less than a decade later. In the last twenty years it has increased by eight times. It is likely that East Asian nations will follow this pattern. So far it is the state that has

exclusively engaged in education. However, globalization is opening up this space in East Asia with foreign and local education suppliers seeking to reduce the controls of the Ministry of Education.

Thus the big money is coming from corporations and funding from the government is gradually being reduced years as per the dictates of the globalization model. While most presidents of the university would prefer a different model, they have no choice. More and more education is becoming an economic good. Humanity departments are being downsized throughout the world since the contribution to jobs is not direct. Unfortunately, they forget the indirect contribution, that of creating smart, multi-lingual, multi-cultural individuals – what some call social capital. However, in East Asia language remains central, necessary to understand other cultures, train civil servants and open up new markets.

However, there are some quite insidious affects of corporatization. First, information is no longer open, as corporations use it for profit making. A survey of 210 life-science companies in 1994 found that 58% of those sponsoring academic research required delays of more than six months before publication. The content of science itself changes as the funding increased. In a 1996 study published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 98% of papers based on industry-sponsored research reflected favorably on the drugs being examined as compared with 79% based on research not funded by the industry. Now what accounts for that 19% variation? And how will the public then see the university? As with the medical system, once patients believe that doctors are beholden to certain drug companies or web sites they are less likely to trust them. This holds true for university research as well.

But there is another side to globalization. In 1989 in the U.S. there were 364 new start up companies on the basis of a license to an academic invention. University technology transfer activities generated 34 billion dollars in U.S.\$ supporting 280,000 jobs.

So the university is becoming more global and also producing incredible wealth, so there are two sides to globalization.

Virtualization: the .com revolution

The .com revolution as well has mixed reviews. For example, at one Australian university, over night, the prefix for academic emails was changed from edu.au to .com. The academics asked why did this occur? While some were upset that this happened without consultation, others were upset that the moral basis of the university was being transformed, they were deeply troubled by corporatization. The administration responded that we can no longer compete globally as an @.edu.au institution and instead had to become a .com. Eventually the university went back to edu.au as the pressure from academics was too great. With the .com world having lost its shine, perhaps it was a wise move.

But the university administration could see the writing on the wall. The traditional model of the classical liberal arts national subsidized university was ending – a new model was emerging. The mistake they made was not engaging in dialogue with others, not living the .com network model but instead using the power-based secrecy model of the industrial era.

The other problem that administrations have not yet begun to see is that much of middle-management can and is likely to be eliminated. The emerging knowledge economy – via the net and future artificial intelligence systems - will lead to dis-intermediation. With a good information system, you don't need all the secretaries, the clerks, as well as those higher up the ladder. Of course, the politics of job firing, retraining, is a different matter and central to how the future university and overall world economy is to be organized in the future.

In Taiwan, surveys at Tamkang University, Taiwan, found that Professors and Administrators were enthusiastic about virtualization. Professors were enthusiastic as this would free their time spent at the university, increase interaction with colleagues and students, and administrators saw the cost savings. Deans saw it eroding their power base – control of the faculty – and students saw it taking away from what they valued most – face to face (not face to blur, ie huge classes) education. They desired a degree of broadband but not virtual classes.

Summarizing these two sections, it appears that the nature of what constitutes education is changing from being academy focused to being customer student focused; from being campus focused to being virtual; from being state subsidized to being corporate funding. Overtime – and certainly these processes are uneven with fits and starts, the university may become a process, it is no longer simply a place, with fixed 9-5 work patterns, with fixed schedules for classes. It can become a network.

Multicultural Realities:

But there is a deeper possibility of change – this the epistemic bases of knowledge, of content, of what is taught, how it is taught and who teaches – essentially this is the multicultural turn.

In its tokenistic form, multiculturalism became a government fad of the last decade in postindustrial societies, its most controversial feature being its excesses of 'political correctness'. In its deeper nature it is about inclusiveness. At heart, argues Ashis Nandy, multiculturalism is about dissent, about contesting the categories of knowledge that modernity has given us. And, even with multiculturalism often criticized and coopted, used strategically to ensure representation, still the future is likely to be more and more about an ethics of inclusion instead of a politics of exclusion. Of course, the struggle will be long and hard, and more often than not, instead of new curriculum, there will be just more special departments of the Other.

Deep multiculturalism challenges what is taught, how it is taught, the knowledge categories used to teach, and the way departments enclose the other. It provides a worldview in which to create new models of learning and new universities which better capture the many ways students know the world. As futures researcher Paul Wildman reminds us, this can extend to concepts such as multiversities and even 'subversities' which encourage participation from scholars and students who dwell at the periphery of knowledge. In this form, multiculturalism goes beyond merely inclusion of 'other' ethnicities, to a questioning of the whole paradigm of western scientific rationalism on which centuries of university traditions are

founded. In this perspective, multiple ways of knowing including spiritual or consciousness models of self, in which as James Grant for the Mahrishi University of Management and Marcus Bussey of The Ananda Marga Gurukul University assert, the main driver in transforming universities of the next century is an explosion of inner enlightenment, a new age of higher consciousness about to begin. Thus, there are three levels to this. The first is inclusion of others, in terms of who gains admission into universities, who teaches, ensuring that those on the periphery gain entrance. A second level is less concerned with quantifiable representation and more with inclusion of others' ways of knowing – expanding the canon of what constitutes knowledge as well how knowledge is realized. A third level is what Indian philosopher P.R. Sarkar calls, the liberation of the intellect, education that transcends the limitation of geographical sentiments, religious sentiments, race-based sentiments and even humanism, moving toward a planetary spiritual consciousness and touching upon the spiritual.

In terms of curriculum and disciplinary boundaries, multiculturalism challenges the notion that there is only one science. Western science instead of being seen as a quest for truth is considered to be one way of knowing among many. There are can alternative sciences – feminist science, Tantric science, Islamic science. They are still engaged in empirical and verifiable research but the questions asked, the ethical framework are different. Generally, the type of research is more concerned with indigenous problems, with local concerns. It is less violent to nature, toward “subjects” and more concerned with integrated self and other, mind and body, intellect and intuition.

What’s happening throughout universities is that scholars are contesting the content of scholarship – how, for example, history is taught, asking are all civilizations included, or are only Western thinkers, Western notions of discovery and culture honored.

Many years ago, I give a lecture at an Australian university and questioned how they were teaching their main course on World History. I noted that the grand thinkers from Islamic, Sinic and Indian civilizations were not included. Why? And when other civilizations were briefly mentioned they were written as threats to the West or as barbarians. Women and nature as

well were absent. I argued that this creates a view of history that is not only inaccurate but violent since other cultures see themselves through these hegemonic eyes. Instead of creating an inclusive history of humanity's struggle, a history of one particular civilization becomes valorized.

While it is unlikely that the professor who teaches this course will change, students have changed. They want multiple global perspectives. They understand that they need to learn about other cultures from those cultures' perspectives. Globalization in the form of changing immigration patterns is moving OECD nations by necessity toward better representation, irrespective of attacks of multicultural as "political correctness."

The multicultural challenge to the traditional university can be defined as below:

- Challenge to western canon
- Challenge to intellect as the only way of knowing
- Challenge to divorce of academic from body and spirit – challenge to egghead vision of self/other
- Challenge to modernist classification of knowledge
- Challenge to traditional science (feminist, islamic, postnormal, indian)
- Challenges pedagogy, curriculum as well as evaluation – ie process or culture, content and evaluation or what is counted.

We are already seeing the rise of multiculturalism in OECD nations. For example, at one conference in Boston, when participants were asked to list the five American authors they believed most necessary for a quality education, they placed Toni Morrison second and Maya Angelou third. Others on the top ten, included Malcolm X and James Baldwin. The first was Mark Twain.

The multicultural perspective challenges as well the foundation of knowledge. Multicultural education is about creating structures and processes that allow for the expression of the many civilizations, communities and individuals that we are.

Multicultural education contests the value neutrality of current institutions such as the library. For example, merely including texts from other

civilizations does not constitute a multi-cultural library. Ensuring that the contents of texts are not ethnocentric is an important step but this does not begin to problematize the definitional categories used in conventional libraries. For example, in the multicultural perspective, we need to ask what a library would look like if it used the knowledge paradigms of other civilizations? How would knowledge be rearranged? What would the library floors look like? In Hawaiian culture, for example, there might be floors for the Gods, for the aina and genealogy. In Tantra, empirical science would exist alongside intuitional science. Floor and shelve space would privilege the superconscious and unconscious layers of reality instead of only focusing on empirical levels of the real. In Islam, since knowledge is considered *tawhidic* (based on the unity of God), philosophy, science and religion would no longer occupy the discrete spaces they currently do. Of course, the spatiality of "floors" must also be deconstructed. Information systems from other civilizations might not privilege book-knowledge, focusing instead on story-telling and dreamtime as well as wisdom received from elders/ancestors (as in Australian Aboriginal) and perhaps even "angels" (either metaphorically or ontologically).

A multi-cultural library might look like the world wide web but include other alternative ways of knowing and being. Most certainly knowledge from different civilizations in this alternative vision of the "library" would not be relegated to a minor site or constituted as an exotic field of inquiry such as Asian, Ethnic or Feminist studies, as are the practices of current libraries. The homogeneity of the library as an organizing information system must be reconstructed if we are to begin to develop the conceptual framework of multi-cultural education.

Thus, not only is the structure of the University changing, that is, virtualization, but the content as well is being transformed. Now what does this mean, in terms of policy prescriptions? If you want your university to have a bright future, you have to understand the changing nature of the student – changing demographics (older, more females) and changing expectations (more multicultural). Generally, while getting a job will always be important, the equation has changed to planet, prosperity and people, that is, a strong concern for the environment, for wealth creation and for engaging with others and other cultures.

For academics, the multicultural is as well about the changing role of the Professor. For example, the university becomes not just a site of gaining knowledge but a place for experiencing other dimensions of reality, at the very least, for balancing body, mind and spirit.

Democratizing the Feudal Mind:

The role of academics is changing as well. This is the generally the hardest notion for senior professors to swallow – the democratization of the university. We want democracy for government, but we don't want democracy for universities .

The university remains feudal. For example, while the economy in East Asian nations has transformed, that is, feudalism was destroyed, the feudal mind has not changed. This is the grand question for East Asian nations. How to create a culture of innovation, how to go to the next level of economic development, instead of copying, creating. To create an innovative learning organization, you can't have a culture of fear. This means real democracy in details like what type of seating is in the room. As well as: can students challenge professors? Can junior professors challenge senior academics without fear of reprisal. Innovation comes from questioning.

In British systems, the university structure is as well profoundly feudal. A strong distinction is made between the professor and the lecturer. Indeed, the professor is high on top the pyramid with others way below (and the president of the university residing on the mountain top).

Thus can we democratize the university? Of course, it is difficult to do this as few of us like being challenged. We all have our view of reality, our favorite models, and we believe we are correct. But creating a learning organization means challenging basic structures and finding new ways to create knowledge and wealth. It doesn't mean always going to the President for solutions. Transforming the feudal university is very difficult.

However, I am not discounting the importance of respect for leadership, for

discipline and hardwork – challenging authority doesn't mean being rude, it means contesting the foundations for how we go about creating a good society.

Along with a learning organization, however, is the notion of a healing organization. Merely, focused on learning forgets that much of our life is spent focused on relationship – with our inner self, with colleagues, with nature and cosmos and with the university itself. As universities change their nature – reducing tenured positions, increasing teaching loads – health becomes an issue. Sick institutions can emerge quite quickly, unless there is a focus on creating ways to learn and heal, to develop sustainable and transformative relationships.

However, democratization is not facile given the trends mentioned above. For the Asian academic, for example, the choices shrink daily. Her or she can choose between the following alternatives – the 4 big M's. The first M is the Ministry of Education. Choosing this career means grant research focused only on the Ministry's needs, and it means being dependent on government. When states go wrong, or punish dissent as in Malaysia or Indonesia, or Pakistan and India, losing one's job and prison are real possibilities. Text are written with the other nation as the enemy, as in India and Pakistan. The professor must teach these texts or lose his or her position. One pakistani academic, for example, was jailed for giving a lecture on alternative futures that contested the notion of Pakistan as an eternal state.

The second choice is the Mullah, or the cleric. This is money from not the corporation or State but the competing worldview to the modern, the Islamic. In real terms this has meant soft and strong version of Wahibism – the creation of International Islamic Universities with Saudi funds as in Kaula Lumpur, Malaysia. Freedom of inquiry is problematic as well here, as boundaries of inquiry are legislated by the University's charter. Instead of spiritual pluralism what results is uncritical traditionalism.

If we combine the first two choices we get a combination of religious hierarchy with feudal and national hierarchy, creating very little space for the academic. In the Indian context, this would be the brahmin who goes to Oxford to study economics, joins the world bank and returns to Delhi to

work with the Ministry of Economic Development.

The third M is "Microsoft", focusing one's career on developing content for the new emerging universities. This is the quickly developing area of Net education. The cost for the academic here too are high – it is contract work, often a loss of face to face, of collegial relationships, of the academy as a moral mission. Volume and speed are likely to become more important than integrity and the inner life.

The final M is McDonaldization. This is the move to the convenience 7/11 university, the Australian model. Large student volume, in and out, with academics having heavy teaching loads. A professorship essentially becomes focused on gaining grants.

Leaving these M's is a possibility, dependent on the nature of the state one lives under. However, the traditional imagination of the university is not a possibility. The route in the last 50 years was the escape to the Western university, but with these universities too in trouble, this route seems blocked.

So far I have touched upon four trends: corporatization, virtualization, multiculturalism and democratization as well as basic missions of the University. Given these trends and missions, what are the possibilities for the university, what are the possible structures?

Possible Structures:

I see three possible structures. One is being a University leader, joining the world's elite, Harvard, Stanford, Oxford. The focus then is: "We are only going to get the best bright students around the world." But the challenge to this model comes from the .com world. The big money is unlikely to be in teaching but in content design. The issue is though once you put your name on cdroms, on internet content, does that diminish your brand name, its exclusivity. If everyone can enter an elite university's web course, is the university still elite? This is the issue of franchising. Should you focus on a small customer base that can pay a lot or become like the University of Phoenix (the largest university in the USA, offers no tenure, uses short courses as well as flexible delivery. A kind of just-in-time education).

For large universities, there are two clear choices – elite university or low cost producers with hundreds of millions of new students all over the world as potential purchasers. A third choice for the smaller university is the niche university –focused in a particular area of excellence. Not trying to be too much, just focused on one particular area (regional concerns, for example).

The question for the traditional university is new competition from global players: multi-media corporations, elite universities that are expanding and branding as well as low-cost producers.

These issues are already of concern in the USA, and soon they will be crucial here as well. It is harder to see this in East Asian nations (and those colonized by England) since the State plays such a strong role in education. But eventually in five or ten years the competition will come here as well. All universities will find themselves in a global market.

However, a university can find ways to be all these structures, developing different campuses. One could be focused on life-long learning, short courses. A second could be research focused, linked to government and industry. A third could be elite based, having student friendly teacher-student faculty ratios. The Net could link them all, or there could be a fourth virtual campus, a net university. In these worlds, what stands out is the loss of community education, of the university focused on place. However, as universities homogenize through globalization, communities may find niches.

Scenarios for the Future:

The next question is what are the probable scenarios for the future of the university. We use scenarios to reduce uncertainty. Scenarios are also important in that they also help us rethink the present – they give us a distance from today.

Earlier futures studies focused entirely on single point prediction. The field then moved to scenario planning, to alternative futures. But now, it is moving to capacity development, with creating learning organizations

where foresight is a continuous part of what the organization does.

Studies that examine corporations that have survived over a hundred years found that the one key factor in explaining longevity was the capacity to tolerate ideas from the margin. Even for corporate universities this is crucial – the capacity to tolerate dissent, indeed, to nurture different ideas, new ideas from the edge.

In terms of scenarios, the first one is the Star Alliance model. I use this term from the airlines - where the passenger is always taken care of – there is easy movement from one airline to the other. Everything is smooth. For the university, this would mean easy movement of student credits, faculty and programs. A student could take one semester at Stanford, and a second semester in Tamkang, and a third semester at Singapore National University. Professors could also change every semester. So it means a similar web of movement. Star alliance works because customers are happy. The airlines are happy because they get brand loyalty. The student might say “I know if I join this university, my credits are transferable. I could access the best professor, I could access the best knowledge in the world.

The weakness in this scenario is the proportioning of funds as well as the costs of movement to the local community, to community building, to place itself.

The second scenario is what I call, Virtual Touch. This vision of the future of the university combines the best of face-to-face pedagogy (human warmth, mentoring) with virtual pedagogy (instant, anywhere in the world, at your own time and speed). If it is just technology then you get bored students, staring at a distant professor. But if it is just face-to-face you don't get enough information. The universities who can combine both will do very well. Ultimately that will mean wearable wireless computers. We already know that in Japan they use the wireless phone to dial up a website and find the out the latest movie, or weather or stock quote.

In 10 years, it is going to be the wearable computer, so we're going to have a computer with us all the time. I can find out everything, I can find out the minerals in water for example, testing to see if it is clean or not. And that

technology is almost developed now. I can find out where was my microphone was made. Was it made in China, in Taiwan, in the U.K. I just dial up and I can get product information. And this information will be linked to my values, what type of world I want to see. Thus, I'll purchase products that are environmentally friendly, where the corporation treats women well. And students will see university courses in the same way: is it well taught, what is the professor like, how much democracy is in the class, what are the values of the University?

The third scenario is: A university without all walls. It's means the entire world becomes a university . As Majid Tehranian writes: "If all goes well, the entire human society will become a university without walls and national boundaries." We don't need specific universities anymore since the university is everywhere, a true knowledge economy wherein humans constantly learn and use their knowledge to create processes that create a better fairer, richer, happier world.

The Future of the Profession:

Let me now return to the future of the academic. What is the role of the academic in this dramatically changing world? The first possibility is the traditional professor – this is the agent of authority, great in one field but knowing very little about other fields. They may know Physics but not complexity theory. They are useful in that they are brilliant in one area but not so useful since they have a hard time adapting to change.

The second role is the professor as web content designer. While the current age-cohort is unlikely to engage in these activities, younger people will – what has been called digital natives. For example, my children – 8 and 6 – clearly see their future in the design of new digital technologies. Other young people as well see knowledge as quite different than we do. They see knowledge as quick, as interactive, as multi-disciplinary and as always changing. They want to be web designers and information designers. So the old role of academics was to write books, the new role is that of creating new types of interactive content. And the content will likely be far more global, multicultural than we have so far seen. It appears to be an entirely different world being created.

That also means, if you are the web designer, your student becomes key. This means using action learning methods. Action learning means that the content of the course is developed with the student. While the professor may have certain authoritative knowledge, his or her role is more of a mentor, the knowledge navigator to help the student develop his or her potential within his or her categories of what is important.

This will be good news for academics who retain their positions. Most of the professors I speak with would prefer less teaching – information passing out – and more communication. The mentoring role is far more rewarding, personal. The old school was the long lecture. The new way of thinking is just tell the student to go the web and find out. Afterwards there can be a discussion. The Professor then has to learn how to listen to students' needs and not just to lecture to them.

What is unique about our era is that we now have the technology to do this. Do we have the political will, the wisdom?

Community and the University

What do these trends mean for the University's relationship with community? Clearly it is under threat. It is global corporatization or spaceless time that is far more important than local and immediate time. Community, however, can be an antidote to many of the threats. It could unite academics, falling back on each other to question the future of the university. On a more instrumental note, regional universities, or universities specifically designed and developed for a locale are a niche that is likely to become more, not less, important as the trends of globalization, virtualization, multiculturalism and democratization continue. Certainly, democracy needs the notion of community and multiculturalism is essentially about more and more community, higher and higher levels of inclusion.

There are four possibilities for Community Spaces

1. Alliance with other communities – like minded learning communities.
This is a novel challenge, and means moving outside the national arena

as defining and searching for other communities in similar situations. Sister cities is a dimension of this, but far more important are real contact not photo opportunities.

2. Alliance with the corporate world – attract businesses to survive.
3. Communities aligning with social movements, that is creating moral space. Prosperity is an issue here, however, a strong local community can ensure that basic needs are met, even if globalized wealth does not raise everyone's wealth (at least local strength will ensure that globalization does not reduce local wealth)
4. The fourth possibility is that communities will themselves transform., There only hope is create Global-local spaces since academics are now becoming virtual and global. Only a program that has local place dimensions with global mobility dimensions can prosper.

Dissenting Futures:

Let me conclude this essay with the issue of dissent. What makes the role of the academic unique is that he or she can challenge authority. When the system becomes too capitalistic, this can be questioned. If it is too religious, this too can be countered. All the excesses of the system can be challenged. And who can do this? Those who work for the government can't since they fear losing their jobs. Those belonging in the church, temple or mosque can't since they are ideologically bound. And this is the problem with globalization, by making efficiency the only criteria, moral space is lost. As academics we should never, I believe, lose sight of our responsibility to create new futures, to inspire students, to ask what-if questions, to think the unthinkable, to go outside current parameters of knowledge. This is our responsibility to current and future generations.

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