

# AMERICAN CONSERVATISM IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION IN OUR HOME: OPPORTUNITIES AND DANGERS

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## **Abstract**

Conservatism is a very interesting issue to be studied. Moreover, conservatism is often seen with a negative connotation. This is reasonable because conservatism is a term that is quite elusive and often debated. This paper focuses on the cultural-philosophical dimension of globalization and the cultural traits of American conservatism. Moreover the world today is on the threshold of a new global capitalism, one which constitutes not only opportunities, but keep risks for development. The opportunities for development and great risks are found in all dimensions of globalization. In this case, humans are positioned as main actors on how to preserve the cultural traits. They can be agents of determinism in their home. In addition Indonesia has experienced the same process of global evolvement as many other countries have. Democracy, fairness, intellectual improvement and dedication towards an independent country considered as recent values, are from the inter-relation of thoughts and cultures between Indonesia and other countries.

**Key words:** *Gilded age, individualism, cultural traits, global era, conservatism*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, the world becomes into one big area where the borders among nations over this universe is no longer seen as an obstacle to create any relationship. Vaclav Havel as the first president of Czech Republic said that '*we live in era in which everything is possible and nothing is certain*'. Society is moving into an era of post-industry, knowledge-based society and sophisticated technology. Media provides a source of information which is not limited by space and time, hence it makes something distance become close. This situation and condition is often called as globalization. In short, globalization means internationalization.

In relation to the U.S., globalization is commonly defined as a process that is facilitated by the liberalization of trans-border transaction by the strength sovereignty. It is basically as a measure of the ease with that capital, labor, ideas, profits, things, and technology can travel across the borders with governmental interference minimally. It also refers to capitalism ala Adam Smith as reflected in his great work '*The Wealth of Nation*'. Absolutely, globalization has created some impacts towards the dimension of humans' life such as culture, economics, politics, and markets. The clash of culture,

economic disparity, political ambiguity, and uncertainty market are often connected with the global era.

In this case, economics has become a dominant factor in modern political life. It used to be that the life of a city or a nation could be guided by high moral or spiritual principles and by cultural aspirations of communion. But now it seems that everything we do in modern societies is governed by some economic necessity to which we must sacrifice our other spiritual and social aspirations and values. It seems that political consciousness, or the conscientiousness of a community, has become totally subordinate to economic consciousness, or the consciousness of commercial interests.

It is not difficult to give a reference for a great country like America. Seemingly, what is happening in the U.S., it will be happened globally. Globalization itself is a camouflage of capitalism with free trade. The existence of globalization in ASEAN, mainly in Indonesia is undeniably true. Even though it is very difficult for Indonesia to compete in global market, Indonesia has no choice. Alienation from this phenomenon will put Indonesia aside from the global inter-relationship among nations over the world.

In line with the existence of globalization in our home, we need a global perspective in facing the changes. At least, we have to prepare everything in facing this highest competitiveness. Change is to be the key to open the window in travelling across over the world. Absolutely it gives positive and negative impacts towards Indonesian culture. In short, we must be selective.

In the process of Americanization here, the new phenomenon happened around us like '*Yogyanization*', it is one of the unique values. In Yogyakarta where I stay, I easily find '*Mac-Donaldization*' *ala* Yogyakarta. They are '*Yogya Chicken*'; '*Rocket Chicken*'; '*Chicken-Chicken*'; *Gudeg* Chicken and so forth. Globalization itself is seemingly facing localization. In global system, it is a logic response. The interaction among three cultures: traditionalism, modernism, and post-modernism in the process of construction of cultural identity is a fruitful approach to understand the reality.

In traditionalism mainstream, it refers to two points, religious values and traditional values. In a spectrum of political behaviors, it is closed to the term of conservatism. Conservatism as a distinct political term is 180 years of age, coming into general usage after the Great Reform Act of 1832 in Great Britain. The word meant

opposition to reform. In general, conservatives wish to preserve present or past value rather than to create or adopt new ones. The well-known figure is Edmund Burke as an English statesman. He rejected French Revolution which only brought the disaster. He stated '*change in order to conserve*', mainly in traditional values (Heywood 2000:54). And for traditionalist, modernism is defined as the continual annihilation of the past in a process of ongoing development or self-creation (Friedman, 2000:83).

Meanwhile some people claim that modernism is always connected with our present life nowadays. The characteristics of modernism is not difficult to be found in our aspects of life. The distinctive characteristics are secularism knowledge, capitalism economics and liberalization. The born of Positivism by Auguste Comte (1798-1857) gave great influences towards secularism which more stresses on mind power than religious and metaphysic values. Secularism places this universe is more admirable than the life after. There is a replacement of religious certainty and moral absolute with skeptic and doubt.

The others claim that the term of modernization does not admit of a simple and straight definition. Everyone seems to understand what it means, though no one would agree with any definition of it. People generally welcome modernization as an antidote to traditionalism, conservatism, backwardness, and so forth. Whenever we say that someone is modern, we seem to suggest that he is not traditional, or conservative, or backward

Moreover liberalization as a product of global issues has swept all aspects of human life. The notion of liberalism requires individuals to master themselves based on the principle that individual liberty is an ultimate value for human beings. As Martha Nussbaum suggests, liberal means that is 'fitted for freedom' and 'makes for freedom' (1997:30-5). This speculation led to the philosophy of liberalism. Optimism about people's ability to solve their problems is the keynote of liberalism. Hence, the liberal is apt to apply reason to every problem and to be confident that this will lead to a positive solution. Nothing is sacred to the liberal. Anything can be changed for the better (Baradat, 1979:9).

## **AMERICAN CONSERVATISM**

In America, the political spectrum is dominated by two big political parties. They are Democrat and Republican. The Democrat party tends to liberals, meanwhile

the Republican party is greatly apt to conservatism. In general, conservatives wish to preserve present or past values rather than to create or adopt new ones. It also denotes to a political morality. It is political because it is a view about the political arrangement that make a society good, and it is moral because it takes it to be the justification of political arrangements that they foster good lives (Kekes, 1998:3). Definition of conservatism is seemingly based on the cultural traits and great experiences from the country where produces it. Therefore, every country has a distinctive characteristic of political behaviors which extends from Left to Right.

In relation to the traditional values, some immigrants, mainly, European gave great contributions toward the movement of Conservatism in America. At the time, this group basically wanted to preserve some relative decency and justice in society against the tyranny and injustice. British dominantly shaped the concept of conservatism influenced by Edmund Burke's idea and French Revolution inspired him to conserve the traditional values. The group of Puritan also gave influences in line with the concept of liberty in religion. WASP (Whites Anglo-Saxon Protestant) is a significant group in dominating inter-religion in America. Moreover some American Founding Fathers such Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and George Washington always shaped some crucial values in American government.

After George Washington was to be the first American president, America was under a new system government adopting presidential system. Therefore, America does not adopt Kingdom like British. America can learn from monarchy system which tends to be absolute power. After George Washington administration, there are two big power reflected in political party. It is from Thomas Jefferson called Democrat-Republican. It is later to be a Democrat party. And the other is from Alexander Hamilton who demands for the strengthening the nation. It becomes a Republican party.

Some writers about American conservatism have often observed that the word itself has meant different things at different times and that there is no consistency in conservatives' beliefs about what should be conserved. American conservatism moreover, has often been reactive in responding to perceive political and intellectual challenges. If the challenges and threats change, the nature of the conservative will response. It is not difficult to find some examples from the above statement. American history can give great contributions in illustrating the conservatives.

In the revolution era, arguments for the free market, for an example, seemed radical. But the arguments for the free market since 1917, when Soviet communism proposed a fully planned and centrally directed economy, have a strongly conservative flavor. In short, beliefs that once seemed radical later came to seem conservative. Even the concept of democracy itself, democracy seemed threatening to many property owners in the early republic country. The Constitution had created a republic, but it did not mention democracy; to the privileged of that era, the spread of democracy could feel unsettling. By the late nineteenth century, to argue openly against democracy was becoming difficult. (Allitt, 2009:4).

In order to get a deep understanding about conservatism in America, it had better compare and contrast to liberalism value. Conservatism and liberalism are like two interconnected sides of coin which is very difficult to be separated. Even, it is possible to modify both of them. But in many cases, they have distinctive characteristics in some American presidency era. They tend to a check and balance in American government with the same destination of the victory of America. In America, liberalism and conservatism are two political behaviors which give the deep impacts towards all dimensions in a society life.

Conservatives are the most contented with the status quo. They are basically pleased with the system and are not interested in a great deal of change. They will support extremely slow and very superficial alteration of the system, but will often resist even seemingly minor changes. In relation to the changes, conservatives are seemingly closed to retrogressive change referring to a return to a policy or institution that has been used by that society in the past. They tend to see an intrinsic value in existing institutions and are unwilling to tamper with them, claiming that to do so might seriously damage that which tradition has perfected (Baradat, 1979:12).

To say that conservatives are satisfied with things the way they are is certainly not to say that they are complacent. Indeed, conservatives are active not in seeking change, like their counterparts on the left, but in defending the system against those whom they believe threaten it. Basically conservatives are pessimistic about our ability to improve our lot through the use of reason. While they do not deny the importance of reason, they are wary of relying too heavily on it for solutions to human problems. They have less faith than the liberal that people can use reason to restrain their animalistic

impulses and their emotions. As you will recall, liberals believe that people are basically good and that they can generally be trusted to do the right thing when left alone. On the other hands, conservatives mistrust human nature. They see people as relatively base and even somewhat sinister. Hence, conservatives tend to favor authoritarian controls over the individual and over the society as a whole (Ibid,13).

Because of their mistrust of treason, conservatives will often rely on irrational (it only signifies persons who see severe limitations in people's ability to solve problems through the use of reason) rather than rational solutions to problem. For example, conservatives look to religion for the answers to eternal questions, while liberals tend to seek solutions in other, more self-reliant ways. It should not surprise the reader to find that most religious are basically conservative. Conservatives tend to be religious and religious to be conservative, and they both rely on powers beyond human reason for answer to their problems.

Meanwhile liberalism is one of the intellectual by products of the development of the scientific method. During the medieval era people looked heavenward for divine relief from their wretched early existence. Faith in human potential, as well as esteem for humankind in general, was very low. Through use of the scientific method people began to make improvements in their material existence, and in problems. This speculation led to the philosophy of liberalism. Optimism about people's ability to solve their problems is the keynote of liberalism. Hence, the liberal is apt to apply reason to every problem and to be confident that this will lead to a positive solution. Nothing is sacred to the liberal. Anything can be changed for the better (Baradat, 1979:9).

In this case, change has remained the major tool of liberalism. Society generally has a favorable bias toward progress. But in fact, progress is not necessary good or bad. It has no intrinsic value at all. Liberalism itself is closed to progressive change which simply means a change from the status quo to something new and different. Consequently its specific objectives have been revised from time to time. What was once desirable to liberals may be unacceptable to them today.

Liberalism encompasses political, social and economic doctrines that emphasize individual freedom, limited government intervention, gradual social process, and a free market economy. In its contemporary construction, liberalism accepts the role of the state in delivering social welfare and economic policy while upholding personal liberty

and opportunity. In addition, it also sensitive to liberal values such as religious tolerance, freedoms of conscience and speech, civil liberties, social justice, public welfare, and educational development.

Every country has distinctive characteristics in relation to the values of liberalism. As a set of political practice, liberal political tradition has been applied differently in many countries in many eras. English liberal tradition has centered in government by consent, individual and economic freedom, and religious tolerance. In France, the liberal tradition has been closely related to secularism and participatory democracy. Meanwhile in the United States, Franklin Roosevelt resurrected and redefined 'liberalism' to describe his New Deal programs. He sees the government as the guarantor of individual rights and freedom through the regulation of economic and social policy to check the excess of capitalism and provide a safety net against poverty (Rohmann, 1999:231).

Change, therefore, is still a major tool of the liberal. Human equality is another concept that the liberal continues to support, but the basis for the assumption of equality has changed. Few, if any, liberals still believe in the concept of natural law. Instead, the contemporary liberal is more likely to argue that although there are a wide variety of differences among individuals, we are all equal in our humanity and therefore are all entitled to fundamentally equal treatment. In addition, contemporary liberals prefer to use government as a tool to help improve the conditions of human life, rather than insisting that government stay out of people's affairs (Baradat, 1979:8).

## **CULTURAL TRAITS OF AMERICAN CONSERVATISM**

In America, conservatism has played a significant role in the development of its political behaviors. In the absence of crown and nobility, conservatism has centered around the Constitution and the institution of private property. Meanwhile Europe at the time was greatly influenced by monarch nuance. Hence type of conservatism ala America is different from European conservatism. Its main objectives in this paper are to find the ideology of American conservatism and its influences towards other nations.

In order to get better understanding about the term of American conservatism, it had better take account the roots of conservatism in America. And 'The Gilded Age' was a relevant era connected with the roots of American conservatism. This era ranged from the second-half of nineteenth century to the beginning of twentieth century which America changed spectacularly in all aspects of human beings. Big business, industry,

the American dream, an age of invention, immigration and social problems, and American economic crisis were often related with the age.

The phrase 'Gilded Age' entered when Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner published a novel about 'The Golden Road to Fortune' in 1873, and the period from the 1870s through the 1902s had been identified with the name. The Gilded Age made its appearance in the United States in the midst of the financial crisis of 1873. In short, the Gilded Age was known for the opulence and conspicuous consumption of the wealthy and some sectors of the middle classes in the U.S., it was also a period of severe economic crisis and social upheaval.

“The Gilded Age ... is one of those works which, in essence a satire of the bitterest kind, is in reality a hardly overdrawn picture of the condition of society in some of the states that obey the laws of the Washington Congress. It is a bitter pill for Americans to swallow, but the medicine is, in the judgment of its authors, a necessary one, ...”  
(French , 1965:23).

The interesting ones from the Gilded Age noted that there are some significant values still hold by some Americans as their cultural behavior patterns in a society. Some of them are as follows: **SELF-MADE MAN; DARWINIAN THEORY; AND LAISSEZ- FAIRE**. Those values can be categorized as an ideology for American experiences in shaping its country into a super power country over the world. They refer to the aspects of culture and social, politics and defense, and economics.

**Self-Made Man** is a prominent value in American life. In era of the Gilded Age, this value was a spirit to pursue American dream. It is similar to Individualism. Individualism in America has a meaning of responsibility by your own-self. Benjamin Franklin with his famous work of Autobiography gives American motivation bring about their goals and dream as reflected in his some maxims. Frederick Douglass is also an example of Black writer for struggling his freedom as seen his work '*Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*'. In this work, instead of telling his life in a set of events, Frederick Douglass wrote in a form of an autobiography in which he could put forward his feelings—regret, fear, sadness, hope and enthusiasm, love, and despair personally. It shows how instead of sinking him to a weak and helpless condition, Douglass's feelings



make him strong and firm to determine his path to gain freedom. That is the characteristic of American culture

Recently, the term of individualism is associated with some issues considered as representative of individualism itself in America. They are: (1) **Individual freedom.** In America, each individual has freedom to take a part in his life. (2) **Self-Reliance.** Americans believe that individuals must learn to rely on themselves or risk losing freedom. Americans believe they must be self-reliant in order to keep their freedom. In order to be in the mainstream of American life, individuals must be seen as self-reliant. (3) **Equality of Opportunity.** Everyone has the same chance to get a certain status. (4) **Competition.** It may take the form of rivalry between individuals within a group, of competitive effort of social groups to gain their objectives, of racial rivalries, or of a contest of culture and institutions for pre-eminence. (5) **Material Wealth.** Material wealth becomes a value to American people. The phrase “*going from rags to riches*” becomes a slogan for the great American dream. (6) **Hard Work.** It is a price of material wealth. American people claim that material wealth can be obtained through hard work only. To get it, they try to expand from one place to other places.

**Darwinian Conservatism.** Conservatives need Charles Darwin’s theory. They need it because a Darwinian science of human nature supports the conservative commitment to liberty as rooted in nature, custom, and reason. The intellectual vitality of conservatism in the twenty-first century will depend upon the success of conservatives in appealing to advances in the biology of human nature as confirming conservative social thought. Darwinian conservatism explains social order as the product of three kinds of order: natural order, customary order, and rational order. This analysis of order was first stated by Aristotle. As originally suggested by Aristotle, we can explain both the social order of a community and the moral order of an individual life as the product of nature (*physis*), custom or habit (*ethos*), and reason or deliberation (*logos*) (Arnhart, 2007:131-2).

The theory of social Darwinism, a philosophy popularized in America by British theorist Herbert Spencer, believed that the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin could be applied to humanity. Society evolved and inevitably improved through a process of competition. In Spencer’s terms, competition resulted in ‘**survival of the fittest**’, ensuring the progress of the human race. In America, at the Gilded age the term

was used by John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie as captains of industry to justify laissez-faire capitalism. Moreover, social Darwinism demanded that government not interfere with business and allow it to compete in a natural way. And the accumulation of extreme wealth is part of the natural evolutionary process, which, in the end, benefits all of society (Greenwood, 2000:20-1).

**Laissez-Faire.** Economics in America is familiar with the concept of capitalism. The evolution industry arising around 18th century was also in shaping American Capitalism system. America becomes a big nation from the South's plantation and the North's Industry. It means America begins with agriculture areas supported by industrial areas in the North. The consequences of this industrial revolution at that time would change irrevocably human labor, consumption, family structure, social structure, and even the very soul and thoughts of the individual. In 1750, the European economy was overwhelmingly an agricultural economy. The European economy, though, had become a global economy.

The growth of European economics also influenced Economic figure like Adam Smith who is well-known his "Laissez-Faire" theory. It means allowing industry to be free from state intervention, especially restrictions in the form of tariffs and government monopolies. it broadly implies "let it be", or "leave it alone." first used the metaphor of an "invisible hand" in his book *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* to describe the unintentional effects of economic self organization from economic self interest- Some have characterized this metaphor as one for *laissez-faire*.

Era of the Enlightenment contributed the value of individualism in American capitalism. The Enlightenment is the name given to an intellectual and philosophical movement that developed in eighteenth-century Europe and is characterized by its belief that reason, not superstition or the authority of unexamined tradition, can solve all of the problems of humanity. It is used interchangeably with the phrase Age of Reason. Progress through reason and science is a central theme of Enlightenment thinking. Enlightenment thinkers rejected the idea that religion can be source of truth, and believed instead that the application of reason to the evidence of the senses is the sole of the truth (Kohl, 1992:60).

## **THE PURSUIT OF THE HAPPINESS ALA AMERICA AND INDONESIA**

Where is happiness. This is a question that has always confused people. Some people think so and thus expect to find happiness in wealth and luxury. Happiness is often defined as pleasure and material satisfaction. It is characterized by good fortune and intense joy. Happiness becomes a loose concept and means different thing to different people. Aristotle, who paved the way for secularism maintains that happiness consists of good birth, good health, good look, good reputation, good friends, good money and goodness. Contrary to his pupil, Plato is doubtful about happiness: once you have happiness you will see misery. You seek happiness and yet you never feel you have it. In short, happiness is the paradise of dreams that all mankind seek.

Every individual in a larger issue has a concept of happiness and has a way to pursue it. American pursuit of happiness falls into two categories, first the religious hope and second the secular dreams. From the time of the first settlers through the colonial time, the revolution, the Civil War, up to the modern time the Americans have a dream in pursuing happiness which is often called the American Dream. They seek for freedom to embrace any religion and belief without any oppression, freedom to express their ideals and thought and freedom from poverty and suppression.

The first American religious pursuit of happiness can be traced back to the Pilgrim and the Puritan, the first settlers in New England . They were a group of Protestants who were hunted and persecuted in England and had to seek refuge in Leiden, Holland around 1608 – 1610. When they learned of a New World where they could be free from persecution, they embarked on the legendary May Flower and reached New England and survived to build a city upon a hill. When John Winthrop and his followers dreamt of a city upon a hill, a “model” for Christian community, he envisioned a group of men and women working together for the common good.

As mentioned above there are at least two kinds of secular happiness that the Americans had been pursuing. First they believe that happiness can be achieved by acquiring the freedom of thought and equality in rights and second by achieving the dreams of a better life with wealth and being freed from poverty.

Since the definition of happiness given in Western literature lack spiritual and religious dimensions, people tend to believe that they will experience happiness only in this world. Consequently, they believe that paradise must be built in this world. They consciously or unconsciously attempted to create heaven for themselves in this worldly

life assuming that paradise in hereafter is merely a myth designed for the weak. This indicates that religion has no significant role in determining the happiness of human being.

Western conception of happiness depends on so much upon material condition of a person. Aristotle followed by most contemporary social scientists and philosophers agree that happiness is psychological condition which depends on sensual satisfaction. According to this view, without material contentment no person can be happy.

Meanwhile Indonesia is home to more Muslims than any other country in the world. For Indonesian people who mostly are Muslims, secularism is supposed as a threat. In their views, philosophers and social scientists who discussed happiness without reference to religious guidance are offering bewilderment and confusion to other people. It is easier to discuss that some people are happy or unhappy, in a narrow sense, but to tell that there is a clear road to happiness is quite challenging and requires comprehensive study. Without religion and spirituality there is no objective happiness. People cannot attain true happiness without religious guidance. What they may attain is only a subjective and temporal happiness.

Religion plays an important role in defining human life. Religion, not only religion but also a true religion of God, can guide us in attaining happiness in this world and hereafter. Without Divine guidance human being will be lost in confusing and gone astray. Divine guidance is needed owing to the fact that human knowledge is limited compared to Divine wisdom.

Moreover, a way of life based purely on human reason, such as materialism and secular humanism is proven to be destructive. The United States of America, the richest country in the world, has not achieved happiness for its people despite its wealth, its skyscrapers, spacecraft, and abundant income. Even one of its thinker stated, "Life in New York is a beautiful cover of a case of distress and hardship!" (Al-Qaradawi, 2001:34).

Thus, abundant wealth does not necessarily bring happiness, nor is it the essential element in its achievement. Rather, it often occurs that abundant wealth is a cause of tribulation in this worldly life before the Hereafter. That is why Allah the Almighty says about a group of hypocrites, *'Let not their wealth nor their (following in)*

*Sons dazzle thee: in reality Allah's plan is to punish them with these things in this life'* (Al-Tawbah: 55). Punishment here refers to hardship, suffering, pain, grief, and illness.

Religion tells us that wealth and worldly satisfaction not be our goal in life but the pleasure (*ridha*) of God. That appearance should not be a parameter but one's heart. The Prophet tells us that a truly wealthy person is the one with contentedness (*qana'ah*) or *ghina al-nafs*. God tells us that this worldly life is not the end, it is only like a bridge to get into the eternal life (hereafter), wherein we are accountable and be punished or rewarded for our deed.

With this mind a person will not be desperate to build his paradise in this world because if he is good he is certain to get into the real paradise in hereafter. And if he chooses to be a bad person he has opportunity to repent and ask God's forgiveness. Religion emphasizes that human being must choose to be a good person otherwise his life, both in this world and in hereafter, will be miserable.

Thus, happiness is not in having abundant wealth, or in enjoying power and prestige, or in having a large number of children, or in gaining benefits and profit, or in material science. Happiness is an abstract thing that cannot be seen by the eye, measured by quantity, stored ion cases, or bought by money. It is something that man feels in the form of purity of the soul, tranquility of the heart, and peace of mind. It is something that springs from within man and is not imported from outside.

## **GLOBALIZATION AND CULTURE**

Globalization is essentially an encounter of cultures. Globalization becomes a problem when the crossing boundaries is an intrusion trespassing on cultures rather than a friendly meeting among them. This means that the critical reaction of philosophy by which globalization is vested with human and comprehensive dimensions needs to occur within the context of culture. Culture is the meeting point of globalization and philosophy.

Society is composed of individuals and groups that share a common history, traditions, and experiences. Culture provides the blueprint for how people think, feel, and behave in society. A culture imposes rules and order on its members by providing patterns that help them know the meaning of their behavior. Members of the same cultural group understand the subtitles of their shared language, nonverbal communications, and ways of thinking and knowing. But they often misread the cultural

cues of other groups, a problem that can lead to mis-communications and misunderstandings in society and the classroom (Johnson, 2005:45).

Culture is learned, shared, adapted and dynamic. Students learn their culture through **enculturation**. It is the process of learning the characteristics and behaviors of the culture of the group to which one belongs. Parents so well and so early in life that they have difficulty accepting different, but just as appropriate, ways of behaving and thinking. But when people live and actively participate in a second culture, they begin to see more clearly their own unique cultural patterns. Understanding cultural differences and learning to recognize when students do not share your own cultural patterns are critical steps in the provision of an equitable learning environment. Therefore, it is important to learn about your own culture as well as others (44).

Over time the relationship of groups to society gives a nuance of terms in culture. Assimilation, discrimination, prejudice, acculturation, pluralism, cultural choice, cultural relativism and so forth. The following paragraphs are still by borrowing the writing of Johnson (2005:45-8). **Assimilation** is a process by which an immigrant group or culturally distinct group is incorporated into the mainstream culture. The group either adopts the culture of the dominant group as its own or interacts with it in a way that forges a new or different culture that is shared by both groups. The first step involves learning the cultural patterns of the dominant group. The final stage of assimilation is structural assimilation. At this stage, members of the immigrant or culturally distinct group interact with the mainstream group at all levels, including marriage. They no longer encounter prejudice or discrimination and share equally in the benefits of society.

**Discrimination** is individual or institutional practices that exclude members of a group from certain rights, opportunities, or benefits. **Acculturation** is the process of learning the dominant culture through immersion, is the prevailing strategy. **Pluralism** exists in societies in which the maintenance of distinct cultural patterns, including languages, is valued and promoted as parallel and equal to the dominant culture in society. Groups may be segregated, but they participate somewhat equally in politics, economics, and education. In some cases, groups have been able to establish and maintain their own political, economic, and educational systems (Ibid,48-9).

Even pluralism in its ideal form does not exist in the United States at this time. Although diversity does exist, parity and equality between groups do not. For example, some groups choose to maintain their native culture, religion, and language. This goal is more likely to be attained if families live in communities where there is a fairly large concentration of others from a similar cultural background: Little Italy, Chinatown, Harlem, East Los Angeles and Amish communities provide these settings.

Meanwhile **cultural choice** is the freedom to choose and adapt the characteristics from one's own and other cultures in developing one's own cultural identity. Early in the twenty-first century, diversity in the United States is increasing. Some immigrants plan to assimilate into the dominant culture as soon as possible. They choose to adopt the new culture and shed the old. Others do not want to shed their unique cultural identity and patterns in order to be successful members of society. Many learn to be bicultural and bilingual, bridging two cultures and learning when it is appropriate to use the patterns of each. Others do not have a choice. Ideally, we could choose to assimilate, maintain our native culture, or become bicultural or multicultural and function effectively in more than one culture. Under cultural choice, society supports these choices and does not value one choice more than another or discriminate on the basis of group membership (50). And the last is **cultural relativism** which is a way of looking at a different culture by using its culture as a yard of stick.

### **AMERICAN GLOBALIZATION IN OUR HOME: A PERSPECTIVE**

America and its alliances which adopt capitalism and democracy will get big advantages to dominate the world free market. America fully realizes to build big power by creating global industries and strengthening the economic sector as significant factors in society and nation. When America's economy transformed into strong and ready to competitive with others, It needed a broaden market for its products. In fact, America did it for trade and imperialism.

The values and practices of democracy associated with capitalism are equally familiar: they include private ownership of the means of production, the pursuit of profit by self-interested entrepreneurs, and the right to unlimited gain through economic effort. In its ideal formulation, capitalism also stresses on competition among producers, a substantial measure of laissez-faire, and market determination of production, distribution, and economic reward. Certain notions from individualist doctrine and the

so-called Protestant ethic, such as an emphasis on achievement and hard work, are also widely regarded as part of the capitalist creed (Herbert and Zaller, 1984:2).

Those values are to be any America's message to spread them out all over the world. War for America is dedicated for realization and picked dictatorship out, so America can get freedom and democracy as well this world is to be suitable enough. Moreover, America is to be a rule model which must be followed by other nations. Classless is also an illumination of America as multiculturalism nation in Salad bowl, for an example. Furthermore, capitalism ideology stated that humans' drive is to do economic activities. So the orientation of American is materialism. Based on its great experiences, America along with capitalism could give prosperity and peace meanwhile other nations, mainly Europe, were in conflicts and wars at that time. Therefore, America claim that isolation politic is good step to declare "America is a democratic nation separated from Western"

In the late nineteenth century, America stated that liberal trade is the best method not only for its country, but also for international trade. America claimed that the international trade based on free trade will give great prosperity and mutual benefits among nations. The concept of supply and demand adopting domestic economic, will change the humans' egoism to be beneficial social products in inter-relation among nations in the world. International conflicts can be solved by free trade, not as a politic sense, it will bring bad competition, conflicts, and war. Therefore, free trade creates peace, and peace, absolutely, supports trade.

In spreading capitalism out over the world, America introduces free trade and globalization era. A new globalization was born as a new religion, with its challenges and hopes. Every nation admires it and wishes very much to improve their lives. Through World Free Market in 2010, Asean are now proud to tell the world that they live in a globalization era. It is like a cake fresh from the oven, and people have smelled the aroma (because they heard on media that globalization could bring prosperity). But smelling is not enough. They want to get a piece of the cake.

Globalization has to improve the country before people get bored with poverty. At least, we must prepare ourselves in facing this era. It is undeniable fact. Now, one month after the opening of world free market, people only smell the aroma, but they do not get a taste of the cake. "Opportunity-oriented not risk-oriented", I think is a good



start in fighting the globalization in our country. we are not afraid of something, but we have to do something to counter it positively.

Globalization itself is an American product to make a hegemony. America offers us products of democracy and capitalism that can give peace and prosperity is still questionable until now. Globalization itself is a camouflage of capitalism with free trade. Not in order to be alienated from the inter-relation among nations, Indonesia must take and face it. It is very inevitably. Absolutely, Indonesia found difficulties in challenging the globalization era. It was a logical response cause Indonesia got it for once (unprepared).

If we see the success of China and India in facing the era, at least we have good efforts to competitive with them. Only by imitating without considering some aspects, ideology, for an example, it will be dangerous for the next economic climate. At least, in regional area, Indonesia tried liberalizing its economic to attract foreign investors with joining APEC and AFTA. Government believed that by liberalizing markets, industries, and companies, would be competitiveness internationally. But many government's policies were discriminative (not accompanied by certain group / sector from deregulation program). So there were no fair competitions at the time. Company puffed up, not it takes efficiency and competitions but it can control asset and economy sources because of privilege or KKN with the ruling class.

Orientation of globalization is to make division of work for getting efficiency. One indication that Indonesia has abandon workers with low salary in many manufacturing industries (sweatshop) like garment in a global production chain. Female workers dominate in Indonesia. They work in the home and in the fields, often putting in longer hours than the males, but at a fraction of men's pay and without education, training, health, and safety protection. Women are far more likely than men to be displaced by technology, to work for subsistence rather than cash, to be illiterate, and to suffer from malnutrition. China and India have the same experiences in sweatshop firstly, but they can up-grade their industries fast. It is in contrast with Indonesia.

In facing this era, apparently, Indonesia faces many obstacles, moreover Indonesia economies continue to suffer from various economic ills preventing them to take advantages of opportunities offer by globalization and government tends to "taken for granted" . It means that Indonesia lacks for the competitiveness. There are main

obstacles that need to be waved so that Indonesia can take advantage of globalization are such as innovation capacity in high value added industries and services is very weak; oligopolistic structure of the private sector in which a few family owned groups largely dominates the modern segment of the economy; and high rates of unemployment, particularly among young people and people with academic background. How is to accelerate the economic change? Indonesia should take the following steps (alternatives): Defining agents of change; Defining issues and tools to be active; Linking the actors of change in a common strategy to taking advantage of globalization; and Exiting from the vicious circle of low productivity to the virtuous circle of high productivity and competitiveness on the global market

## CONCLUSION

The existence of globalization in this era is inevitably. Alienation from this phenomenon will put aside Indonesia from inter-relation among nations in the world. I am positive by learning some great experiences and histories from big countries will support us to have clear vision as a nation. Until now, Indonesia is still questionable “quo Vadis of Indonesia”. See competitiveness with opportunity oriented not risk oriented. I am sure Indonesia still should (must) keep to learn. Some points that we can learn are such as visioning, positioning, strategy, government policy, and leader. It is absolutely essential that our creative endeavor should be directed towards the formulation of genuinely Indonesian solutions

We also realize that Indonesia is multiculturalism and pluralism supported by the environment of fundamentalism, liberal and moderate. In relation to the existence of other cultural values in our home, absolutely they give positive and negative impacts toward Indonesian culture. In short, we must be selective. But if we claim that our culture itself is the absolute truth, it will trigger conflicts. Not every foreign culture is too bad, but it can motivate us to be more competitive than before.

We must be proud of our culture but we do not want to be any alien in our home. We are like fish in aquarium, the foreigners can see our activities from outside but we cannot see them well. Being selective of other culture is one way to keep our culture alive. After comparing and contrasting with Individualism ala America in a deep meaning, we can learn such as individual freedom, competition, self-reliance, equality

of opportunity, and hard work. If we only still hate extremely other cultures because of the differences, we can lack motivation to competitive with them.

In relation to the pursuit of happiness, no one can deny that the material side (of life) has a role in the achievement of happiness. However, this is not everything, as it is measured by quality not quantity. If happiness were to be a tree whose stem is the human soul and the human heart, then belief in Allah and the Hereafter would be its water, nutrition, air, and light. *Iman* gives man springs of happiness that never diminish, nor can happiness ever be achieved without them. These are the springs of tranquility, security, hope, contentment, and love. We find our happiness in our faith, and our faith is in our heart, and our heart is controlled by our Lord, Allah. This is true happiness, which no human being can give to anyone or take by force from whomever Allah has granted it. It is happiness that one of the righteous believers felt.

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