

The Social Movement of Spiritually Engaged Alternative Education in Thailand Against the Background of Reform and Globalization

Michael Ernest Jones

DISSERTATION.COM



Boca Raton

*The Social Movement of Spiritually Engaged Alternative Education in Thailand
Against the Background of Reform and Globalization*

Copyright © 2010 Michael Ernest Jones

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the publisher.

Dissertation.com
Boca Raton, Florida
USA • 2010

ISBN-10: 1-59942-366-9
ISBN-13: 978-1-59942-366-1

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the participants of this research. I especially would like to acknowledge my gratitude for the great assistance and friendship of, among many others: Pichamon “May” Yeophantong and her mother Pannada Yeophantong; Krusom Puengudom and family; Sulak Sivaraksa; Rajani “Mae Aew” Dhongchai; Wisit Wangwinyoo and the entire Chiang Rai Institute community; Chandej, Kanya, and Ubonrasmi Pongjin; Phra Paisal Visalo; Janpen & Maw Phorn Panosot; Yuthachai & Uthaiwan Chalermchai and family; Dr. Artong Jumsai, Lorraine Barrows, Sakao Wangvicha, Babak Kardan, and all the wonderful people at Sathya Sai School; Dhaboon and the entire Asoke community; Piyanuch Mahapiyasilp; Jim and Nao Sangkara-Connors at Whispering Seed in Kanchanaburi; Parichat Boonjoem; Ajahn Chinnawat; Hatai Sri-Ampai and family; and all of my friends at the Ministry of Education. I can never express how much you have meant to me during my research in Thailand and a mere thank you does not seem to suffice, but is sincerely given.

I wish to thank my committee, particularly Margaret Sutton, my advisor who assisted in finishing this part of my life. I also give thanks to Heidi Ross, Tarajeau Yazzie-Mintz, and Janet Bennett for making sure I safely cross this threshold.

My deepest gratitude goes to my wife, Pornchinok Chantar who so willingly and without question sacrificed on my behalf and who has supported me every step of the way during this research. You have been my greatest life blessing.

ABSTRACT

Michael E. Jones

THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT OF SPIRITUALLY ENGAGED ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION IN THAILAND AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF REFORM AND GLOBALIZATION

The establishment of alternative education, private foundations, and networks linked to socio-political and spiritual advocacies distinguishes the Thai social movement in this research. This research is a qualitative study that has made use of historical accounts to associate with data gathered from extensive interviews and case studies in order to inquire as to whether alternative education represents an historical spiritual tradition of opposition to reform hegemony, and whether it has had an impact on state reform efforts. Also investigated was whether there are some historical patterns associated with the manner in which the state of Thailand has dealt with the forces of globalization and whether the collective action by informal movements of Thai people also has the same predictable pattern of response to the global. Analysis and comparison of these issues contribute in determining the values associated with people in the alternative education movement and the motives and intentions associated with state-initiated reforms. A further related aspect explored is the degree of “Thai-ness” and the embedded historical pattern of both the alternative education movement and education reform. These inquiries were answered through the collection of data from three different trips to Thailand over a four-year period, the last trip a one-year stay that

permitted case studies and observations at three alternative schools, and the interview of a host of participants from home-school parents and students to Ministry of Education staff and officers. In examining the data, a clearer notion of what lies underneath the idea of Buddhist education and spirituality became clearer and how educational reform based on Western ideals and notions has not taken into account Buddhism and culture as education. This illumination brings new insight and also raises a new question as to the difference between social movements in a Buddhist nation such as Thailand and social movements in the West.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS _____	iv
ABSTRACT _____	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS _____	vii

Chapter

1. Purpose, Questions, and Significance of Research _____	1
1.1 Introduction _____	1
1.2 Purpose of this Research and Research Questions _____	3
1.3 Significance of this Study _____	4
1.4 Theoretical Framework & Discussion of Issues _____	6
2. Literature Review _____	7
2.1 Globalization & Decentralization as the backdrop for Education, Buddhism, & Culture _____	7
2.1.1 Globalization, Decentralization, and Reform _____	7
2.2 Learning the Complexity of Change & Reform _____	13
2.2.1 Change Paradox _____	13
2.2.2 The Global Expression of Reform & Policy Motivations _____	16
2.3 Change & Reform through Culture & Social Movements _____	19
2.3.1 Comparative Education & Culture _____	19
2.3.2 Social Movements as Cultural Discourse _____	23

2.3.3 Culture & the Thai Notion of Culture _____	27
2.4 Historical Patterns of Thai Reform in Response to Globalization:	
Nation, Buddhism, & Education _____	29
2.4.1 Thumbnail of Thai Historical Background – Ayutthaya Period _____	29
2.4.2 Thai Response to Globalization - 1850-1932 –	
Thai Monarchy Reforms _____	33
2.4.3 Response to Globalization - 1932-Present –	
The Age of Militant Nationalism _____	39
2.4.4 Movement towards the Democratic Process _____	41
2.4.5 Contemporary Thai Educational Reform _____	42
2.5 Historical Overview of the Origins of Buddhism _____	47
2.6 Buddhism as Reform, as Education, as Socialism _____	50
2.6.1 Teaching and Learning Reform Initiated by Buddha _____	50
2.6.2 Learning as the Buddha _____	51
2.6.3 Philosophical Girders: Buddhism as Education _____	56
2.6.4 Buddhadasa and the Importance of Living Education _____	62
2.6.5 Buddhism & the Intellectual Tradition in Thailand _____	66
2.6.6 Education as Cultural Resistance to the Dehumanizing Society _____	68
2.7 Inspiring Education, as a Social Movement _____	73
2.7.1 Free Schooling, Deschooling, Unschooling - Humanizing Society _____	73
2.7.2 Ivan Illich and the Deschooling of Society _____	76
2.7.3 The Influence of John Holt – Learning by Unschooling _____	78

2.8 Social Movements Arising from Education _____	83
2.8.1 Modern State & Colonial Influence:	
Breaking Down Traditional Societies _____	83
2.8.2 Non-West Traditions & the Bias of Western Traditions of Thought _____	88
2.8.3 Buddhist Social Movements in South & Southeast Asia _____	93
2.8.4 The Swaraj and the Shikshantar Andolan Movements _____	96
2.8.5 Thailand’s Tradition of Social Movements _____	99
2.8.6 Thailand’s Tradition of Social Movements –	
The Spiritual Aspect _____	101
3. Methodology of Research _____	104
3.1 Assertions Regarding Thai Buddhism _____	104
3.2 Towards a Definition of Spirituality _____	106
3.2.1 Roots of Western, Christian Spirituality _____	107
3.2.2 Investigating Contemporary Western, Christian Spirituality _____	108
3.2.3 Research in Search of Spiritual Definition _____	109
3.2.4 Spirituality in a Buddhist Sense _____	118
3.2.5 Spirituality: A Comparative Look – West & Buddhist _____	120
3.3 Softening the Blows from the Global through Spirituality _____	123
3.4 Research Design and Methods _____	124
4. Findings _____	129
4.1 Education Reform Perspectives from Formal Education Sector:	
Voices from Inside _____	129

4.1.1 Dr. Siriporn Boonyananta, Deputy Secretary-General, OEC _____	129
4.1.2 Ajahn Chinnawat, Principal of a Rural Village School _____	133
4.1.3 Ministry of Education Officers – Interviews & Focus Group Session _____	138
4.2 Alternative Schools in Thailand _____	144
4.2.1 Franchise & Local Alternative Schools in Thailand _____	144
4.2.2 Sathya Sai School _____	146
4.2.3 Santi Asoke School _____	160
4.3 The Voices of Thai Alternative Educators _____	165
4.3.1 Rajani Dhongchai “Mae Aew” _____	166
4.3.2 Maw Phorn and Janpen Panosot _____	173
4.3.3 Wisit Wangwinyoo _____	177
4.3.4 Alternative Administrators - Chiang Rai Meeting _____	180
4.4 Home Schooling Parents in Thailand _____	184
4.4.1 The Pioneers of Homeschool in Thailand _____	184
4.4.2 Yuthachai Chalermchai – The Gatekeeper _____	186
4.4.3 The Genesis and Current Status of Homeschooling in Thailand _____	188
4.4.4 Pannada Yeophantong _____	192
4.4.4.1 Pannada’s Educational Perspectives _____	197
4.4.5 Wisit Wangwinyoo _____	200
4.4.5.1 Wisit Wangwinyoo, Homeschooling Isara, the Chiang Rai Community _____	204

4.4.5.2 Wisit Wangwinyoo’s Educational Philosophy _____	207
4.4.6 Krusom and Sayarm Puengudom and Family _____	210
4.4.6.1 Krusom’s Tale _____	211
4.4.6.2 Familyschool Peungudom _____	215
4.4.6.3 Krusom’s View on Education _____	221
4.5 Home Schooling Students in Thailand _____	224
4.5.1 Pichamon “May” Yeophantong _____	224
4.5.2 Fasai Puengudom _____	228
4.6 Buddhism, Spirituality, and Education:	
The Voices of Four Thais _____	234
4.6.1 Sulak Sivaraksa _____	234
4.6.2 Pracha Hutanuwatr _____	239
4.6.3 Phra Visalo Paisal _____	245
4.6.4 Nuttarote Wangwinyoo _____	249
5. Summary & Analysis _____	255
5.1 Summary _____	255
5.1.1 Research Questions & Research Methods Employed _____	255
5.2 Results – Summary & Discussion _____	256
5.2.1 Summary of Results _____	256
5.2.2 Interpretation & Reflection of Results _____	262
5.2.2.1 Thailand’s History of Reform & the Modern Project _____	262
5.2.2.2 Thailand’s Educational Decentralization & Reform Breakdown _____	265

5.2.2.3 Thailand’s Educational Decentralization & Alternative Education _____	272
5.2.2.4 Alternative Education & Its Discontent with Public Schooling _____	276
5.2.2.5 Homeschool as Alternative Education _____	281
5.2.2.6 Social Movements: Engaged Buddhism as Education Movement _____	285
6. Conclusion & Future Directions _____	292
6.1 Looking Back & Looking Forward _____	292
6.1.1 Important Contributions to Literature _____	295
6.1.2 Recommendations for Future Research _____	296
6.1.3 Policy Recommendations _____	299
6.1.3.1 International Policies _____	299
6.1.3.2 Local Policies – Ministry of Education _____	300
6.1.3.3 Local Policies – Alternative Educators _____	303
Appendix	
A. SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS _____	305
B. MAP OF SATHYA SAI SCHOOL, LAMNARAI, THAILAND _____	308
C. DR. ARTONG JUMSAI’S DIRECT TEACHING METHOD: LEARNING HUMAN VALUES _____	313
D. KRUSOM UDOMPEUNG’S HOMESCHOOL BOOK FOR PARENTS (TABLE OF CONTENTS) _____	315

E. “LEARNING THROUGH THE HEART” - KRUSOM UDOMPEUNG’S HOMESCHOOL CURRICULUM _____	317
F. MAPS OF ASIA – 550 B.C., 1300 A.D., & 1400 A.D. _____	319
REFERENCES _____	323

CHAPTER 1

Purpose, Questions, and Significance of Research

I've said two things about it [objectivity] One is that it's not possible. Two, it's not desirable. It's not possible because all history is a selection out of an infinite number of facts. As soon as you begin to select, you select according to what you think is important. Therefore it is already not objective. It's already biased in the direction of whatever you, as the selector of this information think people should know. So, it's really not possible. – Howard Zinn

1.1 Introduction

Thailand has never been a stranger to global influences, in fact it has often welcomed influences from afar only to adapt and fashion the influences to fit the customs of the local. A quick look at Thai cuisine and agricultural production will clearly reveal this point – staple fruits, vegetables, nuts, and legumes as varied as pineapple, watermelon, peanuts, sweet potatoes, cashews, guava, capsicum (hot chili peppers), papaya, and cassava, among many others were not indigenous to Thailand but were brought by adventurers and tradesmen. In my research and interviews I have heard accounts of how Ayutthaya, an old capital of Thailand, invited and welcomed foreigners and that dozens of languages were spoken in the capital, an incomparable cosmopolitan and multicultural hub that was rare for those times. Examining historic Thai cultural details reveals that even Thailand's spiritual “glue” teems with outside influences of animism, Jainism, Brahmanism (Hinduism) and Buddhism while the artistic and civilizing features of the land are more than tinged with a variety of characteristics that have been assimilated into a local style from ancient international influences. One might say that the global provided the resources for the people to create the land of Siam and

those who drew up the plans of a nation, also dictated the Thai identity of what is now known as Thailand.

Thailand has not only encountered global influxes of people, ideas, and treasures, but it has developed strategies over time to incorporate these influxes into a somewhat coherent cultural landscape, a landscape not as idealistically sculpted and defined as many contemporary Thais would believe, but one that has retained patterns of managed design. These designs have begun in various reforms, and for the purpose of this research, the major reforms examined have occurred over the last 150 years. These reforms have, however, been arguably the largest civil reforms Thailand has undertaken, determining the frontiers of geography, administration, and reaching as far as formulating and inculcating notions of what it means to be Thai.

This notion of being a Thai is at the center of this research because the means to accomplish the task of defining a Thai identity has been ingrained through the use of Buddhism and inculcated through education. The relationship between Buddhism and education is particularly significant because before the reforms started 150 years ago, Buddhism and education were one and the same for the villager and commoner, perhaps not in substance, but certainly in the learning of how to make life worth living as an individual and as a member of a family and community. Education and Buddhism represent the interface between Siam and what has become Thailand; what was once spiritual has now become religion; what was once living-learning has now become formal schooling; and what was once for the benefit of the community is now for the benefit of the nation-state. The reform of 150 years ago cleaved education from

Buddhism yet both continue to play significant roles in the implementation of the educational reform of 1997. It is the evolution of the relationship between education and Buddhism and their interface with reform that is of specific relevance in this research.

1.2 Purpose of this Research and Research Questions

As in any case regarding social or cultural movements, one must inspect the historical context. The historical context of the alternative education movement in Thailand is fixed in notions of spirituality and, in particular, Buddhism. The notion of spirituality in Thailand has also been entwined in the traditional model of king as enlightened spiritual being (Bodhisattva) and the development of nation-state. This creation of a nation-state has been motivated by the attempt to interact with the forces of globalization on an even footing and not as a country in an inferior position – first in the 19th century during the Colonial era, and then again in the 20th century during the era that promoted modernization, industrialization, and global economies. The reforms necessary to develop a strong state has an historical pattern of manipulating social class structures through the utilization of what I refer to as “reform utilities” – state-determined notions of culture, Buddhism, and education. I make the assumption that it is the control of these concepts that defines the issues and distinguishes the value differences between the alternative movement and the state. While the basic values in Buddhism and education are shared, the value differential is in the interpretation of the principles, purpose and practice of both – a wide chasm exists.

In order to conduct this research and examine these issues and assumptions, I ask four primary research questions:

1. What social, cultural, political, and spiritual values inform alternative education activists in Thailand?
2. What are the differences in spiritual and/or educational values between alternative educators/homeschoolers and policy-makers/formal educators in Thailand?
3. What has been the impact of alternative schools and homeschooling on decentralization and reform in Thailand?
4. What (if anything) is distinctly “Thai” about Thai reform and Thai social movements?

1.3 Significance of this Study

Scholars lack an understanding of how globalization works in cultural contexts, which is particularly striking since globalization has its manifestations in the educational systems of many countries, particularly developing ones. A number of scholars have noted how surprising it was that very little research done on the topic of education decentralization uses an international comparative approach; and, in addition, other researchers have asserted that only one in twenty research studies compare the outcomes of education decentralization with other local areas within a nation. The obvious paradox facing an educational policy-maker is that decentralization is so routinely prescribed as a conscious remedy, but is based on so little empirical knowledge. In this regard, it is assumed by many that developing nations undergo

reform to various degrees due largely to international pressure and factors related to globalization. It is my supposition that educational reform and the related redefinition of cultural values in Thailand have resulted as much from homegrown alternative education movements as they have from external pressures.

This being the case, themes that will reoccur throughout my research will be globalization as the paradoxical paradigm of change; power and its relation to cultural conflict; culture as an expression of learning and adapting to international influences; spirituality as a valuable cultural embodiment of education and social movements; and administrative educational reform of the state and the educational reform by alternative educators. These themes are important to look at because they reveal cultural motivation and the mechanisms in which societal change occurs. As for Thailand, social movements generally go hand in hand with culture, spiritual values, and education to *inform* and reinforce deeply embedded values; oppositional and protective intentions that lead to *reform* of the systems of learning; and which, ideally reflect civic participation and public good in educational *form*. Regrettably, however, it is rare to have policy-makers consider these factors because the notion that popular movements may be significant means to guide executive decisions threaten traditional cultural hegemonic patterns and turn power frameworks upside down. This research will bring to light how significant and beneficial alternative education and local social movements are to regions and nations in a globalized world.

1.4 Theoretical Framework & Discussion of Issues

This research has been informed by several broad theoretical frameworks, including:

- globalization (particularly related to decentralization);
- educational decentralization in a developing country context;
- the cultural influences of social movements;
- comparative education and culture, contemporary Asian social movements;
- and Thai Engaged Buddhist social movements.

Other important frameworks presented throughout this research include:

- Buddhism as a historical, cultural, and contextual reference;
- Western notions of spirituality is placed in a comparative context with Buddhism as a spiritual basis for an engaged social movement;
- and alternative forms of education and learning is contextualized in traditional forms of Buddhism as education, as a form of holistic education, and as a form of opposition to global pressures, hegemony, and cultural and moral coherency.

My research priority was to examine how individuals or communities appropriate from the global and re-define the local, and in turn, instruct the national and regional through discourse on multiple stages. These theoretical frameworks were found to be useful in framing the discourse between participants and in understanding the deeper significance and complexity of issues not previously examined by researchers or amongst the participants themselves.

CHAPTER 2¹

Literature Review

2.1 Globalization & Decentralization as the backdrop for Education, Buddhism, & Culture

Buddhist reform cannot be separated from social reform; they are “dual missions” that concerned people must carry out together... Reforming Buddhism is the only way to liberate its potential to support civil society. – Phra Paisal Visalo

2.1.1 Globalization, Decentralization, and Reform

There is no end to the amount of research on globalization, nor will there be for quite some time to come. This is due to the very thematic foundations of globalization that continue to be prevalent concerns to every country – movement of ideas/people/interactions/industry, appropriation, and reform. These foundations represent the power that is projected and passes unimpeded across and within national borders to effectuate multi-leveled disturbances through the galvanization of global economic configurations that advocate “excessive consumption, individualism, and competition – the three dominant traits of our times” (Stromquist, 2002). These traits, however, are not merely the influences of a globalization process characterized as “a passive diffusion; it is also an active, even aggressive, process of social transformation” (Astiz, et al., 2002). These transformations are not only instigated at the insistence of transnational entities, but are also capitulations made by states to bring about a sense of development commensurate with those determining the requirements and price of

¹ This chapter liberally uses text from a previously published textbook chapter cited as: Jones, M. (2008). Thailand and Globalization: The Use of Reform Utilities – Culture, Education, Engaged Spirituality, and Social Movements. In Hopson, R., Yeakey, K., Camp, C., & Boakari, F. (Eds.), *Power, Voice, and the Public Good: Schooling and Education in Global Societies*. Oxford, England: Elsevier.

admission to the developed world. Stromquist (2002) exhorts us to look closely at how globalization's "economic dimension is deeply guided by a development model based on the hegemony of the market and the role of the state as a key supporter of market decisions."

Contemporary globalization represents nothing less than confrontation at multiple intersecting levels – culture, technology, religion, politics - and is driven not only by powerful economic dynamics, but by institutional reform that imposes social transformations. Transformations are commonly of the type whereby familiar cultural beliefs deeply rooted in traditions and/or socio-political conventions are vibrantly challenged at seemingly mystical levels through the intervention of media technologies. These are generally market strategies that present enticing promises of modernization, progress, and empowerment. In a 2003 Pew Research Center report on globalization, "In 41 of 44 nations surveyed by Pew, majorities think growing trade and business ties are both good for their country and good for their families" with "at least two-thirds of the public in every country - except Jordan and Tanzania – think it is a good thing that their countries are becoming more connected to the world through trade and communication"; however, "people are also unwilling to link problems like economic inequality, the lack of good-paying jobs and poor working conditions to globalization." Ironically, the majority of people in all nations support modern communications and international commerce, but acknowledge that global problems are getting worse, people's traditional ways of life are being disrupted and threatened, and "the erosion of

traditional ways is often blamed on commercialism and consumerism... and are a threat to our culture.”

According to Wang (1996), the research literature on education decentralization is uneven in its definition as many people give it the meaning most fitting for their context. Although they performed their research over two decades ago, Rondinelli, Cheema, and Nellis are still considered the foremost authorities on educational decentralization in developing nations by both Wang (1996) and Rhoten (1999). Their typology of the four modes of decentralization in developing nations: deconcentration, delegation, devolution, and privatization remains the standard model simply because there is not a great amount of literature on education decentralization in international contexts. Rhoten (2000) has contributed her own description of educational decentralization in the nested framework of “international origins,” “national intentions,” and “local interpretations,” and this has paved the way for uncovering globalization from local and regional perspectives.

Noel McGinn and Thomas Welsh (1999) mention factors in how the democratic emphasis of decentralization is often subjugated by centralized forces and Bray (1999) reports that decentralization often perpetuates inequalities and policies often tend to exclude people who have already been largely factored out of the national development equation. Similarly, Mary McNeil (2002) believes that there is a need for a concerted effort by communities to learn how to administer their educational needs through a democratic process to approximate political effect. It would seem reasonable then to expect equity to become a concern since scholars believe that the divide between rich

and poor will widen; however, decentralization normally reflects a managerial perspective on change rarely asking how local actions and social movements could beneficially influence its implementation. Prompilai Buasuwan explains from a world-institutional theory that “the quality of a national educational system is increasingly being held to international standards” (2003: 249) and this in turn is to the benefit of the elite in maintaining their socio-economic status.

Transformation comes also as a political and administrative implementation that presents the enticement of modernization and empowerment, generally through education decentralization and related reform measures. The accompanying rationale for decentralization and reform offers the explanation that centralized states are inefficient and do not deliver the resources to compete for a place in the global market. Paradoxically, decentralization and adjusting to the demands of the market do not necessarily bring about beneficial outcomes. Jere Behrman et al. have pointed out that “decentralization of education management simply shifts the same old problems to levels that are less capable of resolving them” (2002: 3) and “is largely driven by the fact that it can relieve strained public sector finances” (4).

Even though the intent of decentralization is to devolve some authority to the local level and improve administration, in practice its rationale has been reinvented by policy-makers in many developing countries to become a means for a state to be more internationally competitive. This reform language designates a political ideology of government-directed initiatives (Young & Levin, 1999) that often perpetuates inequalities and policy processes that generally exclude educators and people who have

already been largely factored out of the national development equation. These ideologies are driven by concern for economic standing and achieving development based on production, not equity. According to Martin Carnoy, decentralization in developing countries is generally finance-driven and “its primary effect on their education systems is to increase inequality of access and quality” (1999: 60) as the nation-state fails to determine the means to develop an “educational process and practice *within the context of globalization* rather than on globalization’s financial imperatives themselves” (Ibid.).

Reform is generally a formulaic prescription for the benefit of the global economic standing of the nation-state. Reforms read like litanies emphasizing the means to attain global educational values; in addition to decentralization, you will frequently see a variety of practices that support economic interests of education – national standards, accountability, testing and quality assurances (Stromquist, 2002). The growing alliances between education and economic interests are obvious, but questionable in practice. Policy-makers have determined the necessity for educated, skilled labor and radical changes “in what is learned and how it is learned, even though there is little evidence that this change is or will be accompanied by positive social transformation” (Stromquist, 2002: 61); in effect, education still represents the political ideology of the market and not the public good. It is not a coincidence that much of the language around educational reform has been coined by the business world, particularly as applied to the technological world – a short list that includes: knowledge management, efficiency, accountability, quality assurance, equity, and competitiveness.

The education systems of many countries, particularly developing ones, often experience firsthand the manifestations of globalization. Diana Rhoten asserts that education decentralization is one of the “most salient and tangible public policy manifestations of globalization” (1999: 1), but suffers from an even greater lack of understanding, particularly “in terms of implementation and impact” (3). This is an unsettling characteristic of decentralization and reform because decision-makers rely on the consequences of acts that have little precedence – conscious remedies based on very little empirical knowledge, and few decisions are made reflectively and with insight by decision-makers.

What makes reform particularly problematic is that, like Diana Rhoten (1999) and Dani Rodrik (1997) both affirm, there is a lack of understanding of how globalization works in cultural contexts. Martin Carnoy has given several reasons why examining the effects of globalization in cultural perspectives is essential: “schools are transmitters of modern culture” (1999: 76); globalization redefines culture and the nature of identity; globalization defines the sorts of knowledge and skills to be valued in a culture; and global markets create and rend communities. Carnoy also reminds us that not only does globalization alter cultures, but the resistance arising from social movements allows a relative amount of self-assurance in appraising the degree of power a community of individuals has in life to define ones environment. It would seem that a society’s ability to change consciously comes down to who wields consensual power and who directs the forces of culture.