

The Corporate, Social Cohesion and Ethnic Models: Initiatives for Educational Policy Framing (II)*

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OECD:¹²¹ A BASKET CASE OF INTERNATIONAL MEDDLER

Ordinarily, the state is the locus of policy text production. Today, the boundary-broadening of globalization makes us to extend this locus to cover the MNCs/TNCs/TCC as well. One of them is the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) our choice for a basket case.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) comprises representatives from governments of originally 29 founding, mostly wealthy, Western countries (1961): Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Britain and the US. They were joined by Japan (1964), Finland (1969), Australia (1971) and New Zealand (1973). After a more-or-less-twenty-year gap, the new arrivals were: Mexico (1994), the Czech Republic (1995), and Hungary, Korea and Poland, all three in 1996. It is headed since 1 June, 1996 by Donald J. Johnston,¹²² as Secretary-General. OECD

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¹²¹ For more substantive information regarding OECD, log on to www.oecd.org. See also Henry et al, *The OECD*, pp. 39-60.

¹²² In an interview, Johnston considers OECD as an inter-governmental organization concerned with applied research in policy options for politicians and

countries are increasingly known to have been creating “network societies.”¹²³

Contributing about 25% to its budget, the US intervened in policy framing strongly in the education department insisting against internal opposition on the controversial project on educational indicators in line with her brand of neo-liberalism.

Its ideology, in general, is the commitment to a market economy and democratic government, which are interpretable according to context of the receiving state-member. Yet, despite varying applications, the standard procedures are: decision by consensus, dialogue, peer review and pressure, fundamental principles, manner of membership, and style. Structurally, its top governing board – the Council – is composed of representatives of member countries normally at ambassadorial or ministerial levels.

Under its predecessor Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), OECD came into existence out of the new international order established under the Marshall Plan following WWII. Despite its being founded on economic mandate, (OECD) got entangled in the early sixties with academic affairs. During this decade, the universities were heckled to train and to produce effective manpower for the demands of the increasingly advancing industrialized economies that made up the Organization’s membership in the wake of rising youth unemployment.

By this time, it created the Center for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI); and in 1970, the Education Committee replacing the Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel. Thus, the structural basis for education concerns had been institutionalized in OECD.

This hastened the creation of the Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) in 1972. The IMHE repre-

leaders to think about for future implementation. What makes it unique among other think tank organizations is its ability to push national government leaders to decide: “We are policy-relevant in a way that the average think tank simply isn’t.” (“Interview with OECD Sec-General” with the Earth Times News Service representative Pranay Gupte (August 6, 2000) at http://www.una.dk.fdd.Godk_int_org/Interview_Sec1.htm, pp. 4-5).

¹²³ See OECD ONLINE BOOKSHOP at <http://oecdpublications.gfi-nb.com/cgi-bin/OECDBookShop.storefront/>

sented another network of players as its Web Page describes its current topics of interest as: "continuing education and lifelong learning, the tertiary education institution as regional actor, diversification of tertiary institutions, management of research, quality in mass higher education, internationalization of higher education, legal issues and governance."¹²⁴

This demand eventuated into the massification of knowledge, triggering the transition from a parochial to a universal provision of contemporary educational policy. In this respect, OECD operated its machinery of educational policy peddling through classifying and categorizing phenomena; creating conceptual models; and providing the internationalization and exchange of policy vocabulary in higher education. Hence, from the outset, the OECD's involvement in higher education mirrored the policy issues congruent to the eventual dislocation of an elite to mass education onwards to the proposed universal higher education. For a starter, the 1974 Conference on "Problems in the Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education" noted the rapid change in student participation rates while maintaining confidence in the role of university.

As is evident in its report, *Policies for Higher Education in the 1980s* (OECD 1983), a change of attitude – a stark contrast from that which characterized the 1974 Report – towards university governance became apparent as this document at length discussed the *lack* of public confidence in universities. As if to acknowledge the undeniable pinch of globalization, the 1987 Report, *Universities under Scrutiny* (OECD 1987), raised issues of purpose, of links with economy and society, funding approaches, and pressure for greater efficiencies. To cap it all, *Financing Higher Education: Current Patterns* (OECD, 1990) now addressed openly funding options for universities due to government expenditure constraints; its subsequent parsimony in the funding of higher education; and given too the growing market mentality of the times.

With the evolving knowledge-based economy in the late eighties, the role of tertiary education in supplying the needed human resources had become central and indispensable. For its

¹²⁴ OECD Program on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE), 1999. See also <http://www.qut.edu.au/chan/oduc/imhe/>

part, OECD, then, offered different versions of human capital theory. And with the decline of youth employment, the lure for students to enroll in higher education was considered a viable market to which to sell the university which had evolved as a "tradeable" or marketable item since then. The result was a reflection in the greater exportation of students across frontiers. Marketing education became an alternative lucrative business for sagging economies.

By the 90's then, the transition to universal provision of education has intensified and swollen such concerns in a global scale within a saturated neo-liberal policy framework. The 1998 Thematic Review *Redefining Tertiary Education* institutionalized somehow such a drive and became the beacon document of the OECD as it mapped out the future strategies for higher education all over the world in the pursuance of "an anticipatory policy convergence."¹²⁵

¹²⁵ R. Dale, 1999: *Specifying Globalization Effects on National Policy: International Organizations and the Future of Welfare* (Sage, London), p. 13.

In the many intervening Conferences OECD held at different times, OECD raised issues and showed its privilege to freely coin some vocabulary. For example, what in the 1973 Conference on "Future Structures of Post-secondary Education" was "post-secondary education" became "higher education" in the 1981 Conference on "Policies for Higher Education." Such tinkering with word production sparked the discussion on some definitional and policy issues which still remained unresolved in the 1993 Sydney Conference on "Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education." In fact, another nomenclature was introduced in the more recent *Redefining Tertiary Education*, that of "tertiary education" now referring to "a stage or level, beyond secondary and including both university and non-university types of institutions and programmes." (OECD, 1998) It also means "new kinds of institutions, work-based settings, distance learning and other arrangements." (A. Wagner, 1998: *Redefining Tertiary Education*, The OECD Observer, 214, at <http://www.oecd.org/publication/observer/214/article4-eng.htm>, p. 1) "which can lead to a qualification recognized on the labour market." (T.J. Alexander, 1998: "From Higher to Tertiary Education: Directions for Change in OECD Countries," Presented at Plenary Session World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE), UNESCO, Paris, p. 1) Alexander continues: "Partly to open up thinking, the OECD's Education Committee chose to the term *tertiary education* to emphasise a variety of study options along a continuum rather than a hierarchy, to examine pathways and transitions and to draw attention to demand – individual and social – as a key driving force." (Wagner, *Redefining*, p. 1) In the main, OECD employed trend reports and the mediation of a policy language and concepts, both powerful influence peddlers as well; thus the thinking of policy makers not only within its member countries but also beyond are subconsciously conditioned to conform.

That OECD has become an international policy meddler and prosecutor of a biased policy preference will be explained, as suggested by Henry et al, by exposing some provisions of its Thematic Review *Redefining Tertiary Education* (1998).¹²⁶

THEMATIC REVIEW: Redefining Tertiary Education (1998)

How does a thematic review work? Started in 1995, it is one of the education policy mechanisms of the Organization to ensure policy convergence in the future. According to the OECD Website, thematic reviews are “geared to providing a cross-national perspective on particular themes of common interest and growing importance.”¹²⁷

An external thematic review team is organized to visit participating countries armed with homogenized sets of questions touching on issues ranging from structures, traditions and circumstances. Participating countries are supposed to prepare a focused background report (often supplemented by policy statements, data displays and research reports). Out of these collated hard and raw data and on the basis also of the study visit is a ‘country note’ prepared by the external thematic review team. The task of the Secretariat is to draft comparative reports, identifying therein key issues and policy considerations for discussion by the Education Committee. With the comments, observations and recommendations of the Education Committee incorporated, the comparative report is further edited for final publication and dissemination for future policy convergence.

For example, as part of the regular program of education policy reviews, the first of these thematic reviews on “examining issues and country experiences in the first years of tertiary education,” was crafted “to look into how to accommodate large volume participation at this level (now the norm in OECD countries); how to ensure that tertiary – level learning options appropriately and effectively meet the needs and interests of learners as well as the

¹²⁶ See Henry et al, *The OECD*, pp. 1–18; 127–145. See also “Country and Thematic Policy Reviews in Education” at <http://www.oecd.org/document/27/>.

¹²⁷ *Country and Thematic Policy Reviews in Education* at http://www.oecd.org/document/276/0,2340,en_2649_34511_2744219_1_1_1_1,00.html

demands from the economy and society; and how to address the competing demands and constraints on public and private budgets in meeting the costs." Australia, Belgium [Flemish community], Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States [Commonwealth of Virginia] were selected to participate. The process that runs through the production of this particular Thematic Review ended by the publication in 1998 of "Redefining Tertiary Education."¹²⁸

Salient Features

The Review's proposed solutions to the redefinition of tertiary education today are an admixture of being "descriptive, analytic and subtly normative,"¹²⁹ a far cry from being catalytic and integrative in OECD's struggling years.

Based on RTE, with a client focused leitmotif rather than that of supply – led, institution – directed expansion witnessed previously, the impact of globalization makes the following policy themes in the ascendant: *inter alia*, student demand, contending

¹²⁸ To be referred to here under the acronym RTE.

As a fitting preparation for this Thematic Review, OECD came up with a report on *The Knowledge-Based Economy* in 1996. Succinctly, this document reported the following findings, that: economies are more strongly dependent on knowledge production use and distribution; knowledge-intensive service sectors (especially education, communications, and information) are the faster growing sectors of Western economies attracting the most public and private investors; knowledge and technology when before was considered external to production, now is involved directly with it; a new growth theory demonstrates that investments in knowledge are characterized by increasing rather than decreasing returns; and there are two kinds of knowledge *evolving*: codified and tacit; the former referring to the "know-what" and "know why", embracing both factual knowledge and scientific knowledge; and the latter to the "know-how" and "know-who" in the form of skills needed to handle codified knowledge. Tacit knowledge is more important in labor markets today. "In short, while the evidence is far from conclusive at this stage, there is a consensus emerging in economic theory that: education is important for successful research activities (e.g. by producing scientists and engineers), which in turn is important for productivity growth; and education creates human capital, which directly affects knowledge accumulation and this productivity growth." (M. Peters, 2001: "National Education Policy Constructions of the 'Knowledge Economy': Towards a Critique," *Journal of Educational Enquiry*, 2/1, p. 9)

¹²⁹ RTE, p. 18.

rationales beneath the policy of tertiary education, curriculum, teaching and learning, quality issues, leadership, management, costs and financing – all themes contextualized in the confluence of pressures arising from participation rates, diminishing labor markets opportunities and stiff competition for public and private funds.¹³⁰

To begin, RTE decrees: “Tertiary education should be developing wider capabilities, more entrepreneurship and a more flexible attitude towards working life.”¹³¹ It is the student multi-faceted demand for employability (both local and abroad) that is driving change. And this drive is housed and ignited by the doctrine of entrepreneurialism, the heart of the new human capital theory. It, therefore, envisions a student profile that answers to the demands of the rapid changes in knowledge production/transfer and in labor markets and career structures. In matters of educational policy framing, students are treated as *consumers* whose educative satisfaction must be guaranteed.

The enshrined idea is to maintain international mobility, i.e., to be able to sustain their membership among the mobile elites whose basic qualification is technologically skilled with troubleshooting/team-building/risk-taking talents. Since this is now the goal of education purposes, entrepreneurialism had been institutionalized in this document. It is the fuel that ignites the engine of competitive individualism, whether taken singly or corporate (singular institution or conglomeration of them) and employability edge.

Policies, then, are framed not through deliberations inside board rooms, but, rather as they are dictated by student choices. Such is the diversity of choices that the blurring of student classification according to program enrolment is no longer practical and realistic: full/parttime, young/mature, fee paying/grant assisted – all simulate converging in the same learning places working side by side whether physically or virtually at their own respective learning pace. Therefore, new learning pathways and combinations that are more flexible, transparent and recognized, are generated because of this spectacular increase in participation rate.

¹³⁰ See Henry et al, *The OECD*, p. 134.

¹³¹ RTE, p. 105.

All these new pathways/combinations are in support of the consumer's thirst for life-time knowledge. The expression of "to learn at one's pace" intimates drawing up policies/guidelines for life-long learning, important to the consolidation of the knowledge society relative to issues of social equity and access and costing in terms of public/private funding. The challenge for policy framers, then, is effective management proper to this specific need.

In relation to curriculum design, RTE canvassed the recognition of the role of outside supranational bodies like the EU and the prospective role of the WTO in mandating cross-national qualifications for professionals. Besides, profession, industry and students, other consumer-stakeholders must be consulted in curriculum revisions. Consulting stakeholders such as they will, for sure, rekindle discussing the conflict between the traditional pursuit of education and the mercantilist import of its purpose – a conflict that must be eschewed. It also calls for more attention to cross-curricular and generic competences and greater provision of more experiential and problem-based learning. That the curriculum should be "student-centered" is a carry-over of the expression in the corporate world, "customer friendly."

Next, teaching in the university must constantly be improved through both quality and accountability mechanisms and career reward structure; and, hence, must be imputed as areas for tenure and promotion credits although the Reviews echoes the traditional belief that the status and promotion of universities are commonly associated with the academic dictum: "Publish or perish!" Hence, introducing teaching evaluations is welcomed.

RTE enumerates three elements in the issue of quality, namely: attrition rates amongst students, systematic evaluation of quality, and leadership *vis-à-vis* quality. The definition of standardization is also evoked although deemed unrealistic due its to incompatibility with the insistence on universal participation. The culture of quality audits, it notes, while received with high eyebrows by the academe, in general, has been accepted quite rapidly into the operations of universities and university systems. For his part, Wagner sees the following issues as new policy approaches with respect to standards and qualifications: New policy approaches also seek "to balance flexibility against the need for simplicity,

clarity in intended learning outcomes, and quality assurance. Qualifications frameworks provide one means to recognize and foster learning across different types of tertiary education programs and from outside formal tertiary education. It has proved difficult to encompass the linkages in learning for a qualification on such frameworks, where recognition is given for mastery of specific skills acquired independently of each other, in any sequence and at any time."¹³²

Criticisms on Redefining Tertiary Education¹³³

The following are found to be the substantial defects of this beacon document:

1. As a policy text, this redefinition of tertiary education in the Thematic Review forces us to believe that the changes an education policy framer should be cautious of is the diverse global needs of the clients/students never heard before. This is the new context to which the knowledge, skills and competencies within the vortex of flexibility should be directed, the lack of which will cause structural unemployment and economic bust. Thus, OECD has created its own context for policy framing and proffers a solution to this inevitable context, i.e., universal participation in tertiary education. Policies as texts are, therefore, framed within this un-reflected and accepted basic preamble.¹³⁴

2. Once in place, the Review ties both problem setting and solution with a current major theme, i.e., "a lifelong approach to learning."¹³⁵

¹³² A. Wagner, "From Higher to Tertiary Education," p. 2.

¹³³ See Henry et al, *The OECD*, pp. 138-145.

¹³⁴ "While all might not agree with the details of the vision, the courses at play suggests a sweeping shift in orientation toward even higher levels of participation at the tertiary level, driven strongly by demands reflecting the diverse interest of clients rather than supply-led, institution-directed expansion witnessed previously." (*RTE*, p. 3)

¹³⁵ The participation of students with diverse interests, pathways, and backgrounds have provided a new context and with a new context new concepts have to be formulated. Lifelong learning is answer offering a framework, a perspective that is from "cradle to grave." In fact, life long learning as a framework augurs quite well with the new meaning attached to the expression tertiary

3. If policy framing involves the politics of discourse¹³⁶ or quarrel over meaning, then the first to be questioned is the use of the term "client" which term is evocative of the consumerization or the mercantilization of the student.¹³⁷

4. There is here a subtle normative maneuverings in the fact that the Review has been undertaken "to allow members to take the next steps in policy formation", intimating the steering of the next step towards that direction. Somehow, this steering subtly compiles national institutions to adopt such principles into their own policy production and development, although as recognized, receptions may vary from country to country. Likewise, the argument is made that "the success of the review will be judged by the clarity it brings to the issues, and the insights and stimulus it provides to future policy and action."¹³⁸

education. It refers to "a level or stage of studies beyond secondary education which can lead to a qualification recognized on the labour market" either acquired through formal (e.g., universities, polytechnics, colleges, public and private) and/or non-formal (e.g., secondary schools, work sites, free-standing information technology-based offerings, etc.) education institutions at the own personal learning pace of the client-student. (see Alexander, "Higher Education," pp. 1-2)

¹³⁶ See Yeatman, *Bureaucrats, Technocrats, Femocrats*.

For example, "But the client perspective, in challenging many of the orthodoxies and pre-suppositions of institutional life is on the one hand consistent with demand-driven policies and structures in our societies and, on the other, emphatic that there are new needs to meet as we move towards universal tertiary education," (*RTE*, pp. 15-16).

¹³⁷ This is a failure to acknowledge the independent search for knowledge's sake. To this allegation, the Foreword concedes but reverts back to its main thesis that "the client perspective... is on the one hand consistent with demand-drive policies and structures in our societies" which drive offers the client new diverse needs. (*Ibid.*, pp. 15-16)

¹³⁸ For one, Schugurensky is a staunch critic of this agenda. Herein lies a perceived contradictions between this commercial model and state interventionism, on one hand, and how these two-fold competing forces infringes upon the question of university autonomy. This, according to him, produces a "heteronomous" model. (See D. Schugurensky, 1999: "Higher Education Restructuring in the Era of Globalization: Towards a Heteronomous Model?" in *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local*, R.F. Arnove and C.A. Torres (Eds.) [Rowman & Littlefield, New York], see particularly p. 297) So, the very status of the University is comprised and made to be framed by these two competing forces of commercialism and state interventionism. However, despite the reassurances of the Review of synthesizing education as a private consumption with the Humboldtian and

5. To cap it all, the Foreword boasts of the Review as “a turning point” in higher education policy framing: “It will serve as well as a basis for debate, reflection and exchange as all parties seek to maintain and extend the contribution of tertiary education to the improvement of the economic and social well-being.” In this respect is it seen to be implicitly normative.

Tied by the straightjacket of neo-liberalism, RTE is, then, normatively advocating, for all practical purposes, the radical shift by redefining tertiary education according to corporate principles. It is the business corporation – and no longer the University, – which is the key and basic referential institution according to which tertiary education, in content and style, should be reconfigured.

In Neave’s insightful comment, reducing the *universitas* into a mere knowledge-provider is to figure it out as a private corporate delivery system whose business ingenuity lies in producing, advertising, marketing and selling its academic “products” which are course programs in response to the needs of its clientele, the students/consumers.¹³⁹ Neave forcefully continues:

The new vision does, however, impart a certain element of spurious precision derived, it would seem, from the mechanistic overlays of its jargon. It gives legitimacy to a degree of control which, if not always deeply pervasive, nevertheless claims precision over what, when expressed in plain language, is very far from possessing that exactitude its adepts lay upon it. A ‘delivery system’ intends to gloss over the fundamental issue of what is delivered, by whom and to what purpose. Yet, we would be foolish to believe that such a semantic overlay is entirely without consequence for our understanding of what the university should do.¹⁴⁰

Newman traditions of self-autonomy, in contrast, Schugurensky argues that the former tends to box out the latter so that heteronomy replaces autonomy: “Education is considered more as a private consumption or investment than an inalienable right or search for disinterested knowledge. As a language that centres on user fees, rational choices, job prospects, and private rates of return becomes increasingly hegemonic and the commercial model becomes paradigmatic, attacks on competing models escalate. The ‘academic haven’ model (scholars seeking truth in an uncontaminated environment) is perceived as an irrelevant ivory tower.” (Op. cit., p. 298)

¹³⁹ Neave, *Voices of Constancy*, p. 13.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Bringing the logic of his argument to a close Neave finally states:

By imposing a 'productivist' language upon the university we do two things. First, we confer an added authority to define the purposes of the university upon those who set themselves up as the lexicographers of this new technology. Second, we set up as referential models for the university, organizational forms which are themselves external to the university and which, are sometimes only remotely engaged in teaching and learning. ...It is a very different thing to believe that what enterprises do had close similarity to the myriad tasks of the university."¹⁴¹

By favoring the corporation as the basic referential institution the university has indeed lost her "historic primacy which long set it aside as one of society's major referential institutions."¹⁴²

Drown into the quagmire of neo-liberal principles, the economic and the social dimensions of education are made fuzzier as the individual client/consumer is now couched in terms of its indebtedness with the corporate dollar. In producing a student profile that is entrepreneurial the spirit behind is greed to be self-responsible so as to selfishly create a portfolio career for its own well-being as though it is the individual that is bound to create jobs and not the state government; and this pursued as a life-time commitment. Here is the new form of governance in a global world: the reconfiguration of government territory according to deified individual and economic foci; thus forgetting the social dimensions of education.¹⁴³

Aware of the pitfalls/dilemmas accruing from the espousal of the universal participation in education, the Review is blamed for glossing over questions relative to the over-dependence of teaching as well as research on entrepreneurial consultancies and marked by differentiated statuses and labour markets.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁴³ See N. Rose, 1996: "The Death of the Social? Refiguring the Territory of Government," in *Economic Society*, 25/3, pp. 172-205.

As it steers global educational policy framing at a distance, OECD (core) continues its role as a policy actor infatuated deeply with globalization interpreted as neo-liberalism, or new managerialism, anticipating policy convergence and standardization in globalized and internationalized universities and university systems (peripheries).

Against the Bologna declaration of fundamental rights of the university,¹⁴⁴ the university of today according to this market-driven framework may shy away gradually from speaking the truth against the ills of corporate and state policies unmindful of the ethos of the *common good*.¹⁴⁵

When all is said and done, it can be safely concluded that OECD espouses a particular view of globalization itself not subjected to critical analysis in a way as to subtly convince the taker to “swallow” it whole and entire, thus understood as a given reality, the nature of which educational policy makers cannot but understand, accept and respond to out of necessity. As already many times pointed out, the OECD’s agenda on education leans heavily on “economic or corporate globalization” or “global corporatization” whose recipes count in neo-liberalism and corporate managerialism as its main ingredients; however, – and this is regarded the greatest and regrettable defect of RTE – remaining silent in the justification of the choice in promoting both the ideologies of neo-liberalism and the new managerialism.

Now, if OECD overly depends on the neo-liberalistic principles of corporate or techno-economic globalization which globalization according to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad – in

¹⁴⁴ The *Magna Carta Universitatum* (the Universal Declaration of Academic Rights) was drawn in the University of Bologna in September 18, 1988 delineating categorically the fundamental rights of the University as self-evident and as rooted in the conscience of the faculty and the University. They are, as enshrined now in the preamble of the International Association of Universities (IAU), as follows: to pursue knowledge for its own sake; to follow wherever the search for truth may lead; to tolerate divergent opinions; and to be free from political interference. (See Roversi-Monaco “Today’s Universities,” p. 1; and Elmandjra, “Changing Priorities,” p. 3)

¹⁴⁵ For this reason, John Paul II is clearly emphatic when he stated that globalization requires “effective international agencies which will oversee and direct the economy to the common good...” (*Centesimus annus*, 58).

his speech delivered at the UN's General Assembly, 25 Sept., 2003 – has turned WB, IMF and WTO “into instruments of hegemony, to impoverish the poor, to enrich the [already] rich,” then, by and large, in a refractory way, OECD suffers the same shameful condemnation. It is perpetuating subtly a wrong and dangerous doctrine.

If, based on recent studies done by WB which has led it to openly regret having mandated and imposed heavily neo-liberal macro-economics on underdeveloped and developing countries, corporate globalization has failed to close the gap between rich and poor but more so, has widened it, shouldn't we think twice in joining and espousing a global trend in education in the direction of corporate globalization? Instead of pursuing justice and peace, are we, by adopting the educational agenda of OECD, then to be blamed for cooperating and perpetuating dangerous educational agenda? This is, indeed, a serious matter for educational policy framers!¹⁴⁶

If global economy collapses, so also educational systems for espousing and anchoring its policies on the same ideology! This is the result of the blurring effects of corporate globalization between the notion of *commercium* and the notion of *academia*!

THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION: Exploring Other Paradigms

The subsequent analyses of RTE as our basket case has led us to the threshold of exploring other paradigmatic frames of reference other than that of the hegemonic corporate dollar of neo-liberalism. Two interrelated issues of social cohesion, and the proposed shift from techno-economic to cultural globalization are here of special import.

¹⁴⁶ In fact, Elmadjra has partly answered the question: “The great myth of ‘development’ of the last 40 years has turned out to be an illusion if not a nightmare. The university was supposed to play a role in the achievement of the objectives of development – the spine of peace. Practically all of the theories and activities relating to the national and international preaches in this domain have lost much of their credibility. Let us not lie to ourselves.

This affects the university and its approach to the improvement of human well-being. It ought to take stock of how ‘development has enabled a small fringe of privileged persons to enrich themselves indecently and unscrupulously while the standards of living of the great majority of the population plunged down year after year’.” (M. Elmandjra, “Changing Priorities,” p. 5.)

Globalization and Social Cohesion

Early on during the early stages of the great debate on over-concern for economistic undercurrents of the impact of globalization on spheres of life, along the way of this economy-driven agenda, the eyes of the critics were quick to detect a lopsided approach to education where the "have nots" were relegated to the disadvantaged. Expectations, then, were high to ignore considering education to narrowly economistic. The social and cultural demands brought about equally by the restructuring of nation-states should not be left out in the name of pure economic goals and gains and labor markets. This interest, therefore, in social inclusion/exclusion (or simply social cohesion) issue, which surfaced during the 90's as the socially damaging and destabilizing results of economic globalization, may herald an alternative educational policy framing in a way as putting premium to both demands, i.e., to consider both economic investment and social investment as co-equals: "Education should not be considered exclusively in terms of meeting other ends (better employment prospects, income change, greater security), but as promoting social and cultural participation, and thereby contributing to the reduction of marginality and exclusion."¹⁴⁷

Subsequently, it is a given fact that globalization has brought some devastating, social inequalities along its train.¹⁴⁸ For globa-

¹⁴⁷ OECD, 1997: *Education and Equity in OECD Countries* (OECD, Paris), p. 103.

¹⁴⁸ Conventional wisdom dictates that shadows of inequities/inequalities within countries and between countries are in the ascendant. The assets of world's three richest persons exceed the combined GDP of the poorest 48 countries around the world. Moreover, the assets of the world's fifteen wealthiest individuals surpasses the GDP of all of sub-Saharan Africa with 600 million people. (see I. Serageldin, "University Governance," p. 8) Seen from another angle, based on the figure supplied by UNDP and reproduced in the *New York Times* (Sept 1998), "Twenty percent of the richest people of the world consume 85% of the total goods and services of the planet while the poorest twenty percent attains a little more than 1%. The total GNP of the 48 least developed countries is inferior to the assets of the three richest persons in the world." (see Elmandjra, "Changing Priorities," p. 5.) Hence, while the middle classes improved between 1950 and 1970, nonetheless, between 1980 and 1994 they lost income in favor of the 20% richest people, who have passed from controlling 55.8% of the world income to 64.2% of the same. Whereas in 1990, 2.718 billion people lived on less than \$2 a day, on the other hand, in 1998, it was 2.801. (see WB 2000 *Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries* [WB: Washington DC]) In Sub-Saharan

lization fanatics, it is simply a matter of taking charge of economic marginalization, social exclusion and swelling levels of multi/interculturalism – all wielded still within the neo-liberal framework in order to effect social cohesion. In response, education becomes one of the strategic management tools to avoid exclusion from global economy cast in terms of market knowledge, skills and values acquisition, e.g., the value of tolerance in the face of multi-cultural pressures in order to minimize social tensions.¹⁴⁹

Confronting poverty at its face value, Bessis underpins the discussion of social cohesion with this threefold dimensions of exclusion: lack of employment (economic); loss of social status due to being jobless (social); and deprivation of political and human rights (political).¹⁵⁰ In part, the discussion is framed in economic terms. However, the primary aim is in the service of social policy over that of the economic one, confronting the imperialistic discomfort of economic hegemony as the dominant and harmful, global determinant of policy framing.

In the same breadth of thinking, Thomson, for example, defining social capital as “the outcome of social processes which link people together in groups and build communities,” supplies the

Africa, about 46% of the population lives in absolute poverty; 16% in Latin Americas and 15% in Russia. (see Stiglitz, “Globalization and Its Discontent,” p. 259) *Forbes* (Aug. 1999 issue) revealed that 400 richest people in USA possess assets amounting to 1 billion dollars, three times the total annual income of the 30 million poor in that country.

These observations were echoed in a recent study obtained by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). After all – and regrettably – its economic integration project translated into economic bust for developing countries by placing them in higher risks of vulnerability. (*Business Week*, Feb. 3, 2003).

¹⁴⁹ Levitas, an avowed anti-globalization critic, points to the EU’s idea of social exclusion translated in terms of unemployment as an example. Now, to equate social exclusion as an issue of employability tends to obscure the real issue of poverty away from its real source: the unequal relationships of capitalism. Usually, the solution is integration into payroll but this is simply a strawman’s fallacy that further foments the confusion of integration into work as end in itself without asking questions regarding the circumstances under which such integration may happen. (see R. Levitas, 1998: *The Inclusive Society? Social Exclusion and New Labour* (MacMillan Press, Basingstoke), particularly, p. 18).

¹⁵⁰ See S. Bessis, 1995: “From Social Exclusion to Social Cohesion: A Policy Agenda,” *Management of Social Transformations*, Policy Paper No. 2 (UNESCO, Paris), see especially pp. 26-35.

instigations behind the social policy advocacy, namely: the doctrine of individualism behind the urge to be globally competitive; the need of social cohesion for economic success; and the growing disassociation of true and genuine sense of well-being from economic success.¹⁵¹

Similarly, Hadenius and Uggle further explain that the core fabric of bonding in the concept of social capital has two dimensions: affective and institutional.¹⁵² Affectively, social capital foments the core value of coordination in the midst of diverse approaches resulting in a sense of advocacy to bear on other groups or the state as well. In so doing, it foments open-mindedness and the liberty to speak out one's mind; thus, to sum up, promote the art of tolerance of diverse opinions in a pluralist society – all these skills geared towards a broader, collective and political action. This is a kind of democratic political processes starting from a personal acquisition of needed skills towards developing their respective roles as political citizens through these same skills.

The undercurrent disgust for economic globalization to the exclusion of social concerns, for Gray, points to self-defeating scheme in the absence of a strong and significant amount of social capital:

The central paradox of our time can be stated thus: economic globalization does not strengthen the current regime of global *laissez-faire*. It works to undermine it. There is nothing in today's global market that buffers it against the social strains arising from high uneven economic development within and between the world's diverse societies. The swift waxing and waning of industries and livelihoods, the sudden shifts of production and capital, the casino of currency speculation – these conditions trigger political counter-movements that challenge the very ground rules of the global free market.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ See P. Thomson, 1999: "Towards a Just Future: Schools Working in Partnership with Neighbourhoods Made Poor," Paper Presented to Fifty UNESCO ACEID Conference *Reforming Learning, Curriculum and Pedagogy: Innovative Visions for the Next Century*, (Bangkok), see particularly p. 2.

¹⁵² See A. Hadenius and F. Uggle, 1998: "Shaping Civil Society" in *Civil Society and International Development*, A. Bernard et al (Eds.) (OECD, Paris).

¹⁵³ J. Gray, "False Dawn," p. 7.

The point here to reconsider closely is the arrest of the rise of too much preoccupation for individualistic tendencies of neo-liberalism by equally reprioritizing the role of civil – or civic – life and local/community politics. This makes us revert back to the true role of the state in providing the necessary and basic institutional infrastructures to strengthen this kind of political life.¹⁵⁴ More broadly, social policy prods us to forge the appropriate relationships among the principal catalysts: civil society, the state and the market. An example of the interplay among these principal actors is the so-called Third Way politics of the British Labour Government under the influence of Anthony Giddens.¹⁵⁵

Giddens describes the Third Way as a renewal of social democracy, whose nub, around which correlative issues of social consequences are discussed, is social justice. Giddens argues that, in order to offset the devastating ripples of neo-liberalism and the potentially anomic effects of globalization, the Third Way's pathway is situated between welfarism with its traditional and centralized bureaucracy of distributing welfare benefits and the harsh deregulation of neo-liberalism.

His vision under the quintuple core values of equality (defined as social inclusion), i.e., protection of the vulnerable, no rights without responsibilities, no authority without democracy and a cosmopolitan pluralism, is to reconsider in a positive light the state role not to provide so much welfare as the social opportunities for further bonding in pathways of social consequences. In this sense is human capital understood as a social investment. This is the sense of "risk society" for Beck.¹⁵⁶ Members risk themselves in treating old age, for example, as an investment for more creative approaches than the old-style of welfarist pension approach. Programs to decrease poverty ratio is done through social community support networks, self reliance projects and depositing social capital as a means of reviving lagging economic activities especially in poverty-stricken communities.

¹⁵⁴ See R. Putman, 1993: *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton University Press, New Jersey).

¹⁵⁵ See A. Giddens, 1998: *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Polity Press, Cambridge). See also Marcussen, *Globalization: A Third Way*, p. 7.

¹⁵⁶ See U. Beck, 1992: *Risk Society: Towards New Modernity* (Sage, London).

Under the same light is Serageldin's proposal to be understood.¹⁵⁷ He situates the question of the role of the University within the canvas of three-fold cyclic concept of sustainability: economic, social and ecological. Each domain will require the much needed capital for the wheel of income/service to turn around. For social sustainability two kinds of embedded capitals are discoverable: one, the individual with health and education as foremost; and the other, social, that is, the values that bring people together and the bonds that make people stand together. Clearly then, in order to procure the proper human capital for a prosperous future, the role of the university is very crucial and central, indeed. Serageldin amplifies: "Universities are central, both in the domain of Human Capital, in terms of investment in human capital and to Social Capital particularly in terms of the socialization function and the values which the university upholds and transmits."¹⁵⁸

For him, the search for truth is the promotion and inculcation of the values of science or, in other words, the values of scholarship which are truth, honor, creativity and imagination, constructive subversiveness, tolerance of engagement, and arbitration of disputes. Socialization/values refer to other sets of values other than those stated above that would affect the individual scientist as a member of a larger community.

He strongly suggests, then, of retaining the first two traditional functions of the University; but, due to the clamor of ICT in the learning styles of students, the traditional way of certifying degrees (i.e., the linear model – twelve years of school, four years of university, then a degree or certification, which is a fundamental point in a person's life, forty years of practice and retirement) be replaced by "the idea of nodes, networks, of learning and experience."¹⁵⁹ In fact, the university could act as the very hub of these nodes "pulling together the best that is going on all over the world and to disseminate it in a way where not everything is done within the university campus."¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Serageldin, "University Governance," pp. 1-7.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁵⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

So, in today's super-dot-net-market-driven scenario, continuing life-long education is required due to the changes in seconds ushered in by the electronic highways. But that means there are different functions, different institutions and different partners for each function.¹⁶¹ If it is a matter of producing people for the market place, that is a certain type of certification function, which you can do and redo. It requires a different kind of institution than a university, that has the more august and noble goals that we set forth in terms of true socialization, values and certification.

The Shift from Techno-Economic Globalization to Cultural Globalization

While techno-economic globalization has somehow homogenized the world in terms of basic, homogeneous, macro-economic fundamentals, supraterritorial governance, and the weakening of state controls, – all in the wake of borderless and transnational good, services and capital transactions, cultural globalization seems adamant to follow the trend in total abandonment. As was pointed out above, it is true that somehow there has been a cultural confluence of tastes especially savored by the young in choosing “signature” labels like Levi's, McDo, Coke, Nokia, music etc. Yet, despite nation-states welcoming and enjoying “Western global tastes” or cross-cultural values such as these, there is an amount of cultural resistance to go all the way.¹⁶² And these pockets of stubborn resistance are the various manifestations of “the rise of ethnicity” referred to much earlier;¹⁶³ and this despite, *inter alia*, the moves from globalization fanatics to put pressure on the campaign for homogenization worldwide; to propagate WTO's regard for cultural protectionism as “anti-trade”; and to use culture as an instrument of international

¹⁶¹ Op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁶² See N. Davies, 1997: “West Best, East Beast,” *Oxford Today*, 9/2. pp. 28-31; T.K. Ooman, 1997: *Citizenship, Nationality and Ethnicity: Reconciling Competing Identities* (Polity Press, Cambridge); W. Safran, 1995: “Nation, Ethnic Groups, States and Politics,” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 1, pp. 1-11; S. Tombiah, 1996: “The Nation-State in Crisis and Rise of Ethnonationalism,” in E.N. McAllister (Ed.) *The Politics of Difference* (The University of Chicago Press, London) pp. 124-143; J.J. Smolicz, 1998: “Globalism, Nation-State and Local Culture,” *Political Crossroads*, 6/1&2, pp. 111-128.

¹⁶³ See *supra*, p.14.

diplomacy.¹⁶⁴ So, as Smolicz comments, "political boundaries may be becoming more porous, but cultural boundaries are acquiring new significance."¹⁶⁵ An example of this passion for self-identity, as Smolicz notes, are nation-states members of the European Community (EU), e.g., Spain, France and Britain.

Had Spain refused regional self-determination to both Catalans and Basques, Spain could have experienced difficulty in maintaining political stability within the EU.¹⁶⁶ This was not Spain before where it maintained the most unitary nation-state in Western Europe. Grant adds another example that is the United Kingdom now truly a Union of England, Scotland, Wales and, hopefully, Northern Ireland.¹⁶⁷ In general, each EU nation-state is willing to bend to accommodate global trends, but resists strongly submerging their own respective cultural heritage needed to maintain self-integrity and cultural identity under the possibility of supra-national European value system or under the "Western" trade mark of USA. McNeil foresees, as diverse cultural pathways and combinations ripple in diverse concentric circles across the globe, an ever-denser web of exchanges inevitably leads to "global cosmopolitanism."¹⁶⁸

Here, a bright spot for exploring other paradigms for educational policy framing is in the offing.¹⁶⁹ This shift from technoeconomic to cultural globalization will surely find its staunchest ally in the university.

¹⁶⁴ See S.J. Noumoff, 1998: *Globalization and Culture*, particularly, pp. 2-5.

¹⁶⁵ J.J. Smolicz, 2002: "Asian Values, Human Rights and Globalization," in *ad Veritatem, Multi-Disciplinary Research Journal of the UST Graduate School*, p. 346.

¹⁶⁶ See D. Conversi, 1997: *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain* (Hurst, London).

¹⁶⁷ See N. Grant, 1997: "Democracy and Cultural Pluralism: Towards the 21st Century," in R. Watts & J.J. Smolicz (Eds.) *Cultural Democracy and Ethnic Pluralism: Multicultural and Multilingual Policies in Education* (Peter Lang, / Franfurt am Main and Berlin).

¹⁶⁸ W.H. McNeil, 1997. "Decline of the West," *The New York Review of Books*, (Jan. 19), p. 22.

¹⁶⁹ See, for example, Z. Quesada-Reyes, 2004: "Ethnicity in Educational Practices," *International Network, Education for Democracy, Human Rights and Tolerance* at <http://www.tolerance-net.org/projects/concepts/con02.html>, pp. 1-8.

The Vindication of Academic Autonomy

Whereas techno-economic globalization has registered for us knowledge-explosion in all fronts; and socio-political globalization has proposed a new brand of governance and leadership; on the other hand, cultural globalization has made us appreciate shifting priorities and constant values. This persistent refusal to subordinate one's cultural identity under a hegemonic culture is undeniably, a universal value, proven to be a transcendent one not in the sense of being supraterritorial or transborderless (i.e., transcending physical and financial frontiers) so much as in the sense of the kind of universalism spoken by Neave above, i.e., "the notion of Universalism derived from the essential commonality in the qualities which brought individuals together through their shared humanity and reason,"¹⁷⁰ when the referential paradigm was taken from classical learning and the Humanities. For two decades or more, techno-economic globalization was unable to shelter this passion under its mercantilist wings!

In all indication, this resistance or the rise of ethnicity, in general, offers the University an opportunity for spring time of reasserting her sole right and prerogative in social issues as the articulator, defender, and promoter of one's cultural heritage: "Universities are rightly considered to be centers for the education of professionals, privileged places for the acquisition and accumulation of knowledge and centers for cultural promotion. The three basic missions of the university institution which are education, research, and culture, are universally agreed upon."¹⁷¹ Even the very nature of cultural heritage demands the presence of the University, as Kazem further elaborates:

The selection of a cultural heritage is open to errors of omission and commission; even an apparent scientific and objective approach can cloak rigidity and authoritarianism. Even when open-mindedness and rationality are accepted in principle, they can become causes of disagreements at the point

¹⁷⁰ See *supra*, footnote no. 8, p. 2.

¹⁷¹ B. Touré, 2000: "2000: The Role of Universities in International Mutual Assistance" in *Abiding Issues, Changing Perspectives Visions of the University Across A Half-Century*, Guy Neave (Ed.) (International Universities Bureau of IAU, Paris), p. 281.

of application. The term cultural heritage designates both a product and a process. It is expected to constitute a platform for agreement and disagreement based on a variety of interpretations. Hence, cultural heritage needs a guardian, one to whom a person or a thing is committed for protection, security or preservation.¹⁷²

In matters of cultural promotion, the role of the University is specifically to ensure that the virtue of solidarity understood as "the notion that reason and knowledge are common possession together with the ethical responsibility on the part of those who have for those who have not"¹⁷³ is preserved and promoted.

For his part, Teran Dutari includes solidarity as one of the modern tasks of the University today besides economic development and social change: "Solidarity is the key to facing up to tensions in all fields between the global, the regional and the local. This is the task of being truly 'universal', that is, to be oneself whilst being 'integrated' in a complex whole. This concept is fully in keeping with the idea of 'university'."¹⁷⁴ It has, for him, a multi-dimensional global reach. For one, "solidarity with the whole human community appears at the top of global values; though, in fact, it is just an extension of the main condition of cultural rootedness standing for one's own community, which cannot subsist except by means of global communication."¹⁷⁵ Second, "solidarity includes 'preference for the poor' in every sense. It goes beyond ancient patterns of equality that have formed modern democracy. It encompasses much more than integration,.. It is promoted not only by justice – even social justice – but also by compassion and creativity toward those who count less...";¹⁷⁶ and, finally, "an attitude of solidarity grows only from the deepest loan of personal and cultural spirituality. ...Whether it expresses itself as a sense of

¹⁷² M.I. Kazem, 2000: "Universities as Guardians of Man's Cultural Development" in *Abiding Issues, Changing Perspectives Visions of the University Across A Half-Century*, Guy Neave (Ed.) (International Universities Bureau of IAU, Paris), p. 269 .

¹⁷³ Neave, "Voice of Constancy," p. 20.

¹⁷⁴ J.C. Teran Dutari, "Local Priorities, Global Values," p. 299.

¹⁷⁵ Op. cit., p. 300.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

religious transcendence or whether it takes the form of a fierce struggle to overcome destructive impulses by collective actions, solidarity denotes the best of humanity's aspirations."¹⁷⁷

This is the understanding behind what sounds like a catchy, papal slogan: "Globalization in solidarity, globalization without marginalization!"¹⁷⁸

The entrepreneurial vision for education, if pursued relentlessly and remains unchecked, will rather weaken the democratic fabrics of a society in the name of social justice, because the student is translated into a mere economic indicator with instinct for business skills (who, if not tamed, may turn into an economic beast!); and, therefore, an economic investment. Obviously, the qualities, then, nurtured by entrepreneurialism are meant for operational and pragmatic requirements; and, therefore, as Neave points out, "their possession does not necessarily permit the recognition of [the individual's] uniqueness in the corporate culture. Quite on the contrary, in a world of feral competition they stand as dimensions of substitution that allow one individual to be replaced by another depending on the degree to which a particular individual possess such traits – or not. It is no less evident that those subjects of study which foster these qualities also form the basis of today's desirable knowledge."¹⁷⁹

But for education to be a catalyst of and inspiration behind democratic purposes, it should go to the extent of even questioning the rationale of such deterministic global ideology and its imagining. Now is the crucial time to redirect educational policy towards social capital purposes for a vision of a more democratic world order, "recognizing that the individual is more than the sum of these market-driven roles, having civil and emotional responsibilities in relationships, families, communities and globally."¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ John Paul II, "From the Justice of Each Comes Peace for All," Message on World Day of Peace, *Origins*, 27/28, Jan. 1, 1998.

For philosophical discussions on the ethics of solidarity, see J. Lyotard, 1986: *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, G. Ven den Abeele, (Trans.) (Minnesota University Press, Minneapolis); and Levinas, 1969: *Totality and Infinity* (Dusquesne University Press, Pittsburgh).

¹⁷⁹ Neave, "Voices of Constancy," p. 21.

¹⁸⁰ Thomson, "Towards a Just Future," p. 8.

Truly, with a shift of policy context away from the rise of participation in student enrollees all over the world (which RTE has chosen) to the shift from techno-economic to cultural globalization, this rather harmful vision of student profile along neo-liberal principles of entrepreneurialism and market-driven individualism would be minimized if not corrected, in the long run. Thanks to the rise of ethnicity, it has brought us to the threshold of a globalization: "one that is [hopefully] humane because it is founded on full solidarity and a holistic conception of progress. A genuinely human globalization puts people at the very center, instead of leaving them at the fringes. ...It looks at people as assets, and not as mere factors of production to be used and even abused or exploited. As assets, people are more valuable than the financial capital and the tradable goods that are now allowed to move more freely across national borders through globalization."¹⁸¹ This echoes, in the main, what John Paul II condemns as the disgusting evil of "economism," i.e., "that of considering human labor solely according to its economic purpose. ...an error of materialism, in that economism directly or indirectly includes a conviction of the primacy and superiority of the material, and directly or indirectly places the spiritual and personal (man's activity, moral values and such matters) in a position of subordination to material reality."¹⁸²

Yes, it must be insisted today more than it had been before, that higher education, above all else, especially faced now with the daunting challenges of globalization, should assume a distinctive role as an active actor in advancing debate, discussion and in the global imagining of alternative visions and approaches,¹⁸³ and in

¹⁸¹ J.P. Estanislao, 2001: "In Search of Human Globalization," Paper presented at the St. Antoninus of Florence Lecture Series (UST, Manila), p. 7-8.

¹⁸² *Laborem exercens*, 13.

Having stated thus, "the central issue, therefore, is not whether income gaps are growing but whether globalization advances well-being and, if inequalities in well-being have expanded, whether that is because the rich have advanced at the expense of the poor." (I.M. Goklany, 2002: "The Globalization of Human Well-Being," *Policy Analysis*, 447, at <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa-447es.html>, p. 1.

¹⁸³ IAU takes the initiative towards this direction. Having first discussed the concept of intercultural dialogue in the IAU Eleventh General Conference (2000) in Durban, S. Africa, IAU has since then created a Working Group in Intercultural Dialogue (ID) in 2002, Quebec. So far, two initiatives have been undertaken: one,

exploring other axes of research and study (in order to transcend a binary vision of the process of economic globalization as either a panacea or as a threat)¹⁸⁴ for educational policy framing, even if this will demand liberating itself excruciatingly from the bondage of an economistic and mercantilist mold.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we have essayed to provide insights into educational policy framing with the OECD as our basket case in a context now often referred to as globalization. We have decided to treat globalization according to its tri-layered manifestation giving each layer spotlighted features so as to be able to harness its analytical usefulness towards a fuller discussion on the impact of transnational bodies on the process of educational policy framing at the local level.

The facility that ICTs have introduced in the marketplace has hastened the creation of elite socio-political suprabodies, whose political influence and inspiration transcend geo-political territories, leaving, in the end, local nation-states enfeebled and weakened in its policy salience capabilities. One of those suprabodies is the OECD.

Buoyed up by economic fundamentals at the start, OECD cannot but meddle in academic affairs when global trends eventuated in the creation of what is now taunted as knowledge economy/

the creation of a website (www.unesco.org/iau/id/index.html); and, second, the establishment and implementation of a project to set up an IAU International Network of Universities Committed to ID. The findings of the studies will be presented at the next IAU General Conference entitled "The Wealth of Diversity: The Role of Universities in Promoting Dialogue and Development," (July 25-29, Sao Paulo, Brazil). (see P. Blasi, "Intercultural Dialogue: IAU launches a New Working Group," *IAU Newsletter*, 9/1, pp. 1-2. For an initial understanding of the concept of intercultural dialogue, J. Lasonen, "Promotion of Intercultural Dialogue and Understanding," (Op. cit., p. 4).

Also, another expression worth reflecting is the idea of "global education." (See "Globalization versus Global Education" at <http://fdu.edu/newspubs/011003sperling.html>).

¹⁸⁴ See "Economic Globalization and Educational Policies," *Publications, Prospects*, XXVII/1 (March, 1997), Open File, at <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/international/Publications/Prospects/ProspectsOpenFiles/pr101of.htm>, p. 2.

society. The blurring effects of techno-economic globalization have made the relation between *academia* and *commercium* extremely fluid and transparent making the once-venerated and endeared quality of *universitas*, i.e., university autonomy, a suspect for investigation. When before the single undisputed locus for educational policy framing was the nation-state, now the loci have multiplied in the powerful influences of these transnational bodies and the stakeholders.

For the many years that OECD has been existing as a think-tank and catalyst of ideas, it has become adept in its subtle but firm maneuverings and machinations, whipping its member-states into the order of articulation and implementation providing conceptual models and monitoring devices along the way, although respecting local/national variations in how convergent policy agenda are played out. Procedural mechanics that have helped its member-states cope up with economic problems were this time harnessed in furthering the needs and ideals of the knowledge economy/society. With built-in procedures and agenda now institutionalized in the OECD, one of them, thematic reviews technique, OECD has come out recently with its beacon document entitled "Redefining Tertiary Education" that has since its inception in 1998 the normative document for all member-states.

We have provided some insights into its major provisions with insightful criticisms coming from well-known critics. No matter how one examines it from any angle of concern, this document is heavy on market-driven idealism and aims as far as creating the student profile of the future is concerned. The following observations point to some of its major defects:

First, nowhere in the documents does OECD justify in black and white the choice of the policy context and its subsequent avowed espousal of the ideologies of neo-liberalism and the new managerialism;

Second, the issues on social cohesion and other allied problems are discussed but still within the mercantilist parameter; and, therefore, given solutions accordingly;

Third, although it has awaken in us a greater cosmopolitan awareness of the policy actors other than the nation-states, e.g.,

suprabodies, stakeholders, business tycoons, politicians, nonetheless, it, being a transnational corporation, assumes a political posturing implying a subtle edge over that of the nation-state's policy salience capabilities; and,

Fourth, the document has maintained as normative no other conceptual model as frame of reference except that which OECD discovers as arising from its "discovered" policy context: the spectacular rise of student participation in education, i.e., the corporate model. In the words of Henry et al: "The problem lies not so much with instrumental framing of education for employment or economic growth. It is rather to be found in the way in which market logic has been allowed so to capture the educational policy agenda as to render educational systems and actors virtually powerless to cultivate alternative frames of reference for education – and most particularly those which take critical intellectual inquiry and the fostering of an egalitarian and democratic ethos as their starting point."¹⁸⁵

In part, the article has also provided some possible alternative policy framing given a context arising from globalization and the question of social cohesion and the shift from techno-economic to cultural globalization, for example.

Especially with the last, a spring time of welcomed opportunities is given the *universitas* to assert once more her role as truly the only prime critique of society and its social conscience as her most revered right – university autonomy.¹⁸⁶ As noted already above, this shift or, generally, the rise of ethnicity reveals the refusal of cultural globalization for any coincidence in matters of effects or influences with techno-economic globalization.

¹⁸⁵ Henry et al, *The OECD*, p. 175.

¹⁸⁶ Hetherington unearths four central and converging elements from the troika of professional school, a cultural center and research institute that is the university, foremost among them is, namely: "Its work, therefore, cannot be narrowly utilitarian and sectional in outlook. It is infused with a liberality of spirit, calculated to encourage schools by mutual enlightenment and criticism to look to the unity of knowledge, to be aware of its place in the totality of the values of human experience and thereby to contribute to the 'education of the whole man' and to the maintenance and enrichment of the culture within which the university exists." (H. Hetherington, "University Autonomy," in *Abiding Issues* G. Neave (Ed.), p. 51)

What we have tried to essay, therefore, in this article is to show through OECD as a basket case, that, although the nation-state remains to be the prime locus for any educational policy framing, nonetheless, given the global signs of the times, educational policy framing at the local level must be open and aware of the subtle maneuverings of transnational corporations whose interests have already entered into academic preoccupation. Like the many multisources of knowledge in a globalized knowledge society, so also the education policy framer must be critical of the many avenues from which the content of policy framing may arise always having as its standard point of reference "academic autonomy" the *universitas* as the referential institution has for so long maintained and preserved; and would never be compromised in the guise of "progress" that undermines genuine and true democratic processes.

For whatever its worth, this article has brought to our attention that there is much more to knowing the effects of globalization as knowing who the active players are. This paper, therefore, concerned itself, *inter alia*, with "the condition under which globalization has been diffused world-wide." Echoing the very words of Martin Marcussen:

It is concluded that it is not the inherent qualities of the globalization idea itself that has made it so widely shared, nor has it much to do with objective or real globalization processes. The dynamics of the globalization idea can be better understood by focusing on the ideational entrepreneurs who formulated the idea in the first place, the power-base of the politicians who started to talk the globalization discourse, the role of international economic organization in diffusing the idea, and the national politicians and civil servants who in the end implemented the globalization discourse in concrete national settings.¹⁸⁷

For education, to be a catalyst of and inspiration behind democratic purposes, it should go to the extent of even questioning the rationale of such structural-determinist discourse adopted by OECD and its imagining.

¹⁸⁷ "Globalization: A Third Way," p. 1.

Again, thanks to the stubborn rise of ethnicity for it has, once and for all, vindicated the fact that the social function of the universities is here to stay: "They are not in the business of merely producing clones like ants to world into some sort of factory in drab and worthless lives. They are the custodians of past heritage. They are the transmitters of values. They are also communities of scholars. ... [interacting] with the present, embrace the new, invent the future."¹⁸⁸ It has come at a time when, according to an CSNPEA Report, in a context where globalization seems "in retreat," to question again the assumptions of neo-liberal globalization; and "with the questioning of the economic aspects of neo-liberalism, there [comes] a questioning of the neo-liberal assumptions about education as well."¹⁸⁹

Now is the crucial time to redirect educational policy towards social capital purposes for a vision of a more democratic world order, "recognizing that the individual is more than the sum of these market-driven roles, having civil and emotional responsibilities in relationships, families, communities and globally," (Thomson 1999). In the final analysis, what has begun to be a geo-political and highly economic squabble has now become a deeply serious ethical foray. □

¹⁸⁸ Serageldin, "University Governance," p. 21-22.

¹⁸⁹ "Responding to Globalization of Education in the Americas," 2003: *Civil Society Network for Public Education in the Americas (CSNPEA)* at <http://www.vcn.bc.ca/ideakueh.htm>, p. 2.