



Global studies means forward-looking

Gilbert Ahamer

Advisory Board Global Studies, Graz, Austria

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to show, in a practical manner, that discursive procedures (mediated by online platforms or publication systems) enhance cultural understanding of distinct social entities such as Europe and Russia.

Design/methodology/approach – Joint special issues convening authors from east and west in an equilibrated manner give an opportunity for in-depth review processes, in the course of which different paradigms of global evolution are perceived and reflected.

Findings – If handled with care, information technologies are able to strongly support such stepwise consensus finding. The areas of futurology, forward looking, global megatrends, global evolution, globalistics and global studies are prime cases for the patient alignment of world views and multi-paradigmatic approach towards (ultimately) holistic and second-order science.

Originality/value – Even in the face of diverse political realities a series of conferences, lectures and web-supported exercises for the authoring of articles are able to consistently merge actors in academia and policy consulting.

Keywords European Union, Forward looking, Global studies, Globalistics, Holistic science, Russian Federation

Paper type Conceptual paper

The educational field of “Global Studies” (GS) is now, for the fifth time, adding to Emerald’s educational journals’ special issues, emphasising the endeavour of managing global governance in a forward-looking manner.

Last autumn’s GS conference in Moscow took advantage of the 150th birthday of a great Russian thinker pioneering for globalistics (a key term in Russia denoting holistic global studies) and global evolutionism: Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky (1863-1945). The “Globalistics 2013” conference encouraged the discovery of novel thought and reunited scientists and visionary practitioners from east and west following the paths of Vernadsky and de Chardin (both portrayed in Figure 1). Humanism and globalism (symbolised above in Figure 1) provide the main direction that later might evolve into responsible integral science and an integrating way of life.

While bashful observers on both halves of the continent might still stand on their sides and limit themselves to perceiving from a distance what seems to take place on the other side (telescopes in Figure 1), actors have already reached the other, remote area.

In this issue, an equilibrated set of authors from eastern and western Europe describe criteria, quality assessment, targets, processes, educational endeavours, and technological underpinnings of globalisation – practically all of them play a role in institutionalised “Global Studies”. Such stepwise and self-referential process of perceiving and constructing paradigms revives and implements the sociological concept of observing (Egner, 2012, p. 12), thus creating new consciousness by linking (to-date) still partial cultures and policies. Second-order cybernetics enlarges this concept by adding participation to mere observation (Umpleby, 2007, p. 516), thus providing practical and political benefit.





Notes: Convergence towards joint values and increasing mutual perception (curricula for Global Studies and Faculty for Global Studies) on a common globe (above). Globalistics and global evolution as suggested by Teilhard de Chardin (at left) and Vladimir I. Vernadsky (at right), stemming from different parts of Europe, as mapped in Figure 2

Figure 1. This collection of images (arranged in a circle like the flag of the Council of Europe) symbolises the aim of the present issue: looking forward into the ring of stars (telescopes of doing science) and looking forward to a common, transparent world

To rely on a culture of debate and discourse, not on a culture of force and power, is a typically European decision. Such is implemented in the Council of Europe (stars in Figure 1) to which all the authors’ home countries are affiliated; and is materialised in still more depth in EU institutions. Of these, possibly co-motivated by organic openness, the European Environment Agency (EEA) plays a pioneering role in that it also welcomes non-EU countries to take part in their reporting, discussions and consensus finding exercises – the latter being the key item in the evolution towards global humanisation. Among others, the EEA promotes a permanent dialogue on global megatrends hosted in its regular *State of the Environment Report* (SOER, 2010) that trains the virtues of Forward Looking – the second key word in this issue’s title. Figure 2 pictures such extended geographic scope. According to the scope of *CWIS*, information technologies play a key role when constructing consensus in a multipolar world that is rich in cultures of diverse understandings. The EEA’s “Forward-Looking Information and Services” (FLIS) includes a collaborative platform (Ribeiro *et al.*, 2014) which is a knowledge base (White, 2014) on future scenarios and allows complex international communication and supports consensus finding regarding policy making.

The Russian “landscape” of publication on GS has become rich even in the English language during the last decade: a *GS Encyclopedia* (Mazour *et al.*, 2003) and a *GS Dictionary* (Chumakov *et al.*, 2006) emerged from the Faculty of Global Processes at Lomonosov Moscow State University, and regular journals such as *Social Evolution and History* (Scopus listed), *Journal of Globalization Studies*, *Age of Globalization*, yearbooks such as *Globalistics and Globalization Studies*, *History and Mathematics, Evolution*, and books – all available from www.sociostudies.org

How to locate the content of this issue’s contributions? Wikipedia (2014) claims that “in post-Soviet Russia one can distinguish four main currents of philosophical

Figure 2.

The cover of the EEA (2011) report “Europe’s environment: an assessment of assessments” makes clear that European procedures are inclusive and welcoming, based on voluntary participation



thought, namely, Marxism, postmodernism, liberal orthodoxy, and globalism. Alexander Chumakov (one of this issue’s authors) is the leading spokesman in today’s Russia for the fourth trend, which ‘represents a secular stream of thought that aims to formulate a worldview *transcending the division between Russia and the West* by providing a new philosophical basis for their integration and ultimate unity’”. The country of Kasimir Malevich’s “black square” is definitely European in culture (Tretyakov Gallery, 2014)!

Perceiving the globe as a still wider realm will lead us to take note of still more personalities linking Eastern and Western thought, education and action (Sri Aurobindo, the Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen; or Spiral Dynamics and Integral Theory; Aurobindo, 1972; Beck and Cowan, 1996; Graves, 1970; Sen, 1999; Wilber, 1997) who all contributed to evolution by humanisation and education towards humanism, equity, holism, forgiveness, and non-dualism.

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Corresponding author

Dr Gilbert Ahamer can be contacted at: gilbert.ahamer@oeaw.ac.at