



FRAME 10 – A GLOBAL WORLD

Text A – This text is the first part of a much longer interview by Gary Null with Dr. Vandana Shiva.

Globalisation and Poverty

Gary Null: My guest today is one of the most remarkable individuals that you will ever hear speak on the subject that we are going to discuss: the relationship between globalisation and poverty. Dr. Vandana Shiva is one of India's top nuclear physicists and an internationally renowned environmental and social activist. She has been credited as a principal founder of India's ecological and eco-feminism movement.

In 1982 she founded the Research Foundation for Science and Technology and Ecology in New Delhi (India), which led to the creation of an organization, Navdanya, dedicated to the restoration of organic farming across India and the preservation of indigenous knowledge and culture. For several decades Vandana has fought for changes in the globalised practices of agriculture and food and has travelled the world speaking against the bio-piracy of indigenous plants and their medical properties by large agriculture and pharmaceutical corporations. She has received international awards including the Alternative Nobel Prize, UNEP's Global 500 Award, and the UN Earth Day International Award. One of her recent books is "Soil not Oil: Environmental Justice in An Age of Climate Crisis." There are so many pressing issues in the world today, and I would like to start with one that is not getting the mainstream media attention that it deserves, specifically the relationship between corporate globalisation and increased poverty, including the policies of the World Bank, IMF, the WTO and their western government backers. From your point of view how

has the US and its aggressive push for free market economics contributed to the increase in poverty and a widening gap between the haves and have nots throughout the world.

Vandana Shiva: I think India is a good test case to see how globalisation increases real poverty while measurements of growth make it look like the country is booming. India's growth these last few years has been 9 percent and it is seen as one of the fastest growing economies. And yet in this decade of high growth under free market globalisation India has the largest number of hungry people in the world. An agrarian society that has all the capacity to feed itself is today unable to feed its children partly because the land is being diverted for mining, for car companies and highways, and because agriculture itself is being diverted for luxury crops for the rich. One of the greatest tragedies of the new poverty that India is witnessing is the emergence of an epidemic of farm suicides. It's one step beyond poverty to have to end your life because you're so deeply indebted and the debt is completely related to corporate seed monopolies, such as Monsanto's genetically engineered BT cotton. It's a globalised agriculture controlled by a handful of agribusiness companies – the Cargill's and ConAgra's – and the WTO that wrote the rules of agriculture. The combination of seed and commodity controls has denied India its basic right to food, especially for the poor.

Adapted from "Interview with Dr. Vandana Shiva". Dec. 16, 2008

1 Read text A and answer the questions.

1. Who is Vandana Shiva? What information does the interviewer provide about her?
2. Identify the question the interviewer asks her.
3. According to Vandana Shiva,
 - a) does globalisation increase poverty? How does she support her opinion?
 - b) why is an agrarian society that has all the capacity to feed itself is today unable to feed its children?
 - c) what great tragedy is India witnessing? What is it due to??
 - d) what is farmers' indebtedness due to?
 - e) who is globalised agriculture controlled by?
 - f) what has denied the poor in India their right to food?

2 Briefly summarise Vandana Shiva's reply to the interviewer's question.

READ TEXTS B AND C EXPANDING ON THE TOPIC.

Text B

Trade injustice and Ghanaian Tomato Farmers

Tomato farming in Ghana is a vital livelihood. They are an important crop in Ghana, especially in northern Ghana where they are cultivated during the dry season near water sources. Demand for tomatoes in West Africa is huge yet tomato farmers' livelihoods in Ghana are being destroyed. Local markets are full of fresh tomatoes during the tomato season so farmers have to sell their produce cheap and much of their crop is left to rot. It is estimated that 50% of Ghanaian tomatoes rot or sell at below production cost. One answer has been to sell fresh produce to the local canning factories that process it into tinned tomatoes. Yet today the factories are closed, and cheap, heavily subsidised imports have flooded the market. It is cheaper to buy imported tinned tomatoes than the local product. In 10 years imported tinned tomatoes from the EU have increased by over 600%. Originally

it was Italian tomatoes, now it is a Chinese concentrate sold by an American multinational and marketed as Italian. The concentrate is a paste mixed with sugars, starches and chemicals. Surely some international organisations would want to support a more healthy, locally sourced option for a "developing country" like Ghana. Yet it is because of the World Trade Organisation's rules, that ban Ghana from putting taxes on imports or giving subsidies (financial support) to their own farmers, that Ghanaian tomato farmers are caught in a vicious cycle. Farmers are not able to sell enough of their produce at a fair price so they are going into debt and then can't sell enough of their crop to recover. The plight of the tomato farmers has led to indebtedness, increased poverty and even suicide. Poultry and rice are suffering similar problems under the current trade practices.

3 Read the text above and summarise it in a few words.

4 Class discussion.

- What do you know of the situation in Italy? Do you think Italian farmers have similar problems?

Text C

La crescita: una pia illusione

Ho visto in televisione un interessante programma sulla crisi dell'agricoltura. Quelle terre del Sud, da secoli coltivate a grano, abbandonate agli sterpi perché il prezzo pagato dai grossisti non è remunerativo delle spese per la coltivazione e il raccolto. Naturalmente anche questo settore è caduto sotto le logiche della globalizzazione e 5 multinazionali al mondo decidono i prezzi, decidono quando far arrivare le navi cariche (in genere quando si verificano i raccolti) per deprimere i prezzi, e poi arrivano con prezzi elevati dovunque nel mondo ci sia penuria di cereali. Le facce disperate di quei contadini emarginati dalla globalizzazione parlano più e meglio di qualunque economista liberista che ci dice che il mercato è l'unico regolatore possibile e che bisogna stare al gioco della WTO e della libera circolazione delle merci. La litania corale è "CRESCITA". In realtà non si vuole informare la gente che questa globalizzazione e questa crisi mondiale hanno già i vincitori e i vinti. La vittoria è arrivata per i più forti con strutture

multinazionali già presenti nel mondo, per quelli che hanno alle spalle il potere finanziario delle grandi banche, per quei paesi come Cina e India che hanno centinaia di milioni di operai a basso costo, per i possessori di materie prime, per chi ha strutture di ricerca di eccellenza. La "CRESCITA" riguarda quei paesi. Per coloro che non ce l'hanno c'è solo il lento (o rapido) declino, con la vendita ai paesi più forti dei residui pezzi pregiati della propria economia (in Italia è facile che la Volkswagen compri la Fiat, che la Francia compri Alitalia, che i cinesi comprino porti o altre infrastrutture). La crisi dei paesi più deboli è attesa come la manna dai paesi più forti per banchettare con i pezzi pregiati restanti. L'Italia è tra i paesi soccombenti. Coloro che sostengono la globalizzazione devono ammettere, almeno per ciò che riguarda l'Italia, che è un radicale fallimento e, senza darci dei catastrofisti o acchiappanuvole, ci devono spiegare come uscirne, e fare presto perché la crisi economica e l'assenza di un futuro credibile pesano sempre di più.

(Testo adattato da Paolo De Gregorio)

5 Class discussion.

- What do you think of the opinion expressed by the author of this article? Do you have a different opinion?
- From your point of view, have globalisation and free market economics contributed to the increase in poverty and a widening gap between the haves and have nots throughout the world?



FRAME 10 — A GLOBAL WORLD

Warm up

- What do you know of Steve Jobs? Do you know who he was and what he did?
- Do you admire him? If so, why? Do you admire him as an entrepreneur or as a man?
- Have his inventions had any impact on your life?
- Do you have an iPhone, or an iPod, or an iPad?
- Do you use Facebook or any other social network?
- Are social networks important to you? If so, why?

Text A

Steve Jobs

Facts

Born: 24 February 1955

Birthplace: San Francisco, California

Died: 5 October 2011 (cancer)

Best known as: The co-founder and mastermind of Apple computers

In a 1995 oral history interview, Jobs said: “I was born in San Francisco, California, USA, planet Earth, February 24, 1955.” Jobs was given for adoption after birth and raised by his adoptive parents in Silicon Valley. Jobs attended Reed College in Portland, Oregon, for one semester in 1972, before dropping out.

He was a college drop out when he teamed up with Steve Wozniak in 1976 to sell personal computers assembled in Job’s garage. That was the beginning of Apple Computers, which revolutionized the computing industry and made Steve Jobs a multimillionaire before he was 30 years old.

Text B

“Like him or hate him, it’s hard to deny that Steve jobs helped change the world we live in. He was a master showman with a vision that few people possess. He was hard driving, pushing everyone around him and in the end, he leaves a legacy of innovation that has completely shaped our digital lives.

I was completely shocked when I heard of his passing last night. I knew he had been sick for the past few years, fighting pancreatic cancer among other things, but there are just some people that you think have the ability to overcome just about anything. Jobs was one of those people. He is after all the person who helped bring desktop computing to the common man, helped monetize the digital music industry with iTune and the iPod, turned the cell

phone industry on its head with the introduction of the most popular smartphone in the world, the iPhone, and started the next revolution in mobile computing and digital content consumption with the iPad. Of course there have been other successes along with some failures but at the end of the day, he was the man who created the largest publicly traded company in the world by market capitalization and the largest technology company in the world by revenue and profit. Not bad when you consider that he and Steve Wozniak started off selling homemade computers out of a garage. I’m not sure what the future holds for Apple Inc. but I do know that it will never be quite the same without the man in the black turtleneck and jeans.”

Sent by MacBookPro

Text C

“... Steve Jobs changed the world, like Thomas Edison. While Edison illuminated the world with electricity invented by someone else, Jobs connected it with the Internet created by someone else.

The iPhone is one of those revolutionary, world shifting inventions. Without its clones and Droids, social media and social networking would have never taken off the way

it has. The iPhone has literally allowed us to walk away from our desks with a computer in our hands. If it wasn’t for the iPhone, I don’t think Facebook would be the success it is today. ...

So, Steve Jobs, thank you. You have enabled us to connect, and now hyper-connect. ...”

Sent by Heather Morse

Text D

Steve Jobs' Commencement Speech: Apple founder speaks to Stanford Graduates

The Commencement Speech that Steve Jobs delivered to Stanford University graduates in 2005 has become a classic and the version uploaded by Stanford University in 2008 has been viewed nearly 5 million times.

Summary and quotations

Jobs, who never finished college, shared with the graduates what he learned from three major life events :

- dropping out of Reed College after one semester (*"It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back, it's one of the best decisions I ever made."*);
- getting fired from Apple in 1985 (*"It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life. During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named Pixar, and I fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the world's first computer-animated feature film, Toy Story, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together. I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful-tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it."*);

Sometimes life hits you on the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going on was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.");

- and being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2004 (*"Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart."*). He concludes the speech by sharing with the graduates a phrase that he first saw on the back of the final issue of The Whole Earth Catalogue when he was the age of the graduates: *"Stay hungry. Stay foolish."* (*"And I have always wished that for myself,"* Jobs says, *"And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish you that for you. Stay hungry. Stay foolish."*)

1 Read the texts on these pages and find information about Steve Jobs' life and work.

- Born in..... in
- Raised by:
- University degree:
- Married to: ; Family: 4 children
- Best known as:
- Other companies he set up:
- Most important inventions:
- Most important events in his life:
- Died on of

2 Class discussion.

- From what you have read in these pages, what picture do you get of Steve Jobs?
- It is said that he changed the world. What do you think? Justify your reply.
- What strikes you most about Steve Jobs?
- Comment on these words: *"You've got to find what you love."*
- What do you understand by these words? *"Stay hungry. Stay foolish."*

Watch the video on the Internet: Steve Jobs' 2005 Stanford University Commencement Address.