

# Tomáš Jablonský

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## Globalization and education - studying and teaching at the catholic university today

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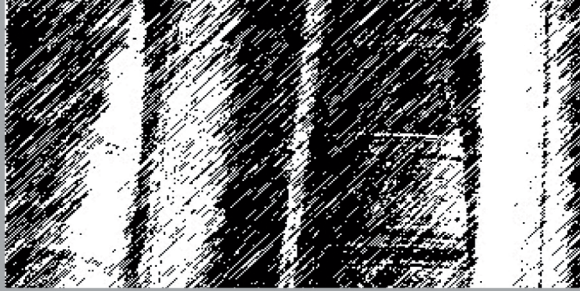
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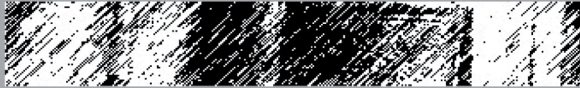
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## Edukacja uniwersytecka i autoedukacja



TOMÁŠ JABLONSKÝ

# Globalization and education — studying and teaching at the catholic university today

### **Globalizacja a edukacja — studiowanie i nauczanie na uniwersytecie katolickim w dzisiejszej dobie**

**Abstrakt:** Tekst stanowi analizę wpływów trendów rozwoju cywilizacji (w tym procesu globalizacji) na początku XXI wieku na edukację. Autor opisuje globalizację w aspekcie społecznym, ekonomicznym, ekologicznym i bezpieczeństwa oraz podkreśla jej wielowymiarowy i złożony charakter. W aspekcie kulturowym oraz tożsamości kulturowej podkreśla wyzwania stawiane przez proces globalizacji przed rozwojem społeczeństwa wykształconego. W aspekcie edukacyjnym i badawczym autor kładzie nacisk na autentyczność misji uniwersytetów katolickich w Europie, które powinny odzwierciedlać, promować i podtrzymywać dążenie do prawdy i wartości chrześcijańskich.

**Słowa kluczowe:** globalizacja, wpływ globalizacji, wyzwania w edukacji i wychowaniu, badanie, misja, wartości.

## Introduction

The main determinant of the actual development is the dynamic character of the epoch we live in, which is best characterized by a new historical trend — globalization. The present epoch is described as the age of information civilization. The characteristic societal system is the society qualified as the target-oriented, achievement-oriented and open (Tokárová, 2002, p. 11). The globalization can be labelled — in a simplified manner — as the interconnection of the world in its economic, political, information and social aspects, thus hitting multiple levels of society development.

The elements of globalization started to express themselves in the end of the 1960s with the rising awareness of imperilment of the mankind's future by a global crisis. The first time in the history of civilization a worldwide crisis arose, which included developed as well as developing countries — the menace to the man's environment. The reasons of the state of art covered up the increase of global population, the disrupted balance among powers, effective technologies and the environment. Since the end of the 1970s, along with the dynamic start of technology progress and its application into technologic and social processes, under the pressure of global oil peaks, the world economy has been characterized by qualitatively new phenomena which — from the 1970s onwards — have been marked as the globalization (Lipková, 2011, p. 98).

The phenomena accompanying the civilization advancement at the turn of the 1960s and the 1970s were researched and categorized as “the global problems of mankind” at the beginning of the 1980s (e.g. A. Peccei, L. Lorenz, and K. Ivanička). The sequence of seriousness of global problems ranged from armament, overpopulation, poverty, energy problems to agriculture, hunger and malnutrition, diseases, plague, pandemics, illiteracy and destitution. Later on the focus was put on the key problems. K. Ivanička (2006, p. 37) draws attention to three cardinal, mutually interlinked global problems: a) armament, b) the deficiency of energy and the global warming, c) the growing poverty of the Third World and the unequal distribution of wealth in the world.

## The globalization impacts

With the aim to explicate the global problems of mankind and to quest for system solutions alternative, the new science dealing with resolutions emerged from futurology, later followed by the globalistics as the interdisciplinary and prognostic science. The globalistics researches on the actual character of development, the trajectories of progress — the megatrends of the global evolution, and designs some new alternatives of global problems solutions. The system examination of megatrends is based on the increasingly emergent necessity of cognition of the substance of the mentioned phenomena, their carriers, their consequences and the quest for the instruments of diminishing and elimination of negative impacts of globalization and other megatrends (Lysák, 2009, p. 90).

The aftermaths of megatrends (including globalization) can be categorized into four groups (Lysák, 2009, p. 104):

- social impacts are manifested as poverty/hunger, menacing increase in disparities, the differences in literacy and education, illiteracy, health problems — plague, pandemics, asymmetry in demographic development;
- economic consequences are manifested in the universal monopolization, the asymmetry of resources/the global dislocation, energy risks,
- ecological consequences can be identified as the degradation of soil, water, air and the global warming;
- security consequences are demonstrated as intrastate and interstate conflicts, the weapons of mass destruction, international terrorism.

Globalization is a multidimensional phenomenon which lies in a mutual and global interconnection of space and remote parts of the globe (continents, regions, states) into the whole of the “global society” (Tokárová, 2002, p. 13). “The world is becoming one global net. The character of globalization resembles the spider-web, the interference in any part of the web can bring up vibrations in other parts, frequently remote places” (Pike, Selby, 1994, p. 22). Nothing is done in isolation; everything jointly generates a dynamics, multi-layered system in potential and real relations. Even small events and seemingly unimportant events may bring along big and far reaching — positive and negative — impacts.

The globalization also influences the socio-cultural context of the human life. It is associated with the perception of globalized civilizations, their acceptance or rejection as the forced evil (Hubínková, 2008, p. 53). Moreover, since the end of the 20th century the sociological identification of the concept of society with the concept of national state and nation-

al community as territorial unity has been overcome, on the contrary, there has been a split between the unity of a national state and a national community (Ondrejko, 1999, p. 7). "There are new authority relations, new competition relations, new conflicts and new ways of their overcoming emerging. It comes to the new permeation of the unity of the state and the nation and the supranational and multinational relationships, new identities, social spaces, social conditions and processes" (ibid, p. 15). The globalization represents a multidimensional process covering individual cultures, ideology streams, educational systems, scales of values, etc. Social, economic and political relations overcome the frontiers of states and substantially affect the life of people (Hubinková, 2008, p. 53).

Globalization is accompanied by phenomena which represent an essential change in the development and the structure of life on the planet. They immediately affect the life of individuals and the society, require social changes and put new requirements upon human potential (Tokárová, 2002, p. 16):

"Globalisation increases the requirements relating to specific attributes, abilities and capacities of individuals (students, parents, teachers, managers, and employees), groups (families, companies, educational organizations) and the society as the whole (civilizations, national communities, and ethnic groups). From the social aspect, the meanings of human and social potentials increase, from the economic aspect, the investments in human capital gain the importance."

There is an increase and an extension of various dependencies and a need to resist different kinds of addictions (economic, political, drug, alcohol, sectarian ones). The mutual interdependence of individuals is increased, the dependence of individuals on small groups, their dependence on a state, the dependence of a state on supranational (transnational) organizations.

The globalization in political sphere is demonstrated as the integration of dominating political powers, from regional up to global scale.

In the ecological field it represents the protection and the management of environment on the surface, under the surface and above the surface of our planet.

In the security field it presents the defense systems, the worldwide fight against various kinds of criminality and the protection of human rights.

## The appeals of globalization for an individual

The consequences of the economic globalization are contradictory and even negative in the social field, as the economic interest dominates the social principles. Other negative influences include (un)employment, migration, brain drain, infringement of environmental legislation in undeveloped economies, changes in culture and way of living. In consequence of forced acquisition of new economic markets, there is an increase in regional hostilities, political and economic migration, and the abuse of children's work, nationalistic movements and xenophobia, ecologic, accidents with global impacts. It implies the globalization of exploitation and the globalization of terror as the form of organized crime. Under the pressure of the unification of products and goods, the production of typical national domestic goods disappears. In cultural field the Americanized lifestyle and clear cultural hegemony (American film production) dominates. Information on the Internet is not secure, they promote pornography, violence, terrorism, and they include the socially undesirable and negative e-content (as occultism, denominationalism, and fascism).

In the globalization expansion the main role is played by media (television, billboards, journals, and the Internet) which offer a certain type of the unified culture and lifestyle. The media have the essential influence upon the modification and the withdrawal from authentic habits of various primitive cultures which may find the reflection in the environment pollution, the loss of identities of individual, the rise of regional tensions and wars, etc. (Hubinková, 2008, p. 55). The media produce and present "virtual reality", the world of fiction and the cyberspace as the perfect copy of the real world. They offer skeletonized political news service and corporate tinsel, they manipulate the viewers and deform the consciousness of recipients, their attitudes, beliefs and behaviour in relation to exposed situations (political situation, elections, accidents, catastrophes, and war conflicts) as they introduce the news with easiness and laxity. They protrude the idol of superman, whose basic values represent the physical force, self-assertion and egoism, leading to fame and fortune.

The consequences and the manifestations of globalization represent new challenges for educational science, pedagogy and psychology and educational practice. Educational systems should take into consideration that

- information spreads across frontiers;
- pupils and students are increasingly independent from local sources of information;

- galleries of world arts, centres of science, collection funds in museums and libraries and services associated with them are globally accessible in real time;
- people can individually learn, be educated, run a business;
- people can individually increase and develop the skills, develop the talent and the preoccupations, to compete and to increase the chances and the welfare even in geographically remote places;
- the comprehension of multicultural communities and the application of intercultural competences and tolerance are becoming a comparative advantage in global communication and cooperation.

## The challenges of globalization in relation to the development of knowledge society

After the World War II the world has been witnessing a series of significant comprehensive phenomena, including the shift from the paradigm of industrial society to the knowledge society. The end of the so-called linear way of deliberation was characterized by three events: the end of the socialism regime, the end of the industrial paradigm and the end of post-war capitalism (Truneček, 2004, p. 25). The shift from the industrial society paradigm to the knowledge society was induced by a new way of welfare generation and caused a rapid development of information technology. It, vice versa, accelerated the speed of globalization (ibidem, p. 29).

The education is the area which has direct connection with the advancement of knowledge society. The basic function of universities is the promotion of lifelong learning, incorporated into daily activities, and the action learning as mutual sharing of problems and issues in learning organization. The education in Catholic universities during globalization has to cope with the elevation of requirements concerning the education system, the curriculum, the approaches and the methods of education, including the increased inquiries related to university teachers. Catholic universities have to respond to new challenges of knowledge society by a progressive portfolio of educational programs and coverage of target groups of students. The motto saying that “it is the advantage to know and to understand, but it is the necessity to learn” has always been recognized, but this approach in information and knowledge society has become a dominant competitive advantage and the ground for fortune generation” (Truneček, 2004, p. 152).

The socio-cultural context is expressively reflected in the content of education and upbringing, therefore their context should have the linkage to different type of human activities (Švec, 2001, p. 21):

- cognitive activity (gnoseological component in the content);
- evaluation (axiological component in the content);
- proceeding (praxeological component in the content);
- intercommunication (semiotic component in the content);
- being (ontological component in the content).

The education process of future teachers is focused on the series “data — information — skills — wisdom”. Skills are classified as organizational, explicit, individual and hidden (tacit). They do not exist as isolated but in mutual combinations. The explicit (formal) skills can be expressed as tangible and stored in information systems. The key skills are the tacit skills hidden in the brain (intelligence). These hidden, unarticulated (implicit) and mute (tacit) skills are the skills in action, which are associated with an individual or a group (Truneček, 2004, p. 160). The skills are dynamic; they cannot be separated from the process in which they are employed. The skills represent a purposeful coordination of action.

Among young students studying teaching professions, the information is represented by the acquisition of curriculum, the skills represent pedagogical competencies applicable in educational practice. The unusable and the unused knowledge remain information. The knowledge can be divided into skills, knowledge and expertise (competence). The knowledge is the most significant form of a university asset (capital). Other forms as e.g. finance, land, and technologies are critically dependant on the knowledge; they are subordinated to the knowledge assets and follow them (Truneček, 2004, p. 185). The knowledge of teachers in universities must also be created and developed because they present key competencies, accumulated in universities by means of the academic staff, constantly renewed, improved and managed.

The skills present a purposeful coordination of action. The description of facts, phenomena and objects are information. The skills cannot be excluded from the cognition. The effective preparation of humans for knowledge society is realized in school teaching, out-of-school formal and informal learning and continues in institutions of lifelong learning. The skills and the knowledge of individuals and the groups (in the form of institutions as universities, institutions of tertiary education and continuing education) are internationalized by means of information and communication systems, they permeate the frontiers of individual countries and aim at supranational and global levels. Retroactively, the “global” (globally recognized and confirmed) knowledge crosses the borders of



states and creates incentives and appeals for transformations in national (and regional) context.

The challenges of knowledge society considerably influence the curriculum, the organization and the management of schools, the teaching profession, especially the role of teachers, the portfolio of methods and approaches to the university study. In the long run, the pupil-centered approach will be considered as the sine qua non condition in the teaching profession. This would impose the demands concerning the personality of applicants for teaching professions, in relation to intellectual and personality prerequisites and “pastoral” activities of teacher, including empathy, assertiveness, and practical implementation of a teaching profession.

In the context of the impacts of globalization the specific role of education is emphasized, as the education should prepare for an output-oriented (achievement-oriented) and open society. The character and the challenges of actual and perspective development of society should be reflected in the aims and objectives of education, the content and the methods. The new requirements may incorporate the following (Tokárová, 2002, p. 26):

- to accentuate the possibility to develop the potential of each individual in educational settings (every person is apt for something);
- to utilize participative methods of education (method of collaboration, collaborative learning in groups, acceptance of personality) which contribute to associate the potential of an individual into the synergy effect achieved by a team work;
- to replace the encyclopedic approach by the pragmatistical approach, considering the aspects of cognition and skills;
- to strengthen and to facilitate the development of autoregulation potential (the capability to overcome barriers) and the mobilization of internal strengths;
- to develop one’s own responsibility (for health, success, carrier) and the consequences of one’s own deeds (moral, social, ecological);
- to promote patriotism and relation towards traditions of family, community, nation, to interlink the ideas of globalism with patriotism.

Neither pedagogical theory nor educational practice can remain isolated from above-mentioned influences and affect. The increase of the level of education of individuals has become the priority of every developed country. This must be naturally reflected in elaboration of the education content and the approach to education. The external changes relating to the socio-cultural environment are reflected in the content of education and upbringing and affect the methodology approaches and the concepts of the ideal of man’s education.

## The impact of globalization upon culture and the cultural identity of man

The original meaning of the word “culture” incorporated cultural and civilization components. At present the progress has limited exclusively upon the scientific and technological knowledge, both in practical application as well as the theoretical reasoning (Žilová, 2010, p. 60). The postmodern idea of progress is controlled by four basic areas (Lyotard, 1997, pp. 33—34):

- the science, in which the idea of the most effective cognition is dominant;
- the technology, in which the idea of the most efficient performance is promoted;
- the economics, which takes care of generation wealth;
- the state, which organizes prosperous and lucky co-existence of human beings.

These four areas cooperate and integrate into a broader complex: “the cognition with the aim to increase the efficiency, the power with the aim to expend the wealth, the wealth with the aim to promote co-existence in order to increase the achievement and the cognizance.”

The scientific research in universities must also consider and reflect the issue of truth. At present the issue of truth is becoming disputable. The truth is rather the synonym of the term “justifiable in relation to actual goals.” The truth is replaced by pragmatism of thinking based on the precondition that the cognition is valued provided it is usable and applicable. From the viewpoint of pragmatism, however, the search for truth is entirely irrelevant (Žilová, 2010, pp. 61—62). Moreover, the culture is eliminated by consumerism, in terms of utility and efficiency.

The most alarming impacts of the civilization growth upon the scientific research are the cognition affected by the information retrieval and the mercantilism. Everything which cannot be transformed into computer codes will be expelled from the category of cognizance (Lyotard, 1984, par. 4). The knowledge has become a commodity for sale and the subject of a consumption carousel (production — consumption, offer — demand). The acquisition of knowledge is not liable to the quest for the truth but to the model that the comprehension of the world is established on the economic turnover (Žilová, 2010, p. 63).

For Catholic universities in Europe it is significant to reconsider in their activities that the civilization growth represent only one angle of a triangle, the two others (Greek culture and Christianity) have consti-

tuted principal European values. Today more than ever the warning of the Pope Benedict XVI pays: “If Europe does not export the faith that God is Truth and Truth is Divine, it would export its non-religion; it means the conviction that there is no truth, no law, no good [...]” (Ratzinger, 1993, p. 93).

Christian religion affecting the formation of personal identity is radically losing its exclusive role under the effect of real multiculturalism. Christianity is steadily marginalized.

The post-modern understanding of the identity of man is closely associated with the search for personal moral values. The world of values does not exist per se, without man (Klimeková, 2007, p. 78). Globalization can be perceived as a liberation process which represents the chance for future. On the other hand it can be perceived as the threat to personal identity and orientation in the world (ibidem, p. 56). The question remains which values are presently promoted in individual and which ones represent the man’s zeal. Do they represent the experiential values, the strong emotional experience? Or do they present the values associated with creative approach to one’s own activities? Or the values of advisability of human attitude to one’s own existence? Is the value of “to have” or “to be”?

## Conclusion

Globalization can be also characterized as the continuation of processes of integration and internationalization in economic, social, political, cultural, ecological and other spheres of human action, viewed from local, state, regional and worldwide (global) dimensions.

The universities in this context carry out new functions. They serve as regional employers, supporters of fight against poverty and promoters of decent human dignity. Their missions include education about the values, comprising the formation of human and intergenerational solidarity (Matúšová, 2010, p. 78). The universities in regions are placed just at the intersection of global, national and regional tendencies. They operate locally, but must act globally, considering the trends of internationalization of university education which bring in a number of advantages and negative impacts (ibidem).

Globalization is a new historical trend; it prestores the type of new civilization of the third millennium (Tokárová, 2002, p. 56). It has gained its supporters who consider it as the instrument of the increase and the counterbalance of socio-economic, and cultural level in differ-

ent countries. It has also its opponents, who consider it as the form of neo-colonialism and the menace to culture and traditions. Globalisation brings in new theoretical problems, instigates to re-evaluation of present theoretical concepts and views in relation to society and socio-economic development.

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