Challenges of Intercultural Relations in an Age of Globalization

Robert Schreiter
Catholic Theological Union, Chicago

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Introduction

The coming together of theologians from so many different parts of the world to reflect together on common problems that face us all in one way or another is a remarkable occasion. I am honored by your invitation and am happy to be able to participate in this part of your program. The theme you have chosen—where we are regarding intercultural relations in the current round of globalization, and how those challenges might be addressed theologically—is certainly a timely one. I have had the opportunity to read the reports you prepared for this meeting, and that has given me a sense of the kinds of issues you most want to grapple with in this colloquium. I hope that what I have to say will stimulate your thinking and contribute in some small way to your deliberations.

   The issues that emerge in the reports are as much about interreligious questions as they are about intercultural ones. This is entirely appropriate, since the boundary between culture and religion is a very porous one, and the so-called religious questions are very frequently cultural ones. It is important to remember that religion is not simply about a view of life (a position to which we theologians are prone), but for most people more about a way of life. That way of life is embedded in a larger social life-world that causes religion and culture to be inextricably mixed up with each other.

   What I hope to do in this presentation falls into four parts. It begins with some preliminary observations about globalization and about culture. It is important to clarify a number of things about both these concepts at the beginning in order to be able to think through some of the issues in a more careful fashion. In the second part, I will look at the four principal ways in which globalization process has an impact on culture, especially at the local level. These four ways can provide a framework for addressing a number of issues in intercultural relations. In the third part, there will be a discussion of three areas where intercultural issues are often most salient and most in need of our attention. These are: immigration, conflict, and what is called in the Spanish-language literature "interculturality." A brief final part will examine where theology might contribute to the larger discussion.

   As you can see, this presentation is weighted heavily toward the frameworks and discussions in the social science literature, and less toward the theological response. I do this because my experience has been in reading theologians who talk about globalization that theologians often are largely unaware of the directions these larger discussions, or show a considerable time-lag in their appropriation of the literature. This has contributed to theologians having had little impact on those discussions. This is regrettable, because there are major moral issues bound up with nearly all of them. So if this presentation is

tilting especially in the social science direction, it does so in the hope of creating a better forum to help theologians engage those working in other disciplines on issues of globalization and culture.

Globalization and Culture: Some Preliminary Considerations
I wish to begin with looking at the two central terms that shape this discussion; namely, globalization and culture. As Marcelo Gonzalez points out rightly in the report from Argentina to this colloquium, how we construe terms has a profound effect on the directions our discussions take.

   Let us begin with globalization. Like any social phenomenon, globalization does not stand still. As we find ourselves ending a second decade of globalization, some things are more apparent now than they were ten years ago. Three things in particular stand out. First of all, globalization—once it begins—is not inevitable nor is it inexorable. Depending on how one defines the term, we can speak of three periods of intense globalizing activity in the last half millennium. The first began with the Spanish and Portuguese voyages of discovery in the fifteenth century. Advances in navigation and shipbuilding made longer-distance sea travel possible. The second period stretched more or less from 1850 to 1914. This period was marked by the harnessing of steam power and the advances in communication technologies of telegraphy and telephony. Our current round of globalization has been shaped by air travel and the advent of the computer and the Internet. Increase in trade is the hallmark of economic globalization. The Great War of 1914-1918 brought an abrupt end to a great deal of international trade, and heralded the beginning of the end of the European empires that provided its infrastructure. The lesson learned from that is that globalization can end. Future struggles over resources— especially water—or terrorism that comes to paralyze international transportation could well spell the end of globalization in the near future.

   Second, there is a greater differentiation in thinking about the various spheres of globalization today. The economic dimension of globalization is the most obvious and has the most immediate impact on rich and poor countries alike. But the economic shape of globalization does not a priori determine the other spheres of globalization, and this is something that is being realized more and more. The impact and consequences of economic globalization, for example, can happen much more quickly than spreading patterns of social globalization. Patterns of globalization in the political sphere run at their own pace and in their own direction, and often not in ways that had been predicted. The nation state has not disappeared, as had been predicted in the mid-1990s. More and more, the spheres of globalization are showing their own, differentiated directions. What that means in the social and cultural sphere will be the subject of the next part of this presentation.

   Third, across the board in globalization studies, there is a sense that we are still trying to dissect a new phenomenon with older, only partially effective methods. A recent volume of essays devoted to the frontiers of globalization in the social sciences makes this point.[1] Be it Immanuel Wallerstein's "world system theory," or Hardt and Negri's "empire," or varying forms of colonial theory, core-periphery theory, or dependency

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[1] Ino Rossi (ed.), *Frontiers of Globalization Research: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches* (New York: Springer, 2008). The essay by George Ritzer in this volume makes this point especially clearly: "A 'New' Global Age but is There Anything New About It?" (pp. 361-371).

theory, we seem to be putting new wine in old wineskins. Nor has the distinction between "mundialisation" and "globalisation" in the Francophone literature been found helpful in much of the wider discussion. There have been some creative attempts to address this. Argentine-born Néstor Garcia Canclini, who now works principally in Mexico, has made some of the most imaginative suggestions, especially about patterns modernity and the development of social imaginaries in Latin America.[2] I do not have a solution to this, but only note it since it does limit the range of our discussion.

"Culture" remains problematic in globalization studies as well. Everyone knows that there is no agreed upon definition of culture, nor even an agreed upon way of approaching culture. This is evident in the reports for this colloquium as well. One can take a humanistic and integrative approach, such as does the report from Benin, that stresses the fundamental unity of human culture. From a theological perspective, this has been especially useful for us. Or one can focus on difference as the defining element, as does for example the Australian or Chilean report. If one takes the three-fold distinction about forms of culture widely used in the English-speaking world—classical or normative; modern (i.e., the unity of language, territory and custom); and postmodern (i.e., a force field where identities are negotiated out of competing fragments)—one still comes up with less than satisfying ways to think about culture. The normative approach does not allow enough for cultural pluralism (and thus is unhelpful in the multiculturalism discussion). The modern approach is trumped, because migration involves loss of territory and boundedness, especially in urban settings. And the postmodern does not seem sustainable as a humanizing factor; for the rich, they can simply flit from one combination of fragments to another; for the poor, the fragmentation experienced in camps for refugees and the displaced can threaten their survival. The impact of living in a fragmented culture is especially evident among disaffected urban youth.

Perhaps a more promising model is one that sees a culture as a layered reality, where certain parts are more accessible to outsiders and to interaction (such as language and certain practices), while others (such as those factors that shape the social imaginaries) are more difficult to reach in intercultural interaction.[3] Such an approach may explain part of the difficult of acculturating immigrants in Europe today.

So as we turn to looking at how globalization has an impact on culture, it is important to keep all of these things in mind. Our capacity to grasp the impact of globalization remains tenuous. How to analyze culture remains elusive. But given those caveats, we do need to forge ahead and make our way through the challenges before us as best we can.

The Impact of Globalization on Culture
In social science studies of the social sphere of globalization, four dynamics have been identified that appear to shape, in different ways, globalization's impact on culture. By "culture" here, I am talking about local, concrete cultures however broadly or narrowly they are construed. In other words, culture is understood here in the way it comes

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[2] Marcelo Gonzalez cites some of his work in the report from Argentina. His work is less known in the English-speaking world, although two of his books are available in English.
[3] U.S. theologian Allan Figueroa Deck suggested such an approach in his book *The Second Wave: Hispanic Ministry and the New Evangelization* (New York: Paulist, 1989). He suggested five layers of culture.

through in the reports: as an ethnic culture, regional or national culture. The four dynamics are not entirely discrete processes; they overlap and interact along the way. But for analytic purposes, it can be helpful to speak of them separately. They are identified by very abstract nouns that at first can seem daunting. But given some explanation, they become more accessible for our purposes here. They are: homogenization, hyperdifferentiation, deterritorialization, and hybridization. Let me say a little about each.

Homogenization has been the most commented upon dimension of social globalization. Here the idea is that powerful cultural forces and products, emanating from the wealthy countries (especially the United States) flood over all other cultures, wiping out local forms and customs. Terms such as "McWorld" that signifies the hegemony of McDonald's or the "coca-colonization" of the world are examples of this. The growing ubiquity and hegemony of the English language in commerce, entertainment, and academe seems to threaten the survival of smaller languages. The fear of such a cultural homogenization (especially evident in youth culture, as was commented upon in the Chilean report) was especially marked in the 1990s. In the meantime, three things have become apparent.

First of all, the fear of such homogenization has awakened spirited resistance to such cultural hegemony in many parts of the world. In Europe, for example, imperiled languages such as Welsh, Basque (Euskadi), or West Frisian have experienced a revival. Resistance, a powerful motif in postcolonial writing, has certainly been in evidence in the revitalization of aspects of culture in many parts of the world. To be sure, languages are dying out around the world; but the principal cause of that is often that the last native speakers are growing old and are not passing the language on to their children, or there are not enough people left to create a linguistic community.[4]

Second, the ubiquity of global cultural products does not necessarily mean that they are received in the local culture in the way there are in the culture of origin. Nor do they necessarily replace local products. Those global cultural products are often adapted to the local setting. In some countries a visit to McDonald's is an occasion for upscale dining. In Haiti, local rum is mixed with Coca-Cola to make a popular drink, "Cuba libre"—certainly an anti-capitalist irony many times over. Media studies of American soap operas or South America *telenovelas* indicate that, when shown outside their countries of origin, are received quite differently: identification with the characters in the story may follow different lines than in the home country. Such reception indicates that there is greater sense of agency and resistance in local cultures than was once assumed. To be sure, the first wave of entry of enticing cultural products coming from powerful cultures can seem to overwhelm a local culture. One has to watch over a longer period of time as to how global cultural products are situated within cultures.[5]

Third, modernity—the social form that appears to be spread by globalization that threatens to overwhelm traditional forms of culture—is not singular or uniform either. Just as global capitalism has been found to grow under both democratic and authoritarian

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[4] The death of cultures is an important topic, raised especially regarding the indigenous cultures of Latin America in the reports. For a good recent study on this topic, see Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Destruction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[5] John Tomlinson's *Globalization and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) remains a very good guide on this.

governments, so modernity is not of a single cut. The modernization process elaborated by Max Weber was once thought to be the sole and inevitable form of modernity that began in Europe and would gradually spread throughout the world. Today, it is more common to speak of modern<u>ies</u> in the plural, rather than in the singular.[6] As the European report notes, Europe is becoming aware of its particularity in this regard. Rather than being the vanguard of the future in its rationalization and secularization, Europe may now appear to be more of a *Sonderweg*.

Hyperdifferentiation starts from the point of view, developed most completely by German sociologist Niklas Luhmann. As modern societies develop, they become more and more differentiated. The differentiation becomes a matter of difference and distinctiveness under the impact of globalization—so much so that some speak of "heterogenization," as a counterpart to global homogenization. The hyperdifferentiation brought about by globalization, then, denotes an increased—even frenetic—creating of distinctiveness and difference. It is connected into the economic sphere by a constant tendency toward *commodification*, something recognized by Karl Marx already in the nineteenth century. Any thing or activity that can be quantified and packaged and marketed is produced and presented on the global market accordingly. As the European report noted, higher education is being turned into training in Germany and elsewhere (sometimes called the "Americanization" of the universities).

This hyperdifferentiation has different effects, depending where one finds oneself on the wealth spectrum. In wealthy countries that produce and abound in every greater choice of products, the development of niches is in evidence. People make choices for a specific niche where they are surrounded by like-minded people and hear the opinions that support what they already think and believe. In the United States for example, people will choose to get their news from National Public Radio, or CNN, or Fox News. Particularly between the latter two, there is likely to be little cross-over. Vincent Miller, in his study on the impact of globalization upon American Catholicism, notes that the parish, which gathered together the full spectrum of people and opinions within a given territory, is being replaced in metropolitan areas by a congregational polity, where people seek out the church that meets their tastes and needs.[7]

On the other hand, those who have their options narrowed, or feel themselves besieged from the outside, experience hyperdifferentiation as a narrowing of their identity. Rather than identifying themselves through multiple signifiers (nationality, ethnicity, religion, occupation, family, etc.), will choose a single signifier as the source of their identity. This single identification can be mobilized in ethnic and religious conflict, as we shall see in the next section. It can become a major strategy of resistance to assimilation in a new cultural setting, as is the case with immigration (the European report dwells especially on this), by saying that being Muslim precludes any identification with Western democratic and liberal institutions. Such narrowed identities are deemed to be "stronger" ones. The Indian economist Amartya Sen has been campaigning tirelessly in urging people to recognize that they can only be themselves in a globalized world through multiple identifications.[8] Narrowing of identities (as opposed to the homogenization of them)

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[6] The classic article on this is S.N. Eisenstadt, "Multiple Modernities," *Daedalus* 129 (1) (2000), 1-29.
[7] Vincent Miller, "Where is the Church? Globalization and Catholicity," *Theological Studies* 69(2008), 412-432.
[8] See especially his *Identity and Violence* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2006).

poses a special threat not only to societies, but also to the Catholic Church, as people identify narrowly with one movement in the Church or the other.

Deterritorialization involves the "disembedding" of cultural phenomena from their original physical and social location, and allowing them to circulate in global flows to be "re-embedded" elsewhere (to use Anthony Gidden's terms). This is the breakup of the unity of language, territory, and custom that has provided the modern definition of culture. Much of the casual clothing of global culture—athletic shoes, T-shirts, denim jeans—are examples of disembedding. Deterritorialization has a range of different effects. In the case of indigenous peoples whose identity is closely tied up with a specific geographic area, to be displaced from that area can mean cultural death. This was a deliberate tactic used by the Guatemalan army against various indigenous peoples in the civil war there in the 1980s. The Q'eqchi, for example, became severely disoriented because they could not maintain contact with the mountain spirits.

On the other hand, in societies where deterritorialized elements of culture have landed, there can be a sense of a loss of the coherence of territory: a bounded geographic area bears no relation to the other cultural dimensions that are present there. One experiences this in cities in Latin America, where the pre-modern, the modern, and the post-modern exist side by side. A similar experience may be add in large multicultural cities such as London, Toronto, or Sydney: a plethora of languages, peoples, and cultural products jostle against each other in the same space. Here—the classic site of postmodern identity—elements are chosen from the environment, without consideration of their origin, and cobbled together into an identity. Identities of these types are understandably without deep structure. The niche-identities just discussed are common here. Because nothing is really connected to anything else, there is a lack of care for the whole, even as people may yearn for a wholeness that remains elusive. Disaffected youth, for example, may adopt an extreme form of religious practice in search of such a perceived whole—to the bafflement of their religiously observant parents. What happens in such *bricolage* is not a greater tolerance for difference or appreciation of the whole, but rather a diminished sense of both of these. A sense of responsibility for the civic or social order where, in another kind of society belonging and territory fit more easily together, disappears. The excellent discussion in the European report about what glue holds together civil society in Western Europe if there are not shared values or a recognition of shared heritage exemplifies that. The fragility of this is also evident in the discussion from the formerly communist-ruled countries of Europe about how difficult it is to rebuild civil society.

Hyperdifferentiation and deterritorialization become an excellent breeding place for *hybridization*. The racist ideologies of the *conquista* in the western hemisphere, and the fears of racial mingling in the nineteenth century imperial ideologies turned on a theme of purity: that mixing of "race" (which sometimes meant "culture" in the nineteenth century) would weaken the superior (i.e., white European) race. As the Caribbean report shows, hybridity or creolization is a fact of long-time colonial rule. In contemporary genetics hybrid plants are bred to withstand changes in climate, and thus are considered hardier and more likely to survive and flourish.[9] Culturally and especially theologically, the discussion of hybridity has focused around syncretism and religious belonging, as discussed extensively in the report from Brazil. In the current discussions of hybridity in

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[9] It would be interesting to explore to what extent some of the passionate resistance to genetic modification in food is a remnant of the nineteenth century racial ideologies of purity.

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the social sciences, there are two views in particular that are of relevance to our discussions of globalization here. The first focuses on hybridity as the mixing of two entities, with the hybrid appearing in the space between them. This approach appears in theological discussion of syncretism, where the "syncretism" is seen as the outcome of an implicitly pure Christianity with an implicitly pure other tradition (be it indigenous, cultural or translocal religious). This approach is heir to the nineteenth century racialist tradition. The other approach has been called a "transculturation" approach, where in "borrowing" rather than "mixing" is the guiding image. Here it is understood that cultures are bounded but nonetheless porous entities that borrow and use elements from other cultures all the time. To be sure those elements are disembedded, but may take on new meaning in their new settings.

When the issue of identity (such as "Christian identity") comes into play, especially because of the evident mixing/borrowing that is going on in a globalized setting, there is the temptation to take a narrowed (or hyperdifferentiated) notion of identity rather than a more capacious sense of identity marked by multiple signifiers. The example of the one-issue politics pursued by some U.S. bishops (the politician's stance on abortion as the litmus test) is an example of this. In an atmosphere of volatile and multiple possibilities, such narrowing of identities has greater likelihood of being adopted.

As I hope is evident from this brief overview of four ways that globalization has an impact on culture, these four can interact and mutually reinforce one another. Reception in homogenization can lead to hyperdifferentiation and deterritorialization, resulting in new hybridities. As people try to construct or maintain identities, they sometimes unwittingly make it more difficult by narrowing their options or by creating imagined purities that probably have never existed. If one reads some of the disputes going on within the Church today (such as recovery of Tridentine liturgy), one can see these dynamics at work. When deterritorialization has meant the lack of shared commitments in a given place, the dilemmas about creating international law for bioethical research, as set forth clearly in Marie Jo Thiel's report, at least lets us see what we are up against.

Globalization and Intercultural Interaction

Having tried to offer some of the principal dynamics involved in the interaction of globalization and culture, we can now turn to the third part of this presentation to explore intercultural interaction in more specific instances. I propose we look at three here: immigration, ethnic conflict, and multicultural interaction or interculturality.

(Im)migration

Nearly all the reports dealt with migration and immigration. Immigration is a major issue in the United States, Australia, Canada, Europe, South Africa, and Chile. Out-migration has long been a significant issue for the Caribbean region. The economic issues surrounding migration—especially remittances, which provide three times as much capital inflow to poor countries than all foreign aid combined—is well documented. Nor will I go into the political and legal dimensions. What is said here focuses on the cultural or intercultural dimension. Obviously, to speak of intercultural interaction and immigration overlaps heavily with the third area, the multicultural one. But I do want to point out a few things here.

First of all, the dynamics of deterritorialization are at work for the immigrant. Now matter how much an immigrant tries to replicate the homeland, even in a socially

enclosed neighborhood, the situation is always a disembedded one. This is most evident in the conflicts that arise between the first and second generations. The second generation is viewed by the first generation as too assimilated into the dominant culture or (if the parents are upwardly mobile) too preoccupied with assuming an imagined identity of the home culture. Second, identity markers typically narrow. Thus the issue of the veil for Muslim women and girls takes on an exaggerated significance. The layered approach to culture, mentioned earlier, can help explain intercultural interaction and intercultural conflict. The host culture believes that if language and democratic customs are accepted (say, in Europe), full assimilation will follow. From the immigrant's perspective however, certain customs in the host country are deemed offensive, so any effort to penetrate any layer of the immigrant's culture will be met with resistance. For refugees, all of these dynamics are intensified since the refugee has made no commitment to the host country and hopes to return home.

Ethnic Conflict. Although the number of intrastate conflicts, usually along ethnic or religious lines, has decreased since the mid-1990s, they still make up a major part of the totality of conflicts today. Interreligious conflicts may be added here, since it is usually cultural dimensions of religion (rather than specific doctrines) that are implicated in conflict. I focus here on culture and identity issues.

One of the things that have to be accounted for is that often people of different ethnicity live without significant conflict across ethnic lines, even sharing the same territory.[10] By trying to locate what ignites conflict we get a better view of how culture and identity come together. How do areas such as Bosnia or Kosovo or Rwanda manage to live for longer periods in relative peace, and then erupt into violence? Often these areas had worked out social arrangements over time that allowed for the inequalities to be negotiated. Then something tips the scale. Although some would invoke what are called "primordial" theories of ethnic conflict ("ancient hatreds"), more often what tips the scale is more instrumentalist: ethnicity is invoked as the sole identity marker in order to mobilize aggression.[11] That sole identity marker, as a marker of difference, becomes a site of fierce belonging or an object of focused hatred. The RSS movement and the BJP party have constructed *hindutva*, or "Hinduness," as a litmus test for who is a true Indian. Fundamentalism in any of the religions usually invokes clear identity markers based not so much on the doctrine of those traditions, but certain practices that mark it off as being against modernity or liberal societies. When those markers have been deterritorialized, as they are for migrants, one has a major feature of the European-Islam impasse in Europe today. Will teaching Islam in German schools make the difference? Probably only partially. Since the issue is not so much Muslim doctrine as it is cultural practices that adhere to some kinds of Muslim observance that constitute certain Muslim identities.

One of the outcomes of ethnic conflict is that it may result in less intercultural interaction rather than more. Neighborhoods in Belfast are more segregated than ever. After the post-election conflict in Kenya, people have relocated to live in ethnically more homogeneous neighborhoods. Territory and ethnic identity can mutually influence each other. The proliferation of new states after the end of the Soviet Union and the fall of the

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[10] One of the best studies in this area is Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: A Global Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
[11] Ibid., 33.

Berlin Wall were often attempts to make territory and ethnicity coextensive. Rather than creating the kind of more complex or firm identity needed to live in a globalized world, it has done the opposite. As has been noted, religious lines are not drawn much differently here from ethnic ones here.

What is the solution to this deadly link between identity and ethnicity? It obviously involves a broadening of one's sense of identity. In the case of religion, some dialogue about doctrine—to increase knowledge of one's another's tradition—is of some use. This is mainly to be able to detect and stop distortions of traditions. Common social action, the interaction of children and of families, and public communication between religious leaders have proven to the be most efficacious means in this area.

Multicultural Interaction and Interculturality. A greater multicultural interaction is a product of migration and globalization. Mobility and communication preclude models of outright assimilation that prevailed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Similarly other systems, such as the millet system used in the Ottoman Empire, the *dhimmi* position for Jews and Christians under the Caliphate, or the *convivencia* of medieval Spain are probably not options any more in a mobile world such as ours. Nor have we discovered, does that of liberal democracies with policies of support relatively independent communities within the host culture. It still works to some extent in Canada, but is accepted as a failure in places such as the Netherlands, who had hoped their older system of columnization (*verzuiling*) could be replicated for Indonesian and southern European and Maghreb immigrants. The French republican, laicist approach of ignoring race and other identity markers has also not proven to be viable. So what becomes the model for multicultural interaction in a globalized world?

We are currently, I believe, at a loss. On one thing there is agreement: there must be healthy interaction if it is to be a viable society. Factors such as racism have to be taken into consideration. It is not easy to speak of "equality." A couple of features can be mentioned that seem necessary to go into the mix.

First of all, the history of the host country's dealing with immigration has to be taken as a horizon, since that influences the notion of civil society. The United States, Canada and Australia—as reports from those places have indicated—are countries of immigration. Their capacity to take in immigrants is different from most European countries that were in recent centuries places of out-migration. Countries' history of dealing with minorities' influences, both positively and negatively, how able they are to absorb cultural difference today. Germany's dark history from fascism has result in an acute sensitivity to xenophobia and extremism, with appropriate legislation to support that.

Second, the liberal, Enlightenment model of equality and non-discrimination is not in itself entirely adequate. It too presupposes egalitarian ideals that nonetheless make implicit judgments about the relative value of things. Thus, such a model will marginalize religious behavior as of less significance when it is a key factor in identity for an immigrant. The debate in some countries in Europe about the construction of mosques is an example of this. At the same time, the liberal approach is an important check on models either of extremism or of other non-republican approaches that may

appear well reasoned, but may not be.[12] All of the liberal approaches favor the liberal democratic traditions of the host country and, in the eyes of immigrants do not accord sufficient value to their own culture.

Third, can an alternative be worked out? Bhiku Parekh's work in the UK is an example of trying to take the immigrant's values and needs more into consideration.[13] It has aroused controversy, especially among liberal thinkers. His work is not be confused with the anti-immigrant literature one finds in the United States (or found in the politics of Pauline Hansen and her counterparts in Europe), but represents, to my mind, and serious attempt to come to terms with these issues.

Theological Themes

Let me conclude these remarks with a few brief words about theology in the face of the challenges of intercultural interaction. I found the reflections on this matter particularly thoughtful.

I recently had the opportunity to edit a special number of the journal *Theological Studies* on theology and globalization, in which ten authors reflected on the challenges of globalization to theology, as well as theology's challenges to globalization. In the introduction to the issue, I suggested that our work as theologians in the face of globalization is concentrating itself in three areas of theology: anthropology, ethics, and ecclesiology. Anthropology has been the principal focus of this colloquium, focusing as it does on issues of culture. The issues of human dignity raised by poverty and racism and the challenges of bioethics are all part of that. What constitutes the sociality of human beings and the societies and cultures they create are areas that need more exploration.

As for ethics, deep questions about the common good, solidarity, subsidiarity, and justice figure prominently. Laying the groundwork for the growth of Catholic Social Teaching to meet the challenges of globalization—just as *Rerum novarum* address the challenges of industrialization over a century ago—has to be front and center for us today. Again, the frontiers of bioethical research come into consideration once again.

And finally, there is ecclesiology. As the oldest and largest transnational institution in the world, what role should the Roman Catholic Church be playing today? How should it understand its catholicity in light of globalization? How should it be a voice in the public sphere, in civil society as the questions and challenges posed by globalization are being raised? How must it change or reinvent itself to be a credible yet prophetic voice of the Gospel in a globalized world?

It is probably not the best thing to end this presentation with all these questions. But it seems to me that they are of world-wide concern, as the preparation for this colloquium has already indicated. I wish you well for the rest of your deliberations, and look forward to what you, as an international network, will be able to contribute to this discussion.

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[12] The debates in Belgium around the Vlaams Belang party is an example of the first. Controversies around Paul Scheffer's book *Het land van aankomst* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2007) is an example of the latter.
[13] Bhiku Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006; second edition).