

Globalization — the Effect on Culture

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Globalization is composed of a swirl of causes and effects that have been profoundly world-changing. At the top of the Cause column are vastly improved communications — in particular the Internet, which used to be called the World-Wide Web — and faster cheaper travel. The latter permits less expensive transport of goods as well as humans, so the global economy of transnational trade is foundational to the process and associated beliefs.

The Internet is a big player in spreading the idea that there are places on earth more desirable than someone's third-world backwater. Belief in the importance of borders and national sovereignty has diminished with the growing view that relocation can be a smart choice for the global poor. Anyway, why bother working to reform and build a better life in the homeland when it's easier to simply leave for greener pastures? And many have. Increased immigration has been a big part of expanding the globalist, one-worlder ideology. The United Nations reported that the number of persons living in a country other than their birthplace reached 244 million in 2015 worldwide, a 41 percent increase over 2000.

Homeland reformers are in short supply these days. In an earlier generation, people like Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi took on the leadership chore of nation-building. You may not like their politics and the sort of nations they constructed, but they entered the arena and struggled with the heavy lifting of political reform.

Take Mexico — there's a country that could use a reformer. It routinely ranks among the top 15 nations for its GDP, yet in 2014 the poverty rate was 46.2 percent according to the government agency Coneval. Mexico is very wealthy indeed for the rich elites who run the place, like the 15 Mexican billionaires that *Fortune* counted on its list for 2017. The magazine observed in March, "Despite a weak currency and a sluggish economy, the combined net worth of Mexico's billionaires climbed 17

percent, from \$99.6 billion in 2016 to \$116.7 billion."

Mexico is blessed with many physical advantages like scenic coasts and mineral resources, and its middle class has been expanding, although slowly. There is a sense that it could do a lot better if it had a serious leader who could knock back the economic sclerosis and improve living standards for those at the bottom of the economic pile.

Television, print media, and the Internet all spread the gospel of first-world-style consumption around the world. The *Wall Street Journal* carried a memorable story of how the attraction of a sparkly modern lifestyle draws impressionable youth from the third world in its revealing article, "Allure of Wealth Drives Deadly Trek" (June 12, 2015). The subject of the story, 27-year-old Ibrahima Ba, lived in moderately prosperous Senegal and had decent prospects in life, yet he joined fellow residents of his village of Kothiary to travel 3,000 miles to Europe. He apparently died crossing the Mediterranean.

Senegal is a stable West African democracy, and Kothiary has profited from the currents of globalization transforming rural Africa's more prosperous areas. Flat screen TVs and, increasingly, cars—mostly purchased with money wired home by villagers working in Europe—have reshaped what was once a settlement of mud huts. The wealth has plugged this isolated landscape of peanut farms and baobab trees into the global economy and won respect for the men who sent it.

But it has also put European living standards on real-time display, and handed young farm hands the cash to buy a ticket out.

Senegal has been developed according to Western ideas of how to grow out of poverty: it has held elections for decades, liberalized trade, and built infrastructure. Yet the country is no longer adequate in the eyes of young people when an idealized view of a wealthy Europe is broadcast daily. The idea of loyalty to home and country does not seem to even occur to the young men headed north. The fervor to leave seems almost like a gold rush — hurry and get some or it will all be gone.

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In fact, many of the European jobs the Africans hope to find for making their fortune will be gone before long, as automation replaces human workers in tasks that are simple and repetitious.

Globalization across Planet Earth brings new information about different cultures as its practitioners arrive as immigrants and seek to make their mark, culturally as well as economically. Today's newbies are not expected to embrace assimilation as in earlier generations: the left has condemned cultural integration as an outdated concept that doesn't respect diversity. However, not all diversity is admirable, as we have learned by exposure to extreme versions. Because of immigration, Americans have in recent years become acquainted with the beliefs and practices of Islam, including polygamy, the honor killing of disobedient females, and war against anyone who does not accept the supremacy of Allah. Ignorance was bliss.

Globalism, the belief system, has its adherents of course. One-worlderism is a liberal faith, based on the naive idea that if people just got to know each other, then war would cease and peace would prevail. It's a vague, unrealistic ideal, but it feels good to the believer. But the idea ignores the obvious fact that not all cultures are morally equal. American women and their friends are not vacationing in Saudi Arabia, and the reason is deep-seated cultural misogyny that shows up in practices like gender segregation in restaurants.

One version of the globalist faith has been blossoming in Canada, where its liberal prime minister, Justin Trudeau, has declared the country he runs to be post-national. The idea of a postnational nation doesn't make much sense, but Trudeau is a true believer nevertheless. He enthusiastically bragged about the odd category in a *New York Times Magazine* interview, "Trudeau's Canada, Again" (December 8, 2015):

Trudeau's most radical argument is that Canada is becoming a new kind of state, defined not by its European history but by the multiplicity of its identities from all over the world. His embrace of a pan-cultural heritage makes him an avatar of his father's vision. "There is no core identity, no mainstream in Canada," he claimed. "There are shared values — openness, respect, compassion, willingness to work hard, to be there for each other, to search for equality and justice. Those qualities are what make us the first postnational state."

Trudeau pictures globalist values as written in the liberal playbook, but his fuzzy list of positive traits is not shared in the sizable Islamic slice of the world which

numbered 1.6 billion persons as of 2010, according to Pew Research.

These imagined globalist principles are sometimes used as a club to beat back western progress in society and replace it with political correctness which refuses to recognize evil. Liberals try to bully Americans into respecting hostile Islamists in our midst, when we should instead reject the whole eighth century ideology. Islam is more accurately described as a totalitarian political system wrapped in a religious package. Therefore it should not be afforded the respect we as Americans normally afford to genuine religions.

As Dutch politician Geert Wilders remarked:

I have nothing against the people. I don't hate Muslims. But Islam is a totalitarian ideology. It rules every aspect of life — economics, family law, whatever. It has religious symbols, it has a God, it has a book — but it's not a religion. It can be compared with totalitarian ideologies like Communism or fascism. There is no country where Islam is dominant where you have a real democracy, a real separation between church and state.

So perhaps it's wise to be suspicious of Islamic diversity and immigration.

Interestingly, globalist ideology has come under criticism in recent years, with more appreciation for the nation-state, particularly among average people. Former Czech President Václav Klaus praised that form of governance in 2003: "You cannot have democratic accountability in anything bigger than a nation state." The passage in Britain of BREXIT to divorce from the European Union and the election of Donald Trump show the rejection of the open-borders diversity model of organization. In early 2017, patriot candidates Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and Marine Le Pen of France failed in elections for national leadership, but both moved the debate to the issues of sovereignty and immigration. It's disappointing that they lost, but at least immigration is being discussed with a degree of realism about the unfriendly culture of the some newcomers.

Globalist diversity includes a mixture of good and bad symptoms. We appreciate French brie and enjoy Italian opera, but we prefer to live without polygamy and honor killing. Western culture and political rights have been hard won over centuries. Now more than ever, citizens must insist upon immigration assimilation because of the extreme diversity being admitted. Or better yet, the government should not admit immigrants from cultures that are historic enemies of western values. America must not drift into a hazy state of postnationalism and belief in globalist standards. ■