

## **Growing Up in a Globalised World and Starting Points for Adventure Education**

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### **Abstract**

*Globalisation and corresponding economic, political, social, ecological and cultural changes have radically altered the conditions in which children and young people grow up. Children and young people grow up under complicated, unprecedented circumstances. Modern life seems more complex, ever faster, more challenging and with stronger demands. Thus pedagogy is challenged with the task to provide guidelines for adolescents helping them to get an intellectual and moral grasp on these social changes so that they can play their part in shaping globalisation processes in a competent, responsible manner. This article initially poses the question how globalisation is affecting children's and young people's life worlds. To what extent have their experiences and the conditions in which they grow up changed? There are signs that globalisation is also leading to challenging consequences for relationships and human encounters. The article goes on to study pedagogical considerations which result from these processes of change, showing how adventure education can enable children and young people to become competent engineers of an increasingly networked world.*

**Keywords:** Globalisation, Children and Young People, Conditions of growing up, Adventure Education.

### **1. Introduction**

We live in a globalised world. Our everyday lives, our consumption practices and our communication habits are all linked within a dense network. Not only has the relationship changed between proximity and distance; our living environment has also become increasingly virtual. We keep in contact with distant parts of the world using the Internet phone service Skype; we use networks such as Facebook to pass on both interesting and trivial information; we make arrangements by text and e-mail or on WhatsApp; we get our music online and our books are now e-books. The Internet has rapidly sped up the process of globalisation. The world has been linked increasingly economically, politically, socially and culturally, also affecting our daily routine. Life seems more complex, ever faster and more challenging, posing greater demands. Thus pedagogy is challenged with the task to provide guidelines for adolescents helping them to get an intellectual and moral grasp on transnationalisation, the dissolution of boundaries in the world and its consequences so that they can play a part in shaping globalisation processes in a competent, responsible manner.

This article asks how globalisation is affecting the lives of children and young people. To what extent have their experiences and the conditions in which they are growing up changed? This question is the focus of the second chapter. The third chapter centers on the challenging consequences which globalisation is also having for relationships and human encounters. What educational consequences can be derived from this process of change? The fourth section picks up on this topic, focusing on how adventure education can turn children and young people into competent engineers of an increasingly networked world. To what extent do adventure education programmes pick up on the changing relationship between individuals and society?

## **2. Globalisation – what exactly is it?**

The term “globalisation” describes the wide variety of changes for individual and social actors around the world, who are increasingly joining up in networks extending across national borders, becoming interdependent on one another. Global relationships expand, grow denser and accelerate.

Globalisation should be understood as a sub process of modernisation. The Western modernisation principles of rationalisation, differentiation and individualisation seem to be pervading the world successively and at an increasing rate (see the works of John W. Meyer in Krücken & Drori, 2009), meaning that globalisation can be understood as a worldwide extension of modernity (see Giddens, 1991). Globalisation goes hand in hand with increasing links (economic, political, social and cultural) between societies. In this context, both surges as well as reductions in socio-cultural complexity can be identified.

One example of a key topic in the debate on globalisation is the question to what extent globalisation standardizes the world. Some factors which speak for homogenisation are (1) the globalisation of financial and capital markets which are largely determined by a neo-liberal economic theory, (2) the globalisation of Western corporate strategies of production, distribution and cost reduction by means of relocation, (3) the globalisation of research and technology with the development of global networks, and (4) the transnationalisation of political regulatory authorities as well as the global standardisation of education systems and the global standardisation of patterns of consumption and lifestyles (ibid.). Terms from the “cultural imperialism”-approach such as coca-colonisation (Hannerz, 1992: 217) and McDonaldisation (Ritzer, 2007) reflect the frequently observed dominance of Western cultural values in the context of globalisation. In contrast with these theories of cultural levelling, other researchers underline the cultural variety created by globalisation. These developments are titled with the label of “heterogenisation”. According to this theory, cultural variety comes not only from heterogeneous identities existing alongside one another as equals, but also from the resulting mixtures whose processes are known as hybridisation (e.g. Canclini, 1995; Pieterse, 1995) or as creolisation (e.g. Hannerz, 1987).

With regard to the “place” where globalisation “happens”, it is clear that these are by no means developments on an abstract meta-level. Globalisation is tangible in the details and in the concrete, a specific place, one's own life and in cultural symbols (see Beck, 2000). So what form does globalisation takes in people's everyday lives? Here, we can distinguish between four perspectives: the spatial, temporal, factual and social angles.

### **2.1 Growing up in a globalised world – spatial challenges**

In terms of space, globalisation, with its rapid rise in forms of mobility, is leading to spatial changes and to new ways in which boundaries are blurring. New options of communicating and exchanging information, and faster possibilities of transport mean that geography and distance play an increasingly lesser role. People can participate in information, communication and interaction without even having to be physically present. Live tickers, live TV and Internet streaming allow to “attend” events in real time. Major sporting and music events, royal weddings and funerals are reducing the world to a “global village”, to use the catchy phrase coined by the Canadian media philosopher Marshall McLuhan.

The information age is opening up new means of communication and interaction. Communication is taking place in form of networks extending across territorial and national borders, its structure taking in numerous communication channels. This process is resulting in new definitions of what is near or far, changing independently of actual distances. Some (distant) spaces are coming closer while other (nearby) spaces seem to be moving away in terms of access. The members of a translocally positioned fan community with whom we interact on forums and in chat rooms, without ever having met them, may actually be closer to us than our neighbour, of whom we know little more than their name. Online communities, blogs, Facebook or Twitter friends, etc. are thus provoking us to readjust our spatial notions of what is near or distant.

Yet even though our relationship to space has changed through the increase in means of mobility and communication, we remain physically bound to a certain space. Even in the information age, the human body is still fixed locally. The British sociologist Roland Robertson (1995) thus speaks of “glocal” contexts, describing the phenomenon of interaction between globalisation and localisation as “glocalisation”, meaning the process of the simultaneous globalisation of the local and the localisation of the global. Following Robertson's explanations reveals that the local and the global are by no means mutually exclusive; instead, they are mutually dependent.

## **2.2 Growing up in a globalised world – temporal challenges**

Globalisation is also leading to a changed awareness of time, virtually a “shrinking of time”. The rhythm of our everyday lives has accelerated. In his examination of time in present-day life, the German sociologist Hartmut Rosa (2005) identifies three forms of acceleration in modern industrial nations which fundamentally determine how we live together as a society: the technological acceleration (with its effects on communication, production and transport), the acceleration of social change and the acceleration in the pace of life.

In detail, this means, for example, that a car is faster than a carriage or an e-mail faster than a letter (technological acceleration). Time intervals in communication grow shorter and shorter due to the Internet. Today, basically any spot on the globe can be reached in milliseconds by the use of television, radio, telephone, fax and Internet connections. Using Internet telephony, offered by providers such as “Skype”, I can communicate in real time, more or less face to face with someone on the other side of the globe, assuming only that there are no barriers to media access. This development is not only changing our possibilities, but also our social expectations: we expect one another to react faster.

With regard to the accelerated social changes, one typical example is the faster pace at which we change jobs, another is that we change partners more quickly as well as homes, mobile phones, habits and preferences. People are becoming increasingly flexible while simultaneously being less firmly rooted in stable social relationships. In his much-cited book “Risk Society”, Ulrich Beck (1992) describes the increasing fragility of traditional, reliable relationships as a result of modernisation processes. One example of the increasing speed of life as observed by Hartmut Rosa is expressed in the way we try to achieve more tasks in a shorter time. We eat fast food, do power yoga and practise multitasking. We have arrived at a “high-speed society” (Rosa & Scheuerman, 2009) where time is becoming a scarce resource and acceleration is the maxim by which we act.

Alongside the current increases in speed, we also observe “the blurring” of time boundaries, for example as the distinction lessens between working hours and leisure time in the service sector and lifelong learning becomes increasingly necessary. Knowing that our future can be individually shaped thus also being open-ended and undefined, we develop feelings of uncertainty and insecurity which can be understood as a result of increasingly accelerating social changes. To gain (or regain) security and certainty, we thus need to learn not only about the options available to us, but also the ability to explore and weigh new options. As humankind remains limited by its physical abilities, it has to find ways of dealing with this temporal acceleration and blurring of boundaries.

## **2.3 Growing up in a globalised world – factual challenges**

The factual dimension in the increased complexity of our life-worlds in an age of globalisation refers to how we deal with knowledge. The amount of knowledge available is growing exponentially and can never be processed in full by any individual person. Keywords are constantly being updated or added on the online encyclopaedia Wikipedia, for example, creating a self-regulated network of knowledge. Using the search engine Google has become so natural to us that we talk about “googling” something if we want to look it up or research into it. YouTube, a popular site especially among young people, today comprises 700 billion mostly privately filmed clips offering young people a stage for self-presentation. Every day, videos are played with a total length of several hundred million hours generating billions of page views. YouTube has more than a billion users which is equivalent to nearly one third of all Internet users (see YouTube press).

The limitless increase in and availability of information is making selectivity increasingly necessary and leads to a rising perception of contingency, i.e. of uncertainty about (future) developments. The emergence of new knowledge does, after all, simultaneously create new ignorance, which can have unintended side effects. Making choices and decisions always involve risks as the possibility to rethink the decision remains. In a world that is growing increasingly complex, humans also have to deal with the unexpected consequences of their actions and manage problems of greater complexity which may occasionally be of global impact. Ulrich Beck describes this problem in his concept of a “World Risk Society” (1999). Our “risk society” has assumed global proportions. The risks and damages caused by mobility and private transport can no longer be dealt with on a national level, as this volume of traffic is also contributing to a global climate catastrophe. The people of this world are under threat from major risks such as climate change, genetic manipulation with unforeseeable consequences, energy shortages and accidents at nuclear power plants.

As well as being too complex to grasp, knowledge is also losing its validity within increasingly shorter timespans, forcing us to reacquire it. Different means of acquiring knowledge are coming to the foreground. An awareness of one's ignorance is necessary as well as the ability to develop courses of action and to make decisions in the face of uncertain knowledge.

#### **2.4 Growing up in a globalised world – social challenges**

The fourth dimension is dealing with social and cultural disparities. Closely connected to the dissolution of spatial boundaries and increasing spatial mobility, the relationship between the familiar and the unfamiliar is also changing. Borders are blurring between the foreign and the familiar. New combinations and overlaps are appearing. Most people have a share in several cultures with each shaping them in their own different ways. The global increase in migration is making it a self-evident everyday reality for members of different cultures to live together. Societies are becoming multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-faith. Foreignness is becoming a self-evident fact of everyday urban life. At the same time, we are also connected to people across national borders. The German sociologist Steffen Mau (2010), for example, investigates how the population of the Federal Republic of Germany is socially integrated into transnational networks. 46.5 per cent of persons without migration experience are nonetheless involved in interactive transnational relationships in other countries by means of the Internet and regular contact. Mau speaks of the blurring of boundaries in social life worlds.

In the generation 30 years and younger, almost 50 per cent stays in regular close contact with people abroad. Not only migration is connecting the people on this planet but also new information and communication means. A glance at the spatial range of interactive relationships does, however, show that this contact is strongly concentrated on North America, Europe, Australia, Turkey and Russia. There are hardly any transnational networks involving Africa, Asia and South America. It is thus an inappropriate generalisation to say that the world will become interconnected as globalisation continues. These transnational contacts need to be processed independently. On an individual level, cultural variety requires us to tackle the difference between familiarity and foreignness, and raises the number of prerequisites required to make contact with potential communication partners. This situation is adding to the tasks required of child raising and education: there is a need to develop (new) forms of solidarity, sensitivity and loyalty.

To sum up the consequences of globalisation for the way in which not just adolescents but also adults lead their everyday lives, it can be seen that the collapse of our traditional understanding of space and time, proximity and distance, the familiar and the unfamiliar entails far-reaching changes in our living conditions. At the start of the 21st century, growing up is not (or no longer) a national affair, but must be thought of in its globalised context. Life today is no longer characterised by clarity, uniformity and restrictions, but by variety, complexity and the dissolution of boundaries. What challenges for relationships arise from these developments?

### **3. Social ties in a globalised present**

Variety, complexity and the dissolution of boundaries: these terms also describe the challenges facing social relationships in the present. Social ties within families, partnerships, friendships or networks are massively involved in processes of modernisation. Individualisation, pluralisation, rationalisation and globalisation, as sub-processes of modernisation, manifest themselves in the variety of life plans and ways of co-existence. Blended families, single parents, couples with and without children, life time companions, same-sex relationships, singles, polyamorous partnerships, living apart together: these multiple living arrangements indicate that the traditional nuclear family is losing its dominance among the forms of togetherness. In "The Normal Chaos of Love", the sociologist couple Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim and Ulrich Beck analyse our present-day partnerships as early as 1995, describing how individualisation is breaking apart traditional ways of living together thereby creating a variety of new life and family life forms. In their current book "Distant Love" (2014), Beck and Beck-Gernsheim widen the horizon by including different forms of long-distance relationships. The dissolution of boundaries in people's life worlds is namely having an effect on love affairs which tend to span geographical or cultural boundaries more frequently than ever. "Normal families" are turning into "long-distance relationships" or even "world families" who share the everyday tragedies of globalised life via Skype.

The inclusion of media as ways in which communication has been modernised has led to different forms of understanding and supports the dissolution of boundaries within relationships. Due to their sheer volume, interactions on the World Wide Web take on an enormous complexity.

The fact that an increasing number of people is involved in transnational communication is fuelling the globalisation process as well as the development of new forms of relationships and connections, a growing number of which is taking place entirely online. Virtual forms of community are developing which coalesce on forums and social networks and whose non-committal nature often makes them short-lived and extremely unstable. Such relational networks are promoted by fast, dislocal means of communication and emerge from similar lifestyles, shared consumption practices and aesthetic preferences. Due to their non-binding, fluid, situational nature, these affiliations are particularly suited to the complexity of reality: individuals can decide for temporary membership without entering into a long-term commitment with others.

While community-building on the Internet remains virtual, independent of time and space, simultaneously the need to meet people in real time also exists. Opportunities are sought out emphasising the physicality which is harder to attend in an increasingly virtual daily life. Festivals and events provide such occasions where a large number of people can meet building fleeting, impermanent communities. Here, communities are formed based on similar consumerist practices or forms of aesthetic self-expression, their purpose being hedonistic pleasures and the experience of being part of a group in the immediate here and now. Communication no longer takes place disembodied, but is often left entirely to the body. In club colours or costumes, with face paints and waving flags, people seek closeness to strangers, linking arms, dancing in step with the music, singing, dancing and waving their arms up in the air (see e.g. Niekrenz, 2014). Rock concerts, music and sports festivals, fairs, carnival parades or sports events provide occasions for such exuberance.

The resulting relational experiences can be summed up with Michel Maffesoli's concept of neo-tribalism. In "The Time of the Tribes" (1996), the French sociologist describes a far-reaching change in society, now increasingly characterised by a finely subdivided network of constantly re-grouping tribes. Maffesoli's concept describes a form of sociality which, with its liberal possibilities for participation, is typical of the present. It is not (or no longer) about groups meeting for a purpose, but about sharing experiences, feelings and emotions without a rational basis. Maffesoli's tribes lay the emphasis on a new form of hedonism which he illustrates with the mythological figure of Dionysus. In his book "L'Ombre de Dionysos" (1982) he describes the orgy as a means of post-modern sociality, describing this unproductive expenditure of energy, the intoxication and the ecstasy as having the power to build communities as well as acting as a vent for individuals constrained by utility.

In a globalised world, relationships are characterised by extreme plurality and a wide range of options. The way in which we enter into and maintain relationships determines the way we live our lives and our being-in-the-world. In times of increasing pluralisation and individualisation, stable ties are becoming harder to build than ever, while at the same time being more important and sought-after than ever before.

In reaction to this experience of losing stable bonds, greater value is thus being placed on family ties and intimate relationships. Studies on young people show that the family is becoming increasingly important to adolescents. Their family is more important to young people today than it has been to almost any previous generation (e.g. in Germany see the Shell study on young people, 2015). At the same time, the need for autonomy and self-realisation is being satisfied in connections without consequences, such as post-traditional communities.

In the 21st century, the youth cohort has access to a wide range of opportunities while searching for community-building. Alongside traditional attachments within their family, neighbourhood, circle of friends and clubs, youth culture communities and fringe cultures offer places where young people find and develop commonalities by means of expression available within youth culture. Meanwhile, the Internet with its dissolution of temporal and spatial boundaries, offers different opportunities to make contact with people and develop relationships. Nowadays, young people are living in widely differing relational models, and developing skills in these different contexts of social ties is a crucial aspect of their development.

#### ***4. Adventure education in times of globalisation***

What pedagogical tasks arise from the changes described above? How can adventure education enable children and young people to act as competent engineers of a world which is becoming globalised? Global issues and their complexity are dealt with using various educational approaches and learning methods. While, in the past, these approaches were initially determined by individual elements of globalisation, today the concepts are becoming ever more comprehensive, integrative and complex. The approaches concern themselves with conveying a global perspective on thinking, judging, feeling and acting.

Some examples which might be mentioned here are reflections on education in a global society, on global learning and on education for sustainable development. These concepts thematically integrate what were once independent discourses such as teaching people about the environment, peace, development policy, human rights and intercultural affairs. Though conceptual work is undergoing a dynamic process of development, the approaches do have one common denominator: they all underline the need to provide spaces for people to become enabled and gather experience, expanding the range of ways they can acquire knowledge and skills. These spaces for learning and education are also seizing the complex consequences of the globalisation process.

Globalisation means that education requires new alliances and the interconnection of learning centres and learning partners within and outside of schools. Skills are acquired in different places. Following Margot Brown (2010), we can distinguish between three forms of learning: (1) learning about the world; (2) learning with the world and (3) learning from the world. Learning *about* the world can be understood as the (media-based) access to the world. Maps and texts are by no means neutral or objective. They are selected outlooks on the world which may differ accordingly, and have not initially been chosen by learners themselves. Accordingly, the task of learning about the world is to raise awareness for multi-perspectivity and to discuss the implications of different outlooks. Moreover, in a globalising world it seems necessary to extend learners' horizons, i.e. to exploit the global dimension of every subject of learning.

Learning *with* the world should involve discussing and acquiring knowledge through dialogue by carefully approaching and cooperatively investigating items of knowledge. Learning together is based in no small measure on the idea that different cultures and regions struggle in very similar ways with global challenges such as the ecological risks of a “world risk society” (see Beck, 1999), or with the successive displacement of regional cultures in a McDonaldised global society. International exchange programmes or partnership projects both in and outside of schools are examples of learning with the world. Learning *from* the world is probably the most demanding path to learning. This form of learning calls for mutual recognition, plus the insight that highly industrialised, technologically well-developed societies can learn something from poorer countries (such as dealing with resources sustainably and fairly).

In what way can adventure education participate in these learning and educational settings? Adventure education (understood as a variety of activity-centred methods in socio-pedagogical and pedagogical fields of work) creates unusual situations with a serious air in order to stimulate learning processes addressing all the senses and deriving from the learner. Learners are expected to tackle these practical tests by being cooperative, holistic and active. Adventure education takes place not only through the media of (physical) activities such as hiking, climbing, caving, canoeing, sailing, expeditions or orienteering, but also in the city. The growing number of links and cooperative ventures between schools and educational establishments outside the school particularly offer possible approaches such as adventure education. This method emphasises exercise, adventure, body awareness, ventures and risks and can add these experiences to what is often an overly intellectual everyday learning experience.

#### **4.1 Spatial appropriation – experiencing distance, closeness and boundaries**

The dissolution of spatial boundaries thanks to new information technology and means of transport has altered our relationship to space. Our present increasingly appears to lack boundaries; there is a growing need to deal with the challenges posed by that dissolution of boundaries. Especially our ability to overcome distances quickly due to improved mobility (e.g. in cars) and technology is blurring our perception of distance and proximity. The certainty that distances can be crossed within a short amount of time is self-evident for adolescents nowadays. How far away can Australia be if I can easily look at it by clicking on Google Earth? Adolescents can regain (or gain) a feeling for distances by crossing them using only their own physical strength.

Hiking (walking long distances in the countryside just for the sake of it), off-road mountain-biking or canoeing on apparently never-ending waterways can, for example, offer alternative ways of crossing distances. This way, space can be appropriated – namely not in an accelerated, “time-saving” manner, but “drawn out” in a way that stimulates the senses. Appropriating space means to actively explore material and physical (as well as social, intellectual) spaces allowing for orientation as well as the conceptualisation and realisation of activities. It concerns strategies for perceiving and interpreting space – in brief, social actors creating constructs of space. When hikers, canoeists or cyclists create a relationship with (natural) space, they are constructing it in relational, individual and social terms: however private this individual appropriation may seem, it is always also a form of social appropriation.

Physically and sensually crossing landscapes, climbing lofty mountain peaks, reaching the mouth of a river or shelter can provide an experience of proximity and distance as well as their relativity. Discovering boundaries – not just one's own physical limits but also geographical borders – and experiencing nature with all its obstacles offers a chance to experience, recognise or surmount restrictions, creating a feeling for space as well as for the world. In processes of reflection this feeling might condense into the experience that human beings are a part of nature, not its master or conqueror. The realisation that we are a part of the world can help clarify the relationship we have with the world.

Modernisation processes such as domestication do, after all, encourage the misconception that the earth is nothing more but a human living environment within which other species have to find their space or disappear. If we understand processes of globalisation from the point of view of being “involved in the world”, then the consequences of global environmental destruction, overexploited resources, polluted living environments or global warning seem all the more dramatic. Thus the opportunity which arises from adventure education settings is to point out the involvement in global matters by directly experiencing nature and understanding local issues. However, adolescents can only learn how life *here* depends on life *there* if they grasp the significance of their immediate environment.

#### **4.2 “Relaxation zones” – deceleration in a high-speed society**

In our so-called “high-speed society”, everyday life is becoming ever faster and more hectic. Even children experience stress in its negative sense. The perceived and actual lack of time is changing our understanding of time itself. The acceleration of the daily routine increasingly requires the competence to deal with the lack of time and the insecurity this entails. Among other things this involves learning to distinguish between the important and the unimportant, i.e. being able to prioritise, to recognise structures and to apply methods for creating structure, to plan projects and to organise time. However, it is equally important to create “relaxation zones”, phases of leisure and relaxation. Activities in adventure education settings such as hiking, sailing or canoeing are based on the experience of “deceleration” as a contrast to an often all too hectic everyday world. While trekking along on an outdoor adventure (e.g. see Becker, 2005), we can, for example, re-examine our sense of temporal perspective. When out and about in nature, children and young people can “discover slowness” and have their eyes re-opened to apparently insignificant details.

Here, learning should not be measured following the maxim of efficiency. Instead observation, experimentation and experience ought to be emphasised as elements of a discovery-based educational approach. Learning by doing (John Dewey) also gives people the freedom to make mistakes according to the principle of trial and error. Whereas models of learning with a more cognitive approach focus purely on dealing intellectually with a learning topic, learning by doing focuses on the direct practical analysis of a situation or facts; this being particularly important for learning processes. The adolescent is involved in this process of engagement as a person on many different levels: physically/closely, affectively/directly, through imagination and speech. The idea is for learners to experiment within a learning environment, thus themselves discovering reality and learning to act independently. By reflecting on the experiences they made and classifying them into bigger personal, social and political contexts, new insights and behaviours are facilitated. And that takes time! In view of globalisation, the learning principles of adventure education now have to engage with the tense relationship between delocalised and local courses of action, between complexity and necessary reduction, between looking to the future and analysing historical context behind current events.

#### **4.3 Knowledge is power; ignorance creates uncertainty – dealing with contingency**

The extent of our knowledge is growing constantly, as is the significance of our knowledge. At the same time, however, we are growing less and less capable of mastering that knowledge; more and more we are facing the limits of our knowledge. The need to adopt a problem-solving approach is coming into focus accordingly, as well as the need to deal skilfully with that lack of knowledge, or with contradictory knowledge. It is becoming more and more important to practise dealing with contingency, i.e. with the experience that our actions may also have unforeseeable consequences. The logical step would be to replace a large part of the learning of knowledge, as practised in many places, with the learning of decision-making. One key concept of adventure education is creating open-ended decision-making situations. An adventure, for example, stands out as an exceptional event in contrast to the routines and regularity of daily life, and appears whenever we leave everyday certainties behind.

By dealing with challenging situations in which they are required to prove themselves, adolescent adventurers also learn something about them, and develop the attribute that makes a subject a subject: its autonomy (Becker, 2005).

Being out and about is based on actively dealing with reality, with the intensive involvement of one's own body. It takes strength, endurance, skill, concentration and awareness, using every one of the senses. Exceptional physical experiences and exercise are important elements of adventure education activities in nature which occur more or less as "side effects", yet are crucial to determining your relationship with your own body – or even with yourself. What is it like to march with luggage until you really work up a sweat? How does it feel to be freezing cold? What do wind, fog, driven snow, heat and cold feel like up close? As trivial as these experiences may appear, they are important physical experiences which raise the body to the status of a means of discovery. After all, we always learn and act as a body: processes of appropriation cannot take place without the body, meaning that knowledge about our body is a resource which should not be underestimated.

Being on an outdoor adventure (Peter Becker) lays the emphasis on perceiving one's surroundings with all of one's senses, feeling with one's own body; on physical activity, human curiosity and a sense of adventure. From a pedagogical point of view, adventure offers potential for education by virtue of being set apart from daily routine. Educational processes are triggered through the confrontation with "problems" which cannot be solved using the concepts from one's previous understanding of the world and of oneself. According to this interpretation, education is not a harmonious, natural maturing process; education and adventure involve unfamiliar experiences which are perceived as crises disrupting the usual daily routine and order. The adventure begins when doubt is cast upon previous, routine patterns of behaviour as the reality of the adventure has nothing in common with the reality of everyday life. A crisis of "thinking as usual" (Schütz, 1943/44: 502) occurs and alternative actions need to be found. New, different action needs to be taken in open-ended decision-making situations.

The concept of adventure education is based on a pedagogical approach which understands people as beings who focus on their close surroundings and are thus not made for a large, anonymous society – a global society. Describing people as beings focused on their close surroundings implies that they need to practise dealing with the consequences of globalisation. Due to their abstract cognition skills, people can learn to deal with a global society. Adventure education can be interpreted as mediating between a being focused on its near surroundings and a global society. Consequently, it mediates between the abstract world of globalisation and the actual world in which individuals learn: think globally, act locally. This maxim is implemented, for example, in environmental projects where children and young people not only deal with the subject matter of increasing environmental destruction, but also test out possible ways of acting in an environmentally friendly manner. By focusing on a specific project or a specific problem, a pedagogical approach based on experiential learning can introduce learners to abstract ideas. Building a tent city, for example, is symbolic of building an urban infrastructure: small groups put up tents to live in, a kitchen, shelter, a group tent, a storage tent, a place for chopping wood and working. The division of labour and the requirements of abstract roles can thus be experienced by means of activities. Processes which, in times of globalisation have long been delocalised and divided into many specialised steps, are brought together on this specific, local project.

#### **4.4 Experiencing oneself and others – the familiar and unfamiliar in pedagogical encounters**

Experiences of familiarity are increasingly being replaced and superimposed by experiences of unfamiliarity, as globalisation is making our everyday lives multi-cultural and multi-religious. This development requires that we learn how to deal with the unfamiliar and that we acquire knowledge about different lifestyles, cultures and religions. Communication skills are growing progressively more important. This includes, for example, a refined approach to dealing with different speech codes: linguistic and intercultural skills (understood in part as sensitivity to intercultural conflict) are becoming more important than ever.

Adventure education, too, can be geared towards intercultural learning and emphasise on the incredible variety of cultures. In a globalised world, intercultural education should no longer start out from an attempt to understand others, but from the awareness that others are different and cannot be understood. Based on this premise, the German educationalist Christoph Wulf pleads in favour of a reflective anthropology which does justice to the many normative concepts of humanity around the world. In his view, the basis for intercultural education and child rising in a global society is a differential anthropology. Recognising differences, in particular, should form the basis for intercultural encounters and education. Wulf's theory emphasises the complexity and diversity of a globalised world in which the concept that everyone is the same must remain in the realm of our imagination.



Adventure education projects can also focus on international meetings and activities by getting set up with an international concept. In adventure education, the basis for sounding out the relationship between familiarity and unfamiliarity can be laid by people becoming more familiar with themselves through exceptional experiences in challenging situations (e.g. on an adventure). The adventure draws their attention to the distinctive perception of their own body and being in time and space. “Who am I?” is a question central to developmental psychology accompanying one’s search for one’s own identity. Adolescents become more familiar with themselves by exposing themselves to unfamiliar situations, breaking through routines, successfully overcoming a crisis thereby gaining in self-confidence. Getting out and about within and beyond their close surroundings evokes the experience of being a stranger in a strange place, as well as of being at home in a familiar place. This is an experience essential to becoming able to reflect on the relationship between one’s own world and unfamiliar ones, and to interact competently during intercultural encounters.

### **5. Conclusion**

There are four fields in which possible uses for adventure education have been developed for a globalised world: the field of “spatial appropriation”, the field of “relaxation zones”, a “dealing with contingency” and the aim to “experience oneself and others”. All four of them underline especially the construction of out-of-the-ordinary situations: looking for different spatial, temporal and physical experiences to create a relationship with space, time and our body. Thus adventure education tends to rather create enclaves in which people can take time out and try something new hereby stimulating processes of learning and education. Abstract ideas are learned from concrete experiences. Globalisation being an abstract and highly complex process, can only be understood in partial aspects provided that the educational setting offers an impetus for reflection on how the local and the global interrelate. The construction of a concrete world (of adventure) in contrast to globalised everyday life also means that its dynamics are kept outside.

The process of acceleration and the condensation of time, for example, can be seen as one of the “arch-enemies” of education. Education takes time and, of course, space as well. Experiential space for “free play” does not develop until we take moments to pause, try out new ideas and “reflect” making processes of learning and education possible. How much freedom, how many ventures and risks, how much curiosity and aesthetic experience are permitted by the various concepts for child raising, learning and education within adventure education? Being allowed to be spontaneous, being able to improvise, and not having to be perfect – these opportunities afford young people important triggers for development in a rationalised world of rapid globalisation. Processes of learning and development which neither contains elements of critical reflection nor signs of searching or trying things out have to fail. This is true both on an individual level and institutionally.

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