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## Transnational Competence in an Emergent Epoch

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The article elaborates a framework for understanding the relevance of transnational competence to the dynamics that mark the transformations of our time. Nongovernmental stakeholders interacting through dense civil-society networks that permeate domestic-foreign frontiers bear increasing responsibility for the course of events. Based on linked interests, interorganizational knowledge generation and aggregation, partnerships, and interpersonal/intercultural interactions, they are deeply involved in addressing the many challenges posed by an ever more interdependent world. Transnational competence lubricates transterritorial networks and projects. Here, the authors extend earlier work that posited a worldwide skill revolution both by developing explicit dimensions of transnational competence and by introducing a behavioral component. The new framework provides analytical groundwork for explaining why some people, groups, and networks are more effective than others in forging meaningful transnational solidarities, negotiating and benefiting from the intensifying experience of globalization, and waging successful transnational campaigns. The article also probes how the spread of transnational competence is being facilitated by global migration and transmigration trends. The final section explores the governance implications of expanding transnational competency for the emergent epoch.

**Keywords:** transnational competence, globalization, transterritorial networks

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With the collapse of time and distance in the emergent epoch—this age of globalization—enabling people to move physically and electronically around the world to a degree previously unimaginable,<sup>1</sup> the aggregation of knowledge and skills across increasingly porous national boundaries has become a vital public good (Stiglitz, 1999:308) and a major source of evolving forms of global governance. Scholars and practitioners alike have come to recognize that much of the

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<sup>1</sup> An estimated 800 million people physically crossed country borders in 1998 (Kovacs, 1999:624).

understanding and competence required for global security and sustainable development is provided by civil-society networks and processes as well as by governments and their multinational institutions. In a rich variety of modest increments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) exchange knowledge and influence policy outcomes widely around the world through the individuals who act on their behalf and, in so doing, participate in spheres of authority (SOAs) that allocate values and evoke compliance as they engage in the activities that delineate and maintain each sphere (Rosenau, 1997a:39–40, 115; 1995:14). While much of world politics continues to be sustained by state actions and the clash and negotiation of state interests, the ability of individuals at the micro level to interact with and within their macro collectivities can make a difference in how issues climb onto and get resolved on the global agenda. It follows that the development and exercise of transnational competence constitutes a vital, albeit underdeveloped, dimension of global cooperation, competition, conflict, and governance.

More persons than ever before, especially professionals and those in business, in more places around the world are opting to pursue transnational lives. The explosion of interpersonal interactions across territorial boundaries provides the energy that drives the transformative efforts of civil-society networks. The complexity involved in such interactions highlights the relevance of transnational competence, especially as increasingly less effective national and subnational governments struggle to cope with the challenges of interdependence (Cusimano, 2000:3; Ferguson and Mansbach, 1999:94; Kettl, 2000:489, 492; Lipschutz, 1992:409–410; Maynard, 1999:4–5; Opello and Rosow, 1999:233; Rosenau, 1997a:5–6, 115, 363; 1990:90–113; Wallis and Dollery, 2001:251–252; Mathews, 1997:50).<sup>2</sup>

The direction of prevailing responses to the interdependence challenges of the emerging epoch will be shaped, in part, by the outcome of *collaboration/conflict* among interculturally competent professionals and activists, better-educated and less passive publics, and imagined/incipient-community members who possess multidimensional and shifting identities (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1999:89, 93, 96; Rosenau, 1997c:63–64; de Courtivron, 2000:B5; Koehn, 2001). This vision does not reduce the problems of world politics to issues of transnational competence. Plainly, there are other dynamics that play an important part in determining the course of events. We contend only that a full appreciation of how and why world politics unfold the way they do increasingly requires attention to individuals, their orientations, and their skills (Rosenau, forthcoming).

### Effective Transterritorial Networks

Assuming the world is moving toward globally networked societies (Castells, 1996; Lipschutz, 1992:390, 393), unraveling the conditions under which networks and their knowledge-aggregation, social-capital formation, and collective-action efforts are effective is crucial to comprehending the course of events in a particular issue arena. We suggest that effectiveness in these capacities depends on at least five factors: *access and resources*, *shared interests*, *partnerships in cooperative projects*, *professional/technical skills*, and *transnational competencies*. While each factor is considered below, our focus is on transnational competence—an essential lubricant in effective global governance.

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<sup>2</sup> Governments retain vital catalytic roles, however, and remain “nodes of communication and decision-making, interacting with domestic NGOs, international NGOs, local and transnational companies, other governments and intergovernmental organisations” (Willett, 1996:134).

*Access and Resources*

Although the Internet has enabled vast numbers of people to participate actively in a wide range of networks, clearly access to them is not evenly distributed. Relatively few persons, mostly northern elites, white men, and others with wealth and advanced education, have extensive network access and possess resources not available to the many, who have limited education and disposable income and mainly live in the South, that can be translated into influence and power. Likewise, the distribution of power among NGOs, transnational corporations, professional societies, and advocacy groups—to mention the main types of collectivities we regard as constituting civil society—can vary considerably, with some deriving influence and access through the expertise and/or the shared deep commitments of their members while others primarily amass resources through private capital accumulation, government grants and contracts, membership contributions, and/or personal contacts. While transnational competence might be attained with modest resource outlays, it cannot be effectively exercised in the absence of adequate means for doing so.

In addition, transnational competence can be applied for diverse purposes. Broadly, actors can employ transnational skills in efforts to maintain hegemonic relations or to build an “emancipatory counterhegemony” that is autonomous of corporate power and the state (Cox, 1999:3, 10–13; also see Mundy and Murphy, 2001). The political obstacles that individuals and collectivities confront when seeking to secure transnational influence are formidable and their success in overcoming them will depend, in part, on the extent to which their objectives are perceived to be incongruent/congruent with those of the actors who control the relevant resources and access.

*Shared Interests*

In a world characterized by tensions between globalizing and localizing dynamics, territorial and institutional differentiation “disaggregates effective problem-solving capacity into a collection of sub-systems of actors with specialized tasks and limited competence and resources” (Hanf and O’Toole, 1992:166; also see 167–176).<sup>3</sup> Effective approaches for treating complex interdependence issues thus must bring together geographically dispersed actors, information, and expertise. The mobilization of effective transnational/national linkages requires reciprocal perceptions of shared interests in cooperation among technically, interpersonally, and ideologically diverse participants. Interpersonal friendships, common values, and organizational requirements can play an important role in network formation and maintenance. However, the principal glue that holds networks together, according to Hanf and O’Toole (1992:177), is “the perception of the individual advantages from collective or joint action.” The mutual perception of shared objectives and purpose motivates diverse stakeholders to form, participate in, and sustain transborder and interorganizational networks (Deibert, 2000:259, 264) and to seek to combine their separate capabilities when confronted with the need to deal with highly interdependent challenges.

*Partnerships in Cooperative Projects*

In the emergent epoch, with allies and adversaries sensitive to U.S. hegemonic tendencies, enduring transnational collaborations will be based on partnerships

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<sup>3</sup> Hanf and O’Toole (1992:166) add that many vital issues are “dealt with in arenas in which no individual or organizational actor possesses the wherewithal to coordinate by using authoritative pronouncements, or to compel action from a privileged power position. Action, if it is to be successful, must be multi-lateral and inevitably will involve a variety of units that have differing perspectives, interests, and levels of influence.”

rather than on unilaterally dictated objectives and hierarchically controlled relations. The bulk of the proliferating partnerships will be established on an ad hoc project-by-project basis among business firms,<sup>4</sup> voluntary organizations (Kettl, 2000:489, 494), and governmental agencies (Slaughter, 1997).

While U.S. government agencies and Northern NGOs, including those concerned with providing aid to developing countries, have embraced partnership at the rhetorical level, transnational interactions often fail in practice to realize their full potential (Koehn and Ojo, 1997:120–121; 1999:3).<sup>5</sup> To be effective, a partnership needs to satisfy the needs and objectives of all participants.<sup>6</sup> By promoting the kinds of interaction all parties deem “appropriate for achieving the necessary concerted effort,” partnership encourages the emergence of networks that begin to function as a collectivity (Hanf and O’Toole, 1992:170, 176). Wide-body jet planes, fax machines, distance-education technologies, the Internet, and nascent “access grids” all play a role in advancing the capacity of partners to maintain contact with and to mobilize their memberships and collaborators (see, e.g., Deibert, 2000:261–265, 271; Mundy and Murphy, 2001). What is particularly important in facilitating broad participation in transterritorial partnerships is that “global communications are not only dense but also very cheap. This factor gives any two people who have some minimum resources, wherever they may be on the globe, the ability to speak to each other, to exchange documents and funds rapidly, to travel to meet face to face and, hence, to work together in transnational structures” (Willetts, 1996:134; also see Lipschutz, 1992:413; Mathews, 1997:51, 54, 66).

#### *Professional/Technical Skills*

Effective responses to complex interdependence issues require the application of technical knowledge and professional skill (Hannigan, 1990:104; Morrison, 2000:124). Financial crises, terrorist threats, population displacements, climate change, escalating claims on natural resources, global/local health and education issues (see, e.g., Kickbusch and Buse, 2001:703, 706–709), and other linked challenges demand that a broad array of specialists address problems through cross-professional collaboration. Through transterritorial professional networking, the potential exists for the latest insights and most useful approaches to be identified and applied worldwide.

The demand for effectiveness in the application and adaptation of professional knowledge places a premium on management skills. The experience of the Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA), a multinational nongovernmental organization established in 1984 by young physicians from Japan, India, and Thailand which has become one of Asia’s largest NGOs (see [www.amda.or.jp](http://www.amda.or.jp)) provides a case in point. The cross-national professional standards adhered to by AMDA’s medical personnel (including doctors, nurses, and paramedics) who mainly work with refugee and other dislocated populations are relatively uniform, widely recognized, and demand high-quality performance. However, AMDA has encountered difficulty recruiting administrative-support staff who possess the communication and related skills required for crisis management in multicultural contexts (Yamamoto, 1995:140; Koehn and Ngai, 2001:739; also see Cui and Awa, 1992:314).

<sup>4</sup> Increasingly, for small and medium businesses as well as major corporations that engage in transborder activity, “the actual operating unit becomes the business project, enacted by a network . . .” (Castells, 1996:165; emphasis in original).

<sup>5</sup> For instance, Kealey (1990) rated only one out of five of the Canadian technical-assistance advisors he studied as highly effective in terms of transferring knowledge and skills to counterparts.

<sup>6</sup> Among networking actors, shared interests are neither assured nor static, but evolve and shift over time through increased interaction and successful/unsuccessful collective action.

Although technical and interprofessional competence and subject knowledge are essential if global challenges are to be met, they are not sufficient. In the expanding transnational arenas of policy and practice, the ability to work effectively with counterpart professionals and persons with complementary technical skills also requires intercultural and transnational competence (de Courtivron, 2000:B5).<sup>7</sup>

### The “Skill Revolution” and Transnational Competence

Spurred by advances in information technology and means of human mobility, people everywhere are expanding their skills in ways that are contributing to the transformations of world affairs presently under way (Rosenau, 1997b:349–350; forthcoming: ch. 11). The worldwide skill revolution has substantially enhanced the ability of increasingly competent and restless individuals, acting on their own and/or as organized stakeholders in civil-society institutions and networks, to address interdependence challenges both by shaping vulnerable macro outcomes and by altering the life of their communities (Rosenau, 1999b:44–49).

Here we seek to advance understanding of this “skill revolution” by extending earlier work in directions that are centrally related to global governance. The first extension involves developing explicit dimensions of *transnational* competence that can be applied in the transterritorial knowledge exchanges and collective actions that arise in response to pressing interdependence challenges. This effort both complements and moves beyond the earlier foci on comparing ways in which people “are becoming more competent in the context of their own cultures and situations” when they respond to “events and trends in the public arena” (Rosenau and Fagen, 1997:660, 657).

Then, we introduce an explicitly behavioral dimension of transnational competence that rounds out the global skill-transformation framework. The overall framework, presented in Table 1, integrates the three components of the skill-revolution formulation (analytic, emotional, and creative/imaginative) with the extensive multidisciplinary empirical work available on bicultural and intercultural competence. Research findings reported by scholars who specialize in cross-cultural psychology, development studies, intercultural communication, international conflict management, and international business suggest the importance of incorporating the behavioral dimension if one aims to develop a comprehensive conceptualization of transnational competence. Competence requires action, “changing the environment as well as adapting to the environment” (Connolly and Bruner, 1974:3). Typically, moreover, “what you actually do . . . is what others use to determine whether you are interculturally competent” (Lustig and Koester, 1996:328).

As indicated in Table 1, transnational competence involves mastery of four sets of clearly differentiated, internally homogenous, and collectively exhaustive (Morrison, 2000:127) skills: analytic, emotional, creative/imaginative, and behavioral. The sections that follow elaborate on the explicitly transnational dimensions of each skill.

### Transnational Analytic Skills

Transnational analytic skills require the ability to convert culture-specific and culture-general information into understanding. Without such inquisitiveness and comprehension, transterritorial actors are unlikely to “interpret correctly

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<sup>7</sup> In her study of transpatriates working for a multinational electronics corporation in China, Schneider (1997:44, 82) found that cross-national competencies distinguished top performers from satisfactory performers. Also see Hannigan (1990:102); Cummings (2000:8).

TABLE 1. Dimensions of Transnational Competence

*Analytic competence*

- Understanding of the central beliefs, values, practices, and paradoxes of counterpart culture(s) and society(ies)—including political and ethnic awareness
- Ability to link counterpart-country conditions to one's own circumstances and vice versa
- Number and complexity of alternative cultural paths assessed
- Ability to discern effective transnational transaction strategies and to learn from past successes and failures

*Emotional competence*

- Motivation and ability to open oneself up continuously to divergent cultural influences and experiences
- Ability to assume genuine interest in, and to maintain respect for, different (especially counterpart) values, traditions, experiences, and challenges (i.e., intercultural/transnational empathy)
- Ability to manage multiple identities
- Sense of transnational efficacy

*Creative/imaginative competence*

- Ability to foresee the synergistic potential of diverse cultural perspectives in problem solving
- Collaborative ability to articulate novel and shared transnational synthesis
- Ability to envision viable mutually acceptable alternatives
- Ability to tap into diverse cultural sources for inspiration

*Behavioral competence**Communicative facility*

- Proficiency in and use of counterparts' spoken/written language
- Skill in interpretation and in using an interpreter
- Proficiency in and relaxed use of interculturally appropriate nonverbal cues and codes
- Ability to listen to and discern different cultural messages
- Ability to engage in meaningful dialogue; to facilitate mutual self-disclosure
- Ability to avoid and resolve communication misunderstandings across diverse communication styles

*Functional (project/task) adroitness*

- Ability to relate to counterpart(s) and to develop and maintain positive interpersonal relationships
- Ability to apply/adapt understanding, sensitivity, and imagination in transnational interactions
- Flexible ability to employ extensive and nuanced range of transnationally accommodative organizational strategies and interaction paths
- Ability to overcome problems/conflicts and accomplish goals when dealing with transnational challenges and globalization/localization pressures

the meanings of other people's messages . . ." (Lustig and Koester, 1996:60–61). Specifically, this component of transnational analytic competence concerns the acquisition of a reasonably complete understanding of the central beliefs, values, practices, and paradoxes (Osland, 2000:235) of interface cultures and societies,<sup>8</sup> along with the ability to render culturally accurate attributions of interpersonal behavior. Awareness of political, ethnic, class, and gender interests in counterpart societies—what Maynard (1999:164) refers to as “the fault lines of tension” and as “areas for potential cross-identity cooperation”—is a particularly important analytic skill, as are the ability to comprehend the forces behind globalization and localization (Marquardt and Berger, 2000:19; Mitchell, 1997:229; LaFromboise et al., 1995:511) and the capacity to identify relevant human/organizational capabilities and cultural/political constraints.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> For a study of the analytic understanding and misunderstanding demonstrated by expatriate Swedish executives regarding the work values of their Hong Kong subordinates see Selmer (1996:10–14).

<sup>9</sup> The identification and utilization of reliable sources of information are crucial to these analytic processes. In this regard, see Maynard's valuable discussion of “contextualization” (Maynard, 1999:163–165).

In transnational interactions, the ability to grasp unfamiliar settings is essential. In such situations, “successful players benefit from knowing who the key people are . . . , knowing the local rules that apply to their activities, and having an understanding of local negotiating practices” (Cummings, 2000:8; Taft, 1981:73). Dinges (1983:178) suggests that the critical elements in understanding counterpart decision-making processes that affect transnational interactions are “the skill to analyze the power structure of which one is a part and an alertness to the political consequences of behavior in everyday work and social settings.” Analytic skill in developing accurate and reasonably comprehensive understanding of key contextual factors facilitates transnational competence by reducing prospects for costly and dangerous mistakes due to false assumptions and/or insufficient information, by revealing ignored needs and uncovering opportunities, and by minimizing unrealistic expectations (Maynard, 1999:164).

The ability to link counterpart-country conditions to one’s own circumstances (and vice versa) constitutes a second analytic skill promoting transnational competence. Interdependence challenges inherently involve a dense interconnectivity of issues. Skillful transnational actors are clear about their own values and goals as well as able to construct scenarios that link global trends to local concerns and that connect their own actions to transnational consequences.

Transnational analytic competence also involves assessments of alternative cultural paths. The transnational path-assessment process begins with the selection and arrangement of relevant features from the total cultural context “for elaborating a course of action” (Connolly and Bruner, 1974:3). Skillful people are able to identify multiple and intricate action paths and decision criteria, and to assess their appropriateness for particular situations—including uncertain and disorderly circumstances (Resnick, 1984).<sup>10</sup> Such insights “aid the transnational in navigating complex local channels . . .” (Mitchell, 1997:229).

Finally, transnational analytic competence involves discerning where, when, and how transterritorial collective action can be effective and identifying appropriate intercultural interaction and transaction strategies. In this process, the skillful actor utilizes lessons learned from past successes and failures in the selection of new approaches (Connolly and Bruner, 1974:3).

### **Transnational Emotional Skills**

While analytic skills center on cognitive resources, emotional skills revolve around empathic capacities—particularly sensitivity and identity. Four principal skills facilitate transnational emotional competence. The first rests heavily on motivation, for “once emotions occur they become powerful motivators of future behaviors” (LeDoux, 1996:19). Specifically, the emotionally skillful person possesses the motivation (even eagerness) and ability to open up continuously to and learn from unfamiliar and uncertain cultural influences and transterritorial experiences (Anderson, 1994:313; Lustig and Koester, 1996:63; Adler and Bartholomew, 1992:56). The requisite motivation further involves a “willingness to face obstacles head-on by the use of instrumental strategies” and the “resolve not to run away” (Anderson, 1994:313; Fitzgerald, 1993:183; van der Zee and van Oudenhoven, forthcoming).

The ability to assume genuine interest in new cultural patterns (language, family life, cuisine, customs, etc.) and to maintain respect for a multiplicity of different and diverse (including non-mainstream) values, beliefs, traditions, expe-

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<sup>10</sup> This skill requires a simultaneity of consciousness; that is, “being able to maintain complex world views without collapsing them into simple dichotomies” (Rosenau, 1999a:14). Less skillful individuals will evaluate fewer paths in constructing their scenarios and will rely on more “either-or” or “mine-yours” choices (Rosenau and Fagen, 1997:662).

riences, challenges, and preferred communication styles constitutes a second emotional skill that enhances transnational competence (Hannigan, 1990:96; Taft, 1981:82; Schneider, 1997:11; Lapid, 1996:8, 10; Hecht, 1984). When emotions are suppressed, Argyris suggests (1962:40–41), it becomes difficult to develop “competence in dealing with feelings”—including the capacity to be open to new values and ideas. In short, intercultural and transnational competence requires the ability to connect emotionally with the feelings, experiences, and/or work styles of counterparts,<sup>11</sup> and to avoid judgmental attributions based on perceived cultural differences (Dinges, 1983:178; Hannigan, 1990:96–97; Cui and Awa, 1992:313, 320; Morrison, 2000:125).

Transnational emotional competence also requires the ability to manage multiple identities—one’s own and others’ (Rosenau, 1999a:14–15). Culturally influenced identities perform the executive role when one is called upon to cope with new environments (Fitzgerald, 1993:185–186). When confronted by interdependence challenges, individual actors can employ any of a multiplicity of identities (e.g., nation-state, world citizen, ethnicity(ies) or nationality(ies), religious affiliation, gender, professional, organizational, relational) in particular situations (Hecht et al., 1993). It is unsurprising, therefore, that global networks have given rise to a proliferation of employed identities.

Since the salience and intensity of the identity/ies enacted can vary across situations, collaborators, and/or time, transnational actors must be flexible and skilled at managing multiple counterpart identities. The transnational emotional skill required for managing these shifting and challenging contexts includes the ability to develop and value one’s own multicultural identity; i.e., “a fluid, dynamic movement of the self, an ability to move in and out of contexts, and an ability to maintain some coherence through a variety of situations” (Dinges, 1983:180). In intercultural interactions, identification with both one’s culture of origin and counterpart nationals (a “bicultural” perspective) has facilitated competence in building effective social relationships at the same time that it maintains psychological well-being (Ward and Kennedy, 1994:338–340; Taft, 1981:73). Migrants and transmigrants are particularly adept at maintaining multiple transnational identities (Koehn, forthcoming). In general, it is becoming increasingly difficult for people to think of themselves in constant, fixed ways in this time of change, and increasingly easy to move from one identity to another without fear of losing any (de Courtivron, 2000:B5) and to appreciate that as the distant becomes ever closer, one’s identities become ever more tied up with diverse local *cum* global worlds.

Self-confidence, or a sense of personal transnational efficacy, constitutes the culminating emotional skill. Transnational self-confidence “involves learning that one can do things with a certain likelihood of success and, moreover, with a fair likelihood of being able to run the course again should one fail” (Connolly and Bruner, 1974:5).<sup>12</sup> To be effective in addressing complex interdependence challenges, actors need to be confident that they can make a difference in their own cultural context, their counterpart’s, and/or a mutually understood third culture that is adapted, but different, from the others (Olebe and Koester, 1989:343; Hannigan, 1990:96; van Selm et al., 1997:148). Bell and Harrison (1996:52) sug-

<sup>11</sup> That is, “to construct the world as they do and to experience the action tendencies and emotions that they do” (Taft, 1981:82; 1977:135–136).

<sup>12</sup> In research conducted among young East German migrants and refugees during a stressful two-year transition to life in West Germany, Jerusalem and Mittag (1995:194–195) found that “perceived self-efficacy proved to be a powerful personal resource . . . . Highly self-efficacious migrants perceived the demands of their new life more as challenges and less as threats” (also see van Selm et al., 1997:146–147). Bandura maintains (1995:11, 13, 38) that a strong sense of efficacy enhances “human accomplishment” (behavioral competence) and “innovative achievements” (creative/imaginative competence) (also see LaFromboise et al., 1995:515).



gest that bicultural individuals who have learned to navigate two cultures find it relatively easy to develop the emotional skill of transnational efficacy.

### **Transnational Creative/Imaginative Skills**

While imagination is now recognized as an important part of everyday life (Appadurai, 1996:5), its potential transnational implications and applications remain undeveloped. Especially in its collective forms, imagination can provide the fuel for transnational action (Appadurai, 1996:7). The freeing up of imaginative capacities is one of the most powerful forces at work in the emergent epoch.

Four closely related skills promote transnational creative/imaginative competence. The first involves the ability to foresee the synergistic potential of diverse cultural perspectives in transsovereign problem solving. In a deterritorialized world, “the new power of the imagination . . . is inescapably tied up with images, ideas, and opportunities that come from elsewhere . . .” (Appadurai, 1996:54). Transnationally creative actors are able to imagine and creatively leverage the potential inherent in multiple multicultural endeavors (Cummings, 2000:8; Allredge and Nilan, 2000:143).

Another creative/imaginative skill is the ability to articulate a novel transnational synthesis that is shared by relevant others. Skillful transnational actors are “creative synthesizers” (Bochner, 1981:17)—people who are able to inspire and collaborate with counterparts of diverse identities in the design and nurturing of innovative and culturally/contextually appropriate approaches to interdependence challenges.

A closely related skill is the ability to envision viable alternative paths that are mutually acceptable among collaborators who possess diverse cultural identities. The emphasis here is on the proposal and construction of socially ingenuous institutional arrangements (Homer-Dixon, 2000:3–4, 22–23), creative adaptation and accommodation, and transnational resource mobilization.

Actors with the ability to tap into diverse cultural sources for inspiration—the fourth creative/imaginative skill—will strengthen and/or reinforce the other dimensions of transnational imagination. They will be more likely to perceive synergistic potentials, to envision transnationally acceptable alternatives, and to identify innovative and shared syntheses.

### **Transnational Behavioral Skills**

Transnational behavioral skills are usefully grouped into those that promote communicative facility and those that enhance functional adroitness. While transnational communication skills are not sufficient in themselves to ensure behavioral competence, they provide an essential foundation for performance skills.

#### *Communicative Facility*

Based primarily on the extensive literature dealing with intercultural communication, six skills are identified as crucial for transnational communicative competence. First and foremost is facility in the spoken and written language used by one’s counterparts (Taft, 1981:73). This skill, which opens otherwise closed doors along the road to achieving analytic, emotional, imaginative, and performance competency, is most completely actualized by verbal fluency in the others’ first language—coupled with the “willingness to use it” (Brislin, 1993:215; Lustig and Koester, 1996:184)—along with proficiency in the written script (if a unique one exists).

While personal linguistic fluency is an immense behavioral asset, achieving it is impractical in transnational situations involving multiple and fluid first lan-

guages. Such interactions call for skill in interpretation and in using an interpreter (Baxter, 1983:310).

Transnationally skillful actors also develop proficiency in nonverbal communicative behavior and in interpreting facial expressions, gestures, posturing, use of space, body movement, pace, and other cues (Ngai and Koehn, 2001; Ngai, 2001). This vital skill in dealing with different communication styles often is overlooked in overseas training and education (Hannigan, 1990:103). An actor proficient in intercultural nonverbal communication typically responds in a relaxed and spontaneous manner that is situationally appropriate to the cues and codes embedded in counterpart behavior (Taft, 1981:76; LaFromboise et al., 1995:518). When mistakes are made, s/he is able to recognize signals indicating inappropriate behavior and to adjust accordingly (Taft, 1981:77).

While linguistic proficiency provides the ability to speak and understand another language, effective transnational communication requires skill in listening and understanding (Hannigan, 1990:103). Thus, the level of communicative competence achieved depends on the extent to which situationally specific cultural rules are appreciated and cultural messages discerned. Transnational listening ability also enables native speakers to understand what a non-native speaker is trying to say when they use language inappropriately.

Two final transnational communication skills bear directly on collaborative interactions. The ability to engage in meaningful dialogue and to facilitate mutual self-disclosure (Dinges, 1983:196; Chen and Starosta, 1996:368) promotes the initiation and sustenance of positive interpersonal relations. The ability to avoid and to resolve communication misunderstandings across diverse communication styles (Dinges, 1983:196) facilitates collective goal attainment within and across global civil-society networks and interdependence issues.

#### *Functional (Project/Task) Adroitness*

Analytic, emotional, creative, and communicative skills provide no guarantee of behavioral competence (Ruben, 1976:335). It has been noted, for instance, that one “can have the necessary information, be motivated by the appropriate feelings and intentions, and still lack the behavioral skills necessary to achieve competence” (Lustig and Koester, 1996:63). Transnationally competent actors participate effectively in activities that cut across two or more national boundaries (Bochner, 1981:17; Taft, 1981:53). In general, their actions must be perceived as appropriate and functional for “achieving mutual goals or satisfying the requirements of particular tasks” by counterparts with diverse cultural identities (Dinges, 1983:193; also see Ruben, 1976:336; Collier, 1996:317). In other words, their actions must be regarded as “proper and suitable given the expectations generated by a given culture, the constraints of the specific situation, and the nature of the relationship between the interactants” (Lustig and Koester, 1996:59). This behavioral challenge requires a final set of four functional skills that are essential for effective social functioning and project/task performance in transnational situations.

The first of these skills is the ability to relate to counterparts and to develop and maintain positive interpersonal relationships. Successful transnational actors are adept at establishing meaningful intercultural relationships (Hannigan, 1990:94, 96; Cui and Awa, 1992:319). One key to success in such endeavors is the capacity to behave in ways that demonstrate interest in and awareness of the ways counterparts understand the world and interpret events and experiences (Lustig and Koester, 1996:330–331). However, meaningful interactions do not preclude non-conformist behavior, the expression of divergent opinions, and even criticism of aspects of the counterpart culture (Anderson, 1994:315)—particularly in third-culture settings. Other valuable expressions of the transnational relationship-building skill are “a willingness to treat local counterparts as equals and to share

work with them, a willingness to spend time on the job and off with local counterparts and to make an effort to get to know the locals and their families, an interest in the local culture, a willingness to learn the local language, an interest in more than just doing the job they came to do, and a lack of concern about differences in race and status” (Schneider, 1997:11; also see Adler and Bartholomew, 1992:53). The establishment of positive interpersonal relations is particularly valuable for transnational functional performance because “in intercultural encounters, overall goodwill, respect, and enthusiasm allow people to generate ‘credit,’ and their credit allows mistakes to be ignored and forgiven” (Brislin, 1993:215). Contrariwise, lack of interpersonal competence erodes other transnational skills—including emotional self-confidence and analytic abilities (see Argyris, 1962:46).

Functional adroitness also involves the ability to apply and adapt intercultural understanding, sensitivity, imagination, and communicative proficiency in transnational collective actions (Appadurai, 1996:8; Dinges, 1983:178; LaFromboise et al., 1995:511). According to Adler and Bartholomew (1992:53), transnational actors “must be skillful at working with people from many cultures simultaneously” on a daily basis. The inherent complexity of transnational behavior becomes apparent when one considers that effective actors must consider multiple and shifting cultural identities and, in addition, correctly read and appropriately respond to changing intracultural settings (Taft, 1977:137; Lustig and Koester, 1996:58). Among other concerns, the transnationally competent actor must strive to “avoid gaffes that could result from inappropriate switching between cultures” (Taft, 1977:143).

Actors possessing diverse cultural identities approach and accomplish tasks in multiple ways (Lustig and Koester, 1996:331). Skillful global civil-society actors possess the ability to employ an extensive and nuanced array of transnationally accommodative roles and organizational strategies—including interculturally satisfying interaction paths and the management of cultural differences between headquarters and project field sites (Dadfar and Gustavsson, 1992:90–91). Skill in navigating complex local and global networked channels builds on a high level of transnational analytic competence and is most effective when linked to the capacity to demonstrate cultural flexibility with project collaborators through the application of an expansive repertoire of situationally appropriate actions<sup>13</sup> (Ramirez, 1984:81; Brislin, 1993:211; Hannigan, 1990:99; Fitzgerald, 1993:183; van der Zee and van Oudenhoven, forthcoming).

Finally, functional adroitness requires skill in overcoming problems (Argyris, 1962:95), conflicts, and uncertainties,<sup>14</sup> along with the ability to achieve collective goals when dealing with transnational challenges and tensions among globalization and localization pressures (Morrison, 2000:125). Skill in attaining desired network and project outcomes builds on high levels of transnational emotional, creative, and communicative competence. It encompasses the capacity to manage conflict and forge compromises through intercultural negotiation (Schoenhau, 2001:14–17; Lustig and Koester, 1996:332) and skill in transterritorial interorganizational coordination and cross-functional operations (Marquardt and Berger, 2000:19).

### The Transnational Competency Continuum

The dimensions of transnational competency elaborated here possess both discrete and interactive (reinforcing/augmenting or undermining/attenuating)

<sup>13</sup> Effectiveness is related to attainment of desired goals/outcomes, while appropriateness involves the ability to act in ways that do not seriously offend valued rules, norms, and expectations (see Bradford et al., 2000:31–32).

<sup>14</sup> Including the ability to negotiate institutional structures (LaFromboise et al., 1995:492) and “instrumental coping” with the challenges of daily life (van Selm et al., 1997:143).

attributes (Dinges, 1983:194). Actors possess components of the several skills in varying degrees and in different mixes (also see LaFromboise et al., 1995:492). Transnational competence is best understood along a continuum from *incapable* to *proficient*, with *pre-competent* and *adequately competent* as intermediate points (adapted from Manoleas, 1994:54).

It follows that not all transnational actors are equally likely to be effective and successful. Indeed, the central components of our framework suggest that the ideological rigidity of some NGOs—say, neo-Nazi groups or the National Rifle Association—is likely to inhibit the ability of members to attain the requisite emotional sensitivity, maturity, openness, and analytic and creative capacity for forming and maintaining appropriate and effective transnational relationships.<sup>15</sup> However, the framework does not equate transnational competence with particular (or even homogenous) issue or ideological positions, restrict successful trans-territorial interaction to networks that adhere to Western democratic processes, rule out the prospect that deficiencies in one skill area can be compensated for by proficiency in other areas (e.g., synergistic perceptiveness, sense of efficacy), or ignore the overcoming and blocking potential of money, power, and other resources. These possibilities are indicative of the interesting questions for empirical research suggested by this transnational-competence conceptualization. As a guide to such investigations and to comparative assessments of the transnational effectiveness of NGOs and other actors, the framework highlights the holistic nature of transnational competence. Potentially, therefore, individuals possessing different combinations of analytic, emotional, creative/imaginative, and communicative skills are capable of generating “functionally equivalent behavioral outcomes” (Dinges, 1983:194).<sup>16</sup>

Finally, it is important to bear in mind that competency—particularly the extensive set of demanding skills required for transnational competence—is *relative*, never fully realized (Anderson, 1994:318; LaFromboise et al., 1995:492), and *contextual* (i.e., contingent on “both a specific relational context and a particular situational context”) (Lustig and Koester, 1996:57). While some components of transnational competency (e.g., developing sincere interest in and concern for counterparts) are generic in that they facilitate “effective functioning in a great variety of intercultural situations” (Dinges, 1983:198), others (e.g., establishing meaningful interpersonal relationships) are not automatically transferable from one interdependence challenge to the next (Morrison, 2000:124–125; Schneider, 1997:85). Thus, transnational actors can “be perceived as highly competent in one set of intercultural interactions and only moderately competent in another” (Lustig and Koester, 1996:58).

### Transpatriates, Transmigrants, and Transnational Competence

Increasing transmigration and transnational competence are interacting to expand the presence of a formidable global/local actor: the *transpatriate* (Schneider, 1997:13, 28). Transpatriates are active participants in transnational networks and global teams (Solomon, 1995). Unlike *expatriates*, *transpatriates* do not necessarily identify with only one “sending” nation-state and they are not limited by skills, preparation, residency, and/or access to technological devices to involvements in

<sup>15</sup> We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

<sup>16</sup> It is likely, however, that the more skill competencies one possesses, “the fewer problems an individual will have functioning effectively” within different cultures (LaFromboise et al., 1995:492). Moreover, lack of functional adroitness is likely to render transnational actors less effective in addressing interdependence challenges in comparison with those who are behaviorally proficient. For this reason, Dinges (1983:194) recommends that intercultural-competence training programs concentrate on “producing defined behavioral outcomes instead of operating on the assumption that providing insight, awareness, and understanding of important underlying cultural assumptions bring about enhanced performance on their own.”

one particular “receiving” country or a particular set of countries (Schneider, 1997:13, 28, 74; also see Adler and Bartholomew, 1992:53–54, 60).

In recent decades, the mobility upheaval (Rosenau, 1999a:5–6) has greatly expanded the transpatriate “ethnoscape” (Appadurai, 1996:33). Migration and transmigration—the continuous mobility of people who cross borders—promotes transnational competence in subtle as well as apparent ways. The initial movement of exiles, refugees, displaced persons, documented and undocumented workers (and family members) across porous state borders enables people who are proficient in a culture of origin to develop competency in new receiving-society cultures (Koehn, 1991:312–336).<sup>17</sup> Concomitantly, by retaining close contacts with the sending society—what Appadurai (1996:22) refers to as initiating “new conversations between those who move and those who stay”—these migrants and transmigrants are able to maintain their original analytic, emotional, creative, and behavioral skills. Among other benefits,<sup>18</sup> the attainment of binational competence allows interconnected diasporic and deterritorialized populations to embrace a new culture without sacrificing their historical identity (Rosenau, 1993:xvi–xvii; Basch et al., 1994:8, 269; LaFromboise et al., 1995:500–501).

Through frequent intercontinental travel and simultaneous participation in transnational social fields, transmigrants “live their lives across national borders” (Schiller, 1997:158; 1999:96–99) by “taking actions, making decisions, and developing subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously in two or more nation-states” (Basch et al., 1994:7).<sup>19</sup> Many contemporary transmigrant transpatriates are professionals (Findlay, 1995:515–522) or professionals-in-training—such as transnational-corporation executives (Adler and Bartholomew, 1992:61), international-development experts, international educators and students, Hong Kong astronauts (Smart, 1994), and cultural trend-setters (Madsen, 1995:207, 228). However, transpatriates also include accompanying family members, skilled laborers, and domestic-service providers who sustain social, economic, and even political interaction across territorial jurisdictions (Chang and Ling, forthcoming; Raynor, 1999:A31; Schiller, 1999:99; Guarnizo, 1997:282, 298; Basch et al., 1994). Transmigrant transpatriates acquire *multiple-place* consciousness and, thus, “feel at home” in the globalized space where they live. For some, distinctions “between home and abroad, between sending and receiving communities, and between emigrating and returning become less than obvious” (Guarnizo, 1997:308).

Resettled and returned migrants, perpetual transmigrants, and persons who never leave their country but are connected to and affected by transnational processes<sup>20</sup> typically participate in “a transcultural reference group whose norms transcend national and cultural barriers” (Bochner, 1981:33; Guarnizo, 1997:308).

<sup>17</sup> For instance, from less than one million in 1965, the number of Asian Americans now exceeds 10 million—at least 70 percent of whom are first-generation immigrants who maintain close ties with family members, friends, and associates in the sending country (i.e., throughout Asia) and keep informed of homeland developments. Although by no means a universal phenomenon, many of these immigrants quickly develop analytic, emotional, creative, and behavioral competence in mainstream U.S. society while maintaining their country-of-origin skills (Koehn, forthcoming). Immigrant and native-born Asian American professionals increasingly are inclined to perceive their bicultural heritage as an asset rather than a liability in today’s networked world and to become involved in diverse transnational capacities (Cheng, 1999:75). Also see Bell and Harrison (1996:52–53); Guarnizo (1997:310–311).

<sup>18</sup> There is a substantial body of research indicating that developing and maintaining competence in two cultures is more beneficial in terms of psychological and physical well-being in comparison with living a monocultural life style (see, for instance, LaFromboise et al., 1995:508).

<sup>19</sup> As Guarnizo (1997:288–289; also see 296, 298) points out, transmigration does not always require spatial mobility given the availability of technological substitutes.

<sup>20</sup> Basch et al. (1994:24, 228) link deterritorialization to the penetration of global capitalism and political domination by the United States. They further contend that “economic and political vulnerability, magnified by the factor of race, augment the likelihood that migrants will construct a transnational existence” (p. 27).

Daily interactions in such transnational spaces can provide the experiential and perceptual basis for nonhegemonic identifications and actions (Basch et al., 1994:275, 282–283, 291).

Increasing transmigration amounts to more than accelerated South-North labor and skill importation. Indeed, some homeland governments encourage transmigrants to assume citizenship and/or to remain in the North both as a strategy of counterpenetration and to maximize their ability to support projects in the ancestral land (Schiller, 1999:110–111, 114–115; Guarnizo, 1997:282, 309; Basch et al., 1994:249–250, 259–260; Mazrui, 1975:126). Transpatriates move with ease along familiar segments of the interpersonal/interorganizational, electronic, and symbolic interfaces of cultures and societies and act as intercultural mediators (Bochner, 1981:6, 13) in accessible global networks. Transnationally proficient migrants and transmigrants increasingly function as the principal decision initiators and facilitators, the “switchers” (Castells, 1996:471; 1998:337) who connect multinational partners, instead of being relegated to narrow roles as comprador conduits or as nominal consultants for hegemonic institutions. Paradoxically, “by leaving their communities, that is, by being *absent*, [trans]migrants gain a stronger *presence* in their home communities via their ability to send remittances, invest in the local economy, help sponsor local projects, and support local causes” (Guarnizo, 1997:312). As the relevance of their transnational proficiency for coping with a broad range of interdependence problems becomes more widely appreciated, leadership roles in all issue arenas increasingly will be filled by transpatriates and their bicultural/multicultural offspring.

### **Conclusion: Governance Implications for the Emergent Epoch**

As the transnational competence dimension of the skill revolution advances, increasing numbers of transnationally attuned and behaviorally proficient transpatriates and expatriates will play influential roles in world affairs and will enrich resources for addressing interconnected issues that involve an “extraordinary range of interdependencies” (Vogler, 1996:7)—including the fragility of globalized economies, threats to human rights and health, sustainable development, natural-resource depletion, and environmental protection. In this concluding discussion, we consider specific governance implications of expanding transnational competence in the new millennium.

Along with access and resources, the key building blocks for global governance in the emerging epoch are knowledge aggregation and sharing, social-capital formation, and collective actions that address interdependence crises. In these three dimensions of human interaction, the skill revolution in transnational competence is strengthening the capacity of civil-society actors to fill any vacuums resulting from the diminished role of states by developing legitimacy and constructing and coordinating SOAs that provide a nascent and constantly shifting foundation for global governance without global government.<sup>21</sup>

### **Transnational Knowledge Generation, Aggregation, and Sharing**

Among the processes promoting effective global governance, knowledge generation, aggregation, and sharing are crucial. In a linked but fragmented world, the

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<sup>21</sup> National governments also find it increasingly vital to network informally and quickly with counterparts around the world in (often futile) efforts to deter terrorism, drug and sex trafficking, and money laundering (see Slaughter, 2000:84–85). While government actors also can and do take advantage of opportunities to develop transnational competence, prevailing power differentials are likely to continue to shrink in the face of increasing public skepticism and cynicism about their motives and abilities as long as the state retreats from service provision and social protection (Cox, 1999:12).

outcomes of global governance are powerfully influenced by the cumulative knowledge and understanding generated by transborder interactions among civil-society actors. Increasingly, the movement of critical knowledge and technology transfers occur through civil-society interactions that are beyond government control (Lipschutz, 1992:413, 419). Moreover, "the evolution of information and communications technology . . . will probably heavily favor nonstate entities, including those not yet envisioned, over states. The new technologies encourage noninstitutional, shifting networks over the fixed bureaucratic hierarchies that are the hallmark of the single-voiced sovereign state" (Mathews, 1997:66). At the same time, these conditions produce a fundamental challenge to governance; that is, newly generated knowledge and insights regarding single and linked interdependence issues need to be shared in a timely and interculturally satisfying manner across groups and networks that do not possess common vocabularies, world views, and experiences.

Landmark studies of the overseas effectiveness of Canadian international-development advisors treat the difficult process of knowledge transfer as a unidirectional flow—i.e., from expatriate advisor to host-country counterpart (Kealey, 1990:5, 31). In contrast, we posit the primacy of the *exchange* of knowledge and conceptualize the process as involving networked individuals who simultaneously are transmitters and receptors, teachers and learners. Indeed, participants establish networks in anticipation of mutual learning, benefits, and even transformation (Keck and Sikkink, 1998:214).

Among the most critical knowledge exchanges for governance in the emergent epoch are those that link the local and the global. The overriding dialectic facilitating intercultural comparison/critique and affecting the outcome of global governance concerns the interaction between the globalizing and localizing forces at work in the world, between those fostering fragmentation and those generating integration, and between centralizing and decentralizing dynamics. As Alger (1988:336) observed some time ago, the failure to link micro and macro phenomena inhibits the aggregation of understandings that "would help people to cope with the worldwide involvements of their daily life by not providing knowledge that would illuminate their worldwide linkages, by not identifying issues that emerge from these linkages, and by not discerning the potential for movements and institutions through which local people can cope with these issues." Moreover, if transnational cooperation "is to enjoy broadly based public support, it has to prove its worth at the local level, with local constituencies" by building on locally identified needs and ensuring that the benefits of collaboration (and, hence, of transnational competence) reach the local level (Kaul et al., 1999:477).

Interdependence challenges typically are accompanied by profound uncertainties and high risks. Information is at a premium. Local stakeholders possess knowledge that is needed for effective policy making and project implementation (Lipschutz, 1997:434–437). Publics are constrained by inappropriate problem conceptualization and a concomitant lack of knowledge regarding effective responses (Kempton, 1993:241).

In order to exert influence over decisions, approaches, actions, and values affecting interdependence issues, civil-society actors must mobilize consensual knowledge through interpersonal, intraorganizational, and interorganizational networks and, then, convey persuasive evidence (Rosenau, 1989:36–37; 1997b:338–340; Castells, 1996:165–166; Haas, 1997:200). In most cases, persuasion will rest on the ability of evidence sharers to articulate effectively across professional and disciplinary boundaries, with nonexpert publics, and in the higher reaches of international decision making.<sup>22</sup> Success in transterritorial information and data identification and application, and in persuasion, requires transnational ana-

<sup>22</sup> The latter challenge confirms the importance of continual access to "the cognitive domains where issues are framed, agendas set, administrative approaches designed, and solutions or standards formulated" (Jasanoff, 1998:85–86).

lytic,<sup>23</sup> emotional, imaginative, and behavioral skills (also see Lipschutz, 1992:411–412; Jasanoff, 1998:75–77) as well as avoiding the tendency to narrow “the range of ‘relevant others’ with whom . . . [specialized elites] communicate . . .” (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1999:86). The transnational competence/incompetence of *all* parties to the knowledge exchange will affect the outcome of such knowledge transactions. Transpatriates are well-situated to recognize who counts in transboundary knowledge-exchange and policy-making processes by virtue of their central location in boundary-spanning decision making. Transnationally competent actors are knowledgeable about local, national, and international roles that contribute in a decisive way to future global security and sustainability as well as adept at sharing knowledge in ways that expand public understanding and discourse.

#### *Transnational Social Capital*

Effective global governance also is contingent upon the construction and activation of extensive transnational social capital. Our conceptualization of transnational social capital encompasses both horizontal “networks of civic engagement that are bound together by trust and reciprocity” (Wallis and Dollery, 2001:249, 260) and the intercultural skills (human resources) possessed by participants. Transnational social capital—including “‘bridging social capital’ between government agencies, voluntary organizations and community groups” (Wallis and Dollery, 2001:250; Kooiman, 1993:35)—facilitates global governance by expanding the scope for cooperative action and by minimizing transaction costs as well as the negative externalities produced when stakeholders pursuing self-interests become engaged in complex interdependencies (Mayntz, 1993:12–13; Wallis and Dollery, 2001:250). In a linked but fragmented world, characterized by the proliferation of transsovereign networks and the relative absence of cross-cutting cleavages among them, leadership skills in transnational conflict-management and in devising and implementing acceptable alternative mechanisms that address transboundary coordination problems will be at a premium.

Governments and not-for-profit organizations can play a useful catalytic role in encouraging and facilitating the construction of transnational networks (Wallis and Dollery, 2001:250–251) and in the development of transnational competence through education and training. In 1998, for instance, the Social Science Research Council launched a “human research capital” initiative aimed at addressing the worldwide need for research professionals capable of “understanding local situations in relationship to global, transnational and international trends and impacts” (McDonnell, 1998:30). Transnational skill enhancements promise to promote improvements in the performance of the institutions and networks that civil-society actors operate within, to increase their capacity for effective participation in global governance and, potentially, even to contribute to changes that expand, and advance the transparency of, the governance context.

Given that “equal opportunities for *unequal* players produce more inequity” (Kaul et al., 1999:475; emphasis in original), particular attention needs to be devoted to addressing existing deficits in transnational competence in order to mitigate the kinds of skill dichotomies that undermine democratic global governance (also see Edwards, 1999:15) and produce skewed benefit distributions.<sup>24</sup> At present, the fault lines of dichotomization tend to follow distinctions between

<sup>23</sup> With the expansion of transnational competence, people increasingly are capable of evaluating data comparatively and critically and increasingly are skilled in seeking out alternative (nongovernmental) information sources.

<sup>24</sup> In neo-Gramscian terms, the challenge in today’s context is “to bridge the differences among the variety of groups disadvantaged by globalization so as to bring about a common understanding of the nature and consequences of globalization, and to devise a common strategy towards subordinating the world economy to a regime of social equity” (Cox, 1999:26).



the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, and the “information-rich” in the Western world who are wired into the latest computer technologies and the “information-hungry” elsewhere—especially in Africa—who lack access to reliable sources of electricity and telecommunications that are indispensable for new modes of processing data and ideas (Ferguson and Mansbach, 1999:86; Cusimano, 2000:26–27; Appadurai, 1996:195; Castells, 1998:92–95).

Whether the various gulfs between the haves and have-nots will widen or narrow in the years ahead remains to be seen, but continuing acceleration of the skill revolution bodes well for compression of the gaps (Cusimano, 2000:27). It is worth noting in connection with analytic competence that IQ scores over the last sixty or more years have undergone steep rises in some twenty different countries—not all of them industrial (Neisser, 1998; Flynn, 1999). Analysts differ over the meaning of these trends, but none deny their existence. Moreover, human resources are the strong suit of the South and many of their citizens have developed emotional, communicative, and functional skills through frequent multicultural interaction at the local level.

Two further developments herald an explosion in transsovereign analytic, emotional, creative/imaginative, and behavioral skills that will enlarge the pool of human resources available for global governance. First, the mobility upheaval has brought about the worldwide distribution of transnationally proficient migrants and transmigrants who are involved in global networks and movements. Growing numbers of people in transition function as local contacts and resource people, role models, imagination cultivators, and intercultural mediators. As Appadurai (1996:4; also 53) astutely observes, “few persons in the world today do not have a friend, relative, or coworker who is not on the road to somewhere else or already coming back home, bearing stories and possibilities.”

Second, as access widens to “virtual (electronic) neighborhoods” that mobilize ideas, knowledge, and linkages (Appadurai, 1996:195) in an increasingly borderless world, ever-expanding proportions of the world’s publics will be able to hone transnational skills. The interpersonal interactions and discoveries that result from travel and virtual contacts involve more than a process of knowledge exchange that takes place outside the purview or control of governments. They also foster new ways of imagining possibilities, of upgrading bicultural and intercultural skills to transnational levels, and of engaging in local-global and South-North collaborations (Edwards, 1999:179) that narrow the divide in transnational social capital.<sup>25</sup>

Table 2 identifies the expected enhancements in global human resources associated with expanding transnational competence along the lines elaborated in this essay. The table also includes the attributes that Rosenau and Fagen (1997:665) identified among individuals experiencing the skill revolution. The conceptualization of enhanced social capital presented in Table 2 carries no assumption of progression or change from one set of attributes to the other. Indeed, transnationally competent actors are expected to retain skill-transformation attributes while adding transnational skills to their repertoire.

#### *Transnational Collective Action*

Transnational collective actions that diplomatically<sup>26</sup> address interdependence challenges constitute a third essential building block for global governance. As skills are enhanced, authority and legitimacy increasingly are derived from effec-

<sup>25</sup> See, for instance, Mundy and Murphy’s discussion (2001:110–112, 119–121) of the role of Southern NGOs and coalitions involving Southern NGOs in the Global Campaign for Education (for all).

<sup>26</sup> “Diplomatic” is used here to refer to “balancing international and domestic concerns” (Moravcsik, 1993:15).

TABLE 2. Enhancements of Global Human Resources

<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Transformed Worldwide Skills</i>	<i>Transnational Competence</i>
Learning	Adaptive	Interculturally open and sensitive
Analytic skills	Developed	Perceive linkages
Cognitive maps	Complex	Multiple cultural paths
Interaction scenarios	Elaborate	Interdependent
Emotional capacities	Active and refined	Empathetic
Compliance orientations	Questioning	Culturally relative
Legitimacy sentiments	Performance criteria	Mutual benefit/partnership
Identity	<i>Not addressed</i>	Multiple
Political loyalties	Variable foci	Transnational projects
Locus of control	Close	Distant and proximate
Communication	<i>Not addressed</i>	Flexible; interculturally appropriate

tive performance in accomplishing the tasks and goals of cross-boundary networks, coalitions, and partnerships (Cusimano, 2000:27; Kickbusch and Buse, 2001:721–722). In an era of diminished state capacity, the performance of civil-society actors and coalitions—including transnational citizen movements—in mitigating interdependence problems and crises and in holding international bodies accountable is increasingly vital for our common security (Finger, 1994:56; Kickbusch and Buse, 2001:719, 730; Mathews, 1997:51; Kaul et al., 1999:463; Slaughter, 2000).<sup>27</sup>

Transnationally competent civil-society actors possess a heightened capacity for collective action that transcends nation-state borders (see Koehn, 2000). In addition to direct participation in interdependence projects, they play important roles in establishing transnational personal relationships and in forming and sustaining linkages and coalitions among networked organizations and participating individuals—primarily through intercultural negotiations aimed at maintaining strategic consensus on expected payoffs and conditions of participation (Hanf and O’Toole, 1992:176–177). Another manifestation of the growing importance of transnational competence in the transformation of global governance is the expanding activity and influence of “citizen diplomats” of various types (see Sharp, 2001).

#### *Advancing Global Governance*

In the emergent epoch, state agents, transnational corporations, and their institutional allies no longer have the center stage to themselves. Transnationally competent professionals and activists, acting as individuals and through civil-society networks, also play a major part in determining the outcome of situations on the global agenda. By contributing their unique insights and abilities in a multitude of small and major ways across the transboundary influence systems of international-agreement shaping, nation-state domestic-policy making and international-agreement implementation, project initiation and execution, and values sharing/change (see Koehn, 2000), transnationally competent civil-society

<sup>27</sup> See, for instance, Slaughter and Bosco’s discussion (2000) of “plaintiff’s diplomacy”—the increased use by individuals of lawsuits (mainly filed within the United States) brought against transnational corporations, foreign government officials, and even foreign states in defense of rights granted by international law.

actors will play increasingly influential, even decisive, roles in a variety of the spheres of authority likely to constitute global governance in the future.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> It is important to note that governments and their personnel also have experienced the skill revolution, that they too bring new knowledge to and are more self-conscious about the bases and logic of their decisions and actions. This being so, the impact of civil-society actors may be at least partially offset by the capacity of their governmental counterparts to cope with, deflect, and/or absorb their demands and pressures.

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