

Cultural Diversity and Cultural Identity in Globalization

Katarina OTASEVIC
Graduate school for Business studies
Megatrend University
Goce Delceva 8, Belgrade
SERBIA
kotasevic@megatrend.edu.rs www.megatrend.edu.rs

Abstract: - Modern societies are interconnected globally and their cultures are intervened whereby processes of globalization and identity clash with each other. The survival of local cultural identity and language has been brought into question by the equalization of media content globally. Request for the protection of independency of culture is more pronounced in response to the lower representation of culture, language, some people in the media. The survival of the cultural integrity due to the influx of foreign cultural products is most pronounced in developing countries.

Key-Words: cultural diversity, cultural identity, globalization, mass media, local culture, cultural hegemony

1 Introduction

In the process of globalization winners are the countries with highly developed mass media (U.S.A. in the first place) „as complex systems which are able to broadcast and receive complex, diverse information which are used as basic development resource“. On the other side are the developing countries which suffer their impact. Their characteristic is the small capacity to adapt to innovations coming from outside and that is why their cultural identity is called into question.

Mass media are not only instrument for spreading popular culture and industries, but at the same time, their use enables cultural hegemony. Mass media and society, local culture and media content are closely related. TV shows, movies, dramas etc. reflect values specific for local culture. So, we can talk about commerciality as feature of American culture, Japanese aesthetic values, French tendency to philosophize ... One of the main functions of mass media is to transfer cultural inheritance, information about the past, values of certain society and to give cultural directive for life, action and behavior.

2 Threatened cultural identity and diversity

Despite the globalization of the economy, the emergence of international political institutions, global dissemination of culture (mass media, education, modernization, urbanization, the spread

of literacy) from the late 20th Century strengthen national identities. Modern nationalism is less focused on the defense of the country and more to defend the established culture and strengthen cultural identity when assessing the danger. The identities represent the defense of unpredictability, disorder, changes of globalization. In the last three decades there is strong resistance to globalization and cosmopolitanism as a form of defense of cultural identity, uniqueness. "God, nations, families and communities will ensure eternal figures that cannot be broken down and around which will grow to a counter-culture of real virtuality". Castells considers that individuals carry with them the eternal truth, the value of which cannot be virtualized or destroyed.

As the globalization process strengthens problems of cultural integrity and identity are more prevalent. Dominant monoculture stands against local, national and traditional cultures with the progress of the process of disintegration of traditional value patterns.

2.1 Mass-media and homogenization of culture

One of the primary functions of the mass media is to transmit the cultural heritage, information on past, values of a society and to provide guidelines for cultural life, actions, and behavior. The mass media are crucial for the production and transmission of values to the masses. The survival of local cultural identity and language has been brought into

question by the equalization of media content globally. The process of globalization homogenize cultural field.

Commercialization, concentration of media control leads to homogenization of culture and popularization value. There is no interest in the minority because they are not interesting from the point of view of potential consumers.

Global audio-visual streams lead to the survival of the local production and local cultural resources. Their products are doomed to survive against global products which become global hits through television advertising, strategic branding, different communication tactics (promotion, the use of Web sites, etc.). Global audio-visual streams lead to the survival of the local production and local cultural resources. Their products are doomed to survive against global products which through television advertising, strategic branding, different communication tactics (promotion, the use of Web sites, etc.) become global hits. During 1999. "although 60% of the charts on MTV Russia accounted hits imported from the West, MTV abroad never showed Russian bands".

Since the late nineties of the 20th century emerged a specialized television channels dedicated to children whose program is broadcast worldwide (Network Cartoon, Disney Channel and Fox Kids Network), they quickly became popular in some countries to the extent that the national broadcaster ceased to produce programs for children.

One consequence of the aspirations of commercial success is that less attention is given to programs that are aimed at minorities and which are triggered topics related to their culture. Such facilities will not become popular, hits on the mass market, since they are not attractive to many people.

To what extent is the culture of one country influential and spread to other cultures, we can guess by the amount of advertising (television, billboards) of its products, music broadcast on radio stations and on the extent to which the language is spoken in other countries. The undeveloped part of the world through the mass media imports mainly entertainment programs (soap operas, movies, shows and Hollywood products) attractive and compelling content that promote individual, the new values and needs. And while films produced in Hollywood, as the "American inspired cultural uniformity", winning audiences in local markets around the world and the music made in the United States takes top of the charts, local cultural products remain on the margins of the global market. Unequal cultural exchange is a consequence, among

other things, linguistic and cultural hegemony of the West.

Several media companies, primarily based in the U.S. and then in Europe, dominating the distribution of media products, supports the process of strengthening the presence of English in the world (this is most noticeable on the World Wide Web). Also, at the global market U.S. govern sovereign commercial sites and run most companies that produce technology. They have a leading position in the field of telecommunications - there is more internet connection in Manhattan than in the whole African continent. Internet as a medium dominated by the English language - it is estimated that 80 percent of website content in English.

Small and rich markets are able to be supplied with high-quality services, information and culture. While a small group of consumers have access to high-quality content, most are offered cheap products. On the one hand we have a powerful global production of popular culture in the form of TV shows, movies, books, music, and the other local media, whose survival depends on market acceptance of global hits. Products of global production are being simultaneously broadcast in the majority of television and radio programs, most of the papers write about them or there are information about them on most web sites. It is unlikely that the national culture will successfully compete with the production of such magnitude. With that fact face the developed countries, not only developing countries. Most of the content broadcast by the mass media came from the western countries and are intended for consumers of mass culture and that suppresses high and popular culture. We can speak of a kind of cultural and media penetration in less developed countries. Domestic cultural production is faced with the dominance of global mass culture in which products are interested mass media, in which what "the audience wants to" decide a small number of influential: editors, producers, agents, managers, etc.. How will the media content be, in terms of aesthetic, technical and logical criteria, depends on the values of a culture. It is enough to compare North Korean Central News Agency website and western news sites such as CNN, to see how differently media interpret what may be news and how it will be presented. Not only is there a problem that products of national culture show on the world stage but their penetration in the local media is hampered. The fact that mass media are in foreign ownership is reflected in their attitude towards the local culture - global production is favored at the expense of the local.

Products for the global sales gain global popularity, and most importantly: make the global profit. Some of the features of contemporary global production would be: content of the English language, primarily intended for the urban population, general topics and a high level of production. Mass media allow these products to become planetary events. When the movie becomes popular all over the world it is difficult to avoid at least some information about it - we will face sooner or later with that content through a medium. Harry Potter phenomenon shows how the product of mass culture can win almost all of humanity. In the year 1997. British author JK Rowling published a novel about the boy wizard, and it will soon gain global popularity. In the two years 450 million copies were sold. Based on the book Warner Bros Pictures made the film series. Thanks to the successful sale of books and films were made theme parks, video games, and about 400 kinds of different products related to Harry Potter. The New York Times described literary world of Rowling as a second-class, "made up of intelligent patchwork motifs derived from the literature for children ... for people whose imagination is in the limits of television cartoons, and ... soap operas, reality shows ...".

"Mentality audience" rule media and cultural production. Content has value if achieve commercial success in the market. Managers know what could win the audience to the extent that it becomes obvious. Motivated by commercial interests mass production creates light, escapist entertainment with which pander to the lowest tastes and thus affect the depletion of cultural values. "Popular culture tends to reduce cultural differences between social classes lowering cultural standards and creating cultural stereotypes and stereotypical flavor that is very different from formatted taste that occurs through training and education". Media constant try to win the majority and tend to appeal to, and they are not really a means of communication and they do not communicate anything new. "In mass culture there is no avant-garde breakthroughs, unexpected achievements, new raid in any creative field". Television has always pandered to popular taste, but at the beginning of its development in the mid 20th century, sought to be more as cultural and educational to the audience (as confirmed by numerous adaptations of classic literature, documentaries).

In terms of concentration of media ownership and the creation of a small number of huge companies that dominate the market, the products of mass culture are starting to resemble each other, and there is little space for the expression of different

cultures. Local culture in all parts of the world are faced with a large number of low-cost entertainment products that global mass media deliver with the help of advanced technologies. Products of local culture are more expensive and lead to lower earnings and are usually less interested in them than mass-media content for global companies.

2.1.1 Leaving local cultural identity

Globalization supported by digital technologies encourages the individual to accept a new world view and identity. There are plenty of free access to information therefore in this sense he no longer solely relies on its community as before. For example, through ICT member of the society, in which it is forbidden to accept a different religion, gets access to the unfathomable amount of information about other world religions.

In Islamic societies were created tensions, as the young people through the media gained access to different views of the world. Also, in the year 1990. research conducted in Indonesia revealed that Michael Jackson is more popular than Muhammad. Given that tradition plays an important role in community life guide not only Muslim societies face an uncertain future. In the year 1997. representatives of South Korea asked the on the United Nations summit the protection of its cultural diversity. Some cultures still successfully resist to this advances. For example, China did not allowed to be Westernized, most of the economic and technological progress based on the characteristics of their culture such as discipline, responsibility to the family, respect of hierarchical order in the family and society, identity and self-control, collectivism ... The Chinese government has limited their citizens access to some parts of the Internet that is considered to jeopardize her order. Electronic barriers set by the Internet is known as the Great Firewall (after the Great Wall of China).

Globalization is changing man's relationship to its own environment. Although it raises the need for economic development, contributing to the spread of the idea of basic human rights, access to knowledge that used to be inaccessible, from the standpoint of culture, globalization creates the danger of cultural homogenization and cultural patterns of domination of the West. The loosening of national borders and the weakening of national governments control over media are effects of rapid flow of information, culture, global media conglomerates in developing countries. Global market dominated by a few media corporations (Disney, AOL Time Warner, Sony, News

Corporation, Viacom, Vivendi, and Bertelsmann) which are on the list of 300 largest global companies. Just four decades ago, none of them were on the list. These companies possess: most satellite channels and cable systems, television networks and movie studios in the U.S., about 85% of the total global music market, a significant proportion of the books and magazines ... The powerful "global players" (global players) are in a position to enforce the rest of the world cultural patterns. Cultural Imperialism (imposing their own culture to other cultures) would not be possible if it is not based on the economic, military and political power. Global presence of the values of Western culture is strong because of its economic power. To spread beyond the borders of their own country, media corporations are required "expensive expeditionary forces that do not make a profit in the short term, but they are expected to pay all investments in the end".

Performances of alternative livelihoods often contrary to the real lives of individuals who consume these images. Research conducted in Greenland, from in 1997. to 2001. of adolescents (ages 12-19) showed that young strongly expressed the need for "global" way of life. Young spend their free time mainly in bars, discos or buying, while a few of them practice traditional activities such as dog sledding or skiing. It was pointed out that the huge gap between the capabilities and desires, as well as the cultural conflict between lifestyles conveyed in the media - the local way of life, can lead to frustration (ranging from the desire for change to, in the extreme, depression). Despite the appearance of materialistic needs (for clothes, CDs, etc..) due to the influence of mass media increased the demand for food from abroad.

Survey conducted in April 2011 in Pakistan was focused on globalization and its impact on the cultural identity of the Iranian people Pashtuns in Malakand, in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The study included one hundred teachers selected from three universities and eight colleges. One of the study was to examine the relationship between globalization and cultural identity of the Pashtuns, ie. relationship between the processes of modernization and cultural heritage of the Iranian people. For this purpose, a quantitative analysis was used.

It was concluded that under the impact of globalization has been a crisis of cultural identity, including changes in traditional social structures, improvements secularization, the decline of solidarity and greater complexity of social relations.

The report notes that developing countries with regard to their cultural identity are "on the edge". Ancient and as often as rigid Pashtun culture, its centuries-long tradition, especially its traditional structure, hospitality, Jirga system, Purdah ...suffer impact of the values of the West. Modernization is strengthening process of secularization and formalism and weakening of religious practices and the intensification of tensions on religious grounds. Conflicts over traditional values, disturbances in the normative structure, suppression of the old with the new value, leading to an increase of dissatisfaction. Given the fact that most are not able to keep pace with the trends, the problem of social adjustment, which at the end leads to mental disorders, and that is also indicated in the analysis.

The traditional social structure has been replaced by the formal. Strengthening materialism changed the traditional power structure, the concept Jirga has been replaced by the formal courts. Globalization has resulted in the abandonment of tradition, centuries-old traditions and values. Individualism has replaced solidarity, simplicity and complexity. In Pashtun society, prior to the modernization religion played a role of main lever of social control, and it is not the case now. In addition, there is a trend of increasing isolation of individuals and distance in social relations, although members of the Pashtun people always were considered as social people.

3 Measures for conservation of cultural identity and diversity

But, at the same time - "as the media spread over the world - through a hole opened by CNN and the Internet, the stronger the human need to feel at home among his own, as a citizen of their town, as a true member of the tribe".

In the modern world language does not only link the past and present, private and public sphere - it represent "trench of cultural resistance". "Language, in particular fully developed language, is the basic function of self-recognition and the establishment of an invisible national boundaries that is less arbitrary than territorial and less exclusive than ethnicity".

The international exchange of products of mass culture is determined by the language that plays a key role in the global media market. For example U.S. import media content from the UK, Australia, because they are in English. U.S. are not interested for products that come out of the English-speaking world because they will not achieve success on a global scale. The exceptions are violent Chinese

action movies or violent Japanese cartoons. Young people around the world are accustomed to listening to music in English and British pop music is widely adopted. If musical group wants planetary success prerequisite is to translate the lyrics into English. Members of the International organization of francophone countries, at a conference held in Benin, 2001., agreed that globalization, the dominant culture and the English language, threaten linguistic and cultural diversity, and that there is the need to take action against cultural uniformity (eg. increase the use of French language education).

In order to maintain their cultural integrity local communities can apply the concept of sovereignty of communication i.e. they are trying to control the flow of information from abroad. Toward that goal they introduce laws. For example they set quotas for films to be shown in movie theaters in the country. Quota system in order to protect the national film industry set the minimum number of home movies showing in theaters during the year. Quota was first introduced by Great Britain in 1927. in order to establish a domestic film industry that is sustainable and inspired by Hollywood, which economically and culturally dominated ever since suddenly developed shortly after World War II. Originally, the quota was 7.5% and increased to 20% in 1935. year. The result was mediocre films (so-called Quota Quickies). Quota system was abandoned in 1960. year. In Brazil each year by presidential decree set quotas based on the number of cinema screens ranging from 28 days (for individual theaters) to 644 (of multiplexes with 20 screens). In Greece, home movies need to run at least 28 days a year. In South Korea since its creation in 1967. year, the quota was 146 days. In 2007. signed a trade agreement with the United States on which the quotas in South Korea reduced to 73 days due to strong pressure from the United States under the Free Trade Agreement (WTO). Mexico has introduced a system of quotas to protect domestic production, but it was in 1994. abolished after the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement)). In the next 10 years, the Mexican economy has achieved growth as a film industry recorded losses. Otherwise, critics of globalization believe that the North American Agreement is neoliberalism at work.

4 Conclusion

Contemporary globalization processes through technology cause more intense and extensive cross-cultural contacts, which inevitably affects the

culture and experience of our culture. Technology among other things, facilitate the development of global networks, which encourage the mixing of cultures, with little or no attention to geographical and cultural boundaries. The cumulative effect of globalization in the digitized age are hard to predict. "The process of change is like the train is going and accelerating, but his destination is not yet seen¹". Yet now there is a fear that globalization represents a threat to autonomy and integrity of local cultures by creating a context that may be contrary to the centuries-old tradition.

Without cultural identity (identification), i.e. common language, origin, religion, customs, institutions, values, ways of life and thought, and other cultural characteristics, identity of an individual, group or society is not possible. If an individual, group or company, voluntarily or forcibly, accept others' values, worldviews, they lose their identity. Complex process that takes place at several levels between global and local, changes intercultural relations. In terms of globalization, local culture has dramatically changed, sometimes radically, which has threatened their survival.

Local people have a need to express their own culture through the media, but media companies in the pursuit of profit turn a deaf ear to that request. Media companies will not respect local traditions and customs because they try to achieve their commercial objectives. In the interest of the company is not turning to social relations, owned since it reduces its power. In the past, public services were a guarantee of cultural pluralism and diversity. Today, the local cultures are being exposed to standardized content (information, education, games), created to make a profit.

References:

- [1] Bal F., *Moc medija*, Clio, 2000
- [2] Castells M., *Moc identiteta*, Golden marketing, 2002
- [3] Hitching, B. *McDonalds, Minarets, and Modernity: The anatomy of the emerging secular Muslim world*, Sevenoaks, Kent, UK: Spear Publishing, 1996
- [4] Kvejl, D.M., *Stari kontinent-novi mediji*, Nova, 1994
- [5] Lecner F., *Boli Dz Kultura sveta*, Clio, 2006,
- [6] Pilkington H., E. Omelchenko, M. Flynn, U. Bluiding, *Looking West?: Cultural globalization and russian youth culture*, the Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002

- [7] Radojkovic, M./Stojkovic B.: *Information and communication systems*, Clio, 2004
- [8] Radojkovic, Miletic *Komuniciranje, mediji i drustvo*, Stylos, 2005
- [9] Byatt, A. S., *Harry Potter and the Childish Adult*, *The New York Times*, July 7. 2003
- [10] Burdije P., *Narcisovo ogledalo*. Clio, 2000
- [11] Cvetkovska-Ocokoljic V., Cvetkovski T. *Komunikacija covek i kultura*, Megatrend univerzitet,
- [12] Rygaard J. *Youth Culture, Media and Globalization Processes in Grenland*, SAGE Publications, 2003
- [13] Naz A., Khan, W., Hussain M, Daraz U *The Crises of Identity : Globalization and its impacts on Socio-cultural and Psychological identity among Pakhtuns of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan*, International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, Vol. 1, No. 1, HRMARS, Pakistan, 2011