CHAPTER - V

CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES IN GLOBALIZATION

Globalization refers to the modern phenomena of cultures, nations and financial institutions around the world becoming more and more interconnected. As a result of this interconnection, these various institutions are becoming interdependent maximizing the benefits of cross pollination of ideas, ideals and under an undefined moral framework. This interdependency carries with it ethical and practical issues that are being addressed by policy researchers, policy makers, businessmen, politicians and scientists worldwide.¹

The world has become a smaller place than it used to be by the end of the 20th century. Societies from all over the world are increasingly being linked into what has been called ‘one global system.’ Human interdependence at a global level sustaining human practice within local communities is hardly a recent phenomenon. International trade and cross migration, e.g., is at least as old as written history and the capitalistic world-system has this phenomena since the 16th century produced a global reality that had touched upon lives of global citizens. However, starting by the end of the 1960’s and rapidly accelerating into the 21st century, technological,

¹ Surendra Arjoon., *Teaching Ethical Issues in Information Technology*, p. 45.
economical, political and other forces have crafted a world in which this interdependence has reached to an unprecedented level.

Accompanying this process of globalization is the widespread recognition of these new global human interdependencies and of their ethical relevance. The on-going process of globalization leads to the emergence of a ‘global order’ engendering new and pressing moral and ethical issues. Contemporary processes of globalization have several dimensions or faces including technological, cultural, religious, economic and political arenas. None of these are in itself good or bad and at times stays neutral. All should be understood as ambiguous, with potential for good and evil, but in the current phase of globalization it is important to distinguish each of the faces of globalization and identify with a potential to pursue the good. Elisabeth Gerle, a contemporary Swedish ethicist writes:

“In an asymmetrical world, the very same processes of globalization can turn a benevolent face to many people, while others experience a face turned away in neglect and ignorance and still others bear witness to globalization turning a greedy, exploitative face to them.”

2 Elisabeth Gerle., *Contemporary Globalization and its Ethical Challenges*, p. 9
**Technological revolution:**

It is sometimes argued that globalization is nothing new. Throughout the great empires and during the last centuries the world has always been interdependent and interconnected. Western hegemonic power and the imperialist tendencies of modernization have certainly been with us for long; and some would claim that many features of contemporary globalization are only an excuse for governmental passivity and shifts towards neo-liberal ideologies. Yet most analysts agree that the revolution in technology and its relationship to time and space are new. Never before has it been possible to communicate around the globe in a fraction of a second; and this influences the way we as ordinary human beings experience life. Cyber-space communication through e-mail and the World Wide Web (internet) is a daily experience in the industrialized, technologically developed part of the world. In the South it is a rarer phenomenon: in many countries electricity is not available everywhere -- at least not 24 hours a day. In the North, too, access to computers varies according to one's financial situation. The North-South / East-West divide is not only regional but exists in every country and local community.

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3 Zygmunt Bauman., *Globalization*, p. 45.
Despite these asymmetries in relation to access to technology, most of us in the advanced countries, as elsewhere in the world, are influenced by the instant communication flows that shape information and global media. This process brings about important changes in consciousness. Individuals and groups are forced to embrace, oppose or relate in other ways to the "global condition." Changes in communication which technology has made possible are therefore first on the list of what Barrie Axford calls the complex and multidimensional character of globalization.

Communication, in its simplest sense, is a human relationship, involving two or more persons who come together to share, to dialogue and to commune, or just to be together, say, at a festival or a time of mourning. Communication is thus not so much an act or even a process but rather social and cultural ‘togetherness’. Communion with oneself, with God, with nature, with the world of spirits, with one’s ancestors is also forms of communication.

Communication is the name we give to the countless ways that humans have of keeping in touch not just words and music, pictures

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4 Roland Robertson., Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture, p. 36.
5 Barrie Axford., Globalization, in Gary Browining, Abigail Halcli and Frank Webster, (ed), p. 108
and print, nods and becks, postures and plumages; to every move that
catches someone’s eye and every sound that resonates upon another’s
ear. A human being’s need for communication is as strong and as
basic as the need to eat, sleep and love. It is both an individual and a
social need. It is ‘both a natural individual demand and a requirement of
social existence to use communication resources in order to engage in
the sharing of experiences, through symbol-mediated interaction.’ The
severest punishment for a child is to be isolated, to be left alone, not to
be spoken to.

The basic human need for communication can perhaps be traced
to the process of mankind’s evolution from lower species. Animals, for
instance, have to be in sensory communication with their physical and
biological surroundings to find food, protect themselves and to
reproduce their species. A loss of sensation the inability to hear a
predator, for instance, can mean loss of life. Similarly to be lost from
primitive social communication, from the pack, from the herd or the
tribe, is to be condemned to death.

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7 Asha Montagu and Floyd Maston., The Human Connection, McGraw Hill, New
York: 1979, p. 36.
8 Luis Beltran., Farewell to Aristotle, in Communication 5, pp. 5-41.
9 David Clark and William Blankenburg., You and Media: Mass
According to Prof. Denis McQuail of Amsterdam University, most revered expert in the mass communications subject proclaims that “communication is a process which increases commonality but also requires elements of commonality for it to occur at all”\(^\text{10}\). A common language, for instance, does bring people together but language alone does not suffice for communication to take place. There are other factors too at play such as a shared culture and a common interest which bring about a sense of commonality and more significantly, a sense of community. Communication thus presupposes a shared symbolic environment and a social relationship among those who participate. What it leads to is social interaction, and in combination with a set of other factors, contributes to a sense of community. Since the world of man, bird and beast too possesses and communicates such a social relationship, the need arises to speak of ‘human communication’ rather than ‘communication’ alone. W.S. Cardon, a leading exponent of kinesics, the science of body language, stresses that interaction within a culture is governed not so much by language, but by ‘body synthesizers’ set in motion almost immediately after birth and thereafter

conditioned by culture. Communication, therefore, is not a matter of ‘isolated entities sending discrete messages back and forth, but a process of mutual participation in a common structure of rhythmic patterns by all members of a culture.’

For sociologists like Thomson, however communication is a ‘form of action’ which takes places in a social context and is related to questions of economic, political, coercive and symbolic power in society. Communication ‘involves the creation of new forms of action and interaction in the social world, new kinds of social relationship and new ways of relating to others and to oneself. In a fundamental way, the use of communication transforms the spatial and temporal organization of social life, creating new forms of action and interaction, and new modes of exercising power, which are no longer linked to the sharing of a common locale.’

**Cultures during globalization:**

It is a fact that people of various backgrounds, cultures and religions meet to a larger extent today than was possible ever before. With people from various backgrounds influencing each other,

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12 Ibid., p. 4.
"hybridization" thus also becomes key words in understanding this dimension of globalization. People in late modernity increasingly live with overlapping identities.

For some, however, the intensity of the encounter with alien cultures feels threatening and leads to claims for borders, for protecting one's own culture. Often this need is wrapped in rhetoric about "community", coming from both left and right. According to Prof. Elizabeth Frazer, a prominent social philosopher from Oxford,:  

> “Conservatives value community because it promises social stability, a self-reliant population that does not drain resources away from the state or the market; by contrast, community activists in the socialist tradition see community as the generator of resistance to the state and, especially, resistance to corporate power -- the power of developers, polluters and profit-makers.”

13 Communitarian values, expressed locally to protect small communities against overpowering forces, are also expanded to whole regions of the world. In the Muslim world, the Islamization of states and communities is introduced as a way to uphold or recreate a Muslim

13 Elizabeth Frazer., *Communitarianism in Understanding Contemporary Society*, p. 25.
identity in order to protect oneself against the West, in terms of economic dominance as well as values.

Also in the West there are communitarian attempts, Christian as well as Muslim, to use traditional values as a shield or a barrier against modernization or against a surrounding culture that is described as godless and atheistic. This anti-modernism avoids or denounces any communication with those perceived as liberal secularists and with people of other faiths. It is often used to reaffirm traditional gender roles in which the man is seen as the head of the family. But in Christian contexts, too, the anti-modernist stand is eclectic: while some features of modernization or globalization are rejected, others are accepted, even affirmed.

Cultures during globalization develop in opposite directions as well as coming closer to one another. A whole spectrum of reactions may be identified: from assimilation and hybridization to encounters that generate increasing attempts to develop politics of identity, in which Muslims, Christians, Jews, African-Americans, Hispanics or others stress their essential, crucial difference in relation to the others. As a strategy of resistance, appeals to "authentic" cultures are still widely made: Muslims use the early period of Islam to reclaim the early vision that was lost in later history and Christians of various
denominations look to the early church and the church fathers for inspiration and guidance. Australian expert, Albert Paolini argues that:

“The notions of difference, authenticity and essentialism which often lurk behind constructions of "otherness", are as false as the idea that globalization inevitably leads towards a homogeneous global culture.”

Impact of Religions

There is a Christian communitarianism that is critical of all theological attempts to engage in dialogue with liberal ethics and its universalist aspirations. In the Nordic region Lutheran churches and states have been closely tied to one another since the 16th-century reformation. Few people today would defend the totalitarian aspects of the close marriage between church and state which emerged but grew stale during the subsequent era of Lutheran orthodoxy. Needless to say, when state and church were virtually indistinguishable, there could be mutual influence and dialogue, but prophetic critique and a distancing of the church from political power were impossible. The rejection of similar relationships between church and state has been part of European history over the past three centuries. Remond distinguishes three phases in the disengagement of church and society. The first stage of secularization was carded out under the

14 Albert Paolini., *Globalisering*, p. 75.
influence of liberal thinking. Religion came to be thought of as a personal affair. Religious minorities were crucial actors in the campaign to get rid of discriminatory statutes. In the name of individual rights, groups rights were expanded.\textsuperscript{15}

The second stage has to do with disestablishment. Once a state is no longer associated with one religion to the exclusion of all others, an increasingly marked distinction between religion and society is inevitable. This entails dissociating administrative acts in relation to birth, marriage and death from religion. Civil administration and registry are set up for all citizens, removed of any religious reference. States must then decide, for example, whether there should be civil marriage only for those who do not want a religious ceremony or for everyone. Should cemeteries have separate sections for different religious groups or a communal area for all?\textsuperscript{16} This process of disentangling is now taking place in Sweden in connection with the separation between the Lutheran church and the state in 2000, but also in relation to new waves of Muslim immigrants especially.

While the first step in secularization in Europe was the acceptance of confessional plurality, the second stage meant a decisive deconfessionalization of the state and secularization of

\textsuperscript{15} Rene Remond., \textit{Religion and Society in Modern Europe}, p. 96.  
\textsuperscript{16} Rene Remond., \textit{Religion and Society in Modern Europe}, p. 137.
society. France opted for the more radical solution of creating a single state, the same for all. The two stages there happened in one leap, under the logic evident as early as 1789 with a clear distinction between citizenship and religion. England has remained religious, but "within the framework of a confessional plurality which liberty of conscience brought as an inevitable corollary, the recognition of a certain freedom in the choice of forms of worship enabling them to be placed on an equal footing."\(^{17}\)

A third stage in the disengagement of church and state is the form of secularization which has led some liberal states in Europe to a "total neutrality regarding beliefs and a complete withdrawal of the state from this arena". Taking France as an example, Remond identifies two systems, challenging each other:

"education through obedience versus liberty; submission to the law of the group versus a questioning approach; dogma versus reason; hierarchy versus equality; tradition versus progress; and conservatism or reactionarism versus democracy."\(^{18}\)

In this phase, religion as such is interpreted as "a permanent threat to the principles and values of modern society,"\(^{19}\) all references

\(^{17}\) Ibid., 134.
\(^{18}\) Rene Remond., *Religion and Society in Modern Europe*, p.143.
\(^{19}\) Ibid., 144.
to religion are evicted from the public arena, both the state and civil society.

The challenge is rather to deal with the often unconscious understanding of religion as something opposed to democracy, reason and equality. This challenge, which sets the relationship between religion, ethics and politics in a new framework, must be faced in an open dialogue with liberal secular society and with people of all faiths. To dream of one single Christian voice speaking to the world with a theocratic, universal tone runs the risk of reaffirming the old stereotype that Christianity is connected to dogma, hierarchy and conservatism rather than to equality and democracy. But it is also important to avoid the Manichaean trap of seeing everything connected with tradition as bad and everything connected with modernism as good. There are aspects of modernity worth acknowledging, but there are also aspects of pre-modern ways of life and the cosmology that went with it which are worth celebrating also in our time.

While there are precious values of sacredness and respect for the community in pre-modern ways of life, values such as the integrity of the individual, including the individual woman and child, which have been developed in modern thinking, are also important. Critical theory and feminist scholars have taught us that many of those values have
received only lip-service and have been connected with hypocrisy and double standards; yet the values in themselves might be quite good and worth a renewed effort of implementation, without the instrumentality to which Prof. Max Horkheimer, a prominent educational philosopher from Frankfurt University, among others has drawn attention.\textsuperscript{20} In my view, the strong tradition in reformist thought of affirming values that underpin democracy, the right of the individual and of equality, is worth acknowledging. The task for feminist critical theory may not be to repudiate concepts such as autonomy and subjectivity, but to reclaim and reconstruct them to empower women.\textsuperscript{21}

Religious representatives today may wrap themselves in nationalistic or fundamentalist garb. Radical or conservative evangelicals have been quite influential in the political arena in the United States. The Roman Catholic Church has a seat in the United Nations, a remnant of the awarding of state privileges to the Vatican during the Mussolini era. This gives it the right to participate in the discussions of the United Nations but not to vote. While Roman Catholic representatives always invoke "universal" values and principles of "natural law", their interventions sound like one Christian voice among others -- and often differ quite substantially from

\textsuperscript{20} Max Horkheimer., \textit{Critical Theory: Selected Essays}, p. 108.
statements made by the World Council of Churches, for example. On
gender issues official Roman Catholic representatives often make
common cause with the most conservative Muslim states.22

Roman Catholic universalism is thus not universal even within
world Christendom. Yet one can sometimes hear evangelical
communitarian Christians expressing a longing for a theocratic voice
similar to that of Rome. This is seen for example in the academic
critique of liberal ethics connected to modern theology and the WCC as
well as to liberal welfare states. Some of the values expressed by these
communitarian Christian voices tend to neglect Christian approaches
that value collaboration with all people of good will.

Liberal political theology is often too apologetic in relation to
modernity and secular ethics. On the basis of an understanding that
globalization processes are in themselves neither good nor evil but
have different effects for different people, and Christian ethics is
challenged to discernment of all forces in the world with the intent of
protecting the most vulnerable.

The international human rights regime is one of the global forces
that could be used to balance global corporate power. Therefore, it is

22 United Nations World Conferences on Population and Development, (Cairo 1993),
Human Rights (Vienna 1994), Women and Development (Beijing 1995).
important not to undermine its potential to work for equality and dignity. Early human rights discourse was inspired by liberal philosophical thought in a dialogue with religious sources. Often religious institutions have historically been reluctant about or even opposed to early developments in human rights, but later they come to recognize elements in their own spiritual tradition as sources for human rights discourse, and in local communities it is often religious people who are the most committed to human rights.23 Stanley Hauerwas from Duke University describes the idea of inalienable rights as:

“A product of "individuals who no longer trust their lives to the hands of those they live with."24

As an historical description of the development of the rights discourse this could be discussed. But the important theological point is that Hauerwas contrasts this understanding of reality with the good which is God’s end for creation. His apparent assumption that this eschatological vision, in which complete trust is possible, could be fully realized within the family and within the church as community underestimates the reality of sin in the world. Hauerwas wants to see the church as a community free from sin. He claims that the language

24 Stanley Hauerwas., In Good Company: The Church as Polis, p. 188.
of rights finds mass appeal in a society where individuals no longer can sustain their civic order on the basis of shared ends and purposes.\textsuperscript{25}

There are two problems with this line of reasoning. The first is theological. It is misleading to perceive the church as being able to create communities outside of the general condition of the world and of humanity. It is not only the life of grace and salvation which permeates Christian communities, but also sin, experienced as exclusion, sexism, ethnocentrism, hierarchies and competing interests. Existing Christian communities can live in relation to the kingdom to come in an anticipatory way, already but not yet. Pretending to be able to create eschatological communities easily leads to an idealism that suppresses any testimonies to conflict and oppression in actual reality, something to which many women have been calling attention.

The second problem has to do with the importance of the discourse of rights in disadvantaged societies. Through the rights discourse poor communities are claiming not only the rights to life, work and sustenance, but also such "liberal" rights as freedom of association, freedom of expression and the right to organize trade unions as a means of achieving a sustainable life. Denouncing the rights discourse, whether out of a communitarian approach or on the

\textsuperscript{25} Stanley Hauerwas., \textit{In Good Company: The Church as Polis}, p.189.
basis of post-modern philosophy, seems to me to be a luxury of the affluent West.

Traditions are in themselves complex, with liberating as well as oppressing features. They ought to be interpreted as gardens to be nurtured and cared for rather than as mines where gold is to be found. In late modernity, any traditional way of life is a choice; just as it is a choice to affirm or to reject modern life-styles. There are no longer any pure traditions which one can simply affirm and continue to live in. Hence, choices are for the most part quite eclectic. Which features are chosen and which are rejected is thus an important question to ask and to try to analyze. A traditional gender role is one of the most obvious choices of traditionalism though certainly not the only one. Yet this choice seems to unite traditionalists and fundamentalists across religions and cultures. Eminent Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman describes globalization as something that:

"Divides as much as it unites: it divides as it unites". 26

The causes of division are the same as those which promote unity and uniformity. The intertwining of the global dimensions of business, finance, trade and information with "localizing", space-mixing processes sharply differentiates the existential conditions of whole

populations and of various segments of each one of the populations. What appears as globalizing for some means localization for others; signaling a new freedom for some, upon many others it descends as an uninvited and cruel fate.27

Being local in a globalized world is a sign of social deprivation and degradation. As the public space is removed beyond the reaches of localized life, localities lose their capacity to generate and negotiate meaning and depend more and more on sense-giving and interpreting actions which they do not control.

For Bauman, "progressive spatial segregation, separation and exclusion" is an integral part of the globalizing process. Thus neo-tribal and fundamentalist tendencies, which reflect and articulate the experience of people on the receiving end of globalization, are as much legitimate offspring of globalization as the widely acclaimed "hybridization" of top culture -- the culture at the globalized top.

This segregation is reflected in a breakdown in communication between the increasingly global and extraterritorial elites and the ever more "localized" rest. Being "on the move" has radically different meanings for those at the top and those at the bottom of the new hierarchy. Oscillating between the two extremes is the middle class,

27 Ibid.
which consequently suffers "acute existential uncertainty, anxiety and fear".\textsuperscript{28}

While Bauman points to spatial segregation, separation and exclusion as part of globalization, Prof. Saskia Sassen an eminent social philosopher at Columbia University focuses on the megacities being created around the world as centres of trade and finance. In terms of employment, they draw not only finance and business people but also construction workers, cleaners, restaurant workers and the like. These areas attract women, many of whom find better employment in the service sector there than they had in their regions of origin.

Sassen distinguishes three phases of academic literature on women and globalization. The first phase was development literature, focusing on how, with the introduction of cash crops and wage labour, "women subsidized wage labour of men through their household production and subsistence farming".\textsuperscript{29}\textsuperscript{(26)} The second phase focused on the "internationalization of manufacturing production and the feminization of the proletariat", as the quest for low-cost imports

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., p. 4.

\textsuperscript{29} Saskia Sassen., \textit{Globalization and its Discontents}, p. 84.
"mobilized a disproportionately female work-force in poorer countries which had hitherto largely remained outside of the industrial economy".

The third phase of feminist scholarship on women immigrants focuses on "how international migration alters gender patterns and how the formation of transnational households can empower women". It is true that many of the jobs in the service sectors of global cities follow the general pattern of globalization: a down-grading of jobs from full-time to part-time, from jobs offering upward mobility within firms to dead-end jobs, and a feminization of employment in these jobs. Moreover, the reintroduction of domestic service, with immigrant women serving high- and middle-income professionals, creates an invisible and disempowered class of workers. Yet Sassen also argues that the access to wages and salaries (even if low), the growing feminization of job supply, and the growing feminization of business opportunities brought about with informalization alter the gender hierarchies in which they find themselves.\textsuperscript{30} She writes:

\begin{quote}
“This new situation, despite its difficulties, creates spaces for a new subjectivity of women with political consequences.”\textsuperscript{31}
\end{quote}

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\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 91.  
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
Politics

The opening of borders and the undermining of national sovereignty are often mentioned as key political features of globalization. However, at the same time as states open up their borders -- for instance, within the European Union -- they are also strengthening their borders in relation to other regions. This facet of globalization is therefore also ambiguous.

The globalization of politics, however, ought to emerge from many particular voices searching the universal from below. Despite its weaknesses, the human rights discourse at its best is one tradition in which the universal and global is increasingly being sought from many parts of the world and out of many spiritual sources. A new life-world is being created, according to Ulrich Beck, a world citizens' republicanism in which individual freedom is at the centre. For Christians, what is important therefore is commitment to the values of solidarity. The greatest challenge for the future is to care for what is being shared, locally and globally.

Such a community needs to be created globally, based not on the politics of identity but on values that affirm responsibilities worldwide and in which the poor and the marginalized are met as real persons to listen to and to collaborate with. A just and sustainable
world needs sophisticated alliances. Such alliances are likely to be more concerned with the well-being of humans and of the earth than isolated radical or conservative Christians speaking to "the secular world" or Muslims resisting Western secularism. Such a global community must be created out of values of solidarity in which life is understood as shared and in which your condition today could be mine tomorrow.

**Economic Inequalities:**

Globalization is the increasingly closer integration of countries and people of the world brought about by the enormous reduction of transportation and communication costs and the breakdown of barriers to the flow of goods, services, capital and knowledge. Think of it as a tidal wave of change brought about by the impact of new technologies. Television, the internet and other forms of rapid communication have increased mobility and commercialization of ideas. Different aspects of globalization include free movements of capital, trade, cultural and political differences.

With these changes come many problems which cross national boundaries: terrorism, disease, refugees, environmental problems, and rapid flow of capital. No nation can be totally immune. In the past many people lived in small areas. The scope and worldwide reach of our
present globalization is new. However, from 1860 to 1914 there was a significant globalization trend due to advancement in industrialization, which was also spurred by developments in transportation and communication. It came about because of railroads, cars, telephone and telegraph.

World War I stopped this trend. Between the two world wars, there was much protectionism. After World War II a major economic conference took place in Bretton Woods, a sleepy New England town. It was there the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and GATT was created. GATT stands for General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. In 1995 this became the World Trade Organization (WTO). By 2002 it accounted for 97% of world trade. The ancient world was always aware of the enormous benefits of global trade. Ships constantly crossed the Mediterranean. The Silk Road between China middle-east and the Roman Empire had an enormous effect on the enrichment of cultures as well as wealth.

The deregulation of financial markets and new technologies are together creating a situation in which it is possible to move currencies across the globe in fractions of seconds. The entire system is interdependent, and in 1987 it almost broke down when a fall on Wall
Street had immediate repercussions in Singapore, Tokyo, Frankfurt, Stockholm and elsewhere.

This vulnerability has led even George Soros, himself an expert in playing this financial game, to call for global regulations. Noting that the "dominant faith in our time ... is the faith in the magic of the market, the self-interest of laissez-faire capitalism", Soros argues that the market needs to be regulated in order to save the open society. Politics and market need to balance one another again. The risks are too heavy, even for those with money. What is mentioned less often is that the system generates wealth only for those with money to invest. If buying and selling currencies is one of the key features of economic globalization, another is the marginalization of whole areas and populations, along with the feminization of poverty.

When we listen to the voices of those affected in this way by what is sometimes described as liberalization, we realize that for many people globalization diminishes the possibility of controlling their own lives. Recent studies from the United Nations show that not only enormous wealth but also extreme poverty is partly attributed to economic globalization. According to the 1998 Human Development Report of the UN Development Programme, "globally, the 20 percent of

the world's people in the highest-income countries account for 86 percent of total private consumption expenditures -- the poorest 20 percent a minuscule 1.3 percent". And the gap between rich and poor is widening: "The average African household today consumes 20 percent less than it did twenty-five years ago. The poorest 20 percent of the world's population and more have been left out of the consumption explosion."33

Globalization could be an engine for growth and great benefit to all groups if guided with some attempt at fairness. Working conditions for many were horrible during the early stages of industrialization in England, US and Europe. After much struggle labor laws regulating worker safety, child labor, and the right to form unions were developed and accepted by the nations. The question is that how well can a global free market, an essentially unregulated market, function in the absence of a global authority to set minimum standards on issues like child labor, worker safety, union rights, and the environment. What we have now on the international scene is early capitalism in the raw.

The number of absolute poor has decreased by 200 million. Most of the improvement has been in China and India. In sub Sahara,

33 Kamal Hossain., Globalization and Human Rights: Clash Universal Aspirations and Special Interests, p. 190.
Eastern Europe, and central Asia, poverty is up. In Latin America and the Caribbean there has not been much change. So--to disagree with both sides of the argument--globalists’ claim that the increase in wealth has helped the poor--the trickle-down theory is certainly not true. The claim that poverty has increased is also not true, although the level of misery that exists already could hardly in any imagination be worse.

We are in the historic process of becoming one world. There are precedents in which governments come to relinquish some of their sovereignty for the benefits of global cooperation. Regional organization already takes place in the form of WTO and the European Union. Such groupings are likely to increase in the future because of the necessity of avoiding the chaos and suffering of the vast disparities between the haves and the have-nots, and perhaps the side effects of competition between the great economic powers. Globalization can be a great boon for many providing common good to all participants. It is not globalization per se, but the unfairness and damaging results from the way it is developing which is creating number of complex moral and humanitarian problems.
Globalization and Applied Ethics:

Whereas roots of globalization could be far reaching into the history, it is primarily a modern age phenomenon. Modern business operation and the world economy are characterized by domination of multinational corporations, strong presence of the government in economy and the long-term tendency towards globalization in manufacturing, trading and consumption in the world. Containing both risks and opportunities, globalization is a problem of manifold nature. For some it means regression and falling into “neocolonialism”, the others glorify it. It is logical to ask the following questions:

a) What are the consequences of globalization for governments, nations, companies and individuals?

b) What are the business, social and ethical issues it causes?

c) In one word, is it possible to be ethical, to avoid and correct “bad” and keep “good” consequences of total phenomena as the globalization, and whether it is rewarding in the increasing market competition?

As a transnational process, globalization has produced far-reaching consequences for most Asian cultures, whose traditional values have remained somewhat stable for millennia. Some religious
leaders are alarmed by the invasion of market forces, which is seen as a new form of colonialism from the secularized West. Nevertheless, the governments in these countries are equally aggressive and relentless in the pursuit of new opportunities through partnership with the West.

A number of modern trends are easily noticeable in Asian societies. First, there is a strong element of westernization and a synthesis of various global cultures. This is facilitated by the spread of new technology, which provides cable television, cell phone, movie, music and video games. The new synthesis of cultures in Asian countries is so powerful it is beginning to obliterate the rather well-defined cultural boundaries as well as the specific social identities of the people. This cultural synthesis has become powerful enough to alter the traditional mindset of the people. In India, this began to happen on a large scale when the country introduced sweeping changes in its economic policies in the early 1990s. “How to be a global partner, without losing one’s cultural identity”, has become a crucial question in Asia.

Second, there is a growing middle class in countries such as India, comprising of 100 million people, with an unquenchable thirst for consumer goods and technology innovations. The spread of new capital has provided opportunities for those who have skills to participate in the growth. More jobs have been created in the country,
and there is a sharp rise in salaries and personal incomes for millions of people. But the widening gap between the rich and the poor in Asian societies has become a serious problem. There are millions who do not have the technological skills to participate in the dynamism of globalization; they are thus marginalized and left out in the process.

Today, even many remote villages have some access to a computer, phone or cable television, but when it comes to improving their economic status, they do not have the same opportunities compared to the urban areas. Traditional workers — artisans, shoemakers, fishermen and small-scale farmers — have been thrown out of their occupations, thereby creating economic problems for these families.

Third, the influences of foreign media on the people of Asia have been significant. These influences are positive and negative.

Transmitting information across cultures instantly has helped in exposing human rights violations and abuses of ethnic groups. For this reason, the authoritarian government in China or the dictatorship in Myanmar tries to curb the foreign media because of “Western ideology and politics,” and their “unwholesome influences in broadcasting.” But we must admit the fact the global media is changing and shaping the worldviews of the traditional societies through transnational programs;
no one has control over the nature of information received. This is seen as a threat to indigenous cultural norms and practices.

Globalization has created many ethical problems that are beginning to surface with greater force. First, there is a new phenomenon of individualism, which is challenging the social cohesion and extended family system. Second, the newly emerging employment patterns and the demands of the corporations upon their employees have been placing new strains on the family. As in the West, the emerging patterns make the employee an “adjusted person.” Asian cultures always have valued sacrificial love for one's family and adherence to basic traditional values.

Third, there is a destabilization of the family. Traditionally, the family system that served as the nucleus of indigenous social value system and the locus of child-rearing is beginning to break down under the burden of the new ideology of economic growth. This situation has resulted from the need for adjustment to the new socio-economic trends set by market economy and the changing behavioral patterns of the workers created by the multinational corporations. The family is becoming smaller and dispersed. It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which churches and other religious communities are aware of this
cultural synthesis and the ethical challenges the communities are facing.

The need for cultural analysis and a communal ethics is very important at this juncture of globalization phenomena. The family always has borne the brunt of social welfare in these societies by looking after the young and the elderly, without institutionalizing them. The need for a proactive strategy to deal with the crisis of the elderly never can be ignored. The ethics that deals with transnational problems must be collaborative and life-affirming, which sees people as more important than profit.\(^{34}\)

Globalization is a complex, interdependent phenomenon, which is changing the world’s cultures rapidly, especially Asian cultures, where people are caught in the midst of new economic and transnational crosscurrents. There are life-affirming changes on many fronts – improvement in national infrastructure, travel, communications, technology and health care. But these changes are giving rise to some new and complex ethical problems.

Rapid and irreversible changes are taking place in all Asian countries, especially in India and China, the two emerging economic

superpowers in the region. There is an ongoing expansion of huge corporations, accompanied by impressive communication networks. A supra-cultural force of economic authority seems to have emerged, which influences the policies of the nation-states. It is true that the quest for transcending one’s own world has been native to every culture from the ancient times, but the present trends are different in that they are multidirectional and intense, accompanied by emigration, transfer of technology, business outsourcing and communications on a massive scale.\(^{35}\)

While the research thus far could not authoritatively embrace one side or the other side of the globalization phenomena - an attempt was made to further the focus that world need to provide to applies ethical perspectives in the context of complex problems posed by the globalization.

\(^{35}\) Ibid., p. 46.