

〔特別寄稿〕

## Globalization in the information age: Its effects on higher education and Asia Pacific Studies.

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This paper is divided into two main sections. In the first I discuss recent developments in sociology, and the way in which the information technology revolution is changing the world we live in. In the second I give two concrete examples of the use of this framework, dealing with changes taking place in higher education in advanced industrial societies, and the development of new forms of regional studies, such as the study of the Asia Pacific.

### **The impact of information technology**

In the late 1990s, the Spanish sociologist, Manuel Castells, published a three-volume work called *The Information Age*, and this is still one of the best outlines available of the impact of information technology on modern society (Castells, 1996, 1997, 1998). Castells was born in Spain, studied and has worked in France for many years. He is now a professor at the University of California at Berkeley. He writes in Spanish, French and English, and has written or edited over 20 books, mainly about economic development, urban planning and urban politics.

The industrial revolution began in Europe in the 18th century, and has continued ever since. There have been three main phases. The first phase, which took place mainly in Britain in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, saw the development of factory production based on water power and the steam engine, and led to the development of the railways and steam ships. The second phase, which took place mainly in America was based on electric power and saw the development of the automobile and the mass media, including radio, television and sound recording. The third phase, which we are currently in, is based on the development of information technology, micro-electronics, photo-electronics using lasers and glass fiber cables, and computing. It is also the age of genetic engineering, which also relies on the use of powerful computers to investigate DNA. As a result of this, increasing numbers of people make a living not through making things like cars or consumer goods, but through the production and manipulation of information, using computers.

High-speed computing developed during the Second World War. The first modern computer started working in 1946 at the University of Pennsylvania. It was called ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Calculator). It weighed 30 tons and consuming enormous quantities of electricity, because it consisted of 19,000 valves (looking rather like electric light bulbs). The invention of the transistor in 1947 and the silicon chip meant that computers could become gradually smaller. Small companies developed the new micro computers, while big companies like IBM continued to make large mainframe computers for universities, large companies and the government. Early microcomputers included the Altair, for which two school friends, Bill Gates and Paul Allen, wrote the software, calling their company "Microsoft," and the Apple I, built by two school drop-outs called Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs, in Wozniak's parents' garage. The cost of information memory has halved every few months since then, making computers increasingly fast and powerful. Many of these developments took place in "Silicon Valley" near Stanford University, where Hewlett and Packard, two Stanford graduates, began a company in the 1930s. Hewlett Packard grew because of defense contracts during the Second World War, and attracted other electronics companies after the war. Now, Japanese, Taiwanese, Korean, Indian, and European companies have also moved in.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This account of the rise of the computing industry is mainly based on Castells (1996, chapter 1).

The effects of information technology have been to speed up the processes of globalization in the world economy. After the Second World War, the costs of research and development very quickly led to the development of multinational corporations. With the decreasing cost of transmitting information these have been able to organize their research and production on a global rather than a national or regional basis. Three interdependent core areas of the world economy have emerged – North America, Europe and East Asia. The rise of information technology is also linked to the development of a global currency market and financial services industry, based in the three world cities of London, New York and Tokyo.<sup>2</sup> Deregulation of the currency markets mean that capital can be between many countries in the world electronically.

The East Asian corporations were particularly well placed to take advantage of this new technology, because of the nature of the links between them. The Japanese industries were organized around the *keiretsu*, networks of companies both big and small, with one or other of the large banks at the center. Along with the growth of the giant corporations has gone the “small is beautiful” philosophy, and Japan combines the two ideas, with huge companies sitting at the top of a hierarchy of small family businesses.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese businesses in East Asia are linked together in a similar way through family ties, which give flexibility in terms of flows of capital, loans, information, and so on.<sup>4</sup> But these network enterprises also need constantly changing amounts of labor. There has been a massive movement of part-time and low-paid women into the labor market, often at the expense of permanent male employees who are facing increasing unemployment. The women may be low paid, but as men lose their jobs, many women have become the main source of income for the household.<sup>5</sup>

This shift of power in the work place and the breakdown of traditional patterns of employment has led to a crisis within the family. In most industrialized countries until the 1970s, most people used to live in nuclear families, with the husband, wife, and their children living together. Now these kinds of families have become a minority rather than the norm, thanks to the increasing divorce rate, and the growing number of people preferring alternative lifestyles. Many married couples live together with children from previous marriages. Many young people live together without getting married, and an increasing number of people with a partner of the same sex. In the advanced industrial societies like Japan, the birthrate has gone down, leading to the phenomenon of the “aging society,” in which old people are living longer and longer, with fewer and fewer younger people of working age to support them. With an average of only about 1.4 children per family, the populations of many industrial countries, including Japan, will soon start to decrease rapidly. The simplest solution is to import cheap labor from elsewhere but many states resist this because they fear a loss of national identity and social conflict between the immigrants and the local people due to competition for jobs, housing, and social services.<sup>6</sup> (One of the reasons why the US has remained so economically competitive has been its willingness to accept immigrants to keep up the labor supply.)

Faced with the crisis in the family, many people have turned to religion. Fundamentalist Christianity and Islam have grown more popular throughout the world, partly because they provide simple explanations of what seems to be going on, and partly because they

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<sup>2</sup> On the rise of the global cities and their role in the world economy, see Sassen (1991).

<sup>3</sup> For a good discussion of the industrial structure of Japan, see Tabb (1995). Castells deals with the East Asian economy in *End of Millenium* (1999: chapter 4).

<sup>4</sup> On Chinese business networks, see Chan (2000).

<sup>5</sup> The changes in marriage and the role of the family as a result of information technology are discussed by Castells in *The Power of Identity* (1997: chapter 4). On Japan see also Bishop (2000).

<sup>6</sup> For a good discussion of contemporary migrant labor and its problems, see Castles and Miller (1998).

stress the importance of the family and of the role of the father within it. In the US, many fundamentalist groups are also nationalistic, and are opposed to what they call the New World Order, dominated by the United Nations and other international organizations. For this reason, much of the resistance to globalization often comes from ethnic, extreme nationalist and religious groups. Resistance to the new global order has also led to the development of many other cults and social movements, from fringe cults such as AUM Shinrikyô in Japan to local, national, and international environmental movements.<sup>7</sup>

As globalization and the development of information technology have proceeded, the state itself has been weakened. Increasingly states are unable to stop flows of capital, or flows of information, or to prevent the major corporations from moving industrial production to other regions of the world. Democratic processes have been profoundly influenced by television, especially in the United States, so that real debate has been replaced by the production of ‘sound bites’ and video clips endlessly repeated on television talk shows. The media focus a lot of attention on political scandals, reducing the political process to a television drama.<sup>8</sup>

As the state is weakened, groups and associations based on religion and ethnicity have become increasingly important. The collapse of Yugoslavia was followed by ethnic and religious conflict between Serbs, Croats, Bosnians and Albanians. The roots of many of these conflicts lie in the Second World War, when Yugoslavia was divided between those supporting Germany and Italy, and those supporting Russia.

The effects of the new information age on the former Soviet Union have been particularly severe. The collapse of the Soviet Union, Castells argues, came about not because socialism itself does not work, but because the Soviet socialism was unable to manage the transition to the new informational economy.<sup>9</sup> In fact the Soviet economy achieved substantial levels of growth from the revolution to the 1970s, despite the destruction and loss of life resulting from civil war, the Stalinist purges the invasion by the Nazis. Tight state control of industry did not allow companies like Apple or Microsoft to develop in the Soviet Union, even though there were many well-trained mathematicians and engineers. Instead of developing their own computer industry, the Soviets decided to base their computing systems on IBM technology which by the 1960s had become the best in the world. From then on the Russians were dependent on out-of-date computer systems borrowed or copied from the West, and they were soon twenty years behind in computer design. Even copying and typewriter facilities were tightly controlled for political reasons. Soon the gap in incomes and standard of living between Western and Eastern Europe became so large that the communist governments of Eastern Europe lost their legitimacy, and eventually collapsed between 1889 and 1991. In the Soviet Union, Gorbachev’s attempts at reform led to an attempted coup by hard-line communists in 1991. At the end of 1991, the Soviet Union broke up as the individual republics decided to leave it and become independent. Within this new framework, organized crime has flourished, much of it controlled by former party officials, especially in the republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

In contrast many of the states of East and Southeast Asia have experienced rapid economic growth. Some writers have explained this in terms of the “developmental state.” In the case of Japan, for instance, it has been argued that the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (Tsusanshō) was able to stimulate economic growth through its control of imports of raw materials and foreign exchange after the war. It supported the development of key industries such as automobiles which resulted in technological development. At the same time,

<sup>7</sup> On religious fundamentalism, see Castells (1997: chapter 1). On AUM Shinrikyô, see Kaplan and Marshall (1996), Brackett (1996), Reader (2000). On the environmental movement, see Castells (1997: chapter 3).

<sup>8</sup> On the decline of the state, see Castells (1997: chapters 5-6).

<sup>9</sup> On the Soviet Union, see Castells (1999: chapter 1).

by keeping the value of the yen low until the 1970s, they made imports expensive and exports cheap.<sup>10</sup> China's current economic growth is based on a similar combination of factors. The result was the 'flying geese' model of economic growth, in which Japan led, followed by Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, and then by Malaysia, Thailand and China, and parts of Indonesia. As labor costs have risen in each country, so production has been moved to parts of the region with cheaper labor, increasing economic growth there as well.

### **The growth of Asia Pacific studies**

Due to the economic growth in East and Southeast Asia, together with the development of high-tech industries on the west coast of North America, there has been an increasing interest in the study of the Asia Pacific region and the Pacific region. There are many departments and institutes of Asia Pacific studies in universities in various parts of the world, but APU where I now teach is perhaps the only university in the world whose main focus is the study of the Asia Pacific region. The first reference of "Asia Pacific" I have come across is in a speech by the Japanese foreign minister in 1967, and since then the number of books with both "Asia" and "Pacific" in their titles has more or less doubled every five years. At the end of the 20th century, many scholars argued that the 21st would be the "Century of the Asia Pacific." This is quite likely to be the case, given that two of the world's major poles of economic growth face each other across the Pacific. Just as the 1970s and 1980s were a period of competition between Japan and the United States, the early years of the 21st century may well prove to be a period of competition between the United States and China.<sup>11</sup>

One of the main problems with talking about the "Asia Pacific" region, however, is that scholars cannot agree on which countries it includes. Most definitions seem to include at least East and Southeast Asia (the ASEAN+3 countries), though together these are sometimes also called "Pacific Asia." Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific islands are also often included, and at least one author includes India as well, because of its close cultural and historical links with much of Southeast Asia. The widest definition of all is that of the Open University in the UK, which published a series of textbooks on the region in 1998. These define the region as including the countries on both the eastern and western shores of the Pacific, plus the islands. This definition includes the whole of the giant countries of Russia, Australia, China, Canada and the United States, and not just the parts adjoining the Pacific. In what follows I therefore distinguish between "Pacific Asia" (ASEAN + 3), and the "Asia Pacific," (the regions around the Pacific rim, including both the eastern and western shores).

#### *Issues in the study of Pacific Asia*

The main issues in the study of Pacific Asia include the following:

(a) How do we explain the rapid economic growth in many countries in the region since the 1950s? This is an important practical question: if the East Asian model could be imported to other developing countries, could it produce similar results there as well? As I mentioned above, the "developmental state" model provides one possible explanation for how this growth took

<sup>10</sup> The classic account of Japanese growth is that of Johnson (1982). This sparked off a large literature on Asian economic growth and the "developmental state," e.g. Johnson (1995), Overholt (1993), Tabb (1995), Thompson (1998), Woo-Cummings (1999), and Castells (1999: chapter 4).

<sup>11</sup> This section is a summary of a previous paper on the current state of Asia Pacific studies (Eades 2001a).

place, and even though the details are still a matter for debate, it does seem as if all these states shared at least some basic characteristics: powerful and competent state officials in charge of economic planning, businessmen with capital to invest, and a generally docile and hardworking labor force. Conversely, it seems that in the states with the greatest political instability and levels of corruption, such as Indonesia under Suharto and the Philippines under Marcos, have been much slower to develop.<sup>12</sup> A final factor for many years were the upheavals accompanying the Vietnam war up to 1975, and its continuation in Cambodia for many years after that.

(b) A second category of issues concerns the nature of the urbanization process that has accompanied this economic growth and the nature of urban life. Many cities in the region are still typical third world mega-cities, with very large and crowded populations, high rates of unemployment, high rates of illegal squatting and building on government land, and large informal sectors of the economy, with activities ranging from begging and petty crime to large-scale trade. On the other hand, some of the cities of the region have been drastically modernized, thanks to the experience of rapid economic growth. Most of the major cities in Japan were destroyed by the Americans in the Second World War, and these were rapidly rebuilt and modernized.<sup>13</sup> Tokyo is perhaps the most high-tech city in the world, but despite its size it works comparatively well, thanks partly to the largest and most efficient urban railway system in the world. Singapore and Seoul also fully modernized, and many of the other cities in the region are well on the way. The issues in these cities become more like those which preoccupy urban sociologists in industrial societies: high rise living, the cost of education and commuting, consumption patterns, the emergence of a middle class, and city planning.

(c) A third group of issues concern the political and economic integration of the Pacific Asia region. One of the other points which Castells makes is that with globalization and loss of autonomy, states have increasingly come together in regional groups to try and control on a regional basis what they have lost individually. The European Union has moved furthest in this direction, but the development of ASEAN and APEC in the Pacific basin can be seen as moves in the same direction.<sup>14</sup> There are already discussions of currency union, and it could well be that a regional framework will be the best forum in which to resolve some of the disputes which threaten to disrupt the region in the future. Of these, the most serious are probably the question of the status of Taiwan, as independent state or part of China, and the future of the oil supply. With the end of the Cold War, and the weakening of communism as a state ideology, mainland China has become more nationalistic, while at the same time Taiwan has become more democratic. While the Kuomintang which was in power for until the 1990s always maintained that China was a single state, but that they were the legitimate government of it, lately the Taiwanese have talked more openly of independence, causing a rise of tension in the region.<sup>15</sup> In the longer term, the oil supply may cause even more problems: China and Korea are likely to have increased energy costs as China industrializes, and if Korea is reunified and has to set about reconstructing the north. Calder has made the point that much of this energy will have to come from the Middle East, and that the shipping route passes through Indonesia, with its uncertain political future. There may be oil in the South China sea, but the waters and islands there are contested by several different countries. Diplomacy within some kind of ASEAN + 3 framework may be the only way to resolve this without one or other of the countries in the

<sup>12</sup> On Indonesia, see Vatikiotis (1998). On the Philippines, see Sidel (1999).

<sup>13</sup> On the development of Tokyo, see Eades (1999a), and Cybriwsky (1998).

<sup>14</sup> This section is based on Castells (1999: chapters 4 -5).

<sup>15</sup> On relations between Taiwan and China, see Xu (2001, 2002).

region resorting to force.<sup>16</sup>

*Issues in the study of the Asia Pacific*

Widening the boundaries of the region to include the eastern Pacific and the islands has the result of changing the nature of the main issues and questions in Asia Pacific studies. Even though the historical experiences of the two sides of the Pacific are so different, there are still similarities. These include the experience of the aboriginal groups from Australia to North America, and the experience of peasant farmers in the face of capitalism and imperialism on both sides of the Pacific Rim. There are also flows of international migrants linking the entire Pacific basin, particularly those of migrants from India, China and Japan. The United States, Australia and New Zealand share problems of the assimilation of large numbers of migrants from different countries in Europe, in addition to the relations between these settlers and the aboriginal populations. All of these movements have created an enormous amount of culture mixing and multicultural populations. Anthropologists and historians now talk about “traveling cultures” mixing together the “global ecumene” rather than distinct cultures and cultural areas. Identities and ethnicity may not be the same as cultural differences. Koreans in Japan continue to see themselves as Koreans, even though many of them can no longer speak Korean, and many have never been to Korea.<sup>17</sup>

One of the reasons for the fluidity of culture is that people are communicating and moving around so rapidly. At the same time, the restructuring of industry, the offshoring of production, and the spread of the multinationals on a global scale has led to an international homogenization of culture which has been labeled as “McDonaldization.”<sup>18</sup> But it is not just American influence which is hegemonic, but also that of Europe and Japan. Alongside the American fast food, European perfumes, fashions and luxury goods, and Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Taiwanese cameras and electronics can also be found throughout the region, as can Japanese manga and anime.<sup>19</sup> There is a large flow of tourists between these countries, and Japanese, American and European leisure and travel companies construct similar golf courses, resorts and hotels throughout the region. Tourism also has an effect on local culture, and cultures that cannot be sold to tourists tend to disappear.<sup>20</sup>

The internationalization of consumption is linked in turn to the internationalization of the media. The information technology revolution has led to the emergence of giant global media companies, such as News International, Time Warner or Disney, the source of Japan’s largest tourist attraction.<sup>21</sup> It is nearly impossible for governments to stop the flow of information over their borders, even though China and Singapore have tried.

Also linking the two sides of the Pacific together are the problems of the environment, a matter of common concern on both sides of the Pacific. Analysis of environmental problems operates at several different levels: from that of global diplomacy, represented by the Kyoto agreement and its unilateral revocation by the US; to the regional level, represented by the smoke from the Indonesian fires which blanketed much of Southeast Asia in the late 1990s or the pollution spreading from China into neighboring countries; or to the national level, represented by local concerns over air pollution, water pollution, the effects of industrialization

<sup>16</sup> On future energy problems in the Asia Pacific, see Calder (1997).

<sup>17</sup> For studies of Koreans in Japan, see Ryang (1997, on North Koreans) and Fukuoka (2000).

<sup>18</sup> On the impact of fast food in Asia, see the papers in Watson (1997).

<sup>19</sup> On manga, see Kinsella (2000).

<sup>20</sup> On culture and tourism in Asia, see the papers in Yamashita et al. (1997), Picard and Wood (1997).

<sup>21</sup> On the Disney Corporation, see Wasko (2001). On Disneyland in Japan, see Raz (1999).

and urbanization, and deforestation.<sup>22</sup> In the longer term, global warming will of course be disastrous for many of the smaller states of the Pacific Basin, particularly islands which may start to disappear under the water as the level rises.

There are two general issues which may be briefly taken up here however. The first is the basic contradiction in development, which is that in general people want a higher standard of living and are prepared to put up with a degree of environmental degradation as long as they are becoming demonstrably wealthier. This was the case in Japan in the early 1970s, though there policy changed rapidly in the wake of major disasters such as the spread of Minamata disease.<sup>23</sup> But governments in the region have a constant problem of legitimacy, and their main priority is usually to try and raise the standard of living of their peoples in order to stay in office. America under Bush is like this: for an American president a fuel shortage in California is likely to be a more important political issue than the longer term effects of global warming..

The second point is that it is only when people are relatively affluent that the environmental begins to become a major priority – or when pollution crosses inconveniently over international boundaries, as in the case of smoke from Indonesian forests. Linked to this is a third point, that environmental activism can only take off with the development of civil society – NGO's and citizens' groups which can monitor the activities of government and capital and try to change them, either through the ballot box or social movements.<sup>24</sup> Currently Japan would seem to be furthest along the road in the development of environmental consciousness and an environmental movement. Taiwan and Korea are catching up, following the process of democratization and the emergence of a powerful middle class voice. In Thailand and Malaysia, the beginnings of an environmental movement are there, often expressed through the local mobilization of ethnic or religious groups. Finally, in China, continued government control of much of heavy industry means that the polluter is also the watchdog, and given the Chinese government's priorities in terms of increasing the standard of living and controlling the rise of unemployment, environmental concerns often have to take second place.

One of the most spectacular developments in politics in the major industrial countries in the last decade has been the occurrence of major protests and demonstrations against globalization and capitalism, which now seem to erupt at almost every major meeting of international leaders, to say nothing of the May Day marches, protests, and violence between police and demonstrators which have become a fixed part of the calendar throughout much of Europe and North America. Globalization is increasingly linked to human rights, another concern which both links and divides the two sides of the Pacific.<sup>25</sup>

Some of the worst human rights violations in recent decades have occurred in Southeast Asia, notably Cambodia and East Timor.<sup>26</sup> Most of the current debate concerns China, with much of the most violent rhetoric coming from the United States. Certainly there are human rights issues in China: the draconian population policy, particularly in its impact upon women; the denial of autonomy and the repression of dissent in Tibet; the repression of religious groups such as Falun Gong, and the repression of the student movement in Tiananmen Square in 1989,<sup>27</sup> and there are quiet changes taking place at the local level. America also has

<sup>22</sup> On Southeast Asia, see the papers in Hirsch and Warren (1998). On China, see Smil (1993), Edmonds (2000).

<sup>23</sup> The classic account is McKean (1983??).

<sup>24</sup> This section is based on the argument in Eades (1999b).

<sup>25</sup> The interest in social movements stems from earlier work by Castells, notably Castells (1983). See also Castells (1997: chapter 2).

<sup>26</sup> For general discussions of human rights, see Kelly and Reid (1998), Bauer and Bell (1999). On Timor, see Pinto and Jardine (1997), and Hainsworth and McCloskey (2000). On Cambodia, see Chandler 1991), Kiernan (1996).

<sup>27</sup> On Tiananmen, see e.g. Nathan and Link (2001).

its civil rights problems from the point of view of Europe, as the debate of capital punishment illustrates.

A further issue affecting the Asia Pacific is organized crime. Both sides of the Pacific are linked by the narcotics trade and the resulting movements of capital and money laundering. But these are not the only activities to worry about: Castells also lists the trades in weapons, nuclear materials, illegal immigrants, women and children, and even body parts.<sup>28</sup> A number of studies of organized crime have appeared in recent years, in addition to the Mafia in the United States, including most recently the yakuza in Japan,<sup>29</sup> the Triads in China,<sup>30</sup> the drugs industry of the Golden Triangle in Southeast Asia, and the Russian "Mafiya." Some of the international connections become apparent in the various accounts of Aum Shinrikyo and its attack on the Tokyo subway system in 1994. Criminal networks are often intimately linked with local politicians and businessmen, and there are also the inevitable links with the sex industry on both sides of the Pacific.<sup>31</sup>

### **Globalization and higher education<sup>32</sup>**

Many of these factors resulting from globalization also have an impact on university education. Currently in Japan a major process of university reform is underway, in part based on the experience of other countries such as Britain. It is generally assumed that information economies require more highly educated people than industrial economies, able to use the information technologies on which the information economy is based. In the last half of the 20th century, most industrialized countries tried to expand their university systems to allow more and more people to receive university education. The systems in many countries are now of mass university education, in which nearly half the total population of school leavers goes on to university, and in which nearly all the children of university graduates also go to university. This raises the problem of how this expansion of higher education is to be financed: should it be left to the families of the university students themselves to finance, or be financed by the state as a matter of public interest. As the university sector has expanded, its purpose and financing have been increasingly questioned, with demands for increased monitoring. The result is the 'audit culture' which I will discuss below. Does the present university education system represent value for money for the state, or should the quality of education be improved?

There are also the demographic problems. Since the 1980s the number of young people aged 18 in Japan has fallen drastically, as in most other advanced industrial countries. This makes it increasingly difficult for universities to recruit students, particularly where they are in competition with each other and where universities are clearly ranked in the minds of the public -- as they are in Japan. There have also been criticisms of the Japanese university entrance examination system and the pressures which it puts on high schools students, leading to other problems of anxiety, alienation, bullying and high rates of suicide. Other countries in East Asia seem to have similar views of their higher education systems.

One way of dealing with the problem of low standards in universities is to monitor the teaching and research which goes on, and to reward the best institutions with cash. This is

<sup>28</sup> This and other aspects of organized crime are discussed by Castells (1999: chapter 3).

<sup>29</sup> Herbert 2000.

<sup>30</sup> Booth (2000).

<sup>31</sup> Discussions include Brown (2000), Van Esterik (2000), Bishop and Robinson (night markets, 2000).

<sup>32</sup> Much of this section is based on the papers edited by Goodman in *Ritsumeikan Journal of Asia Pacific Studies*, vol 8 (2001), including Goodman (2001), Eades (2001). On the problems of Japanese higher education in general, see also McVeigh (2002).

roughly what has happened in the UK in the last 20 years, with the 'Research Assessment Exercise' (RAE) carried out roughly every five years, and its more recent counterpart in teaching, "Teaching Quality Assessment." In the RAE, a percentage of the universities' budget was put aside to be spent on the institutions with the best research. Every five years, the research output of nearly every department in every university in the country is measured and assessed by a panel of experts in each discipline. The department is measured on a seven-point scale, and departments with higher scores receive more money during the next five years. The teaching assessment is not directly linked to money, though universities which score highly use this in their publicity literature to attract more high quality students.

The result has been a polarization of British universities, between a dozen or so institutions that collect most of the research money, and those which have low research ratings and have to top up their budgets by taking in more students. This in turn means that the staff have less time for research, and so their research ratings gradually tend to drop.

Measures similar to these have now been adopted by the Ministry of Education in Japan. First the government is turning national universities into independent educational trusts, to put them on a similar footing to public and private universities. In the long run this should make them more competitive, and give them greater control over their own management, finances and curriculum. The powers of university presidents and vice presidents are to be strengthened, to create management teams, while the powers of the professors' meetings are to be reduced.

Second, last summer, the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science organized a "Center of Excellence" or COE program. University departments and research teams were invited to send in applications for funding for research programs for the next five years. Some sent in applications to strengthen conventional disciplinary programs, while others sent in applications to get money for new innovative interdisciplinary research. As in the UK, it is not surprising that the most famous universities have also been allocated the largest shares of money, though small specialist programs at other universities have also in many cases been successful.

Thirdly, with the fall in the birthrate, it is likely that many universities will eventually amalgamate or close, due to lack of students. Already many universities barely receive enough applications to fill up the available student places. This means that universities have to look to other markets to get students to fill up the places. In the UK, two particular markets have been tapped. One is that of 'mature students' equivalent to 'shakaijin' in Japan. These are people who failed to go to university when they first left high school, but who decide to go to university later on. In the UK the most important event here was the foundation of the Open University in the 1960s. This is now the largest university in the UK with over 200,000 part-time students. The idea was to open university education to anyone, and no entry qualifications are required. Because the students were spread all over the country, it was decided to give lectures using radio and television. Lectures were broadcast at night or early morning when the networks were not used for anything else, and students could record these and listen to them at their leisure. In fact, the quality of these professionally produced lectures forced lecturers in other universities to improve the quality of their lectures. The Open University also published its own textbooks, and because they sold so many copies of these for their major courses, these were produced for them by major academic publishers. Many of these books have been taken up as textbooks by other universities as well -- APU makes a lot of use of five books published in 1998 in conjunction with an OU course on the Asia Pacific.<sup>33</sup>

These developments raise a lot of questions about university education. First what is it for? Is it to create people able to enjoy life and become better citizens because of their education,

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<sup>33</sup> See Maidment and Mackerras (1998), Maidment et al (1998), Thompson (1998), McGrew and Brook (1998), Eccleston et al. (1998).

or is it practical, to give people the skills to make the state prosperous and successful in competition with other states in the world economy? Should the curriculum be controlled by the state, or left to individual universities and their professors? In countries like France and Japan, the state has traditionally had considerable control over universities and their curricula. In the US, on the other hand, there are very few central government universities at all: most of the universities are run either by state governments or they are private.

The major changes in the universities in Japan (and much of the rest of East Asia) can therefore be summarized as follows:

(a) Increasing numbers of students entering university. In 1947, 2.9% of Japanese school leavers went to university. This rose to 38% in 1980, and nearly 50% in 1999. Partly this is a response to a perceived need for education, and partly the drop in the birthrate. However, the current economic recession is raising questions about how far it is possible to maintain this situation.

(b) Relations between the state and universities. Japan generally followed a European model in which the state maintained tight control of education. This is now being questioned, and part of the rationale for the current government reforms is to allow universities more freedom to govern themselves, while still receiving some government funding. The advantages would be a reduction in costs to the state, a drop in the number of civil servants (who include the teachers in public universities), and perhaps the encouragement of greater creativity among both the professors and the students, which would eventually benefit the economy.

The reasons for these changes are:

(a) External competition -- the cost of air travel has fallen as the middle classes in East Asia have expanded, and this has meant that universities in different countries are now in competition with each other. Both Singapore and Japan would like to become major players in higher education internationally, and not just within the East Asian region.

(b) The economic recession. This has had several results -- companies are recruiting less employees, and are looking for graduates with more specific skills. This means that the old system in which the graduates of the best universities were guaranteed jobs for life has started to break down. Students are also becoming more particular about what they study rather than where they study. Universities now have to sell themselves to the best students, rather than the other way around. With governments short of cash, universities have had to look elsewhere for funds, and one possibility is to try and form links with industry -- in return for teaching the students the skills that industry needs.

(c) Much of this is driven by the birthrate. The population of 18-year olds in Japan has declined from 2.05m in 1990 to 1.51m in 2000: it is expected to fall further to 1.2m by 2010, a drop of over 40% in 20 years. There is a similar situation in Korea. This means that in the long term many universities which fail to attract students can be expected to amalgamate or disappear. This also has implications for the recruitment of staff: at APU most of the language teachers, who make up around half the teaching staff, are being recruited on 3-4 year contracts rather than permanent tenure, in order to increase flexibility in the future.

(d) Politics. In most countries of East Asia, increasing democratization has led to the separation of education from the state -- and its greater exposure to market forces.

## Market changes

All these changes have meant that universities are being forced to innovate, with more collaboration in teaching and research, including collaboration between public and private universities, more flexibility in the way that students study, and more use of the internet to deliver education. The universities are being forced to make courses more attractive to older students, rather than the research interests of faculty, and to provide better advice, employment and support services. They are having to change the entrance examination system, to secure the best and more creative students on the basis of a wider range of high school achievements, before other institutions get them. In the case of APU we are also looking at the market overseas, an area in which Japan has tended not to be very successful.

Meanwhile, the state is changing its role, from one of control to one of supervision. This is particularly clear in the UK, where the 'audit culture' has taken hold. UK universities spend much of their time measuring performance, quality, accountability, efficiency, value for money and 'good practice'. These reviews are carried out by other professors rather than by the state, and the ideology is one of emancipation, allowing universities to run themselves. The results are interesting. Certainly much dead wood has been shaken out of the system, and many professors who failed to research or publish have been forced into retirement. On the other hand, the type of research and publication has also changed. People no longer publish long important books: instead they put out short books to meet RAE deadlines at five year intervals. (This fits well with the interests of publishers who often claim publishing long books is uneconomic).

As these practices become international, so it can be expected that the higher education systems of different countries will become increasingly like each other. This is already happening in research, where the American model of peer review and competition to publish in the most famous journals and with the most famous publishers is intense. It also means that journals and publishers have long queues, so that it can take years to get anything published at all, compared with a few weeks or months in Japan. The process of homogenization is also promoted by the movements of scholars around the world: scholars trained in Europe or America tend to promote European or American practices when they return home. English has become the de facto world language of education, and those unable to publish in English find it increasingly difficult to find an audience outside their own countries (French and German writers are a partial exception.) One result is that the system of gerontocracy in Japanese universities is also likely to break down. Some people have argued that junior professors can criticize their seniors in English much more easily than they can in Japanese! The result will be that promising scholars will become full professors and be given more responsibility earlier in their careers in Japan than they have in the past.

## Conclusion

The world that we live in is globalizing rapidly thanks largely to spread of information technology. The results are bound to be seen in higher education and universities, as the main institutions training the higher manpower for future generations that will have to deal with the problems.

Here I have argued that these processes increasingly have to be analyzed within the framework of the political economy of the world system as a whole, and within area studies disciplines. The rise of the Newly Industrialized Economies (NIEs) of the Asia Pacific mean that there are now three major economic growth poles in the world economy, and much of what happens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is likely to revolve around the relations and rivalry between them. The 1980s saw a rash of books published in the U.S. on the economic rivalry with Japan, and already similar titles are starting to appear on the coming rivalry and conflict with China! Asia

Pacific studies are particularly crucial, therefore, in that the region encompasses two of these major growth poles, and perhaps the two most likely to come into conflict over energy and other resources in the future.

Higher education has to respond to these changes as well, which explains the calls for “educational reform” in most of the countries of the region. Some of them, like Japan, are adapting elements of the “audit culture” from the UK and elsewhere, in a bid to improve the efficiency of the higher education sector, against the background of demands for increasing accountability and the falloff in the birthrate in these countries. These include the granting of increasing autonomy to the national universities, together with increasing supervision, and programs such as the “Centers of Excellence” Program of 2002. The falling birthrate in Japan, coupled with changes in the international labor market and Japan’s international relations, will make new thinking on the part of higher education institutions essential. Some with specialized niches in the market, such as those dealing with health, welfare and other aspects of the aging society, may actually do very well in the process, while some of the lower-ranking more general national and private universities subject to local competition may find it increasingly difficult to find students. In this environment, a number of bold experiments may well be tried, including the establishment of new institutions or faculties aimed at new markets (including international students), and collaboration with foreign universities using IT for distance learning and teaching. There may be a need for restructuring of staff, with the appointment of new staff in new fields, and offering early retirement packages to phase out staff in declining fields, as has happened in the UK. In any case, the next few years promise to be exciting and challenging ones in the higher education institutions of Japan and the rest of East Asia, as the changes following upon the growth of the informational society and globalization work through into society.

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