

GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE

Special Issue on Globalization: Current Challenges and Future Prospects

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This volume of the *International Journal of Technoethics* seeks to address a wide range of problems and issues arising from or exacerbated by globalization processes. The articles it includes aim to clarify a range of salient globalization processes, the variety of factors that contribute to causing them, and the problems and issues they raise, as well as to provide suggestions for addressing them. This approach contrasts with traditionally narrow—for example, merely economic or merely political—ways of conceiving of globalization, the problems and issues it poses, and the available ways of responding to them—which, as current events make it plain, have not been successful. In adopting a wider perspective, this volume conceives of globalization as the spreading interconnectedness of business, science, technology, politics, and culture through large regions or the entirety of the world, and of globalization processes as not uniform and not merely economic and political but also resulting from technological, scientific, and cultural factors.¹

Further, the articles included in this volume reflect this conception and also pursue approaches that are not merely disciplinary or just interdisciplinary, hence, merely academic. Indeed, some of the articles' contributors, though well versed in academic disciplines, are partly or primarily practitioners in areas of human activity ranging from technology and business organizations to the arts. That is, this volume's combined perspectives can be said to be truly multi-occupational.

All the contributions to this volume have been associated with the *Philosophy and Society Circle*, housed in the *Department of Philosophy* at the *Carol A. Ammon College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences* of *Central Connecticut State University*. In particular, all the authors in this volume are or have been associated with events the *Philosophy and Society Circle* organized, such as, in 2012, *Exploring Development: Kinds, Conceptions, Challenges, and Prospects for Improvement*; in 2013, *The Dynamics of Cooperative Inquiry: Innovation through Cross-Pollination in and between the*

Humanities, Arts, Professions, Sciences, and Technologies and, in parallel with this volume's publication, *Globalization: Current Challenges and Future Prospects*, in 2015.

The lead article to the present issue, "Thinking about Development: The Lived Reality of Globalization," by Eleanor Godway, focuses on the all-too-common tendency to emphasize efficiency understood in narrow, impersonal economic or political terms while conceiving and trying to address globalization, progress, and development problems and issues. She outlines an alternative approach for dealing with these problems and issues by relying on the philosophy of John Macmurray and using the strategy of writing "under erasure" introduced by Derrida. The latter strategy helps her emphasize the problematic nature of traditional conceptions of efficiency, globalization, progress, and development. And the philosophy of Macmurray provides a basis for establishing her thesis, that we should move from the impersonal conception of efficiency towards one that gives priority to the ultimate value of the personal—with the fact that globalization and what we do about it affects people personally—in dealing with globalization problems and issues.

Audra King addresses the persistent failure of mainstream development to promote just and equitable social change, in particular, a central cause of this failure, the problem of structural exclusion—a situation whereby participation in decision-making is restricted to a narrow range of structural perspectives and interests. She provides a systematic account of structural exclusion as an epistemic obstacle to just and effective development policy and argues for a principle of structural pluralism, which requires that all relevant structural perspectives be included on equal terms and have equal right and effective opportunity to contribute to or influence deliberations at all levels of decision-making about the appropriate vision and policies of development.

Robert Paul Churchill's article deals with the growing use of Reaper and Predator drone strikes in the ongoing War on Terrorism and argues that drone warfare is immoral because it

fails both the *jus in bello* and the *jus ad bellum* conditions of Just War theory. He also argues that drone warfare cannot be accepted on utilitarian grounds either, as it is very probable that terrorists will acquire drones capable of lethal strikes and deploy them against defenseless civilians. Moreover, by examining the psychological bases for reliance on drone warfare, as well as the message this sends to adversaries, Churchill argues for the need to be concerned that, rather than reduce the likelihood of terrorists strikes, reliance on drones strikes threatens to institutionalize terrorism as the status quo for the foreseeable future. He sees taking the lead in international efforts to develop treaties and protocols leading to the effective control of UCAVs as a first and necessary process in preventing the institutionalization of terrorism.

Florencia Luna examines the effects of globalization on the vulnerable, in particular, the sick and poor. She points out that every year, 8 million children die before they reach the age of 5 from preventable diseases and that so called "exotic illnesses" cease to be so exotic: they can cross borders easily—a clear example of globalization. Ebola, for example, originally an African worry, in 2014 was an international threat. The availability of information about threats such as these makes us more aware than ever of the health problems of people from far away countries. Yet, despite the wide availability of this information, we live in a world that is all-too-often willing to rescue banks while ignoring the worst off. Luna's paper asks: Are these new empiric circumstances reflected in our moral understanding of the issues? How should we think of global health and our obligations towards people living in deprivation? How can the new empiric possibilities the global world offers be related to the implementation of such obligations? What are some of the challenges to the translation of new obligations to the present world? In addressing these questions, the paper argues that if we seriously want to address our obligations towards those in need, even if they are far away from our places we may need to work not only with ideal proposals such as the "new obligations" pointed by Thomas Pogge

and Peter Singer, but also with different transitional theories and non-ideal strategies in order to solve some of the big challenges the real world impose to theories.

Gabriel Ricci describes the dialectical role of science in its promotion of public policy and the manner in which scientific autonomy has been challenged to further political ambition in the past as well in recent U.S. national and global policy introduction and decisions made. He recounts various episodes in the history of the ever expanding marriage of science and politics, often accompanied by religious and economic motivations as well as technological development, to demonstrate the threat to scientific self-rule and to individual scientists who have been relegated to instrumentally functional roles. He argues that the class status of scientists has been subverted by the triumvirate of technology, industry and religion. Moreover, science has met its greatest challenge from those individuals and organizations able to understand and realize the translation of technology and scientific discovery into regulatory measures.

Alejandra Emilia Iannone begins by observing that since the 1990s Internet communications technologies have influenced human activity, for example, by helping produce virality—the fact that content circulates via Internet among an increasingly broad audience at an exponentially rapid rate. This has been sufficiently impactful. Also, not all content achieves virality. The author asks: what's significant about virality? What causes it? Why not all content achieves virality? In addressing these questions, she argues that scholars have failed to adequately address the topic especially when it comes to viral artwork. Her essay helps fill that gap in the literature by demonstrating the academic significance of viral artwork through comparative analysis of three cases where Internet-based artworks went viral: "Ten Hours of Princess Leia walking in NYC," "New Beginnings," and "McKayla is Not Impressed." It argues that viral artwork merits rigorous study because doing so could: first, augment existing research on other topics;

second, fortify investigations in philosophy of art; and third, guide the public toward better-informed engagement with viral artwork.

John Tauxe's article deals with waste and its disposal, especially with the disposal of highly radioactive wastes, regarding which waste management faces a serious quandary: how to balance the substantial expense of waste isolation against the uncertain mitigation of risks to hypothetical future humans. Most of this uncertainty stems not from natural processes, or from the projected performance of engineered materials, but rather from social actions and human behaviors. Hence he asks: given that these uncertainties become overwhelming when consider the future only a few centuries from now, how far into the future is it useful for us to attempt to assess risks? Are we to base decisions on estimates of risk to some future hominid? To which? What assumptions must be made in these estimates, and are those assumptions defensible? How are decision makers to use this information intelligently? In seeking sound answers to these questions scientists and non-scientists are faced with uncertainties, including the future development of technologies that may be useful in mitigating risks, and the scenarios of human activities and exposures postulated for the future, which become wildly uncertain within the coming centuries, and overshadow natural and engineering uncertainties in the performance of materials. In discussing these and other uncertainties, the article outlines central conditions for soundly dealing with those questions.

As a whole, these papers present a timely overview by academicians in various disciplines and practitioners in areas ranging from technology to art, of a wide variety of challenges presented by current globalization processes. They also outline insightful suggestions for approaching resolutions to the problems those challenges pose. As editor of this special issue of the *International Journal of Technoethics*, I take advantage of this opportunity to thank all contributors for their invaluable work and express my hope that their contributions, through their interdisciplinary and multioccupational

interplay and crosspollination will lead to fruitful dialogue in academia and beyond.

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Guest Editor

ENDNOTES

1. For more on this conception and how it helps deal with globalization problems and issues, see A. Pablo Iannone, *Seeking Balance, Philosophical Issues in Globalization and Policy Making* (New Brunswick, U.S.A. and London, U.K., 2014)