

CHAPTER 1

Global Strategic Vision: Managing the World

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This essay presents some aspects of a bigger project investigating transnational corporate spatial practices within the context of the problematique of globalization. Specifically, the focus is on ways in which the ideal types of *the* global corporation and the subject of *the* global manager are made up or constructed in the discourse of global management. Source material is drawn from the Anglo-American field of management: management textbooks, management theory books and articles, popular and how-to management books, and business school materials (course descriptions, publicity material, etc.). I am not claiming that representations of *the* global corporation or *the* global manager are translated directly into the actual practices of managers in transnational or global corporations. However, I do argue that the ways these representations are set up are important as they have effects as key elements in a discourse of global management.

This discourse is itself just one element in the larger “discursive constellation” identified as globalization. This constellation includes other key discourses such as those of neoliberal economics (and associated discourses of structural adjustment, devaluation, trade liberalization, and austerity); development; deregulation; and new world orders. This constellation powerfully defines collective political and spatial imaginations. The discursive constellation that is globalization is notorious for depicting globalization as a set of imperatives, often portrayed

as extrasocial (and extraterritorial) in origin (by treating the economy as a separate and originary sphere or by treating technology in the same way), leaving places and populations no choice but to "compete" on its terms. It is important, therefore, to think through how the discursive constellation that is globalization serves to create (or at least enable) the very circumstances it appears to be describing. It is also important to recall that the discursive is fully social (and vice versa) and as such is never a fixed or totally sutured set of social practices. Rather, it is a set of practices that is in flux at the same time that it is structured by power geometries (see Massey 1993). Thus, although the discursive constellation that is globalization might appear as a completed or even hegemonic set of imperatives, it is the (temporary) result of struggles over material and representational practices between different people and groups of people. By taking a closer look at some of the actors that are presumed most powerful in the discursive constellation of globalization, I explore (in a preliminary way) the uncertainties and anxieties at the heart of globalization.

The discourse of global management that is central to globalization may be seen, following Foucault, as a strategy of power. Like any other strategy of power, this one works by being deployed spatially: it is one element in a bundle of significant strategies of power that at once discursively and materially produce space. The idea of "producing space" signals a poststructuralist theorization of space, drawn largely from the ideas of Henri Lefebvre (1991), in which space is seen as a fully social "thing" that is in no sense prediscursive (cf. Harvey 1989; Natter and Jones 1993). Societies, through spatial practices, "secrete" their spaces. Following Lefebvre, spatial practices may be seen as including "production and reproduction, and entailing the daily routines and flows that secrete communications and transport networks, produce urban hierarchies, and differentiate public and private spaces" (Roberts and Schein 1995, 172). Spatial practices are themselves partly defined by (and work to define) what Lefebvre identifies as representations of space (maps, charts, and any ways of laying out or "knowing" space in an instrumental way) and representational spaces (more "imaginative"

spaces reliant on nonverbal symbols and signs, for example, art and film). Representational practices, then, are spatial; and spatial practices are representational (see Lefebvre 1991, 1-67; Harvey 1989, 256-78; Roberts and Schein 1993).

Specifically, in the case of global management, as well as in globalization more broadly, scalar restructuring is depicted as a set of imperatives in which the global is demarcated as the domain of capital in a simplified representation of the world that seems to cast most persons, places, and institutions into unambiguous and largely reactive roles (cf. Appadurai 1990; Smith 1993; Swyngedouw 1997 on scale). In contradiction, the global corporation and the global manager are constructed as strategic actors and shapers of world space. As Lefebvre noted with regard to what he termed "political ideologies,"

such ideologies relate to space in a most significant way, because they intervene in space in the form of *strategies*. Their effectiveness in this role—and especially a new development, the fact that worldwide strategies are now seeking to generate global space, their *own* space, and to set it up as absolute—is another reason, and by no means an insignificant one, for developing a new concept of space. (1991, 105; emphasis in original)

This essay aims to contribute to an intervention in these sorts of ideological scriptings of world space and politics (cf. Gibson-Graham 1996). It is an examination of a few of the threads in the discourse of global management. First, the ideal type of the *global corporation* is investigated. Barner and Cavanagh have called global corporations "the midwives of the new world economy" (1994, 15). In the management discourse, this supposedly new organizational form is seen as at once driven by the (extrasocial, etc.) imperatives of globalization, and as driving that process. In management discourse, the global corporation is seen as so different from its predecessors that it requires new techniques of management. The field of *global strategic management* has arisen to address this issue and focuses on how the volatile and risky world economy can

be controlled and "managed." As such, global strategic management is a part of contemporary attempts at government in the broadest sense (see Foucault 1991). Changing styles and techniques of government/management can only be realized through the creation of a new type of manager—the *new global manager*. This is the supposedly new and different subject who can enact global strategic management and lead the global corporation in its drive for competitive advantage. I will argue that this new person is a key subject in the discursive constellation of globalization. The new global manager may be seen, however, as a product more of the desire to manage an unruly world and anxieties about that challenge than of a surefooted and certain hegemonic thing called globalization or even "capitalism" (see Gibson-Graham 1996). In management discourse, the desire to manage is depicted as realized through *global strategic vision*—an essential and distinguishing attribute of the true global manager. What exactly this vision might mean will be addressed—particularly as it entails representations of space and spatial practices.

Through these beginnings, then, "globalization" might be rendered less steady. I join J. K. Gibson-Graham in rejecting "globalization as the inevitable inscription of capitalism" (ibid., 139).

The Global Corporation

In the light of what has just been sketched out, it should seem reasonable not to present an empirical assessment of the validity of the corporate claims to globality. Let me note, however, that I am sympathetic to those who point out that there are not that many really global corporations—that the purported "global reach" is, more often than not, not actually global; that a firm might be "globalized" yet not do business in any part of Africa save perhaps South Africa; that although a firm might have the majority of its workers outside its home country, it still is identified as a corporate citizen of that homebase, and so on and so forth. Here, however, I am mostly concerned with how the business literature represents, and to a degree invents, the global corporation.

It would be wrong to claim that in the business literature there is an agreed-upon single idea of what the global corporation is. The defining features of the global corporation remain under discussion in business schools and management literatures. Sometimes a stage-like model is implied. Such a developmental model would have the firm progress or develop through stages—national, international, then multinational to transnational—ending up at the highest stage: global. However, there is actually little agreement on nomenclature and there are many characterizations of emerging organizational forms. Nonetheless, it is possible to identify some recurrent themes in the business literature concerning key necessary or desirable attributes of the global firm. These include the following:

1. The ability to manage spatially strung-out production/consumption (or value-adding) chains. From raw materials sources to final merchandising and servicing can be a chain that has links in all corners of the globe.
2. This ability is often portrayed as involving a certain commitment to a supranational strategy. Sylvia Ostry notes: "the idea of a global firm is one operating on a world scale and on the basis of a worldwide, rather than a multicountry strategy" (1990, 97). A world-scale strategy is difficult to execute with multicountry organizational structures, so a global corporation is depicted as having a different sort of structure. Percy Barnevik, president and CEO of ABB (Asea Brown Boveri), explains the decentering and denationalization of his company:

ABB is a company with no geographic center, no national axis to grind. We are a federation of national companies with a global coordination center. Are we a Swiss company? Our headquarters is in Zurich, but only 100 professionals work at headquarters and we will not increase that number. Are we a Swedish company? I'm the CEO, and I was born and educated in Sweden. But our headquarters is not in Sweden, and only two of the eight members of the board of directors are Swedes. Perhaps we are an American

company. We report our financial results in US dollars, and English is ABB's official language. We conduct all high-level meetings in English.

My point is that ABB is none of those things—and all of those things. We are not homeless. We are a company with many homes. (In Taylor 1992, 69)

The corporate structure of the (flexible) global firm is often represented pictorially as the result of an organizational shift from *hierarchy* to *network* or *web*, and from *verticality* to *horizontality*. Terms to describe, and pictorial representations of, the supposedly emergent network organizational form of global corporations have multiplied. For example: Malone and Rockart (1993) write of new “adhocracies” and “answer networks”; Eccles and Nolan (1993) of “informal networks floating on formal hierarchies”; and Konsynski and Karimi (1993) of “integrated-network organizational structure.” A typical example of the shift, in this case from hierarchy to the amoeba model of Kazuo Inamori, is shown in Figure 1.1 taken from Nelson's book *Managing Globally* (1994). This shift in corporate form may be seen in the context of longer-term and broader shifts in the organization and representation of economic systems in general (hierarchy to network). Such a shift was appraised by Susan Buck-Morss (1995) as part of her broader project on the invention of “the economy.”

3. Such networks or horizontal organizational structures are built around communications infrastructure. Massive investments in the machinery and personnel to organize, process, and transmit huge quantities of information—to generate various sorts of knowledges—are a key feature of the global corporation (cf. Thrift 1998).
4. The “many homes” claimed by ABB in the quotation above signal an additional important attribute of the global firm. This one has attained the status of a mantra in the business school literature; it is the ability to be simultaneously global and local. Preston Townley, president and CEO of the Conference Board, stated

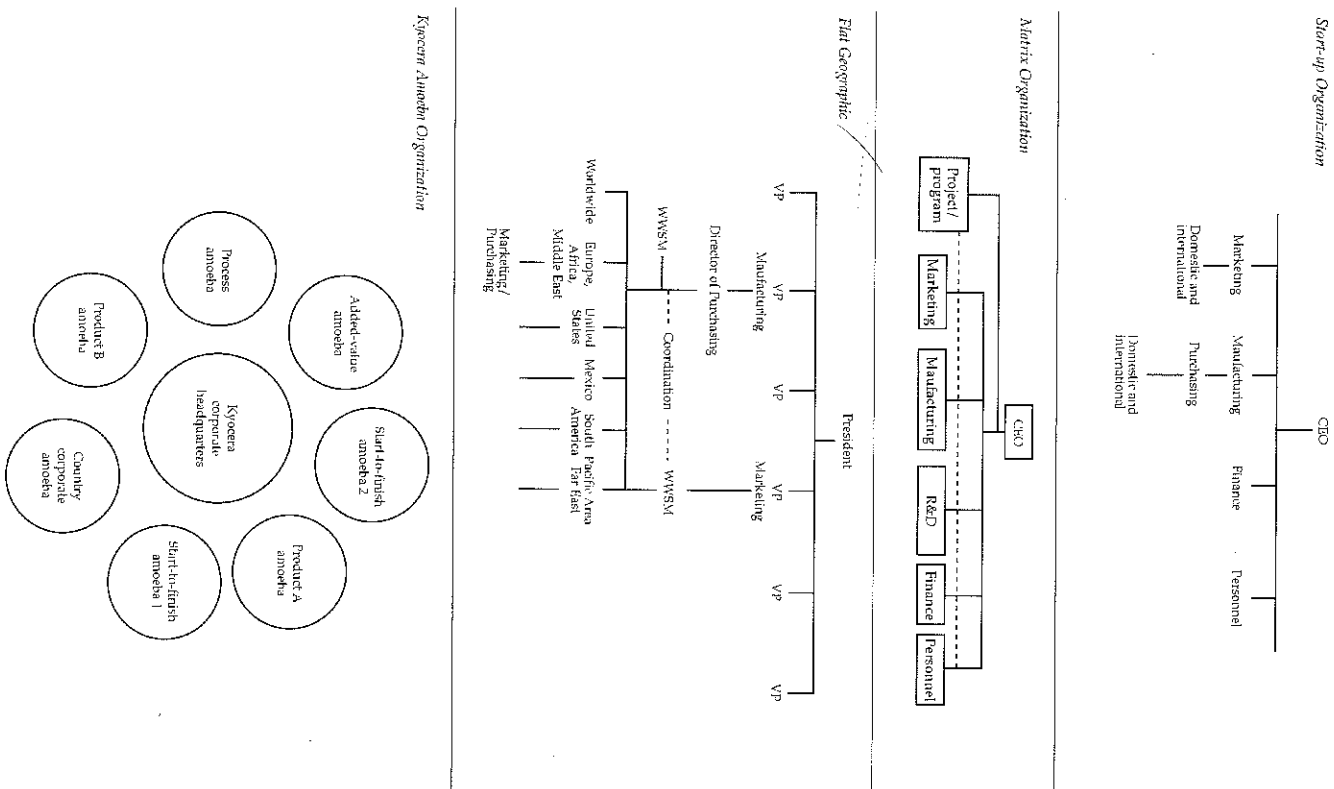


Figure 1.1. Hierarchy to amoeba. Reprinted with permission from Dr. Carl A. Nelson, author of *Managing Globally: A Complete Guide to Competing Worldwide*, and from the *Global Manager* series by Thompson Learning.

bluntly, "global' thinks about the world in total *and* about its parts in particular" (1991, 5; emphasis added). This ability of global firms to know the particularities of local markets, to be able to "act like an insider" when doing business in the various markets around the globe, is what Akio Morita, chairman of Sony Corporation, meant by his oft-quoted "global localization." This means creating a structure that can be flexible and responsive to changing circumstances—be they global or local.

5. Flexibility is not just a strategy in the face of changes across space. Flexibility is seen as the essential attribute in a world economy of tremendous uncertainty. In operating and managing strung-out production chains, the global firm faces a host of risks and volatilities that make flexibility essential. Temporal as well as spatial variations have been very significant factors in the emergence of flexibility as the key to success for, and the quintessential characteristic of, the global firm. Bruce Kogut of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School noted in an early paper on global management strategies:

the unique content of a *global* versus a purely domestic strategy lies less in the methods to design long-term strategic plans than in the construction of flexibility which permits a firm to exploit the uncertainty over future changes in exchange rates, competitive moves, or government policy. This flexibility can be attained, for example, by building excess capacity into dispersed sourcing platforms or by arbitraging between different tax regimes. In short, flexibility may be gained by decreasing the firm's dependence on assets already in place. (Kogut 1985, 27; emphasis in original)

Indeed, the rise of strategic management theory as a subdiscipline coincides with the increasing volatility in the world economy faced by U.S. corporations pursuing multinationalization. Flexibility is a term almost as "catchall" as globalization and, as Andrew Sayer and Richard Walker note, this term should also be approached

critically as it is slippery, "double-edged and value-laden," and denotes processes with "different political interests at stake" (Sayer and Walker 1992, 198). In the case here, flexibility may be seen as an often vague strategic goal.

Most writers agree that global firms do not have to be huge. Walter Wriston, former CEO of Citicorp, for example, notes: "[s]cale alone is not enough. You have to combine financial strength, market position, and technology leadership with an organizational focus on speed, agility, and simplicity" (Wriston 1992, 8).

So, this decentered organizational structure—flexible enough to be able to take advantage of the uneven topographies of all sorts and of the volatility in the key variables—is crucial. It should be noted, of course, that this is not all brand new, and that what Doreen Massey (1993) calls the "power geometry" underlying these changing representations may be coalescing in quite familiar ways. In his book *Company Man*, Anthony Sampson quotes Bertil Nordquist, an ABB engineer, as saying of Barnevik's corporation: "ABB is not as decentralized as it may appear. Responsibility has been decentralized—but not power" (Sampson 1995, 312).

Global Strategic Management

Rethinking the structure of the multinational firm as it has become the "global corporation" has entailed a concomitant rethinking of the practices of management best suited to running such an organization.

Ideas and practices of management are produced in popular, everyday, corporate, and academic contexts (to name but a few). Nigel Thrift has done some work delineating elements in what he calls the "cultural circuit of capital" that is "responsible for the production and distribution of managerial knowledge to managers" (1998, 42). Thrift identifies three key loci for the production and distribution of "business knowledge": academia (especially business schools), management consultants, and management gurus. These institutional categories are actually very interrelated. For example, 30 percent of Wharton's graduating class of 1997 gained employment in consulting (slightly ahead of the 24.5

percent who ended up in investment banking) (see Wharton 2000). Faculty at business schools are often also consultants (independent or for one of the big and growing firms such as Accenture [formerly Anderson], McKinsey, or PricewaterhouseCoopers [see Ramsay 1996], and even gurus (e.g., Rosabeth Moss Kanter holds an endowed chair at the Harvard Business School). Furthermore, business schools enter into corporate partnerships and corporations establish their own universities (Prahald 1990; cf. Thrift 1998).

Motorola University was established in 1989. It is described as the strategic learning organization of the corporation, complementing the training that takes place in Motorola's business groups. Motorola University is organized into regions and colleges with design teams to serve its customer base efficiently. The University manages 7 learning facilities around the world and has 20 offices in 13 countries on 5 continents.

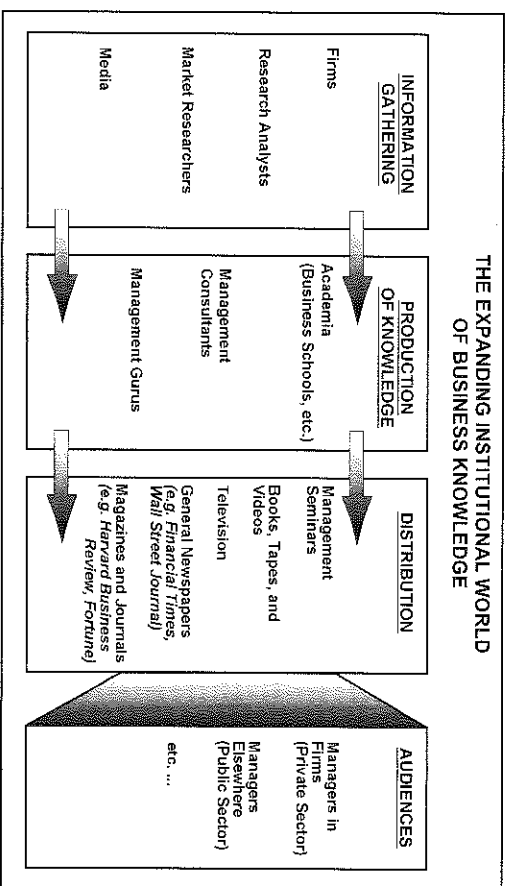


Figure 1.2. Nigel Thrift's cultural circuit of capital. Originally published in *An Unruly World? Globalization, Governance, and Geography*, edited by Andrew Herod. Geaoid Ó Tuathail, and Susan M. Roberts (New York: Routledge, 1998). Reprinted with permission from Routledge/Taylor and Francis.

Motorola University is staffed with a workforce of 400 professionals. A flex force of 700 writers, developers, translators, and instructors provide service on an as-needed basis. (Motorola 1997)

Motorola University has its own museum and runs the Motorola University Bookstore and administers the Motorola University Press.

University business schools, like corporations, read their environments and recognize shifts in their context. In the 1990s, in the United States and Europe (at least) the top business schools regared their popular MBA programs in an attempt to cater to the perceived demand for the skills of global management demanded by the global corporation. For example, in 1990 the University of Michigan's Business School's Professor Noel Tichy noted that just as corporations have to undergo massive restructuring to compete in the new globalized world of volatility and uncertainty, so do business schools: "The unfreezing of the faculty from old ways of doing research and teaching will be no easy task and the requirements for global transformational leadership in our business schools is as serious an agenda as for business" (Tichy 1990, 3). Michigan's Business School has developed a Global Leadership Program designed to meet the requirements of graduates who "will require new and diverse skills to facilitate their professional roles as members of *management teams* operating in a virtually *borderless world*" (Barnett 1990, 19, emphasis in original). The dean of Stanford's Graduate School of Business noted in a 1997 letter:

At the moment, neither we nor any other business school has developed a body of research or a curriculum that we feel provides adequate conceptual frameworks or teaching materials on global management. We are working to remedy this . . . a distinguished group of our faculty are currently developing a new course—Managing in the Global Economy—that will become a required part of the MBA program next year. (Spence 1997)

Conceptualizing the skills presumed to be needed to run and lead a global corporation has become a central task for many business schools

as the international MBA gains currency in Europe and other regions outside the United States, and even as hot new management topics such as e-commerce and knowledge economies arrive on the curriculum. In addition, U.S. business schools have been forming alliances with business schools in Europe and Asia (typically). For example, through an alliance between the Wharton School and INSEAD, MBA students can take courses at any of four campuses in Philadelphia, San Francisco, Fontainebleau, and Singapore (Wharton 2000).

Managing the global corporation requires a set of global management skills. In general, managing the global corporation requires vast amounts of information of different sorts, processed efficiently and transmitted effectively. Information and informations and communications technologies have become crucial in the assessment and "management" of risks of all sorts (Ewald 1991). Countering, and even profiting from, risk management is a major way in which today's global corporations outcompete one another—a game that has been so highly developed as to have become the underlying premise for international finance today.

The key skills and knowledges seen as central to the tasks of global management are taught and encoded under the label global strategic management (GSM). GSM is now a very significant subfield of management studies. For example, it is a core required course in the MBA program of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School (Wharton 2000).

GSM has grown out of strategic management more generally. Although strategy in management discourse has deep roots (see Knights 1992), contemporary strategic management theory may be seen as arising out of quantitative exercises in "strategic planning" developed in business and management schools in the postwar years (Ansoff 1991). As the 1970s world economy became more volatile and risky, planning and forecasting became at once more important and considerably more difficult. Strategic planning, by corporations and states, is a technique embedded in the whole complex of practices that seek to manage spheres (such as the economy, the population) that Foucault captures in the

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Figure 1.3. Business school advertisements from the Economist.

term *governmentality* (Foucault 1991; see also Knights 1992). Joseph A. Maciariello notes that “management control is the process of ensuring that the human, physical, and technological resources are allocated so as to achieve the overall purpose of an organization” (quoted in Wilson 1991, 119). It is possible to see how an imperative to control may be linked to historically and socially constructed notions of masculinity—a point to which I shall return (cf. Barry and Hazen 1996, 147).

Strategic management theory grew out of strategic planning theory. However, although the two fields share a future orientation, strategic management entails a definitively relational stance for the corporation as it seeks to investigate how a firm can outcompete its rivals in a volatile and risky world economy. There has been a shift away from planning per se and from the strictly quantitative business of modeling and forecasting toward a more “fuzzy” and broader sense of what strategic management is—a shift that one text characterizes as from “planning” to “coping with the unexpected” (Brake, Walker, and Walker 1995, 7). Nonetheless, strategic management is still about attempts to control.

An additional important aspect of strategy is that it is all about gaining “competitive advantage” (an idea of Michael Porter’s [e.g., 1980] that seems to have become almost universally accepted). Thus the concept of “strategy” is relational in an adversarial way—an observation that points toward the military connotations of this practice. More particularly, GSM can be seen to be about devising and enacting spatial strategy, and as such is an intensely geopolitical discourse and practice (cf. Schoenberger 2000). It is not uncommon for their critics to depict transnational corporations as geopolitical actors—specifically as (neo-)imperialists (e.g., Barnett and Cavanagh 1994)—but geopolitics and the trope of imperialism also figure within management discourse itself. Indeed, the Wharton School’s MBA students may take MGMT 715, a course titled “Geopolitics” (Wharton 2000).

Imperial conquerors are often approvingly invoked as role models for the would-be global manager. For example, in their 1993 article in the *International Review of Strategic Management*, Jagdish Parikh and

Fred Neubauer approvingly invoke both Napoleon and Sir Stamford Raffles, commending their abilities to create and communicate “strategic visions.” (I will return to this idea of strategic vision.) Both imperialists are held up as exemplars for the contemporary global manager (Parikh and Neubauer 1993, 110; see also Bennis 1995, 57 on Napoleon). Not only imperialistic but also militaristic, it is a small step from the skills of the “playing field” to those of the battlefield. Indeed, management texts are replete with the vocabulary of warfare. “Weapons,” “strategic arsenals,” and their “deployment” are regular elements of management advice for the corporate executive (Bartlett and Ghoshal 1989, 32). Global strategic management skills are often compared to those of the army commander in chief who plans and executes strategy in conditions of warfare.

Reflecting the 1980s and 1990s U.S. fascination with Japanese management techniques—embedded in a world economy wherein Japanese firms were outcompeting U.S. firms in key markets—Sun Tzu’s military manual has become *The Art of War for Executives* found in airport newsstands and offering, according to the blurb on the cover, “the ancient wisdom of Sun Tzu’s classic text—interpreted for today’s business reader” (Krause 1995).

So, despite the New Age-y rhetoric and the purported shift in management as a practice, GSM—a bundle of ideas, concepts, and practices—which stands at the core of global management, remains uncompromisingly militaristic. As already noted, management is all about control—or at least the desire for control. As Clegg and Palmer put it:

Management, ideally, in so many of its own representations, confers order, reduces uncertainty: it is the capacity to render the uncertain manageable, to conquer space and time with strategic discretion, that marks out the manager. (Clegg and Palmer 1996, 3–4)

Despite the amazing succession of fads in management discourse (leading to some complaints of sensory overload and accusations of “fad surfing”), and their history of poor results, management theories and

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of Sun Tzu's classic text—
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THE ART OF WAR FOR EXECUTIVES

Donald G.
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techniques, such as those under the label GSM, become popular, in large part, because they offer tools for control. Knights has examined the ways Michael Porter's ideas about strategy and competitive advantage have been adopted despite the severe contradictions and failures associated with them:

his [Porter's] work is attractive to management also because it contributes to the transformation of management practice into an expertise that is supported by knowledge. As a rational basis for managerial prerogative, this expertise provides some illusion of control, legitimacy, and security in the face of uncertainty. It feeds on the representations of reason and rationality, fact and truth that reflect and reproduce particular "masculine" conceptions of reality. (Knights 1992, 527)

We can, then, see management as a strategy of power. As Clegg and Palmer point out, the rhetoric of management theory "provides not just a legitimization but the *raison d'être* for what it is that some people are able to do to some other people" (1996, 3). On the basis of her empirical studies of corporate culture, Erica Schoenberger takes this point a step further when she observes that "the identities of top managers are intimately caught up in the fact and the sense of power" (1997, 138). However, in considering exactly what *kind* of power top managers enjoy, Schoenberger notes that

one conventional candidate would be immediate power over other people: the ability to tell others what to do, what their status and position in the division of labor are, what their rights and responsibilities are. But I would like to suggest that, for the highest levels of management, this power of being the boss is less vital than others of a more conceptual and strategic nature.

More centrally involved is the exercise of a strategic imagination. By this I mean the power to envision how the world should be and to establish the processes of valuation by which both the manager himself and all others are measured. (Ibid., 142)

Figure 1.4. Book cover: *The Art of War for Executives*.

Thus, the adoption of GSM or any type of management knowledge-practice bundle by managers is not just a matter of how a corporation is run. It is also a matter of the relative position of, and very definitions of, those managers themselves and, hence, of others. GSM is not just about techniques a manager can adopt; rather, GSM entails the global manager acting in a distinct way—indeed, being a distinct type of manager, a distinct type of person. Knights pointed out that when managers at all levels participate in implementing a particular management strategy, they at the same time “collaborate in the constitution, or *self-formation*, of their own identity as *subjects of strategy*” (1992, 528; emphasis added). Schoenberger sees changes in the strategic directions of firms as necessarily entailing difficult changes in the nature of top managers—in her words, a “rethinking” of “their own identities” (1997, 145; see also 147). GSM is about “reimagining the manager” and is thus a project of “constituting certain sorts of persons” (du Gay 1996, 21). As business schools, management gurus, consultancies, and other institutional sites are engaged in (re)producing the discourse of global (strategic) management, so too are they engaged in the fashioning of new subjects—global managers.

The Global Manager

The discourses of the global corporation as an innovative organizational form and of GSM as the appropriate way to run a competitive global corporation are moments in the circuits constituting new types of subjects. The most obvious new subject is the “global manager” himself. McKinsey management consultant Kenichi Ohmae (1990) argues that by “decentering” the global firm, “the headquarters mentality” will be got rid of. He claims that a corporation that has “decomposed its center” is best staffed by neutral “equidistant managers.” The neutrality is a denationalization of corporate structure, but also of the mentality of personnel. “You really have to believe, deep down, that people may work ‘in’ different national environments but are not ‘of’ them. What they are ‘of’ is the global corporation” (Ohmae 1990, 96). Here, one can see clearly the way in which this discourse and its associated practices imply

(or demand) the creation of new subjects via a thorough deconstruction of citizenship and national-identity categories.

In his landmark article “Who Is Them?” in the *Harvard Business Review* Robert Reich described the new global manager and his context:

Gone are the company town, the huge local labor force, the monolithic factory, and the giant, vertically integrated corporation that dominated the entire region. Vanishing too are the paternalistic corporate heads who used to feel a sense of responsibility for their local community. Emerging in their place is the *new global manager*, driven by the irrefutable logic of global capitalism to seek higher profits, enhanced market leadership and an improved stock price. *The playing field is the world.* (Reich 1991, 80; emphasis added)

This “new global manager” who is a supercapitalist, unfettered by “a sense of responsibility,” plays the global management game on a sports field that is the world. It is clear, however, from a perusal of the business section of any bookstore that many difficulties are encountered in actually playing the global game. Many works are devoted to assisting the global manager to become a successful member of the transnational cosmopolitan business elite—at home in different cultures and able to think globally and at the same time to act appropriately locally. There is a mini-industry helping managers avoid cultural gaffes and “bridge cultural gaps.” One contributor to this mini-industry observes that “[d]espite the sophistication that managers call on in dealing with people, many of them still make cultural mistakes in conducting business” (Dickson 1983, 7).

However, this new global manager is meant to be able to recognize cultural difference (or more likely diversity), but also to rise above such difficulties. He (and it is a he) is a new man. The sorts of stark dualistic depictions of old and new that characterize management texts on corporate form and management practices also animate the discursive construction of the new global manager, who is depicted as an entirely different sort of person than an old-style traditional manager. For example,

the Training Management Corporation offers a course called "The Effective Global Manager" in which the table in Figure 1.5 is used to highlight the differences between the traditional manager and the global manager. The defining qualities of the new subject the "global manager" have been summed up by two of the most influential academics writing on this topic in their article in the *Harvard Business Review* titled "What Is a Global Manager?" They call the global manager a "global business manager" and say that there are three roles "at the core" of such a person's job. The global manager is to be "the *strategist* for his or her organization, the *architect* of its worldwide asset and resource configuration, and the *coordinator* of transactions across national borders" (Bartlett and Ghoshal 1992, 125). They note that although there are only a few such persons needed by each corporation, "the particular qualities necessary for such positions remain in short supply" (ibid., 131).

Both Bartlett and Ghoshal are employed by business schools (Harvard and INSEAD)—key institutional nodes in the discursive circuits that coproduce global management and global managers. The imperative for business schools to "produce" or "develop" a new sort of manager is directly acknowledged. Barnett of Michigan's Business School, for example, notes that

managing global organizations demands a brand of leadership, imagination, determination, and sense of duty that most MBAs have not been taught before . . . The MBAs of the 1990s must have a different vision and a new set of values, skills, and abilities than earlier generations of students. (Barnett 1990, 22)

Thomas P. Gerrity, dean of the Wharton School, promotes his school's MBA program as "designed to develop renaissance leaders." The context for the school's efforts is depicted thus:

It is clear that the old models of producing either general managers or functional specialists are no longer adequate in today's environment. What is needed is truly broad-gauged leaders. These are individuals who can

discuss the nuts and bolts of operations with an employee on the line and a few hours later talk corporate strategy with the board of directors. They can review European marketing plans over breakfast in Paris and hold their own with a product design team in Chicago over dinner. They have simultaneously mastered both the art and the science, the detail and the big picture, the local culture and the global context. They are true "renaissance leaders." (Gerrity 1998)

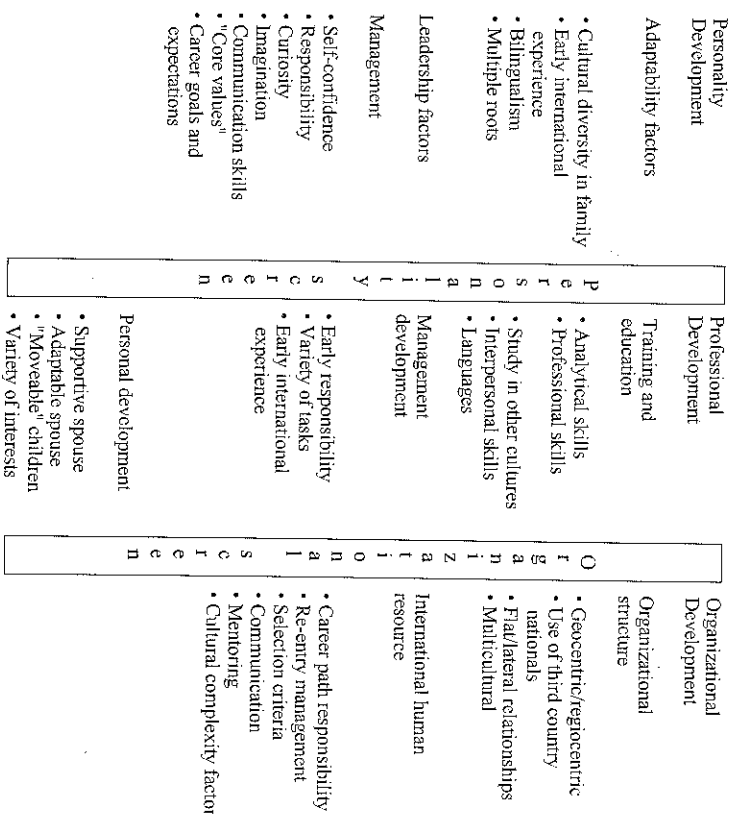


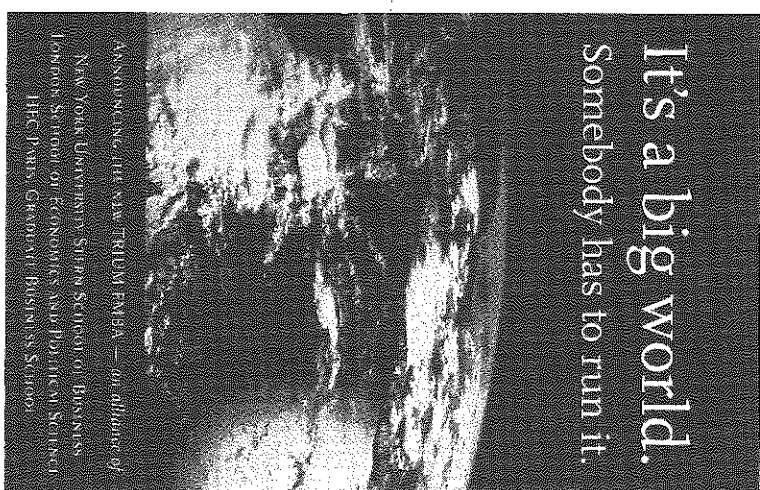
Figure 1.5. Factors contributing to development of global managers. Reprinted from *Doing Business Internationally* by Terence Brake, Daniela Medina Walker, and Thomas Walker (Burr Ridge, Ill.: Irwin Professional Publishers, 1995), by permission of The McGraw-Hill Companies. Adapted from Spyros G. Makridakis and Associates, *Single Market Europe: Opportunities and Challenges for Businesses* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991).

These are renaissance leaders who can aspire to "run the world." "The attribute of leadership is so central to the identity of the global manager that management and leadership are often treated as the same thing" (Sashkin 1992, 156). Thus, for example, the Wharton School notes a "Global Perspective" as one of the five necessary features of a person prepared "for leadership" (Wharton 2000).

A genealogy of the concept of leadership as it is deployed in the management discourse would likely entail considering the emphasis on its analysis in military training institutes such as West Point. The leadership concept is balanced precariously between nature and nurture in the management discourse. Many of the best-sellers by successful businessmen/managers (Lee Iaccoca, Donald Trump, etc.) insist on the inborn, often intangible, personal qualities of the successful manager-leader, whereas business schools must insist that such qualities can, at least if not be "produced," be "developed" in their human students.

Global Strategic Vision

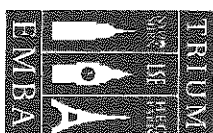
The "art" of GSM rests on specific geopolitical skills: being able to think and see globally. The global manager must, then, be able to see and think globally. Business consultant and writer Lawrence Tuller states unequivocally: "Any company expecting to survive in the intensely competitive environment of the 21st century must become global. The starting point is to . . . develop a *global mentality*" (1991, 23; emphasis added). Other writers employ the term *global mind-set*. For example, Brake, Walker, and Walker state, "The fundamental corporate challenge is to develop and transform the collective and individual mindset in the management ranks by *broadening the manager's view of the world* and business (1995, 231; emphasis added). They define the global mind-set as "to constantly scan and interpret the world from a broad perspective, looking for unexpected trends and opportunities. The capacity to envision the future direction in an increasingly complex environment" (ibid., 232). Noel M. Tichy ranks the possession of a "global mind-set" first among the four attributes he identifies as necessary in the "global business leader" (Tichy 1990, 2).



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Figure 1.6. Advertisement from the *Economist*.

The adoption of a global mind-set is, in the literature, bound up in (indeed often equated with) the development of a particular “world-view” (Garten 2000). This worldview is purportedly one that is “broad” (Gerritty 1998), able to take in the world. This is the precondition for being able to dream global dreams (Barnet and Cavanagh 1994) and, importantly, to enact those dreams. The global mind-set acts as a cor-porate (re)framing of the world. This is a strategy that entails visuali-zation of world space. It is salutary to recall that in their now-classic 1974 study of multinational corporations, *Global Reach*, Richard Barnet and Ronald Müller recognized that “the most revolutionary aspect of the planetary enterprise is not its size but its *worldview*” (1974, 15; emphasis added).

<i>Traditional Manager Mind-set</i>	<i>Global Manager Mind-set</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow • Functional • Specialized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad • Cross-functional • Cross-cultural
Perspective	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forces to be prioritized • Eliminate conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contradictions to be balanced • Conflict as opportunity
Organizational Life	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust hierarchical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust networked processes
Dealing with Unexpected	
Working Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural self-awareness • Teamwork
Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create change • Change as opportunity
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifelong learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal self-awareness • Individual mastery • Avoid surprises • Change as threat 	
Master specific knowledge/skills	

Figure 1.7. Traditional versus global mind-sets. Reprinted from *Doing Business Internationally* by Terence Brake, Daniela Medina Walker, and Thomas Walker (Burr Ridge, Ill.: Irwin Professional Publishers, 1995), by permission of The McGraw-Hill Companies. Copyright Training Management Corporation (TMC), originally published in *The Effective Global Manager* seminar and course book (Princeton, N.J.: TMC, 1993).

The idea of vision is absolutely central to the discourse of global management and the person of the global manager. Vision is meant in several ways. It implies an ability to see, to envision, global space. It also connotes an ability to see far ahead into the future, so a global manager is expected to have in his head a picture of the future of the corporation—an ideal future and a clear sense of direction for the corporation. This is to be differentiated from mere strategic planning; according to one article, “a vision is: *a future to be created*, and *not* a forecast” (Parkh and Neubauer 1993, 105; emphasis in original). Vision also has associations with being visionary: the idea of being able to see something that most people cannot—some sort of supernatural experience only a few have access to. All these connotations are played with in the business literature. And it is through this last—about vision being the property of a select few—that depictions of the new global manager connect with the business literature on leadership.

Leadership is an essential quality of the global manager because not only does he have a strategic vision, he absolutely *must* be able to communicate it (see Bennis 1995). The American Graduate School of International Management—known as Thunderbird—in Arizona notes, in publicity materials for its Global Leadership Certificate, that the required introductory course on leadership “covers the key components of leadership, including *development and communication of vision, the translation of vision into action* and the need for leaders to learn” (Thunderbird 1997; emphasis added).

In some treatments, the “vision thing” (the specter of George Bush Sr. perhaps) goes through Rostowian stages of development as it becomes a part of a corporation’s organizational culture. In one account, for example, stage 1 is “the creation of a vision”; stage 2 is the “infusion” of this vision into the “corporate culture”; stage 3 involves the “mobilization of commitment”; and stage 4 is the “institutionalization of change” (Hitt and Keats 1992, 58). Jagdish Parikh and Fred Neubauer have developed a model based on a similar series of stages (Figure 1.8).

Tom Peters, management guru of gurus, noted that “*these devices—vision, symbolic action, recognition—are a control system, in the truest sense of*

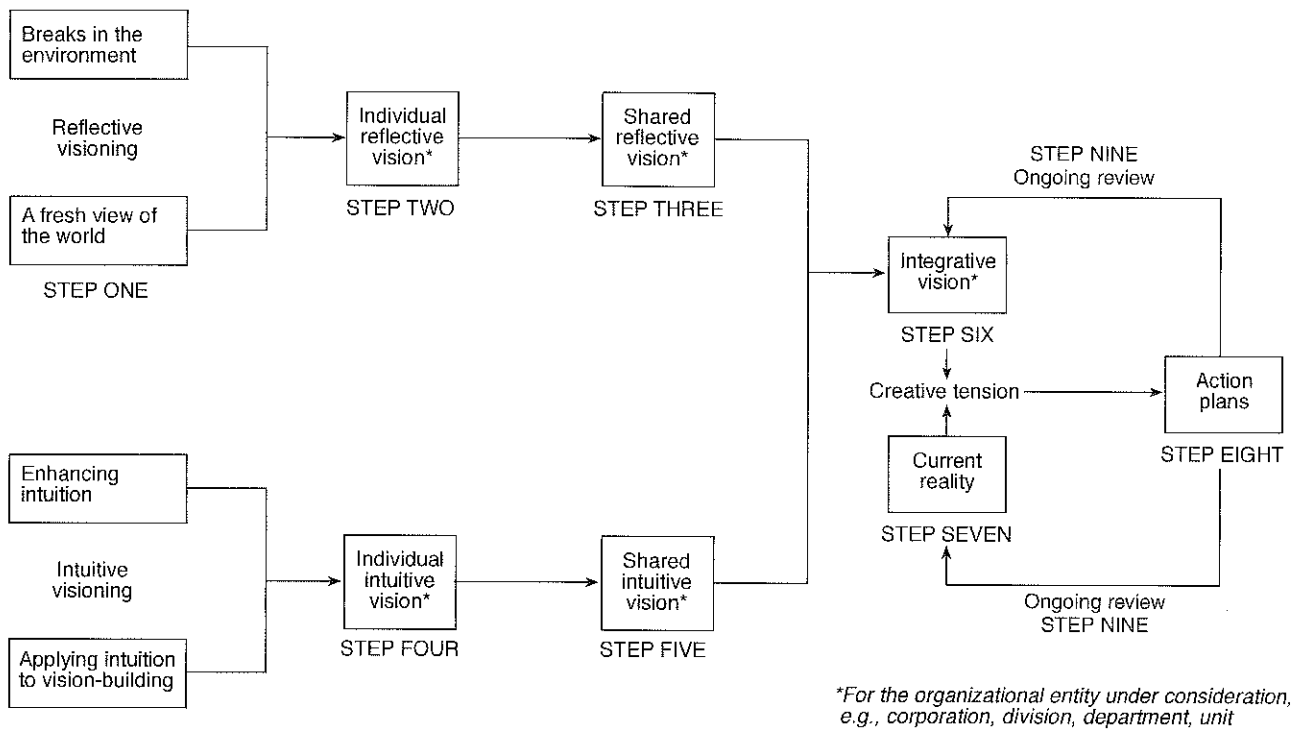


Figure 1.8. The vision-building process (Parikh-Neubauer model). Originally published in *Beyond Leadership: Balancing Economics, Ethics, and Ecology* by Warren G. Bennis, Jagdish Parikh, and Ronnie Lessem (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell Business, 1996). Reprinted with permission from Blackwell Publishers.

the term. The manager's task is to conceive of them as such, and to consciously use them" (cited in Roberts 1996, 64; emphasis in original). I have stated that discourses work through space, but let me ask the more simple questions: What is the vision of global space held by the global manager? How does the new global manager view the earth and himself in relation to it?

Two examples from business books present an answer in stark terms. They represent the ideal global manager as defined by a peculiar ocularity: the possession of an extraterrestrial strategic gaze.

The first is from Carl A. Nelson's 1994 book *Managing Globally: A Complete Guide to Competing Worldwide*, and depicts the position of the "equidistant global manager" argued for by Ohmae in *The Borderless World* (1990). In this example, the anthropomorphized global firm is a huge, disembodied eyeball staring at the globe. Under this figure, Nelson notes: "Figure 1-1 shows this concept [equidistance] as if the firm had its eye suspended in space looking at the earth and all its country markets. The global firm no longer sees only a home market, rather

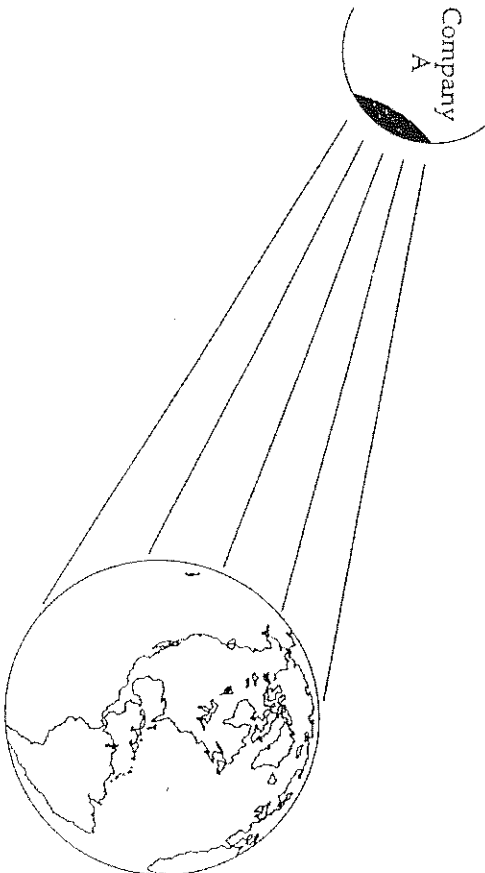


Figure 1.9. Equidistant global strategic vision. Reprinted with permission from Dr. Carl A. Nelson, author of *Managing Globally: A Complete Guide to Competing Worldwide*, and from the Global Manager series by Thompson Learning.

it sees economic denationalization and multiple opportunities" (1994, 4). By situating the disembodied eye outside that which is looked at, a series of claims are being made. The view from apart and above is one that situates the viewer outside the world—and the world (and its contents) become so many things to be managed and controlled. The gaze is strategic. It also demonstrates the "culturally pervasive association between objectivity and masculinity" and the construction of "objectivism" as a "masculine goal" that Evelyn Fox Keller (1985, 71), among others, has theorized and documented. In this case, the entire human world, the feminized other, is laid out before the eyeball of masculinized transnational capital. According to one management writer, in a successful vision, "the world becomes a theater for your visionary script" (Kevin Kingsland, quoted in Lessen 1996, 95). Donna Haraway's observation about the "god-trick of seeing everywhere from nowhere" is apposite (1991, 189). Identifying such positions as a god's-eye view is given some reinforcement by the pretensions of Hamish Maxwell, CEO of Philip Morris, who is reported to have said, after the takeover of Kraft in 1988, "You never get to where you can just sit back and say, 'Okay, I've now created the world, I'll rest'" (quoted in Barnet and Cavanagh 1994, 219).

A second example of a pictorial representation of global strategic management also highlights the intensely geopolitical view of the whole earth that is stated as a prerequisite for global managers. This illustration is taken from a book "intended to provide both practical answers and a broad theoretical perspective on the issues and trends shaping the globalization of work—specifically, the problems and opportunities of distance and diversity and the strategic implication of technology and team process" (O'Hara-Devereaux and Johansen 1994, xvii-xviii) and written to "help all the managers and teams . . . who are having to come to grips with new ways of working in the global workplace" (ibid., xiii). California-based business consultants Mary O'Hara-Devereaux and Robert Johansen illustrate their arguments in their book *Globalwork: Bridging Distance, Culture, and Time* with many flow charts, diagrams, and pictures. One of the more extraordinary illustrations is titled

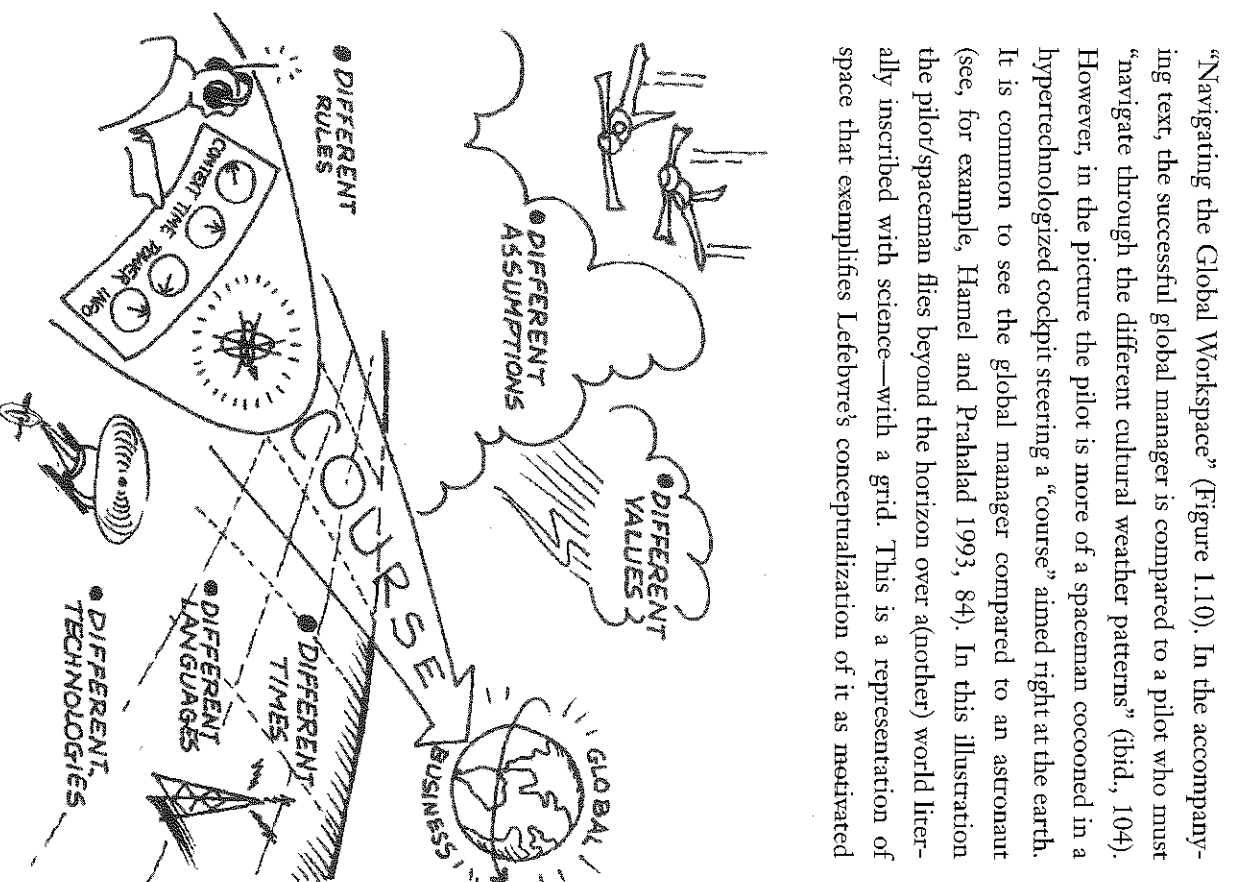


Figure 1.10. Navigating the global workspace. Originally published in *Globalwork: Bridging Distance, Culture, and Time* by Mary O'Hara-Devereaux and Robert Johansen (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994); copyright 1994 Jossey-Bass, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Jossey-Bass, Inc., a subsidiary of John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

by instrumental rationality. This extraterrestrial position is a fantasy of instrumental rationality and power made possible by what Haraway (1991) identifies as the “informatics of domination” (to be read in the pilot’s gauges). Don Beck and Chris Cowan described the visual abilities of the new global manager (one of a breed of what they call “new-paradigm thinkers”) as follows:

Their sensory systems are constantly open to the flow of data from all possible sources. They disdain political games, territorial defensiveness, or other forms of information distortion and blockage. They have the capacity to navigate on past, present, and future timelines—in all directions—to obtain a sense of perspective, continuity, and receptiveness to new ideas. (Beck and Cowan 1996, 23)

It is perhaps chilling to note that this global manager appears to be an archetype nomad of the type conceptualized by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987, 480). He is able to escape “striated” or “gridded (state) space” because a nomad constantly deterritorializes (ibid., 380–81). Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari note that “. . . multinationals fabricate a kind of deterritorialized smooth space” *through* the very striated space of territories and states (ibid., 492; cf. Harvey 1989).

The development of global vision is not separate from the making of the new subject—the global manager. The most successful visions are those that are bound up in remaking the visionary leader as well as those who are expected to follow. Parikh, Neubauer, and Lank note at the end of a detailed explication of how to develop a vision:

It is also important to note that this process of intuitive visioning, if pursued on a continuing basis, does lift you from the stage of “having” a vision to a level of intensely getting absorbed and identified with it or, shall we say, “*becoming*” your vision. (1996, 83; emphasis added)

Advising managers on how to convert vision into action, Ronnie Lessem cautions:

Whatever ideas you pick up intellectually you have to develop the emotional commitment to put both them and yourself to the test. In the process you may become a *different person*, disassembled and reassembled, as a result of the emotional wrangles you have undergone. (Lessem 1996, 94; emphasis added)

The global manager as visionary leader is an ideal and rare type. He is born out of and, apparently, *through* a great deal of anxiety about self. Indeed, a professor of management, after reflecting on the structure and content of many MBA programs, concludes:

a great deal of management education still seems to play on the insecurities and greed that wish to believe in the possibility of such managerial omnipotence, and the enormous amounts of energy and suffering are generated in the attempt to make an organizational reality out of such illusions. (Roberts 1996, 73)

Thus, the pretensions of the global manager can be seen as rooted in quotidian gendered, racialized, and otherwise differentiating sociospatial practices. The global manager, then, is far from the disembodied eyeball or the spaceman, far from the complete, whole, singular, and coherent subject the management discourse aims to “make up.” We might, instead, think about the global manager as a subjectivity that is contingent, an object of (subject of) desire—a gendered desire to command and control in a world of unprecedented risk and change (cf. Huczynski 1996, especially 190–213, on the appeal of management gurus). The global manager is born out of a huge anxiety about vulnerability. Perhaps it is true that at the heart of the so-often-assumed-to-be-hegemonic discursive constellation that is globalization lies an imperative—but maybe that imperative is not some abstract competitive drive or logic of capitalism. Ordinary human politics springing from fear and doubt may instead be imperatives. Or, maybe there are no imperatives, just moments in ongoing struggles over meaning and power in which fear and doubt are enmeshed.

Conclusions

Of course, the discourse of global management is so full of hubris and arrogance that it can be seen as simply ridiculous. It is humorous, to be sure, and the empirical work aimed at finding out how elements of the discourse are enacted in management practices remains to be completed. Indeed, in an article titled "Strategic Vision or Strategic Con? Rhetoric or Reality?" management consultant Colin Coulson-Thomas notes that surveys of corporations showed that, in many cases, attempts to articulate and implement "strategic vision" had failed utterly—often resulting in an atmosphere of skepticism and distrust (Coulson-Thomas 1992). However, I am convinced that the claims of global management are of interest and import not despite, but precisely because of, their failure and their often pompous nature. As Christopher Grey and Robert French put it: "whether or not the pretensions of management to be able to manage the world are defensible, the consequences of the belief that they *are* remains an irreducible social fact" (1996, 2).

In describing a world of risks that are knowable, manageable, and controllable only by a few global managers in global corporations, the discourse of global management is an important element of the discursive constellation that is globalization. The discourse of global management participates in constituting the very conditions it purports to describe (cf. Gibson-Graham 1996, 77).

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