

GLOBALIZATION & MARGINALIZATION Discussion Guide to the Jesuit Task Force Report

INTRODUCTION

The report Globalization & Marginalization: Our Global Apostolic Response was prepared by an international task force convened by the Jesuits' International Social Justice Secretariat. It is an invitation to reflect and act together on the processes of globalization and marginalization.

The Taskforce was made up of eight Jesuits from different regions. They analyzed the stories of Jesuit activities from all over the world, and each one prepared a report on the process of globalization and marginalization in their own region. Together they synthesized this material into a 55 page report which was issued in February 2006 and included the regional reports as appendices.

The members of the Task Force had different experiences of globalization and they saw things differently from one another. The report honours this diversity while seeking to discern together concrete strategies and tactics for response.

The full report is available at
http://www.sjweb.info/documents/sjs/docs/GlobMa rg_ENG.pdf

This summary and discussion guide is intended to introduce people to the key ideas in the report and encourage action in response to the challenges that it raises.

UNDERSTANDING GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is a phenomenon that expands interconnectedness in the world. In some ways this is a very old dynamic and in other ways the phenomenon is new.

Globalization is not just an economic phenomenon - it also affects cultural, political, social, legal and

religious life. These aspects of globalization interact with each other and there are feedback loops between them. These effects may be unexpected and contradictory.

Experiences of globalization differ. Our geographical, cultural, political, economic and social location will influence whether we see globalization as mainly an opportunity or mainly a threat. The same person may experience both positive and negative aspects of globalization.

Some of the tensions produced by the process of globalization identified by the Task Force include:

1. Openness and universality versus neo-colonialism and imperialism;
2. The expanded freedom of the individual versus the resurgence of new communitarian projects;
3. The tendency to 'homogenize' cultures versus the strong emergence of individual and group-identities;
4. Consumerism versus sustainable development;
5. Local versus global citizenship;
6. A guarded attempt to downplay institutional religion versus the rise of neo-conservative religious expressions.

MARGINALIZATION & EXCLUSION

Marginalization is a process denying opportunities and outcomes to those 'living on the margins' and enhancing the opportunities and outcomes of those who are 'at the centre'.

Marginalization combines discrimination and social exclusion. It offends human dignity and it denies human rights, especially the right to live effectively as equal citizens.

Exclusion keeps segments of the population out of social interaction, or casts them out from it. Those who are at the centre have benefited from globalization, but those who are already marginalized are often left further behind.

WHAT IS NEW ABOUT GLOBALIZATION TODAY?

Scale & Intensity

Human interconnectedness has deepened and widened. Interconnections now extend to the whole earth, penetrating institutions and the lives of individuals in a more intense way than before.

Fluidity

Traditional relationships and ways of making meaning are now being constantly reshaped; as a result cultural hybridization and relativism are rising. While borders are becoming more fluid for financial capital, they are hardening for people, and new forms of xenophobia, casteism and racism are emerging.

Structures & Hubs

New webs of relationships and structures are overlaid upon traditional social structures, leading to more complex, interrelated structures. New patterns of interaction lead to new 'rules of the game'.

New communities of relationships are maintained by new channels which transfer information and knowledge. 'Hubs' in these communication channels can configure and reconfigure the way in which knowledge, meaning and power are transmitted. The marginalized are pushed to, or beyond, the edges of this web of relationships.

FOR DISCUSSION

- Try to imagine yourself in the position of the poorest and most marginalized person in your community. What does globalization look like, sound like, and feel like from this position?
- How do you personally experience globalization? Does your experience include both positive and negative dimensions?
- What are the positive and negative impacts of globalization in your parish, school, community or ministry? Which groups in your parish, school, community or ministry share in the benefits? Which groups carry the burdens? Which groups are left out?
- Can you identify cases where increased interconnectedness has reduced marginalization?
- What are the most urgent problems raised by globalization in your parish, school, community or ministry?
- What are the most exciting positive possibilities flowing from globalization for your parish, school, community or ministry?

REFLECTING ON OUR GLOBALIZING & MARGINALIZING WORLD

Guiding Principles

In the light of the material gathered from the different regions, the Task Force settled on four principles to guide their discernment. These principles are described in the table below together with corresponding evils to be avoided.

Guiding Principles	
Principles	Evils to Avoid
<i>Being as Subject</i> Subjecthood of all, including the marginalized, co-responsibility, based on human dignity.	Paternalism, colonialism, arrogance, dependence, uninhibited individualism.
<i>Inclusive relations</i> Inclusion of all, especially the 'other', the 'different', the excluded and the other species on earth.	Fundamentalism, narrow nationalism, xenophobia / racism, chauvinism, gender exclusion, casteism / ethnicity, environmental exploitation and degradation, demonizing the powerful.
<i>Transforming Relationships</i> Transformation and healing from within to achieve peace and reconciliation, based on justice, security, dignity, equality, dialogue, respect (for faith, culture, religions).	Understanding the dimensions (faith, justice, inculturation, and inter-religious dialogue) of our Jesuit charism independently, living in disharmony, conflict and war, substitution of ethics and politics with economics.
<i>Acting in Synergy</i> Looking for synergies and creating alternatives for understanding / acting/ being together / teams / partnership / accompaniment / liturgies and symbolic actions.	Individualistic spirituality, relying on individual-driven pioneering efforts, maintaining unconnected sectoral (pastoral, educational, social) approaches, destructive competition / unnecessary duplicating action.

Adapted from Box 1, Chapter 2, p 23.

CHALLENGES FOR DISCERNMENT

The Logic of the Market

The 'logic of the market' - a set of ideas, practices and institutional behaviours that absolutize profit and make it the primary value of humankind – has caused much suffering when allowed to dominate every aspect of human life. For the sake of human dignity and the care of the environment, the logic of the market must be kept in its place.

To work properly, markets need rich institutional contexts including a strong and organized civil society that can hold the State accountable. Fair competition is only possible within an institutional framework of cooperation, especially at the international level.

Discernment is required as we face new forms of tension between market and society.

Cultural Erosion & Inclusion

The erosion of traditional cultures and religious beliefs is common in all regions of the world, but there are also powerful reactions asserting ethnic, caste, linguistic, territorial, religious or political identities. In both processes new identities are created and recreated.

In pluralist societies, cultural exclusion occurs when a person or group isn't allowed to participate in society in the way that others are allowed and encouraged to do, or when the one group in society denies recognition of a lifestyle that another group would choose, for instance by insisting that members of that group must live exactly like the dominant group.

We need to discern our attitudes to cultural change, and to reflect seriously on practical ways of upholding cultural liberty in pluralist societies.

Violence & Conflict Transformation

There are many forms of violence that affect the quality of our mutual relationships. Violence leaves scars on both victims and perpetrators, and its effects are difficult to eradicate.

When the real causes of violence are hidden and unrecognized, people often respond to conflict with further violence.

Our common discernment must address the question of how to deal with violence, setting up mechanisms to prevent violence, and engaging all concerned parties in dialogue.

Unsustainable Environmental Degradation

Abuse of the environment affects our life together and especially the lives of the poor and marginalized.

Current first world levels of consumption and use of natural resources cannot be replicated in all countries of the world. Exercising self-restraint in consumption and internalizing the environmental costs of production are essential as a first step towards a new, sustainable way of living together.

Without common discernment of environmental tensions, we risk overlooking an essential ingredient of our interconnectedness.

Politics & Governance

The new web of global interconnectedness can and has been used to express solidarity, for example in the campaigns to ban landmines and for the forgiveness of the unpayable international debt of poor countries.

Ongoing global economic and cultural processes require that we all understand ourselves as world citizens, members of a global civil society. We need new political institutions at the regional and global levels so that the common good of humanity is taken care of in the emerging world.

We are called to create, with and for the poor, mechanisms for wider political participation in and control of the political process, both at the national and global levels. We are called to discern the most appropriate way to cooperate in empowering the marginalized to have a voice in decisions that affect our life together.

FOR DISCUSSION

- The Task Force identifies five challenges for discernment. Which of these challenges is the most *urgent* challenge for your parish, school, community or ministry? Which is the most *important* challenge?
- Is your parish, school, community or ministry currently responding to any of these challenges for discernment? How?
- Choose one challenge. How might the guiding principles identified by the Task Force help you to respond to this challenge?
- Do the principles suggest any particular direction for response, or rule out any potential ways of responding?
- How do these principles relate to the four key principles of Catholic Social Teaching: human dignity; the common good; subsidiarity; and solidarity?

JESUIT EFFORTS IN A GLOBAL WORLD

Spirituality

The mystery of the Trinity reveals the essence of God as life-together, and so we too are called to be one in many, to include rather than exclude.

The Task Force notes that the three religious vows promote a set of values, attitudes and behaviour – a Gospel culture – which stands against the forces that lead to marginalization. The values enshrined in the vows can also be lived by lay people.

Evangelical poverty expresses our solidarity with the poor and is a counter cultural stand against a culture of consumerism, affluence and waste.

The values behind the religious vow of chastity lead us to reject relationships that enslave and dominate, and the manipulation of human beings for personal satisfaction. We seek instead to build interconnectedness on the basis of dignity and respect.

The ideal of obedience is an appeal to discern the will of God rather than considering only our own interest. It challenges excessive individualism and calls us to be generous in making ourselves available for mission.

The logic of the Gospel is to be lived and shared with all those with whom we struggle to promote the Reign of God. Solidarity can be understood as a form of reciprocity between God and human beings that is extended to relationships between human beings. We will work to develop communities of solidarity that are open to all who are committed to the common good.

The Jesuit Charism

The Jesuit mission can be seen as joining with others to actively transform the situation to create a new global interconnectedness in solidarity. Serious attention to the task of healing and reconciling will be needed.

All Jesuit ministries must be permeated by faith, based on justice, rooted in culture and open to dialogue with other persons of goodwill.

A fear of uncertainty and diversity can lead people and institutions to become self-focused and inward. We must not let our faith become a purely individual experience, turned in on itself.

We need to be very aware of the way in which cultural and religious differences are blamed for deep conflicts and often used to cover other, larger economic and political conflicts.

Religious fundamentalism of different kinds has polarized communities and whole countries. Fundamentalism shuns dialogue, and cultural and political freedom. Through dialogue and openness to difference, we can find ways of reconciling the autonomy of public life and the public character of religion.

Intellectual Life

Intellectual life is not just about objective knowledge, but also relating knowledge to reality, and the ability to evaluate knowledge and its processes. It involves the capacity to integrate experience into larger frameworks, as well as the aesthetic and playful aspects of life, and a certain intimacy with the whole reality.

More than ever, knowledge is power. Our intellectual life must uncover, analyze and denounce the power structures based on knowledge and which marginalize millions of people.

Interconnectedness is at the heart of knowledge management and so we need new paradigms and methodologies. We need to work in teams using multi-, inter – and trans-disciplinary approaches.

The Education Ministry

The logic of the market has turned quality education into a profitable and marketable commodity. We need to develop a critical global perspective in the people we educate and in our educational institutions.

The Task Force notes that the lack of synergy among Jesuit educational institutions leaves them incapable of responding to the issues raised by interconnectedness. The same lack of synergy between universities and Jesuit social centres highlights the narrowness of the approaches we have pursued.

Challenges for Jesuit Formation

The Task Force asks whether current arrangements foster the formation of overly individualistic Jesuits and notes the need to foster the capacity to work in teams, the willingness to work with non-Jesuits and in non-Jesuit contexts. Efforts to introduce trans-disciplinarity, teamwork and critical thinking into the curriculum must continue and expand.

The Task Force also questioned an over emphasis on the academic, and the lack of accompaniment and connection with the formal curriculum of experiences with the poor. The lived experience of the international character of Jesuit formation houses also needs to be complemented with the treatment of cultural identity and the experience of trans-culturality at an academic level.

While younger Jesuits are generally familiar with the internet, there is a danger that they may become insulated from the realities of suffering and marginalization by living in virtual spaces.

FORMING OURSELVES INTO ONE BODY

In recent years steps have been taken to make the governance of the Society of Jesus truly global and yet rooted in the local situation. The Task Force sees a need to go further in responding creatively and concretely to the challenge that some problems are global in nature and need global solutions.

Mission & Governance

The Task Force identified three principles for the development of governance:

Flexibility - Governing structures need to be able to change and adapt according to the needs of the mission;

Transparency - Adequate information about decision making should be provided in a timely manner while protecting the privacy of individuals;

Accountability - We need criteria of accountability and evaluation and should be clear about processes and lines of accountability.

Discernment & Planning

The Task Force suggests that planning in the Society of Jesus cannot be effective if it simply reorders or re-names existing activities. Planning for mission needs to form part of an Ignatian strategic discernment that allows the Society to put aside some of the personal and institutional brakes that limit its mobility.

Partnership for Mission

Lay people and members of other religious congregations may share in the mission and works of the Jesuits. They too are considered by the Task Force to be 'apostolic subjects' or 'Jesuit Apostolic Partners'.

According to the Task Force, a Jesuit Apostolic Partner:

1. Shares the same Ignatian vision, which needs to be interpreted and clearly defined in the light of different cultures and religious experiences; and
2. Shares the same mission as defined explicitly by our charism of being for, and with, the marginalized of this world and transforming complex structures of socio-cultural, economic and political domination.

Such partners share to varying degrees in Jesuit mechanisms for responsibility and accountability. They should also be provided with adequate and

graded formation so that they share the Jesuit vision and mission and are not marginalized within Jesuit efforts.

Being More Effective

The Task Force identified a need for more professionalism and seriousness in planning for mission at the provincial and regional levels. It also suggested that time bound projects focused on concrete goals and undertaken in an inter-sectoral way would help to build more linkages among different sectors of ministry.

FOR DISCUSSION

- Does your personal spirituality influence your own response to the phenomena of globalization and marginalization? If so, in what ways?
- How might Ignatian spirituality influence the responses of a person, group or organization to globalization and marginalization?
- Describe the values, attitudes and behaviour that you believe would constitute a Gospel culture? How would they influence the way in which your family, parish, school, community, workplace or ministry might respond to globalization?
- What lessons, if any, do these reflections on directions for the Jesuits' response to globalization hold for other Church and community groups?
- What are the implications of globalization for how Jesuit ministries should go about
 - strategic planning
 - building partnerships
 - evaluating activities
 - providing training and formation for personnel?

NEW GLOBAL APOSTOLIC STRATEGIES

The Task Force identified six general strategies, made specific recommendations for Jesuit works, and proposed a check-list for activities.

Global Strategies

The Task Force identified the following global strategies:

1. Strengthen an individual and corporate global outlook which is rooted in our local commitments.
2. Adopt an inclusive approach which involves all stakeholders, building alliances and bridges which provide spaces for interaction and dialogue.
3. Stress mutual accompaniment supporting the choices of the marginalized in their struggles.

4. Explore the application of the Ignatian principle of communitarian discernment.
5. Promote publicly an overall ethical, human and interior perspective.
6. Design structures of governance which equip us better to face the challenges of globalization and marginalization.

Specific Recommendations

In the area of spirituality that:

- the more communitarian aspects of religious traditions be retrieved and revived
- we be more attentive to the transcendent
- the popular religiosity and religious traditions of marginalized communities be explored and integrated into our spirituality
- procedures for common discernment be developed.

In the area of intellectual life that:

- new theological and philosophical frameworks that emphasize togetherness and interdependence be developed
- interreligious dialogue reflect on fundamentalism
- the social ministries engage in research and social advocacy on good governance, devise global systems of checks and balances, empower the marginalized, and respect the integrity of the earth
- Jesuits consider starting open universities which are accessible to the excluded
- More research be done on the interaction between communities and institutions
- Researchers from Jesuit universities work with others to influence policy and institutions from inside
- We build transversal communities of solidarity working across ministry sectors.

A Check List for Partners in Mission

The Task Force encourages everyone involved in the mission and works of the Jesuits to consider the following check list:

1. Espouse and cherish differences amongst partners in mission as a means of addressing divisions in our world.
2. Presume that God's self-revelation will be disclosed in differences and not just in the resolving of difference.
3. Adopt one justice issue, inform yourself, and after close contact with the marginalized, take some political action.
4. Ask yourself, when you consume resources, if similar consumption by all is sustainable. If it is not, ask yourself what you will do to put right your excessive consumption of limited resources.
5. Be an advocate for at least one culture different from your own.
6. Acquire an appreciative and advanced knowledge of at least one religion not your own.
7. Be involved with a community of solidarity which links the marginalized with decision makers through shared relationships with partners in the mission and works of the Jesuits.
8. Occasionally visit a community of insertion where Jesuits and their partners in mission share the life of the marginalized.
9. Ask your Jesuit Province to establish an accessible community of solidarity or a community of insertion if you cannot find one.

FOR DISCUSSION

- Consider the set of six global strategies put forward by the Task Force. Which of these strategies attracts you the most? Which do you find the least attractive? Why?
- Choose one strategy. What action steps would be needed to implement this strategy in your parish, school, community or ministry? What projects or activities might be involved? Do any of the more specific recommendations of the Task Force relate to your strategy? Can you think of any indicators that would help you to know whether your strategy was being effectively implemented or not?
- How many of the items in the check list can you tick off?
- Which item in the checklist is the most challenging for you? Why?