

Testimony of

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To the

Committee on Science and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
July 26, 2007

GLOBALIZATION AND THE UNIVERSITY:
REALITIES IN AN UNEQUAL WORLD

Mr.Chairman, and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this hearing. The broad theme of the internationalization of higher education has immense relevance for American colleges and universities and for US leadership in higher education worldwide. It is the case that the United States has, overall, the best higher education system in the world, and that American ideas about higher education are influential worldwide. For this reason alone, we have a special responsibility to play a responsible role in international higher education. It is also the case that we cannot take our dominant position for granted—other countries are building higher education capacity and are aggressively moving into the global academic market.

The analysis here is intended to provide a broad overview of internationalization trends. I define key terms and then analyze how these trends affect higher education in the international context.

In the past two decades, globalization has come to be seen as a central force for both society and higher education. Some have argued that globalization, broadly defined as largely inevitable global economic and technological factors affecting every nation, will liberate higher education and foster needed change. Technological innovations such as the Internet, the forces of the market, and others will permit everyone to compete on the basis of equality. Knowledge interdependence, it is argued, will help everyone. Others claim that globalization strengthens worldwide inequality and fosters the McDonaldization of the university. All the contemporary pressures on higher education, from massification to the growth of the private sector are characterized as resulting from globalization. There is a grain of truth in each of these hypotheses—and a good deal of misinterpretation as well. This essay will seek to “unpack” the realities of globalization and the related concept of internationalization in higher education and to highlight some of the impact on the university. Academe around the world is affected differently by global trends. The countries of the European Union, for example, are adjusting to new common degree structures and other kinds of harmonization that are part of the Bologna process and related initiatives. Countries that use English benefit from the increasingly widespread use of that language for science and scholarship. Of special interest here is how globalization is affecting higher education in developing countries, which will experience the bulk of higher education expansion in the next two decades (Task Force on Higher Education and Development, 2000).

From the beginning, universities have been global institutions—in that they functioned in a common language, Latin, and served an international clientele of students. Professors, too, came from many countries, and the knowledge imparted reflected scholarly learning in the Western world at the time. Since universities have always figured in the global environment, they have been affected by circumstances beyond the campus and across national borders. This reality is all too often overlooked in analyses of 21st century globalization. A long-term perspective when considering the university reveals the deep historical roots of the ethos and governance of universities. As Clark Kerr has noted, of the institutions that had been established in the Western world by 1520, 85 still exist—the Roman Catholic Church, the British Parliament, several Swiss cantons, and some 70 universities. The universities may have experienced the least change of these institutions (Kerr, 2001, p. 115).

Today's globalization, at least for higher education, does not lack precedents. From the beginning, universities have incorporated tensions between national conditions and international pressures. While English now dominates as the language of research and scholarship, in the 19th century German held sway, as did Latin in an earlier era. Students have always traveled abroad to study, and scholars have always worked outside their home countries. Globalization in the 21st century is truly worldwide in reach—few places can elude contemporary trends, and innovations and practices seem to spread ever faster due to modern technology. But, again, similar trends have occurred in other periods as well.

It is also the case that all of the universities in the world today, with the exception of the Al-Azhar in Cairo, stem from the same historical roots—the medieval European university and, especially, the faculty-dominated University of Paris. This means that the essential organizational pattern of the contemporary university worldwide stems from a common tradition—this is an important element of globalization. Much of the non-Western world had European university models imposed on them by colonial masters—academic systems in India, Indonesia, Ghana, and the rest of the developing world stem from common Western roots. Even those countries not colonized by Western powers—such as Japan, Thailand, Ethiopia, and a few others—adopted the Western academic model (Altbach & Selvaratnam, 1989). This is the case even where, as in China, well-established indigenous academic traditions already existed (Hayhoe, 1999).

The American university itself, so influential worldwide, constitutes an amalgam of international influences. The original colonial model, imported from England was combined with the concept of the German research university idea of the 19th century and the American ideal of service to society to produce the modern American university. Foreign models were adapted to domestic realities in creative ways. As the European Union moves toward the harmonization of national higher education systems in the “common European space,” foreign influences again emerge—degree structures, the course-credit system, and other elements in modified form—to produce evolving academic patterns. Just as

Japan adapted German academic models and some American traditions as it built its modern university system after 1868, the European Union is looking to “best practices” worldwide in 2004.

Given the centrality of the knowledge economy to 21st-century development, higher education has assumed a higher profile both within countries and internationally because of its roles in educating people for the new economy and in creating new knowledge (Altbach, 1998a). As evidence, the World Trade Organization is now focusing on higher education. Currently, a debate is under way concerning the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Multinational corporations and some government agencies in the rich countries are seeking to integrate higher education into the legal structures of world trade through the WTO. These developments indicate how important universities and knowledge have become in the contemporary world (Larsen, Martin, & Morris, 2002; Knight, 2002; Altbach, 2002).

Definitions

It will be useful to define some of the terms in the current debate about globalization. For some, globalization means everything—an inchoate catch-all for the external influences on society. For others, it includes only the negative side of contemporary reality. This essay examines the international environment of higher education and seeks to analyze how that environment affects national higher education systems and individual academic institutions. Thus, the focus is

not on the detailed issues of the management of academic institutions – changing administrative structures or changes in the specific nature of academic appointments for example, although these may be influenced by global trends. Rather, we are concerned with how societies and universities have dealt with mass enrollments, privatization, and the new technologies, among others.

In this discussion, globalization is defined as the broad economic, technological, and scientific trends that directly affect higher education and are largely inevitable in the contemporary world. These phenomena include information technology in its various manifestations, the use of a common language for scientific communication, and the imperatives of society's mass demand for higher education (massification) and for highly educated personnel, and the 'private good' trend in thinking about the financing of higher education. Academe is affected by, for example, patterns in the ownership of multinational publishing and Internet companies, the investment in research and development worldwide, and international currents of cultural diffusion. These, and other, trends are part of globalization – they help to determine the nature of the 21st century economy and society. Although globalization is by no means a new phenomenon – the medieval universities were affected by the global trends of the period – it has increased salience in interdependent world of the 21st century. All are affected by these trends, and must take them into consideration as part of higher education policy and reality.

Internationalization refers to specific policies and programs undertaken by governments, academic systems and institutions, and even individual departments to undertake student or faculty exchanges, engaged in collaborative research overseas, set up joint teaching programs in other countries or a myriad of other initiatives. Internationalism is not a new phenomenon and indeed has been part of the work of many universities and academic systems for centuries. With much room for initiative, institutions and governments can choose the ways in which they deal with the new environment. Internationalism constitutes the ways that contemporary academe deals with globalization. While the forces of globalization cannot be held at bay, it is not inevitable that countries or institutions will necessarily be overwhelmed by them, or that the terms of the encounter must be dictated by others. Internationalization accommodates a significant degree of autonomy and initiative (Knight, 1997; Knight, 2005; Scott, 1998; De Wit, 2002).

Another new trend in higher education trend is multinationalization, which refers to academic programs or institutions located in one country offering degrees, courses, certificates, or other qualifications in other countries. The programs are often sponsored jointly with local institutions, but this is not always the case (Teather, 2004). A joint-degree sponsored by institutions in two or more countries, often called “twinning,” is an example of a multinational academic enterprise. Offshore institutions constitute one variation of the trend—this may be carried out through franchising (sometimes referred to as

“McDonaldization”) or simply by opening a branch institution (Hayes & Wynyard, 2002). The American University of Bulgaria, offering U.S.-style academic programs in English in Bulgaria and accredited in the United States is an example. Increasingly, the Internet is used in the delivery of multinational academic programs.

Globalization cannot be completely avoided. History shows that when universities shut themselves off from economic and social trends they become moribund and irrelevant. European universities, for example, ignored both the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution and ceased to be relevant. Indeed, the French Revolution swept away the universities entirely. Napoleon established the *grandes ecoles* in order to provide relevant training for the leaders of society and to contribute to science and technology. Von Humboldt had to reinvent the German university model in 1809 in order to make them relevant to the development of science and industry in Prussia (Ben-David and Zloczower, 1962). Institutions and systems possess great latitude in how they deal with globalization and other social influences—at times they have effectively coped with such changes. At other times, the innate conservatism of academe prevented this. Thus, those who argue that there is just one model for higher education in the 21st century are clearly wrong.

Centers and Peripheries

The world of globalized higher education is highly unequal. Concentrating on developing countries and on smaller academic systems immediately reveals the specter of inequality. While the Internet and other manifestations of globalization are heralded as disseminating knowledge equally throughout the world, the evidence is mixed on the outcomes. In some ways, globalization does open access, making it easier for students and scholars to study and work. But in many respects, existing inequalities are only reinforced while new barriers are erected. The debate in higher education mirrors analyses of globalization generally. Economists Joseph Stiglitz and Dani Rodrik, among others, have argued that in some respects globalization works against the interests of developing countries, reinforcing international inequalities (Stiglitz, 2002; Rodrik, 1997; Rodrik, 1999). Neither is opposed to globalization—and both see it as inevitable—but their critiques reveal critical problems that tend to be overlooked in the dominant perspectives on the topic.

The powerful universities and academic systems—the centers—have always dominated the production and distribution of knowledge. Smaller and weaker institutions and systems with fewer resources and often lower academic standards—the peripheries—have tended to be dependent on them. Academic centers provide leadership in science and scholarship and in research and teaching. They are the leaders with regard to organizational structure and mission of universities, and in knowledge dissemination. The centers tend to be

located in larger and wealthier countries, where the most prestigious institutions benefit from the full array of resources, including funding and infrastructures—such as libraries and laboratories to support research, academic staff with appropriate qualifications, strong traditions, and legislation that supports academic freedom. The academic culture fosters high achievement levels by individual professors and students, and by the institutions themselves. These top institutions often use one of the major international languages for teaching and research, and in general enjoy adequate support from the state.

The world of centers and peripheries is growing ever more complex (Altbach, 1998c). The international academic centers—namely the leading research-oriented universities in the North, especially those that use one of the key world languages (particularly English)—occupy the top tier. High quality universities do exist elsewhere—for example, in Japan and several smaller European countries. A number of universities in China, Singapore, and South Korea aspire to the status of top research institutions. Even within countries at the center of the world academic system in the early 21st century—the United States, Britain, Germany, France, and to some extent Australia and Canada—there are many peripheral institutions. For example, perhaps 100 of America's 3,200 postsecondary institutions can be considered research universities. These institutions receive more than 80 percent of government research funds and dominate most aspects of American higher education. The rest of the American higher education system lies on the periphery of the research centers—these

segments, including the comprehensive universities, community colleges, and others play important roles in both the academic system and in society – but they are not considered to be leaders in the academic system. While hardly a new development, this stratification has probably become more pronounced in recent years. Countries that had relative equality among universities are fostering diversification—the U.K. has created a ranked system, and Germany is moving in that direction.

Other countries possess similarly stratified academic systems. There are also universities that play complex roles as regional centers, providing a conduit of knowledge and links to the top institutions. For example, the major universities in Egypt provide academic leadership for the Arabic-speaking world and are links to the major centers, while contributing relatively little themselves. China’s key universities are significant producers of research, mainly for internal consumption, while at the same time serving as links to the wider world of higher education.

In many ways, it is now more difficult to become a major player in international higher education—to achieve “center” status (Altbach, 1998b). The price of entry has risen. Top-tier research universities require ever greater resources, and in many fields scientific research involves a large investment in laboratory facilities and equipment. Enabling institutions to remain fully networked for the Internet and information technology is also costly, as are library acquisitions—including access to relevant databases. Universities in

countries without deep financial resources will find it virtually impossible to join the ranks of the top academic institutions. Indeed, any new institution, regardless of location, will face similar challenges.

Academic institutions at the periphery and the academic systems of developing and some small industrialized countries depend on the centers for research, the communication of knowledge, and advanced training. The major journals and databases are headquartered at the major universities—especially in the United States and the United Kingdom—since international scholarly and research journals are largely published in English. Most of the world’s universities are mainly teaching institutions—in developing countries virtually all are in this category—that must look elsewhere to obtain new knowledge and analysis. Many smaller developing countries, for example, lack the facilities for research, do not provide degrees beyond the bachelor’s, and are unable to keep up with current journals and databases due to the expense. Structural dependency is endemic in much of the world’s academic institutions.

A New Neocolonialism?

The era of the Cold War was characterized by the efforts of the major powers to dominate the “hearts and minds” of the peoples of the world. The Soviet Union, the United States, and others spent lavishly on student exchanges, textbook subsidies, book translations, institution building, and other activities to influence the world's academic leaders, intellectuals, and policymakers. The goals were

political and economic, and higher education was a key battlefield. The rationale was sometimes couched in the ideological jargon of the Cold War but was often obscured by rhetoric about cooperation (Altbach, 1971).

The programs included many that offered considerable benefit to the recipients—including scholarships to study abroad, high-quality textbooks, scientific equipment, and other resources. Participation in programs took place on an entirely voluntary basis, but in a context of scarcity assistance becomes difficult to decline. Acceptance meant increased ties to the donor countries and institutions and long-term dependence on the countries providing the aid. Installation of laboratory equipment or computers, for example, meant continuing reliance on the supplier for spare parts, training, and the like.

We are now in a new era of power and influence. Politics and ideology have taken a subordinate role to profits and market-driven policies. Now, multinational corporations, media conglomerates, and even a few leading universities can be seen as the new neocolonists—seeking to dominate not for ideological or political reasons but rather for commercial gain. Governments are not entirely out of the picture—they seek to assist companies in their countries and have a residual interest in maintaining influence as well. The role of the governments of such countries as the United States and Australia in advocating the interests of for-profit education providers and others in their countries in the World Trade Organization with regard to the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and other matters is but one example. As in the Cold War era,

countries and universities are not compelled to yield to the terms of those providing aid, fostering exchanges, or offering Internet products, but the pressures in favor of participation tend to prevail. Involvement in the larger world of science and scholarship and obtaining perceived benefits not otherwise available present considerable inducements. The result is the same—the loss of intellectual and cultural autonomy by those who are less powerful.

The Role of English

English is the Latin of the 21st century. In the current period, the use of English is central for communicating knowledge worldwide, for instruction even in countries where English is not the language of higher education, and for cross-border degree arrangements and other programs. The dominance of English is a factor in globalization that deserves analysis if only because higher education worldwide must grapple with the role of English (Crystal, 1997).

English is the most widely studied foreign language in the world. In many countries, English is the required second language in schools, and the second language of choice in most places. English is the medium of most internationally circulated scientific journals. Universities in many countries stress the importance of their professors' publishing in internationally circulated scientific journals, almost by definition in English, placing a further premium on the language. Internet websites devoted to science and scholarship function predominantly in English. Indeed, English serves as the language of Internet

academic and scientific transactions. The largest number of international students go to universities in English-speaking countries.

English is the medium of instruction in many of the most prominent academic systems—including those of the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand—all of which enroll large numbers of overseas students. Singapore, Ethiopia, and much of Anglophone Africa use English as the primary language of instruction as well. English often functions as a medium of instruction in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Other countries are increasingly offering academic programs in English—to attract international students unwilling to learn the local language and to improve the English-language skills of domestic students and thus enable them to work in an international arena. English-medium universities exist in many countries—from Azerbaijan and Bulgaria to Kyrgyzstan and Malaysia. In many countries—such as Japan, the Netherlands, Germany, Mexico, and so on—universities offer English-medium degree programs and courses at local universities. Many European Union nations offer study in English as a way of attracting students from elsewhere in the EU. English is clearly a ubiquitous language in higher education worldwide.

The role of English affects higher education policy and the work of individual students and scholars. Obviously, the place of English at the pinnacle of scientific communication gives a significant advantage to the United States and the United Kingdom and to the other wealthy English-speaking countries.

Not surprisingly, many scientific journals are edited in the United States, which gives an advantage to American authors—not only are they writing in their mother tongue but the peer review system is dominated by people accustomed to both the language and methodology of U.S. scholars. Others must communicate in a foreign language and conform to unfamiliar academic norms. As mentioned earlier, in many places academics are pressured to publish in internationally circulated journals—the sense being that publication in the most prestigious scientific journals is a necessary validation of academic work. Increasingly, international and regional scientific meetings are exclusively in English, again placing a premium on fluency in the language.

English-language products of all kinds dominate the international academic marketplace, especially journals and books. For example, textbooks written from a U.S. or U.K. perspective are sold worldwide, influencing students and academics in many countries and providing profits for publishers who function in English. The English-language databases in the various disciplines are the most widely used internationally. Universities must pay for these resources, which are priced to sell to American or European buyers and are thus extraordinarily expensive to users in developing or middle-income countries. Nevertheless, English-language programs, testing materials, and all the other products find a ready market in these countries.

Countries that use “small languages” may be tempted to change the medium of instruction at their universities entirely to English. A debate took

place in the Netherlands on this topic, and it was decided to keep Dutch as the main language of instruction largely out of concern for the long-term survival of the Dutch language and culture—although degree programs in English are flourishing in the country. Where collaborative degree programs are offered, such as in Malaysia, the language of instruction is almost always English and not the language of the country offering the joint degree.

English is supplanting such languages as French, German, and Spanish as the international medium of scholarship. These other languages are in no danger of disappearing in higher education, but their world role has shrunk. The use of English tends to orient those using it to the main English-speaking academic systems, and this further increases the influence of these countries. Regardless of the consequences, however, English will continue as the predominant academic language.

The Global Marketplace for Students and Scholars

Not since the medieval period have such a large proportion of the world's students been studying outside their home countries—more than 1.5 million students at any one time—and some estimate that the number of overseas students will grow to 8 million by 2020. Large numbers of professors and other academics travel abroad temporarily for research or teaching, and substantial numbers of academics migrate abroad as well to pursue their careers. Aspects of globalization such as the use of English encourage these flows and will ensure

that growth continues. As academic systems become more uniform and academic degrees more accepted internationally, immigration rules favor people with high skill levels, and universities look to hiring the best talent worldwide, the global marketplace will expand.

The flow of academic talent at all levels is directed largely from South to North—from the developing countries to the large metropolitan academic systems. Perhaps 80 percent of the world's international students come from developing countries, and virtually all of them study in the North. Most of these students pursue master's, doctoral, and professional degrees. Many do not return to their countries of origin. Close to 80 percent of students from China and India, two of the largest sending countries to the United States, do not return home immediately after obtaining their degrees, taking jobs or post-doctoral appointments in the United States. The years since the collapse of the Soviet system has also seen a flow of scientists from Russia to Western Europe and North America. Students from industrialized countries who study abroad typically do not earn a degree but rather spend a year or two in the country to learn a language or gain knowledge that they could not acquire at home.

Most international students pay for their own studies, producing significant income for the host countries—and a drain on the economy of the developing world. According to estimates, the money spent abroad by students from some developing countries more than equals incoming foreign aid. These students not only acquire training in their fields but also absorb the norms and

values of the academic systems in which they studied. They return home desiring to transform their universities in ways that often prove to be both unrealistic and ineffective. Foreign students serve as carriers of an international academic culture – a culture that reflects the major metropolitan universities, and may not be relevant for the developing world.

In 2002, universities in the United States hosted almost 85,000 visiting scholars. Although statistics are not available, it is estimated that visiting scholars number 250,000 worldwide. The predominant South-North flow notwithstanding, a significant movement of academics occurs among the industrialized countries and to some extent within other regions, such as Latin America. As part of the Bologna initiatives of the European Union, there is more movement within Europe. Most visiting scholars return home after their sojourns abroad, although a certain number use their assignments as springboards to permanent emigration.

The flow of highly educated talent from the developing countries to the West is large – and problematical for Third World development. For example, more Ethiopian holders of doctoral degrees work outside of Ethiopia than at home, and 30 percent of all highly educated Ghanaians and Sierra Leoneans live and work abroad (Outward Bound, 2002, p. 24). Many African countries experience this pattern. South Africa is losing many of its most talented academics to the North, while at the same time it is recruiting from elsewhere in

Africa. This migration has seriously weakened academic institutions in many developing countries.

Migration does not affect only developing countries. Academics will go abroad to take jobs that offer more attractive opportunities, salaries, and working conditions, as illustrated by the ongoing small but significant exodus from the United Kingdom to North America. To combat this trend, U.K. authorities have provided funds to entice their best professors to remain at home. Being at the center of research activity and having access to the latest scientific equipment sometimes lures scholars from small but well-endowed academic systems, such as those in Denmark or Finland to the metropolises. In some fields, such as engineering specialties and computer science, the percentage of professors from other countries working at U.S. universities is very high—reflecting the fact that almost half the doctoral students in these fields are foreigners. Academic migration takes place throughout the academic system, especially in the sciences, engineering, information technology, and some management areas. Such migration occurs both at the top of the system, with some world-famous scholars attracted abroad by high salaries, and at the bottom, where modest salaries are able to draw foreigners to jobs that are unappealing to local applicants.

Academic migration follows complex routes. Many Egyptian, Jordanian, and Palestinian academics work at Arabian Gulf universities, attracted by better salaries and working conditions than are available at home. Indians and Pakistanis are similarly drawn to the Gulf as well as to Southeast Asia. Singapore

and Hong Kong attract academics worldwide. Mexico and Brazil employ scholars from elsewhere in Latin America. South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana currently recruit Africans from elsewhere on the continent. Some of the best scholars and scientists from Russia and a number of Central European countries have taken positions in Western Europe and North America. The existing traffic among member states will likely grow once the EU implements policies to harmonize academic systems, a process now underway.

The most significant “pull” factors include better salaries and working conditions and the opportunity to be at the centers of world science and scholarship (Altbach, 2003, pp. 1-22). The discrepancies in salaries and conditions between North and South mean that in most developing countries academics cannot aspire to a middle-class lifestyle or have access to the necessary tools of research and scholarship.

One of the many “push” factors involves the limited extent of academic freedom in many developing countries. Academics can be subject to restrictions and even arrested if they stray from officially approved topics. Favoritism and corruption in academic appointments, promotions, and other areas further erode the environment of the university. In many higher education systems, job security or stability are unattainable. Conditions at Third World universities stem largely from the scarcity of resources and the pressure of increased student numbers on overburdened academic institutions. While the “pull” factors at the centers will retain their influence, the “push” factors can be moderated. Overall,

however, the migration of academic talent will continue in the current globalized environment.

People have long equated the migration of talent with brain drain. The life stories of emigrants have changed (Choi, 1995). Many academics now keep in close contact with their countries of origin, maintaining scientific and academic relationships with colleagues and institutions at home. Growing numbers of academics have even gone back after establishing careers abroad as economic and political conditions at home have changed. Some academics from South Korea and Taiwan, for example, left United States to accept senior academic appointments in their home countries once academic working conditions, salaries and respect for academic freedom had improved. More commonly, expatriate academics return home for lecture tours or consulting, collaborate on research with colleagues in their country of origin, or accept visiting professorships. Facilitated by the Internet, these links are increasingly accepted as appropriate and useful. Such trends are especially strong in countries with well-developed academic systems, such as China, India, and South Africa, among others.

The migration of academic talent is in many ways promoted by the industrialized countries, which have much to gain. Immigration policies are in some cases designed to encourage talented personnel to migrate and establish residency—although at least in the United States security concerns in the aftermath of 9/11 have changed the equation to some extent. In many countries,

academic institutions make it easy for foreigners to fit into the career structure. Countries that place barriers to foreign participation in academe, such as Japan and now perhaps the U.S. may find it more difficult to compete in the global knowledge sweepstakes. Industrialized countries benefit from a large pool of well-educated scientists and scholars—people educated by developing countries—who choose to take their talents and skills to the highest bidders. In this way, the developing world has supported the North's already overwhelming lead in science and scholarship. The renewal of links between academics who migrate and their countries of origin mitigate this situation somewhat, although developing countries, and some smaller industrialized nations, still find themselves at a disadvantage in the global academic labor market.

The Curriculum

The field of business administration exemplifies the global dominance of ideas by the major English-speaking academic systems. In most countries, business administration is a new field, established over the past several decades to prepare professionals for work in multinational corporations or in firms engaged in international commerce as well as in local business. The dominant pattern of professional studies is the M.B.A. degree—the American-style master's of business administration. This degree originated as the way to prepare American students for work in U.S. business, based on American curriculum ideas and

American business practices. A key part of many M.B.A. programs is the case study, again developed in the U.S. context. The M.B.A. model has been widely copied in other countries, in most cases by local institutions, but also by American academic institutions working with local partners or setting up their own campuses overseas. While the programs sometimes are modified in keeping with the local context, the basic degree structure and curriculum remain American.

Another example of the export of the curriculum is the proposed incorporation of some general education in the first-degree. Part of the U.S. undergraduate curriculum for two centuries, general education provides a broad background in the disciplines along with critical thinking skills. *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise*, an influential report sponsored by the World Bank and UNESCO, advocates general education as an alternative to the existing largely specialized undergraduate curriculum common in higher education worldwide (Task Force on Higher Education, 2000). The future of general education as a curriculum reform is not clear.

There is an increasing use of common textbooks, course materials, and syllabi worldwide, stimulated by the influence of multinational publishers, the Internet, and databases, as well as the growing number of professors who return home after their study abroad with ideas concerning curriculum and instructional materials. These materials originate mainly in the large academic

systems of the North—especially the United States, the United Kingdom, and France.

Disciplines and fields vary in terms of how globally homogenous they have become. Such fields as business administration, information technology, and biotechnology are almost entirely dominated by the major academic centers. Other fields—such as history, language studies, and many areas in the humanities—are largely nationally based, although foreign influences are felt in methodology and approaches to research and interpretation. The internationalization of the curriculum, like other aspects of globalization, proceeds largely from North to South.

The Multinationalization of Higher Education

The emergence of a global education marketplace exhibits itself in the form of a variety of multinational higher education initiatives—ranging from “twinning” programs linking academic institutions or programs in one country with counterparts in another to universities in one country setting up branch campuses in another. Cross-border higher education ventures include many that use the Internet and other distance education means to deliver their programs. Many for-profit companies and institutions have invested in multinational educational initiatives, as have a range of traditional higher education institutions (Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, 2004).

History shows that the export of educational institutions and the linking of institutions from different countries generally represented a union of unequals. Earlier “export models” involved colonialism—the colonial power simply imposed its institutional model and curriculum, often diluted and designed to for intellectual subservience, on the colonized (Ashby, 1966). In almost all cases, the institution from the outside dominated the local institution, or the new institution was based on foreign ideas and nonindigenous values. Examples include the British in Africa and Asia, the Dutch in what is now Indonesia, and French initiatives in Africa and Asia. The Spanish monarchy asked the Roman Catholic Church to set up universities in Latin America and the Philippines; religious orders such as the Jesuits undertook what might now be referred to as multinational higher education. In the 19th century, American Protestant missionaries established universities based on the U.S. model in Lebanon, Egypt, Korea and Turkey, among other places—for example, the American University of Beirut. During the Cold War, both the United States and the Soviet Union exported their academic institutions and ideas, mainly to the developing world, generally tied to foreign aid, and in some cases set up universities reflecting their views—such as the University of Nigeria-Nsukka (Hanson, 1968).

The same inequality is characteristic of the 21st century, although neither colonialism nor Cold War politics impels policy. Now, market forces, demands for access, and monetary gain motivate multinational higher education

initiatives. When institutions or programs are exported from one country to another, academic models, curricula, and programs from the more powerful academic system prevail. Thus, programs between Australian and Malaysian institutions aimed at setting up new academic institutions in Malaysia are always designed by Australian institutions. Rarely, if ever, do academic innovations emanate from the periphery out to the center.

The export of academic institutions from one country to another is a growing but not entirely new phenomenon. Of course, both traditional colonialism and the government-sponsored foreign assistance programs of the Cold War era exported institutional models, practices, and curriculum from the metropole to developing countries. In the past decade, the number of institutional exports based on non-governmental programs have risen, usually on the initiative of the exporting country. In the 1980s, for example, American colleges and universities directed their attention to Japan as a higher education market. Several hundred U.S. institutions explored the Japanese market, and more than a dozen established campuses—usually in cooperation with a Japanese institution or company (Chambers & Cummings, 1990). A small number of Japanese institutions looked into the feasibility of a U.S. connection, with a few even setting up branch campuses. However, most Japanese programs involved bringing Japanese students to the United States for study, while U.S. programs focused on educating Japanese students in Japan. Generally, the institutions engaging in export activities were not the most prestigious schools.

By 2000, very few of the branches were still operating. In Japan, the difficulty of obtaining Ministry of Education certification for U.S. programs proved overwhelming, and the initiatives on both sides were affected by the protracted economic slowdown in Japan. The U.S.-Japan initiatives were unusual in that both sides were industrialized countries.

Some of the export initiatives taking place today are indicative of global trends. A small number of prestigious American universities are establishing campuses worldwide, usually in popular professional fields such as business administration. The University of Chicago's business school now has a campus in Spain that offers Chicago degrees to Spanish students and students from other European countries, using the standard Chicago curriculum—taught in English mostly by Chicago faculty members—with an international focus. It includes a period of study at the home campus as well. Some other U.S. universities have developed similar programs.

An unusual but interesting model of multinationalization is being undertaken by Singapore, which is inviting a number of prestigious foreign universities, such as the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, to start programs in Singapore. The government carefully selects the institutions and provides incentives to encourage them to come to Singapore. Another trend has been the establishment of U.S.-style universities in such countries as Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, and Bulgaria, among other places. These schools typically originate through local initiative, and many have strong links to American universities.

Some are supervised by the U.S. partners and accredited in the United States. The language of instruction is English and the curriculum U.S. based. The quality of these American clones varies considerably, with some simply capitalizing on the cachet of an American-style education.

In keeping with the standard export model, a university in an industrialized country will set up a program abroad, often but not always in a developing country, at the invitation of a host institution. The host may be an educational institution or a corporation without any link to education, or some combination of the two. Many examples of these arrangements have been set up in Malaysia to satisfy unmet demand by local students. Universities from Australia and the United Kingdom are most active in Malaysia, but the new programs have generated complaints of low quality, poor supervision, or inadequate communication between the providers and the hosts. In Israel, a number of small American colleges and universities (some of lesser quality) began to offer academic degrees when the market was opened up in the 1990s by the Israeli government. After considerable criticism, restrictions were later placed on the programs – many of which have ceased to exist.

In another export model, foreign academic degree programs are “franchised” by local institutions. The foreign university lends its name provides the curriculum, some (often quite limited) supervision, and quality control to a local academic institution or perhaps business firm. The new institution is granted the right to award a degree or certificate of the foreign institution to local

students. Unfortunately, these franchising arrangements have led to many abuses and much criticism. Many articles have appeared in the British press charging that some U.K. institutions, mostly the less prestigious ones, involved in overseas programs are damaging the “good name” of British higher education. Meanwhile, “buyers” (fee-paying students) overseas think that they are getting a standard British degree, when in reality they are receiving the degree but not the level of education provided in the United Kingdom.

There are a large number of “twinning” programs worldwide. This arrangement links an academic institution in one country with a partner school in another. Typically, the university in the North provides the basic curriculum and orientation for an institution in the South. In such arrangements, academic degrees are often jointly awarded. Twinning has the advantage of aiding institutions in the South in developing new curricular offerings, with the stamp of approval of an established foreign university. Again, the higher education ‘products’ come from the North, often with little adaptation to local needs.

As can be seen in this brief discussion, there are many facets to the 21st century multinationalization of higher education. However, some common perspectives and motivations can be identified. With few exceptions, a central goal for all of the stakeholders, especially those in the North, is to earn a profit. Institutions in the South that are attracted to multinational initiatives may also be interested in making money, but they also want to meet the growing demand for higher education and for new degree programs that may not be available in local

schools. As with other aspects of globalization in higher education, multinational arrangements between institutions are marked by inequality.

Information Technology

The information age carries the potential of introducing significant change in higher education, although it is unlikely that the basic functions of traditional academic institutions will be transformed. The elements of the revolution in information technology (IT) that are transforming higher education include the communication, storage, and retrieval of knowledge (Castells, 2000). Libraries, once the repositories of books and journals, are now equally involved in providing access to databases, websites, and a range of IT-based products (Hawkins & Battin, 1998). Scholars increasingly use the Internet to undertake research and analysis and to disseminate their own work. Academic institutions are beginning to use IT to deliver degree programs and other curricula to students outside the campus. Distance education is rapidly growing both within countries and internationally. IT is beginning to shape teaching and learning and is affecting the management of academic institutions.

IT and globalization go hand in hand. Indeed, the Internet serves as the primary vehicle for the globalization of knowledge and communications. As with the other aspects of globalization, significant inequalities exist. Inevitably, the information and knowledge base available through the Internet reflects the realities of the knowledge system worldwide. The databases and retrieval

mechanisms probably make it easier to access well-archived and electronically sophisticated scientific systems of the advanced industrialized countries than the less networked academic communities of the developing countries.

For scholars and scientists at universities and other institutions that lack good libraries, the Internet simplifies the obtaining of information. This change has had a democratizing effect on scientific communication and access to information. At the same time, however, many people in developing countries have only limited access to the Internet (Teferra, 2003). Africa, for example, has only recently achieved full connectivity to the Internet.

The Internet and the databases on it are dominated by the major universities in the North. The dominance of English on the Internet also affect access and usage of information. Multinational publishers and other corporations have become key players, owning many of the databases, journals, and other sources of information. Academic institutions and countries unable to pay for access to these information sources find it difficult to participate fully in the networks. Tightening copyright and other ownership restrictions through international treaties and regulations will further consolidate ownership and limit access (Correa, 2000).

Distance education, while not a new phenomenon, comprises another element of higher education profoundly affected by IT. The University of South Africa, for example, has been offering academic degrees through correspondence for many decades. The Open University in the United Kingdom has effectively

used a combination of distance methods to deliver its highly regarded programs. IT has greatly expanded the reach and methodological sophistication of distance education, contributing to the growth of distance education institutions. Of the 10 largest distance education institutions in the world, 7 are located in developing countries, and all use IT for at least part of their programs. Universities and other providers in the industrialized nations are beginning to employ IT to offer academic programs around the world, a significant portion of which are aimed at developing countries. Entire degree programs in fields such as business administration are offered through distance education on the Internet, and many providers view the international market as critical for the success of their programs. These providers include corporations, such as some of the major multinational publishers, for-profit educational providers like Sylvan Learning Systems, and others. Some universities now offer degree and certificate programs through the Internet to international audiences. Firms such as Microsoft, Motorola, and others are offering competency certificates and other training programs in fields relating to their areas of expertise.

As with the other aspects of globalization discussed in this analysis—the leading providers of IT consist of multinational corporations, academic institutions, and other organizations in the industrialized nations. The Internet combines a public service—e-mail and the range of websites to which access is free—with a commercial enterprise. Many databases, electronic journals, e-books, and related knowledge products are owned by profit-making companies

that market them, often at prices that preclude access by those in developing countries.

Nevertheless, developing countries have been able to take advantage of IT. For example, most of the largest universities using distance education are located in developing countries. The African Virtual University is an effort by a number of African nations to harness the Internet and other distance techniques to meet their needs. AVU's success so far has been limited, and many of the courses and programs are based on curriculum from the North. E-mail is widely used to improve communication among scientists and scholars and to create networks in the developing world. While the information revolution will neither transform higher education, nor is it a panacea for the higher education needs of developing countries, it is one of the central elements of globalization in higher education.

International Agreements and Frameworks

In the new era of globalization in higher education, new international agreements and arrangements have been drawn up to manage global interactions. The arrangements between countries range from bilateral agreements on student and faculty exchanges to the mutual recognition of degrees—for example, the many binational commissions governing the American Fulbright scholarship and exchange programs. Of the current international agreements in higher education, perhaps the most comprehensive

are the European Union's: the comprehensive Bologna framework, designed to introduce changes to harmonize the higher education systems of all EU member states, and specific exchange and scholarship programs such as ERASMUS and SOCRATES. In contrast, NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), and others have few implications for higher education.

An indication of the potential impact of globalization is the debate over the inclusion of higher education in particular and knowledge industries within the framework of the WTO through the GATS proposal. While GATS has not yet been fully formulated and is not part of the WTO framework, it is relevant not only because of its influence but also for what it reveals about the reality of globalization. GATS seeks to establish "open markets" for knowledge products of all kinds—including higher education. The idea behind GATS and, for that matter, the concept of globalization is that knowledge is a commodity like any other and should be freely traded around the world. The proponents argue that free trade will benefit everyone by permitting competition in the marketplace of ideas and knowledge products.

GATS and related arrangements also seek to provide a legally binding framework for the circulation of educational services and for the protection of intellectual property (Knight, 2004, pp 3-38). Thus, GATS and the WTO are very much related to TRIPS (Trade Related Intellectual Property) arrangements and copyright regulations. The motivating force behind all of these regulatory

frameworks is to rationalize the global trade in knowledge and to ensure open markets and protections for the owners of knowledge products. The WTO and its related agreements, as well as international copyright, have the force of law – they are international treaties supported by a legal enforcement regime. These arrangements were created to protect the sellers and the providers, not the buyers and users, and as a result they have negative implications for developing countries (Raikhy, 2002). For example, copyright laws have been further strengthened to protect the owners of knowledge, while failing to open access through “fair use” provisions or meaningful special arrangements for developing countries.

Those favoring GATS and the regulatory framework in general are the sellers and owners – multinational knowledge companies, governments focusing on exports, and others (OECD, 2002). Testing companies such as the U.S.-based Educational Testing Service, multinational publishers, information technology and computer firms, for-profit educational providers such as Sylvan Learning Systems, and others are examples of businesses involved in global education that see GATS as benefiting their interests. In many countries, government agencies most focused on GATS include not the ministries of education but rather departments concerned with trade and export promotion. In the United States, it is the Department of Commerce that has taken the lead and not the Department of Education. In the United Kingdom, the Department of Trade and Industry has been in the forefront. Education groups in the United States, Canada, and a

number of other countries have been skeptical or opposed to the GATS proposal. The American Council on Education, which represents most university presidents in the United States, for example, has spoken out against GATS. Developing countries have generally not yet taken a position on the concept of free trade in education and knowledge products.

While the complicated details of a GATS treaty have not been worked out, the basic issues are straightforward. Should education in all of its manifestations be considered as a commodity to be traded in the marketplace, regulated in the same fashion as are automobiles or bananas? As Lawrence Summers, the former U.S. treasury secretary and current president of Harvard University put it in a recent interview, "I'm skeptical as to whether bringing educational issues under the auspices of trade negotiations would be helpful. . . . To start with, many educational institutions are nonprofit, their motivations are different from the motivations of commercial firms that we think of in a trade context. There may be some egregious practices that should be addressed, but I would be skeptical about treating education in a way that had any parallels with financial services, with insurance, or with foreign investments" (The World According to Larry, 2002, p. 38).

While GATS would bring developing countries into a global framework of commerce and exchange in higher education, it would remove aspects of autonomy from educational decision making. Extending the principle of free trade to education would open national markets in signatory countries to testing

companies, providers of distance education, and many other organizations. Regulation or control of these entities would prove difficult if not impossible to achieve. Institutions or companies could, in principle, count on having access to foreign education markets. Since developing countries typically import rather than export their educational products or institutions, it is unlikely that GATS would promote their exports. Developing countries represent the markets that sellers from the industrialized world are eager to target. Most developing countries, having few educational “products” to export, would be at the mercy of the multinational providers.

Current arrangements—in which all countries retain authority over educational imports and exports, subject to some regulatory arrangement such as international copyright, patent treaties, local accreditation and licensing arrangements, and the like—nonetheless permit a great deal of international higher education exchange, as this essay illustrates. It can be argued that international education markets are already appropriately open, and additional legal requirements to open them further are not needed. Cross-border educational transactions of all kinds are being actively pursued worldwide. At present, the developing countries are the main importers of products and services from abroad—and they would be most directly affected by GATS.

Conclusion

Globalization in higher education and science is inevitable. Historically, academe has always been international in scope and has always been characterized by inequalities. Modern technology, the Internet, the increasing ease of communication, and the flow of students and highly educated personnel across borders enhances globalization. No academic system can exist by itself in the world of the 21st century.

The challenge is recognize the complexities and nuances of the global higher education context—an academic world fraught with inequalities in which market and commercial forces increasingly dominate. The traditional domination of the North over the South remains largely intact. The task of ameliorating inequalities in the context of mass higher education is not an easy one. Yet, it is important to ensure that globalization does not turn into the neocolonialism of the 21st century.

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