Effects of Globalization on International Librarianship

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What is Globalization?

Globalization is defined as:

"a process of integrating an international perspective" into aspects of education and industry (678 Bordonaro)

"expansion of global linkages, [the] organization of social life on a global scale" (*The Globalization Website*)

"a web of connections and interdependencies of humans and human communities" (11 Kolodziej)

"the contingent outcome of a confluence of specific processes that are themselves likely to be limited in space and time" (6 Hay)

The overall meaning of globalization communicates a continual progression toward global connectedness that stresses importance on the acts themselves

Thesis

Analyzing the effects of globalization on international librarianship will reveal a theory of the outcome of future international librarianship

Theories and Positions

Theories
The following are the primary theories that describe the state and evolution of globalization:

- **Modernization Theory:** "success gives an incentive for other societies to emulate" (25 Busch)

- **International Relations Theory:** "states no longer ha[ve] to deal with their own likes, but with other non-governmental agencies…" (26 Busch)

- **Foreign and Domestic Politics Theory:** "the international system…is not only a consequence of domestic politics and structures but a cause of them" (27 Busch)

Positions
There are various reactions to globalization theories that can be broadly grouped into the following positions:

- **Hyperglobalist:** Believes globalization brings the destruction of the nation-state

- **Transformationalist:** Globalization is neither fully good nor fully bad and the other positions exaggerate

- **Skeptic:** Globalization is a myth and is used to justify colonialism

Librarianship through 1920-1980

The Paris Library School *1924-1929*
- After WWI ALA dedicated funds, previously used in the war effort, to rebuilding libraries in Europe
- Was seen as a way to promote the American version of public librarianship globally
  - Raise the standard of library techniques.
- Unlike French library tradition, the American model of public libraries took into account the needs of all patrons
- The focus soon shifted to an international purpose
- By 1929, the school boasted alumni from 25 countries and was sought by libraries across Europe

We are realizing that research done in the 20th century can rarely be done satisfactorily without the use of publications and often the libraries in a number of different countries
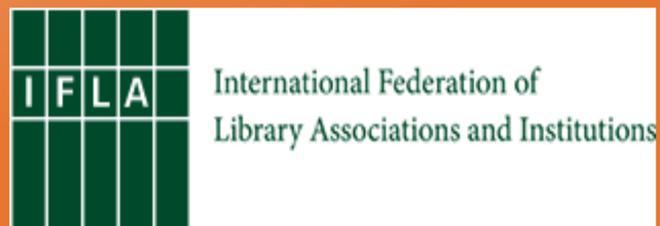**- Mary Parsons, Paris Library School**

IFLA
- Founded in 1927.
- Objectives:
  - To represent librarianship in matters of international interest
  - To promote the continuing education of library personnel
  - To develop, maintain, and promote guidelines for library services
- Committee on Free Access to Information and

Freedom of Expression (FAIFE)
- Taking into account cultural differences and understanding of local views and ideas and needs is vital to collaborating with diverse groups

Librarianship from 1980 - Current

Mortenson Center
- Founded in 1991
- Currently the only successful integration of libraries and international communications initiative of its kind in the world
- Seeks to strengthen ties among libraries and librarians, regardless to geographic location or access to technology.
- Libraries for Peace

OCLC
- Created in 1967
- Became internationally accessible in 1980
- Serves over 16,000 members in 120 countries
- Supports the Unicode standard allowing for worldwide interchange of languages
- Strives to create universal bibliography

Computing and the World Wide Web
- The requiring of English to code and interact with programming.
- English is considered the unofficial language of the web
- Digital literacy is not diff. among cultures
  - All must conform to the same ways of interacting with computer technology

In a world where globalization is a given, it is essential to be able to work together and discover innovative ideas through collaboration.
- Barbara Ford, Mortenson Center for International Library Programs

International Librarianship Defined

International librarianship consists of activities carried out among or between governmental or non-governmental institutions, organizations, groups or individuals of two or more nations, to promote, establish, develop, maintain and evaluate library, documentation and allied services, and librarianship and the library profession generally, in any part of the world

-J.S. Parker, *International Librarianship – a Renaissance*

The profession of librarianship…is unlikely to survive in its purest sense without broad and intensive attention to international developments

- Robert D. Stueart, *International Librarianship*

The Future of Librarianship

The results of the analysis are still in progress but analysing past international librarianship has shown that:

- Libraries are open and willing to international collaboration

- Information professionals are cautious of the negative implications of globalization

- The creation of the Web has changed methodologies in international librarianship

Acknowledgments

IFLA International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

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An Initiative of the Mortenson Center

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developing librarians worldwide

ALA American Library Association

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