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Introduction

“Global Mind Constructing”

Globalization can be defined as integration of everything with everything else. This simplistic definition has the virtue of being clear. Clarity is a rarely present feature in the discourse and debate on globalization. Globalization is neither bad nor good. Globalization is not an opinion, nor an ideology or an anti-ideology (anti-capitalism). It is neither a constructive state of mind, nor destructive secularism. It is not just the integration of capital, finance and markets. Globalization is simply the Reality. Perhaps, more than everything else – it is not a system, but a process. A process operating on the dyadic relationship of order and chaos. Certainly, this is not a linear process; it does not have a history to narrate.

Globalizing processes (not globalization) unfolded often through history. Referring to a historical segmentation of Western civilization, several can be considered: Biblical times, the Hellenistic era, the Romans, Christianity, the Renaissance, Muslim empires, European expansion, the Enlightenment, the Industrial revolution, and Modern ideologies. In the past these processes were “contributions” to globalizing societies; now in the present, globalization manifests as an actual “global/total” process for the first time.

At present, we are not able to govern a “global/total” globalization, perhaps for the simple reason that is not governable. The difference with the past is substantial, in the sense that in the past globalizing processes were governed by ruling powers, i.e. more or less governed by “empires” often, less often by nations. These powers were eventually defined, circumscribed, institutionalized, hierarchically organized, and then became capable of exercising power over economies and civic societies. They interacted amongst themselves through the economy, diplomacy, and war.

Today, in a reality of liquidity, powers of all kinds are defined, redefined and diluted – with many new players emerging. A multitude of players-for-power are present in the international arenas: multinational corporations, INGOs, supranational entities, migration, terrorism, and organized crime. State boundaries are losing significance, national states’ management capabilities over their societies are being eroded irreversibly.

The individual (the individual human being, the individual citizen, the individual laborer) is undergoing a painful process of mutation. Presented with a cascade of new, unedited, unknown challenges, he or she should optimally understand first, and then respond, adapt, and integrate. This individual must now navigate liquidity and uncertainty as a permanent condition. The most challenging, disruptive, and painful task is that of having to adopt a “global mind” approach to everyday existence – an almost “mission impossible”.

The role of higher education has become increasingly important – it is very much about knowledge transfer, and integration of the individual with technology, and also importantly the integration of the individual with society, and with civic society. It also assumes a crucial role in terms of identity: progressing from “identity politics,” and moving toward “cosmopolitan” perceptions. Now, higher education is also about “global mind constructing”.

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