# Epistemic Virtues and Cosmopolitan Learning

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It is perhaps a little too easy for academic workers like myself to generalise from our nomadic experiences of transnational mobility. I was born in an academic family in India; educated in India, Australia and England; have worked in Britain, Australia and the United States; and my research interests and networks take to the various parts of world. Mine might be an extreme case, but my experiences of transnationality are hardly unique. Global mobility has become one of the defining characteristics of our age. And even if we do not travel extensively, we are constantly in touch with friends and colleagues who live and work around the world. Our lives are increasingly shaped by the social imaginaries of what Craig Calhoun (2002) calls, the 'frequently traveled' and what Zygmunt Bauman (2000) refers to as 'tourists'.

An emerging disposition among this new global class of people is their assumption that just as their styles of living and working are changing rapidly – becoming cosmopolitan – then so are the lives of most people around the world, if not everyone. Of course, this is not the case: indeed it would simply be too arrogant to assume that it is. Most people still remain tied to particular localities, and do not have either the desire or the means to become more mobile. I still come across people in central Illinois where I work who have never been to Chicago, just over 100 miles from where they live, who have never surfed the world wide web and who do not know anyone outside Illinois, let alone people who live abroad.

For them the talk of global interconnectivity is both remote and highly abstract. The social processes that many globalization theorists describe have little sense to them. But should this really be the case? Just because they are not globally networked, can we assume that global processes do not also affect them? Is it possible for the life style and options of those who do not travel to remain unaffected by those who do? Is it possible for the social constitution of their communities to remain unaltered? Can we even imagine places beyond the reach of the global media, and the new institutions of global exchange? Let me explain what I mean here with an example.

Every year a very small number of *dalits* – the so-called 'untouchables' – leave their village in India to work as migrant workers on construction sites, for a period of up to five years, in Dubai, surely one the most globally ambitious cities in the world. After some time in Dubai they come back to their village, bringing back with them at least three things. First, they bring back money with which to buy land, often from Brahmins who had owned it for generations. Second, they bring back goods, electronic gadgets in particular. And finally, and perhaps most importantly, they bring back narratives, stories of how good it was in Dubai, even if it was not, and even if they had in fact had to endure the most appalling and exploitative conditions. They exaggerate because after being abroad they are interested in socially repositioning themselves within their own community.

Their attempts at repositioning have a number of discernible effects that have the potential to transform their village in India. First, their narratives of travel and of living in Dubai engender among younger men in particular a strong desire to have similar experiences of working abroad, of making money, and of becoming globally engaged. Second, the electronic goods that the migrant workers bring back often introduce the new media into the village community, changing the ways in which people use their leisure time, and imagine the world beyond their immediate circumstances. Third, the usage of money that is brought back into the community invariably alters the social balance among people because it renders the traditional relationship between land and caste inherently unstable. In so far as social status and prestige is linked to the ownership of land, the traditional social order is disrupted, in ways both good and bad. And finally the remittances that migrant workers send back home have the potential to transform the economic relations within their community, subsuming them under the logic of the global flows of finance.

I do not tell this story in order to describe the profound changes that are taking place in India driven by its engagement with the global economy. My point, rather, is to show how the mobility of just a few people from a particular community has the potential to transform the entire community – its economic relations, its social order, its links to the outside world and most fundamentally the subjectivities of both the few who travel and the most who do not. I agree with Arjun Appadurai (1996) that "globalization is not simply the name for a new epoch in the history of capital or in the biography of the nation-state, but is marked by a new role for imagination in social life" (p. 11). In relation to the various ways in which global processes now work – through the flows of people, capital and information, as well as ideas and images found in the media – Appadurai is surely correct in arguing that imagination has become "a critical part of collective, social, everyday life and is a form of labor" (p. 7). Global imagination now plays a crucial role in how people engage with their everyday activities, consider their options and make decisions within the new

configurations of social relations that are no longer confined to local communities but potentially span, either directly or indirectly, national boundaries.

It is clear that no community is entirely unaffected by the global processes. Even if people do not recognise their effects, it is hard for me to see how subjectivities and social relations can remain unaltered by global shifts, produced by increasing levels of travel, access to the global media, the changing nature of work, and the shifting modes of social imagination. Quite often we experience these transformations as social disruption, but do not always recognise how the sources of this disruption do not necessarily lie within our communities but also in the massive changes taking place in the wider world. These changes affect the tourists and the vagabonds, as well as those who are not mobile, in a manner that is dialectical, as Bauman (2000) has so clearly demonstrated. They represent various shifting dynamics of interconnectivity, produced in many different ways, displaying modalities that are uneven and disproportional.

Over the past two decades, much has been written about the ways in which global processes are generating intricate demographic profiles, economic realities, political processes, media and technologies, cultural facts and artifacts and identities. There are more people 'on the move' than ever before, for a whole range of reasons –migration, work, tourism, education and the like. New patterns of immigration are transforming the cities around the world, making them 'global' (Sassen, 1991). Communities are now transnationally networked, with new patterns of communication and ideological links, configured in a range of diverse and complicated ways. The 'new diasporas' (Cohen, 1997) are no longer reluctant to exercise political power in the communities they have left. We are exposed to global media and popular culture as never before. We consume cultural products that are globally produced and distributed. The nature of work is constantly changing, and is often organised in a manner that stretches across the world. In short, goods, capital, technologies, people, knowledge, images, crime, beliefs, fashions and desires all readily flow across territorial boundaries, leading to global interconnectivity becoming a norm.

However, while the facts of rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections can no longer be denied, it is not always clear as to how particular communities and people experience and are affected by global interconnectivity, how they interpret its various expressions and how they work with this understanding to forge their sense of belonging, and their social imagination. These questions clearly require detailed empirical research that has now begun to be conducted by historians, sociologists, anthropologists and cultural theorists alike (e.g. Burawoy, Blum, George, & Gille, 2000). But these are not merely empirical questions they are also normative. They relate to the issues of how we should work with these global transformations.

And if indeed these transformations affect everyone, albeit in ways that are highly differentiated and unequal, then the question arises as to how educational policy and practice should respond to these shifts so that our engagement with globalization is not only empirically informed but also ethical. How should we re-think the processes of learning about globally inter-connectivity, about cultural formations that now occur in transnational spaces?

In recent years, both scholars and organizations have begun to address these questions. Indeed the idea of 'internationalisation of education' has become so ubiquitous that it can now be regarded as part of a global slogan system designed to steer educational reform in a particular direction. Almost every educational system now insists that curriculum must become more responsive to the compelling requirements of globalisation, and must be attentive to the cultural, economic, political and interpersonal dimensions of international relations (e.g. Beazley, 1993). It must assist 'intercultural understanding', and encourage 'an international outlook' and must help students learn about the diverse and increasing complex nature of the global environment. According to the OECD (2004), no less, internationalised curriculum must be based on the values of innovation, flexibility, client-centeredness and enterprise culture on the one hand and intercultural understanding and sensitivity on the other; and that such an orientation to the curriculum is necessary, not only because of the requirements of the global labour market but also because social and cultural developments everywhere are evidently heading towards a multicultural and globally-minded society.

According to Nel Noddings (2005), the promotion of global citizenship has never been more urgent. She argues that global citizenship involves a set of cultural attitudes towards the requirements of economic and social justice, of social and cultural diversity, treating the earth as a single unified place that needs protecting and educating for peace. Her framework for educating for global citizenship includes a range of ethical values including community-building and mutual respect, social responsibility, appreciation for diversity and social justice. She advocates teaching emotional literacy and ways of managing and resolving conflict. In contrast to Noddings' values-based approach, Howard Gardiner (2006) has argued for a skills-based paradigm that highlights the need for students to develop skills they will need to analyse issues and mobilise others to solve problems from multiple perspectives. The global age, he maintains, requires individuals who are cognitively flexible, culturally sophisticated and are able to work collaboratively in groups made up of people of diverse backgrounds and intelligences.

Now a problem with these approaches is that they are stated in a highly generalised and abstract manner, making it difficult to infer implications for specific practices of

curricular and pedagogic reform. At a practical level, moreover, they face the highly entrenched traditions of educational policies and practices that remain nationally or locally defined. Almost by definition, much of our practice is located in a particular context informed by the immediate exigencies of our day-to-day lives. The immediate priorities that people have are invariably local. These are not shaped by remote considerations but, inevitably, by the immediate relations with our family, friends and work colleagues. If this is so then we need to ask how we might teach about issues of global interconnectivity so that they are locally relevant, but are equally compatible with global concerns. This requires an educational vocabulary that transcends the binary between the global and the local, while promoting an understanding of global interconnectivity that is both empirically grounded and ethically informed.

In what follows I want to develop such a vocabulary around the idea of cosmopolitanism, interpreting it not as a universal moral principle, nor a prescription recommending a form of political configuration, but as a mode of learning about, and ethically engaging with, new cultural formations. My argument is that if global interconnectivity is now a pervasive socio-cultural condition then teaching about cultural and intercultural relations should no longer be aligned to the requirements of national prejudices, but has to become cosmopolitan with a focus on attempts to develop in students a set of epistemic virtues with which to understand the dynamics of global transformations. This does not mean ignoring local issues, but to understand them within the broader context of the global shifts that are reshaping the very nature of localities.

The idea of cosmopolitanism is of course not new. In a highly influential paper, Martha Nussbaum (1996) describes, for example, the enthusiasm the ancient Greeks displayed towards the notions of a globally inter-related moral order and cosmopolitan education. Historically, a similar aspiration underpinned most religions as they sought to spread around the world their convictions about a common humanity. Indeed, religious sentiments have always been based on sets of universal precepts. Ideas of earth as a single place can be found in most religious doctrines. The romantic poets similarly held ideas of an integrated moral order, as did the western philosophers of the Enlightenment who predicted an incipient global consciousness, based on the promise of science as a language of universal laws that was applicable to the entire world, natural as well as social.

It was not, however, until the development of capitalism in the nineteenth century and the emergence of more consistent practices of colonialism that notions of cosmopolitanism were taken beyond abstractions, into more substantive realms of social, economic and political practice. Under colonial regimes, globally integrated markets and financial systems emerged, as it became possible to transport goods across vast distances, and as people were able to remain in touch with each other

using new communication technologies, such as the telegraph. International brand names like Campbell Soup, Coco Cola and Heinz Foods all emerged in the 1880s, and, in less than twenty years, became household names in many countries around the world.

According to Scholte (2000, p. 70), it is the incipient global communications, markets, money and finance in the late nineteenth century that encouraged the formation of international organizations to regulate cross-border movement of goods, money and people. This globality was not however restricted to the economic sphere, it also led to the development of a popular consciousness, as people wished to find out more about the countries with whom they traded, and the peoples and cultures they colonised. Indeed, the discipline of Anthropology itself was created to fulfil people's desire to know others, as a basis for interacting with them (Clifford, 1997).

As Edward Said (1985) has pointed out, colonialism was above all a mode of thinking, a system of knowledge with which to exercise power over colonised people. A hegemonic form of cosmopolitan education played a major role in the dissemination of colonial ideas, designed not only to buttress the exercise of power, but also to make it appear legitimate to the colonised and colonizing populations alike. In this way, the main aim of Orientalism (Said, 1985) was the development of a global consciousness sympathetic to the economic and political interests of the colonial powers.

It is not surprising, therefore, that both Britain and France invested heavily in creating educational systems in the countries they colonised. Schools were established to educate the masses, and universities were created to develop a local administrative elite beholden to the colonial powers. The ethos and structure of the emerging colonial systems of higher education mirrored those of the colonial centre. The universities in far-flung parts of the British Empire, for example, followed the same curriculum, and examined the students in the same manner. Universities in both the centre and the periphery were designed to help students imagine the British Empire as a seamless entity, built around a core set of values and interests that were often viewed as 'cosmopolitan'. Students were encouraged to learn the languages and cultures of the Empire. Even if this knowledge was constructed in a particular way, which portrayed the native as simple, exotic or inferior, in need of 'civilisational' development, it viewed the world as globally interconnected and interdependent.

The contemporary interpretations of global interconnectivity differ markedly from these earlier constructions. They are different from the colonial constructions, for instance, in that they do not assume a political centre from which economic and political activity across the world is controlled and coordinated. They suggest, rather,

that the major advances in information and communication technologies have converted the world into a single economic system, with knowledge as its key commodity. According to Albrow (1996, p. 9) "the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single, global society". As a result of time-space compression, Robertson (1992, p. 8) argues, "cultures and societies are being squeezed together and driven towards mutual interaction".

So, while in religious doctrines the notion of cosmopolitanism represented a moral aspiration, and in its colonial construction it was a political project designed to legitimise territorial conquests, in the contemporary era, it describes an empirical reality resulting from the ease with which goods, finance, people, ideas and media are now able to flow across the world, leading to a radical shift in our understanding of space and time. It places great emphasis on the role people themselves play in forging and sustaining conceptions of global interconnectivity.

In this way, global interconnectivity is neither systematic nor structured around some central locus of power, but is much more about popular consciousness, a form of social imagination. It is produced *organically* through the shifting subjectivities of people. Tomlinson (2000, p. 2) refers to this as 'complex connectivity', consisting in "the rapidly developing and ever-densening networks of interconnections and interdependences that characterise modern social life". He contends that this connectivity implies proximity as a *social-cultural* condition. It suggests a kind of cultural awareness that, in various ways, has become 'global'. As Robertson (1992, p. 8) maintains, globalization intrinsically involves "the intensification of consciousness of a world as a whole". This suggests the need to understand even the most specific of localities in supra-territorial terms.

Traditionally, sociologists conceived of a culture as bounded and coherent, serving the purposes of social integration. Globalization has destabilised this conception, encouraging us to think of culture as essentially dynamic rather than static. As Tomlinson (2000, p. 9) argues, "if connectivity really does imply proximity as a general social-cultural condition, this has to be understood in terms of a transformation of practice and experience which is felt actually within localities as much as in the increasing technological means of access or egress from them". If this is so then we need to develop a more contemporary view of cosmopolitanism, emerging out of the subjective realities of global interconnectivity and interdependence already in existence.

Ways of conceptualizing cosmopolitanism that are grounded in the traditions of western moral philosophy may not suffice any longer. As I have already noted, contemporary normative debates concerning cosmopolitanism have their roots in

ancient Greek philosophy, where the term stood for 'citizens of the world', those who considered humankind as more important than their own state or native land. Martha Nussbaum's (1996) attraction to this conception lies in her opposition to the kind of nativist patriotism that grips nations from time to time, such as that expressed in the current global 'war on terror'. Nussbaum argues that to give the nation "special salience in moral and political deliberations is both morally dangerous and, ultimately subversive of some of the worthy goals patriotism sets out to serve" (p. 11). It is morally dangerous because it reinforces the unexamined assumption that one's own preferences and ways are natural and normal. And it is subversive because it overlooks the fact that, in the longer term, even our most local of interests are tied to the broader concerns of others.

According to Nussbaum, cosmopolitanism does not mean that one has to give up local affiliations in order to be citizens of the world. Indeed, local traditions can be a source of great richness in the world, but only if they are not celebrated in an uncritically partisan fashion. Nussbaum imagines local affiliations to be surrounded by a series of concentric circles. The first one is drawn around the self, the next takes in one's immediate family, then, in order, one's neighbours and local group, one's fellow city-dwellers, one's fellow countrymen – and we can easily add to the list groupings based on ethnic, linguistic, historical, professional, gender and sexual identities.

> Outside all of these circles is the largest one, that of a humanity as a whole. Our task as citizens of the world will be to draw the circle somehow towards the centre making all citizens somehow as fellow city dwellers. (Nussbaum, 1996, p. 9)

Education, Nussbaum insists, has a major role to play in enabling us to become such citizens, by learning more about ourselves and by developing problem-solving skills that require international cooperation.

International cooperation is also a theme central to those theorists of cosmopolitanism who have found Kant's insights in his essay, 'Perpetual Peace', first published in 1795, particularly useful in developing a modern view of cosmopolitanism. Theorists such as Daniel Archibugi (2003), for example, find in Kant a rigorous integration of moral, legal and political philosophy, elevating the cosmopolitan tradition from a basic sensibility to a genuinely global project. Kant's conception of a cosmopolitan order is based on his 'formula of universal law', the highest of moral principles – his formulation of the categorical imperative. Kant (1960) believed that if the human race was not to consume itself in wars between nations and if the power of the nation-states was not to overwhelm the freedom of individuals, then an order was needed in which there were established 'a lawful external relation among states' and a 'universal civil society'.

For Kant, such an order represented a system of international justice based upon robust principles of cosmopolitan law designed to constrain states' power, but not their freedom. He intended such a law to guarantee the right of 'hospitality', a universal right of 'humanity' to all individuals. His view of cosmopolitanism thus implies a particular form of moral education, designed to teach students the universalism of moral theory, an understanding of the formal codification of individuals' fundamental rights irrespective of their nationality, ethnicity, race, social status of religious beliefs, and a moral disposition to act in demonstration of respect for human dignity and universal rights.

In an important respect then, Kant's cosmopolitan vision of a universal community of humankind builds upon the Greek ethical sensibility, and guides it into the domain of actual political process and juridical organization (Hayden, 2005, p. 22). Common to both of these perspectives is, however, what Stuart Hall (2002) refers to as 'liberal universalism', with its assumption of moral asbolutism, as well as the view that the state should be neutral with respect to the particularities of any culture, except in preserving the rights of individuals. Hall asks, however, whether this framework of liberal universalism is the only and best possible shell for cosmopolitan modernity. Practically, he notes, there are all kinds of problems associated with the actual operations of such a system in guaranteeing either freedom or equality to all the citizens regardless of their background. Conceptually, Hall argues, liberal cosmopolitanism assumes a fixed notion of tradition as already constituted in authority, as well as a view of culture as static, and not as something that is continuously changing, responding to the new circumstances in which it is embedded and encountered.

Liberal universalism assumes a world that is segmented in terms of specific, well bounded, tightly knit, organic communities, now having to interact with others as never before. But, as Hall insists, this is not the world we live in anymore. In the current context of globalization, groups, while they are culturally marked, are not entirely separated from each other, and are constantly re-shaped by cross-cultural encounters. While cultural traditions might be important to them in terms of their self-understanding, most groups have wider lateral connections that are not only located within nation-states but potentially span the globe.

Hall (2002, p. 30) suggests that the globally 'open' spaces in which we now live requires a kind of 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' that "is aware of the limitations of any one culture or any one identity and that is radically aware of its insufficiency in governing a wider society, but which nevertheless is prepared to rescind its claims to the traces of difference, which make its life important". What this suggests is that local and national attachments remain important in the new era, but in ways that are

crucially different, articulated in new ways, against conditions in which our problems and their solutions are inter-connected and transcend national boundaries. In this context, the nature of the polity within which moral claims are best addressed is itself open to question and political elaboration.

Philosophers like Stuart McIntyre (1985) regard the most local of attachments, neighbourhoods and cultures involving face-to-face communication as fundamental. They argue that the specific moral traditions grounded in a particular community matter much more than any universal principles or generalised spheres. But others, like Richard Rorty (1996), argue that it is the national context where the ideals of moral life are best located. But each of these views, in my view, appears to demand a somewhat hasty philosophical conclusion, without attending to the facts about the changing nature of our interconnected problems and of the social dynamics of the globalizing world. In this new context, cross-cultural encounters are not only imagined but are experienced on an everyday basis. What is needed, then, is a view of cosmopolitanism that is in line with the dynamic and interactive nature of everyday lived experiences of globality that are now steered by the imperatives of the global economy and a culture of consumption.

Cheah and Robbins (1998) point to the 'actual existing cosmopolitanisms', which rest on the recognition that the world now consists of a single economic market, with free trade and minimal political involvement as its ideological mantras. They imply the need to accept that a contemporary form of cosmopolitanism already exists. The question then, is how we should engage with its hegemonic expressions, such as, for example, the contemporary market-based practices of international education. Within the framework of these practices, cosmopolitanism of international students consists in their participation in an economic exchange, in which they are less concerned with the moral and political dimensions of global interconnectivity than with education's strategic economic possibilities. As a result, their cosmopolitan outlook is likely to be framed already by the role they believe international education might play in better positioning them within the changing structures of the global economy, which increasingly prizes the skills of interculturality and a cosmopolitan outlook.

Yet this form of cosmopolitan education is inherently contradictory, since on the one hand, it opens up the possibilities of genuine interaction among people from different cultural traditions, giving those students who can afford it opportunities to travel and learn the knowledge and skills required to work more effectively in an increasingly global society, to become cosmopolitan. On the other hand, it fails to problematise its bases in economistic modernising imaginaries, within which subject positions are formed. There is little doubt that international education encourages cultural interaction and exchange, as its rhetoric suggests, but this occurs within the logic of consumption, under the new global economic conditions.

Aihwa Ong (1999) has sought to understand the cultural aspects of these global conditions. She argues that, in the era of globalization, mobile individuals develop flexible notions of citizenship as strategies to accumulate capital and power. The logic of capital accumulation is to "induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions" (p. 14). In the global arena, powerful incentives exist for individuals to emphasise practices that favour "flexibility, mobility and repositioning in relation to markets, governments and cultural regimes" (p. 15). She illustrates her general thesis by referring to Hong Kong Chinese immigrants to the United States, who "seem to display an élan for thriving in conditions of political insecurity, as well as in the turbulence of global trade" (p. 15). Ong's thesis thus places transcultural practices at the centre of discussions of globalization, in the production and negotiations of cultural meanings within the normative framework of late capitalism. But she insists that such negotiations of meaning are accompanied by dilemmas for mobile people who are pulled in the direction of cultural flexibility on the one hand and cultural uncertainty and confusion on the other.

This new cosmopolitanism of the global elite appears then to represent a celebratory universalism that is arguably a mask for the rampaging capitalism in the new world order. Yet, it also involves a genuinely decentring move that recognises multiple identities working themselves out at multiple sites, that works to understand the complex tensions and interactions between nationalisms and global forces in the contemporary period, and that continues to seek new forms of transnational solidarity. This approach holds on to an ideal of global justice in the face of persistent, even growing inequalities, and tries to find, but not exaggerate, the emancipatory possibilities opened up by globalization. But in so doing, its interest in other cultures often gives way to an uncritical promotion of them.

As Craig Colhoun (2002) puts it, this new cosmopolitanism – the cosmopolitanism of the 'frequent travelers' – is inevitably contradictory in its articulation of the possibilities of solidarity across cultural and national differences. According to Tim Brennan (1997), at a time when identity politics and the discourse of difference have seemingly put an end to the possibility for genuine international solidarity, the idea of a new cosmopolitanism is very attractive. But if this new cosmopolitanism is to be self-aware, critical of its own positioning, of its own potential collusion with global capitalism, as well as of the dangers of imposing a new self-interested nationalism in the name of universal good, then it has to begin a critical conversation about its own definitions and its own intellectual work. Education has an important role to play in this task, in enabling students to recognise that while particular forms of global interconnectivity already exist, they need to be critically elaborated in search of more humane, just and democratic alternatives.

The facts of global interconnectivity, as we have already noted, are not new. But nor are they self-evident or politically neutral. Many of the links that define our lives occur in the shadows as their nature is masked from people who often take them for granted. In another place, I have argued (Rizvi, 2006) that one of the problems with much of recent social theory is that it represents globalization in ahistorical and apolitical terms, without reference to the actual actors who are shaping it, struggling over its forms and contesting its various formations. In addition, current social theory fails to realise that each global process – each experience of interconnectivity – has a specific history from which it has emerged. In this way, global processes do not mark a clear departure from colonialism, but are arguably embedded within its historical trajectory.

Global interconnectivity is also a dynamic phenomenon, politically and historically changing. It follows, then, that it is not only experienced differently, but it is also interpreted differently in different contexts. It involves a hermeneutical politics. It has different consequences for different communities, and even individuals, some of whom are able to profit from its possibilities, while others have their lives shattered as a result of its excesses (see Bauman, 2000). Not surprisingly, therefore, various representations of global interconnectivity, and of cosmopolitanism, are highly contested because they embody particular configurations of power that serve some interests, and ignore others.

In such a context, the relationship between cosmopolitanism and education needs to be re-thought. If the views of cosmopolitanism based on liberal universalism, on the one hand, and on the actual existing practices of globalization, on the other, are both flawed and inadequate, then we need an alternative, which, while it recognises the facts of global interconnectivity and interdependence does not assume their form, or indeed their inevitability. I believe that cosmopolitanism can be a worthy goal, but only if it is historically informed and open to the diversity of moral and political traditions that are now inevitably involved in cross-cultural encounters.

Cosmopolitanism is only worth pursuing if we are able to use it as an instrument of critical understanding and moral improvement. In this way, issues surrounding the cosmopolitan possibilities of education are at once empirical and normative. Empirically, they relate to the need for greater clarity over how global transformations are re-shaping our lives. Normatively, we need to ask how we *should* work with these transformations, creatively and in ways that are potentially progressive. And if indeed these transformations affect everyone, albeit in ways that are highly differentiated and unequal, then the question arises as to how education should respond to these shifts so that globalization does not further reproduce social inequalities. In other words, how should education be framed so that it provides students both an empirical understanding of global transformations, but also an ethical orientation towards them?

As I have already noted, at a practical level, attempts to realise the cosmopolitan possibilities of education face the highly entrenched traditions of educational policies and practices that remain largely locally defined, even if they are influenced by many external sources. The immediate issues we have to deal with are invariably local. If this is so, then, I believe that our approach to teaching about global interconnectivity should begin with the local, but must move quickly to address issues of how our local communities are becoming socially transformed through their links with communities around the world and with what consequences. In this way, I want to stress the *relationalities* that lie at the heart of any thinking about the dynamics of change. I believe that our focus ought to be on understanding the nature, scope and consequences of global transformations, rather than on some generalised principles of cosmopolitanism, global citizenship, or indeed the skills required in the global economy. In this way, I want to argue that learning about interconnectivity itself needs to become cosmopolitan.

In developing this view of cosmopolitan learning, I draw heavily on Edward Said (1994; 2004), especially his insistence upon the importance of contingency in both theoretical and political deliberations and his rejection of dualisms such as universalism and particularism, global and local, and empirical and normative. Said argues that a particular conception of humanism is essential in realizing cosmopolitan possibilities, but insists on viewing it as provisional. Responding to his critics (e.g. Clifford, 1997), Said (2004) maintains that: "it should be possible to be critical of humanism in the name of humanism" (p. 10). Said refuses to view social theory in its narrow sense, but insists that it needs to be grounded within a political struggle that is spatially and historically specific. For him, intellectual work must always be viewed as tentative and strategic, working against the illusions of dualities and certainties.

In my view, the same applies to learning, especially in relation to understanding the emerging conditions of global interconnectivity. I want to propose, therefore, a view of cosmopolitanism that defines it as a particular way of learning about our own social identities and cultural trajectories, but always in ways that underscore their interconnectivity with the rest of the world. In this way, I want to emphasise the dynamic nature of our identities and cultures, now changing more rapidly and intensely than ever before, mostly as a result of their interactions with identities and cultures that potentially span the world. Unlike multiculturalism that highlighted learning about other cultures *within* the nation-state, I want to argue that the sources of cosmopolitan learning are more diverse and extensive, and can no longer be contained within the borders of the nation-state.

If learning about global interconnectivity is to become cosmopolitan then it must have the potential to help students come to terms with their *situatedness* in the world –

situatedness of their knowledge and of their cultural practices, as well as their positionality in relation to the social networks, political institutions and social relations that are no longer confined to particular communities and nations, but potentially connect up with the rest of the world (Said, 1983). Much of the traditional learning about other cultures and cultural interactions has been nationally defined. Cosmopolitan learning, in contrast, represents an aspiration that seeks to develop a different perspective on knowing and interacting with others within the changing context of the cultural exchanges produced by global flows and networks.

It is based on a different view of culture as dynamic and creative, viewed as always in the state of *becoming* as a result of interactions of various kinds, rather than something that is entirely inherited within clearly definable boundaries and norms. It envisages cosmopolitan learning not in terms of an abstract universal moral law, but in efforts to develop in students a set of *epistemic virtues* with which to both understand current discourses and practices of global interconnectivity and to develop alternatives to them. I use the term epistemic virtues deliberately (as opposed to values) to highlight those habitual practices of learning that regard knowing as always tentative, involving critical exploration and imagination, an open-ended exercise in cross-cultural deliberation designed to understand relationalities and imagine alternatives, but always from a position that is reflexive of its epistemic assumptions.

Such epistemic virtues are of course best developed collectively, in transcultural collaborations, in which local problems can be examined comparatively, linked to global processes. But even when such collective learning is be possible, it is nonetheless possible to help students to interrogate how things are done differently in different places, how they might express particular histories of intercultural encounters. Such interrogation is clearly necessary if we are going to help students to develop a different social imaginary about their lives and life options in the materiality of their collective and interlinked circumstances – that is, if we wish to help them to consider how things could be otherwise. With greater access to the new media, it is now possible to do this kind of pedagogic work through networks, both formal and informal, bringing together students from different backgrounds, with the objective of encouraging them to think outside their own parochial boundaries and cultural assumptions, helping them to reflect on how global processes affect communities differentially and to examine the sources of these differentiations and inequalities and what could be done about them.

Thus, instead of learning about cultures in an abstract manner, cosmopolitan learning involves pedagogic tasks that help students explore the criss-crossing of transnational circuits of communication, the flows of global capital and the cross-cutting of local,

translocal and transnational social practices. Such learning encourages students to consider the contested politics of place making, the social constructions of power differentials and the dynamic processes relating to the formation of individual, group, national and transnational identities, and their corresponding fields of difference.

It should be noted that this kind of learning is impossible within an emphasis on criticality. This is so because cosmopolitan learning necessarily challenges the prevailing orthodoxies both about education and about cultural formations. Moreover, it contests the hegemonic social imaginaries of globalization and is implicitly directed towards the goal of global relations that are more just, democratic and humane. Current attempts at the internationalization of curriculum highlight the importance of intercultural experiences, through such programs as study abroad, but do not seriously address how such pedagogies might produce a critical understanding of the new global configurations of economic and cultural exchange.

Cosmopolitan learning of the kind I have in mind, in contrast, encourages students to examine the political meaning of intercultural experiences, seeking to locate them within the transnational networks that have become so much part of the contemporary era of globalization. It is not enough to state that globalization drives cultures towards mutual interaction; it is perhaps more important to examine how cultures are transformed by these interactions, and how our social imagination plays a central role in these transformational processes. If this is so, then, one of the major goals of cosmopolitan learning should be the development of a critical global imagination, based on a recognition that we all have "elaborate interests and capabilities in constructing world pictures whose very interaction affects global processes" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 11).

Such an approach clearly demands the deparochialisation of the processes of learning and teaching, highlighting the importance of 'grassroots' global networks capable of interrogating dominant social imaginaries that are no longer adequate for negotiating the complex global realities we now confront. In this sense, cosmopolitan learning is not concerned so much with imparting knowledge and developing attitudes and skills for understanding other cultures *per se,* but with helping students examine the ways in which global processes are creating conditions of economic and cultural exchange that are transforming our identities and communities; and that, unreflexively, we may be contributing to the production and reproduction of those conditions, through our uncritical acceptance of the dominant ways of thinking about global interconnectivity.

Indeed, it should be in our collective power to develop an alternative imaginary of global interconnectivity, one which is informed not by the universalizing logic of the market, or by the romanticised notions of global citizenship, but by our determination

to develop a different conception of global relations, which views all of the world's diverse people and communities as part of the same moral universe. Such an imaginary requires the development of a sense of moral responsibility among students directed not only towards their families and nations, but also towards humanity as a whole.

Cosmopolitan learning, thus, demands a new way of learning about other cultures and intercultural exchange. It requires the development of intellectual skills to examine the ways in which we create knowledge about others and use it to engage with them. In this way, it highlights both the cognitive and ethical dimensions of intercultural learning. It suggests that learning about others requires learning about *ourselves*. It implies a dialectical mode of thinking, which conceives cultural differences as neither absolute nor necessarily antagonistic, but deeply interconnected and relationally defined. It underscores the importance of understanding others both in *their* terms as well as *ours*, as a way of comprehending how both our representations are socially constituted.

This suggests the importance of understanding intercultural exchange *historically*, in ways that show how no cultural tradition – no set of cultural values and practices – can be understood without reference to the historical interactions that produced it. This has always been the case, but in a world in which social networks of money, technologies, people and ideas increasingly shape life options and chances, thinking historically about global interconnectivity is indispensable. This is so because networks, too, have histories, without an understanding of which we cannot fully comprehend how people's sense of their collectivity – as solidarity in its positive manifestations and as marginalization in its negative – is forged within power configurations that are often asymmetrical. The past is linked to the present and plays an important role in imagining the future. As Edward Said (1993) pointed out, it is only through this realization that we recognise that our identities are forged in histories of contact between groups of people, where knowledge and resources are traded, borrowed, improved upon, fought over and passed on to others.

The notion of a pure culture, located within its own territory, has always been a myth because all cultures result from their encounters with others. If this is so, then, *relationality* must be regarded as crucial for any attempt to internationalise curriculum through cosmopolitan learning. If we cannot learn about cultures in their pristine and authentic form, then, our focus must shift to the ways in which cultural practices become separated from their 'homes' and are converted into new forms in their new contexts, and on how this transforms both the places people leave and the places they come to inhabit. In a world in which flows of information, media symbols and images and political and cultural ideas are constant and relentless, new cultural formations are

inevitable, and can only be relationally comprehended. Therefore, this focus on relationality must replace approaches that treat 'other' cultures as entirely separable from our own. Cultural formations can only be understood in relation to each other, politically forged, historically constituted and globally interconnected through processes of mobility, exchange and hybridization.

A relational understanding of global interconnectivity also points to the importance of another element of cosmopolitan learning: *reflexivity*. Reflexivity (Beck, 2000) requires people to become self conscious and knowledgeable about their own perspective and how it is subject to transformation as a result of its engagement with other cultural trajectories. Reflexive individuals are able to challenge their own taken for granted assumptions that are often linked to official and popular discourses of cultural difference. They are able to reflect upon the politics of their own representations of others, and point to the ways in which this politics is historically constituted. Such reflexivity cannot then be achieved without a critical recognition of our own cultural and political presuppositions, and the epistemic position from which we speak and negotiate difference. This must involve realizing that knowledge about cultures is never neutral and that our efforts to learn about and engage with others take place within asymmetrical configurations of power. This realization, however, needs not prevent us from continuing to explore, engage and learn from other cultural trajectories in an effort to transform our own.

In the contemporary era, the volume and speed of intercultural exchange has increased at an unprecedented rate, creating greater possibilities of trade, transfers of technology, cultural cooperation and skirmishes, and even war, than ever before. Never before has there been a greater need of intercultural understanding and communication. But if this understanding is predicated on essentialist conceptions of culture, rather than within a pedagogically open framework that explores the dynamics of cultural interactions in an on-going fashion, then no amount of intercultural education is likely to be helpful. New ways of thinking about economic and cultural exchange are necessary, in which conceptions of others and ourselves are defined relationally, as complex and inherently dynamic products of a range of historical processes and the contemporary cultural economies of global interconnectivity. Epistemologically, all cultural understanding is comparative because no understanding of others is possible without self-understanding. If this is so, then, not only is it important to emphasise historicity, criticality and relationality, but also reflexivity in all our attempts to imagine and work towards better futures.

Cosmopolitanism is a worthy educational goal, perhaps more important now than ever before. Its possibilities, however, cannot be adequately realised unless we develop a different way of thinking about issues of global interconnectivity and develop in

students a set of epistemic virtues with which they can critically explore the ways in which global flows are now shaping, and will continue to re-shape, both their identities and their communities – their life styles as well as their life chances. In a sense, the students born in the twenty-first century in many parts of the world will inevitably experience 'actual existing cosmopolitanism' based on a consumer culture and un-reflexive acceptance of the dictates of the global economy. But this cosmopolitanism is unlikely to serve them well.

We need a different kind of cosmopolitan learning with which to challenge the hegemonic understanding of globality and forge a different social imaginary of globalization, based on a somewhat optimistic conviction about the creative possibilities of continuous self-examination and transformation. This will require not only relational and reflexive understanding, but also a different ethic towards intercultural relations that denies that our cultures are fixed and essentially distinct, and insists that the relation between self and others can only be understood dialectically, and hopefully in ways that are cooperative.

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