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Learning in Globalized Crisis:
Emancipatory Education, Technology and Diversity

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An era of contradictions

- Knowledge explosion
- Technologies of breathtaking scale
- Globalized power and hegemony
- Transformation and re-alignment
- End of certainty
- Rights, inclusion, equality
- What are we learning?
- Why are we learning it?

Situating Open

Afoot and light-hearted, I take to the open road,

Healthy, free, the world before me,

The long brown path before me, leading wherever I choose.

Song of the Open Road

Walt Whitman 1856

Challenge of emancipation

- Rationality itself under siege

- Degraded levels of participatory citizenship

- Unexamined impacts of the crash of 2008 and increasing inequality

- Rising fragmentation, hate and fear

- George Monbiot: *"Out of the Wreckage"*

  Human beings have a unique capacity for altruism, empathy and collective education

- Inclusive education requires a parallel emancipation from the strictures and modalities of neo-liberalism

Digital: revolution or illusion?

- In our transformed world, technology and values intersect powerfully and symbiotically.

- Technology was to underpin a move towards more equal, open and democratic futures

- Boosters of techno-social governance and the 'end of history' were wrong

- Human values on rights, respect and recognition are maintained and enhanced through purposeful appropriation of technologies to serve transformative ends.

1. Dimensions of Globalized Learning

- Contours of pervasive change
- Knowledge explosion
- Crisis, challenge and the impact of growing inequality
- Education and learning in a transformed world
- Access to quality education is also unequal
- Globalization

Anticipating the future (*OECD 1994*)

Future learning and employment needs (*Jobs Study*)

- Policy change
- Flexibility
- Entrepreneurship
- Internationalization
- Technology

The future is now…

- Potential provision of universal schooling now realized

- Internationalization is the norm

- Technology pervasive but unevenly accessible

- 'Flexibility': weapon or tool?

- Entrepreneurship: what is it?

- Policy: shaping or copying?

- Permanent crisis?

Globalized impacts

- Competition
- Economics
- Socio-critical discourse
- State power or impotence)
- Cultural + planetary ecology
  - *Göran Therborn*
- *'The chemistry of widespread improvement'* (Michael Fullan)
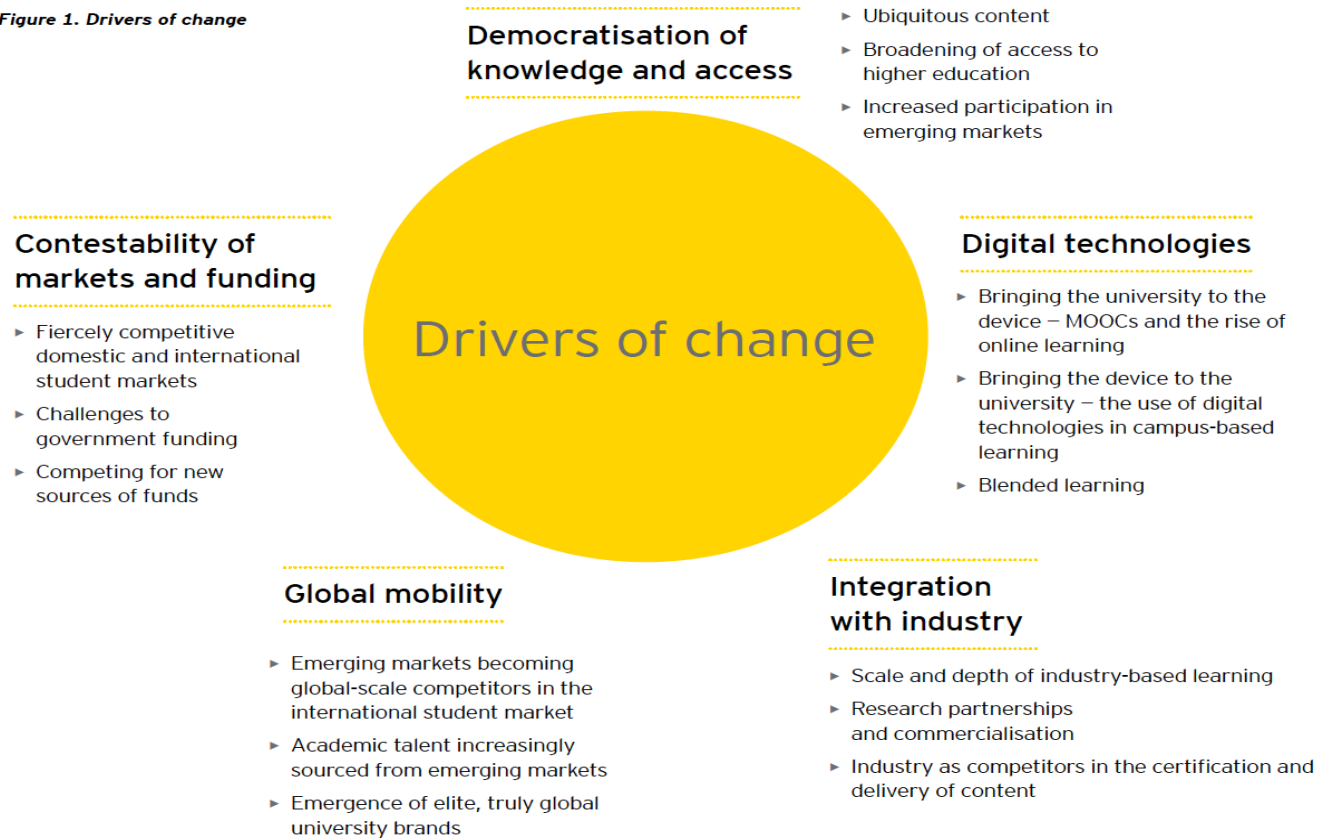
Neoliberal realities in education

- Higher education: globalized and competitive
- Rankings
- Marketization of HE
- Commodification of learning
- Hierarchy and elitism
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Social justice

Portnoi & Bagely, 2014

Drivers of change

Ernst & Young 2012

Figure 1. Drivers of change

Democratisation of knowledge and access
- Ubiquitous content
- Broadening of access to higher education
- Increased participation in emerging markets

Contestability of markets and funding
- Fiercely competitive domestic and international student markets
- Challenges to government funding
- Competing for new sources of funds

Drivers of change

Digital technologies
- Bringing the university to the device – MOOCs and the rise of online learning
- Bringing the device to the university – the use of digital technologies in campus-based learning
- Blended learning

Global mobility
- Emerging markets becoming global-scale competitors in the international student market
- Academic talent increasingly sourced from emerging markets
- Emergence of elite, truly global university brands

Integration with industry
- Scale and depth of industry-based learning
- Research partnerships and commercialisation
- Industry as competitors in the certification and delivery of content

2. *Crisis and Opportunity in Education*

"School systems that have successfully ignited reforms and sustained their momentum have all relied on at least one of three events to get them started:

- *they have either taken advantage of a political or economic crisis,*

- *or commissioned a high-profile report critical of the system's performance,*

- *or have appointed a new, energetic and visionary political or strategic leader."*

McKinsey 2010

A Transformed World

- End of old certainties

- No return to 'normal'

- Population disruptions

- *Planet of Slums* (Mike Davis): hypercities of the future

- Accelerated change as a constant

- Constant connectedness and information explosion

Legacies of segregated schooling

- Centuries of exclusion in learning systems
- Outright ban – girls, women and disabled
- Exclusion as the norm
- Separate systems: gender, language, religion, class, ethnic group
- Unequal resources and outcomes
- Fragmentation and disenfranchisement

Trajectories of inclusion

- Youth and mass unemployment
- Demographics: ageing and life expectancy
- Women and labor market participation
- Immigration, cultural and religious difference
- Disability
- Conflict, stress, anomie
- Urbanization, dissent and democratic deficits

From crisis to opportunity

- A globalized world of structural inequalities impacts education also

- Differential access reflects this – as does the digital divide

- Full potential of enhanced education access via technology is not being realized

- Innovation, research and creativity are keys

Towards alternatives

- Access; Rights; Empowerment
- Challenging established structures and assumptions about teaching, learning, understanding and knowing.
- Openness: continuously negotiated
- Four dimensions (Catherine Cronin 2016)
  - *balancing privacy and openness*
  - *developing digital literacies*
  - *valuing social learning*
  - *challenging traditional teaching role expectations*.

Reality on our doorstep

Responding to change

- Flexibility: non-traditional learning for non-standard groups

- Diverse learners and traumatic pasts

- Learning outcomes and hopelessness

- Pedagogical design - integrated learning

- Teacher training

- Spaces of Hope – Lesvos. Early childhood learning

3. *Global citizenship, technology and windows of diversity*

- Engaging with diverse communities
- Developing massive outreach to sectors
- Outreach, access and validation
- Legislative foundations on rights and anti-discrimination
- New technologies – mobile telephony
- Implementation of diversity practice and intercultural competence

Global Citizenship

- Fostering inclusion in contradictory socio-economic environment problematic

- Scale of economic disruption reflected in wars, genocide, ethnic cleansing, health issues and extraordinary movements of people either as economic migrants or refugees – now permanent and accelerating dimension of globalized life

Inclusive global citizenship in learning systems

- Changes produced in the globalization process shape how global education addresses various learning communities previously excluded by reason of prejudice, discrimination or remoteness.

- Critical importance of innovation and vision as key priorities to develop learning to combat socio-economic marginalization.

- Pervasive globalizing process means intercultural learning strategy needs to address how cultural diversity impacts learning needs of populations subjected to unprecedented levels of change.

ICT and re-imagining access

- Contradictory and paradoxical process
- Never greater potential - side by side with increasing disparities of access
- What we think:
  - Citizens
    - Shared knowledge
      - Participative engagement
- What we have:
  - Consumers
    - Increasing exclusion
      - Significant problems with equitable access

Anticipating the future

- Excellence goes beyond quality measurement systems
- Critical role of diversity and equality approaches
- Gender and inclusion – the centrality of women
- Demographics and youth intervention
- Competitiveness and sustainability
- Education as business or a place apart?
- Offering critical space and alternative perspectives

Inclusive futures

- Training of trainers and teachers
- Multilingualism: shared learning
- Developing skills – competence transmission
- Developing attitudes – securing motivation
- Developing buy-in – loyalty and commitment
- Active inclusion strategies
- Addressing pervasive poison of prejudice
- Review, evaluation and research

Conclusions

- Education at a crossroads: refugee crisis highlights options

- 'Progression model' challenged

- Impact of increasing inequality: access and resources

- Crisis as the norm: open learning is a start

- Performance, standards, quality, reproducibility and added value at the heart of competence: but context equally crucial

- Disruptive narratives demand global policy and shared goals

- Innovative learning demands imagination and vision

Whitman's optimism

O we can wait no longer

We too take ship O soul

Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas

Fearless for unknown shores, on waves of ecstasy to sail

Amid the wafting winds

Passage to India, 1872

Thank you!

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