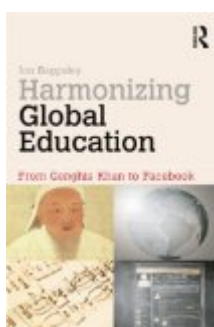


## HARMONIZING GLOBAL EDUCATION – FROM GENGHIS KHAN TO FACEBOOK

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Reviewed by  
Dr. Wolfram LAASER  
Milly-Steger-Str. 1 C.P. 58093 Hagen, ALEMANIA



Jon Baggaley's book is an exiting and profound piece of academic literature. It also includes personal anecdotes and flash backs about topics he came across during his long academic career as professor at Athabasca University, Concordia University and Memorial University of New Foundland. But Jon Baggeley is not only a gifted writer and researcher but also actor and therefore very much related to culture and arts. All this forms the ingredients of his book which "focusses on literature not usually associated with the field of Open and Flexible Learning, but offers a foundation for today's open and distance-based approaches to global education"(Preface of his book).

The book starts with the optimistic definition of the Maastricht 2002 declaration about global education claiming that it should open people's minds to the realities of the globalized world and bring about greater justice, equity and human rights. He then traces back the history of global communication to Dengehis Khan and his arrow riders to end up with the modern forms developed by the different generations of distance education with special emphasis on the mega universities . Although communication is dominated today by iPads and smart phones Baggaley points out that important concepts how to bring online media to the population and to convert the recipients of that information into contributors (user generated content) have been developed much earlier e.g. by the Polish filmmaker Dziga Vertov about one hundred years ago. So Baggaley always tries to put actual media development into a historical context that includes parallel developments and trends in music or painting as well.

In the chapters that follow he explains the rise and fall of different media. He also points out that Asia in a certain sense became a leader in media and communication development because Asian institutions achieved to accommodate mass media like television and radio with online virtual teaching systems instead of closing down audiovisual centers like it happened in the past in many western institutions. The book also shows his preference for simultaneous communication compared to asynchronous communication and his claim for sound research before hopping on new technology.

Consequently history of educational research methodologies up to actual data mining of time based recording of audience reactions to improve media design are another focus of the book.

Those who might have expected that the book deals with harmonizing of global education will be somehow disappointed because the book rather explains the ever new destruction of prevailing concepts by upcoming innovations like in Schumpeter's theories of economic cycles and the resistance and expectations related to these changes. However he also underlines that the "new clothes" all have some predecessors and are all too often rather "second hand" and that harmonization to happen needs critical research not to make everything equal but to identify where real value added can be generated to make education a vehicle for improving conditions of life.

So it is not casual that the yin-yang symbol can be found at the beginning and at the end of his book.

### **About Dr. Jon Baggaley**

Professor Emeritus  
Centre for Distance Education  
Athabasca University, Alberta  
B.A. (Hons) University of Sheffield  
Ph.D. University of Sheffield



Jon Baggaley is a psychologist specializing in the educational effects of communications media. He has taught previously at universities in Liverpool, Newfoundland, and Montreal, and is author/editor of 20 books/ volumes including Dynamics of Television (with Steven Duck), Psychology of the TV Image, Evaluation of Educational Television, Distance Education Technologies in Asia, (2010); Policy and Practice in Asian Distance Education, (2010) and Harmonizing Global Education (2011); also over 200 articles on media research and evaluation. Baggaley was founding editor of the Journal of Educational Media (formerly J. E. TV). He has consulted on the design of educational media campaigns for government and broadcasting organizations in Canada and the US, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Britain, Germany, Norway, Russia, Ukraine, Kenya, South Africa, Bangladesh, and in over 20 Asia-Pacific countries. As Chair and Director of Educational Technology at Athabasca University, Baggaley has been responsible for the development of new media technologies, and of policy for the distance-based delivery of the University's programmes. E-mail: [jonbaggaley@gmail.com](mailto:jonbaggaley@gmail.com)

## BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of REVIEWER



**Wolfram LAASER:** PhD in economics and ex academic director (Akademischer Direktor) at the Centre for Distance Study Development of FernUniversität Hagen, Germany. At present lecturer of online courses at National University of Cordoba, Argentina and of University of Alcalá, Spain. International consultant of various distance education programs. His publications cover aspects of instructional design, evaluation and organizational issues of distance and online learning.

Dr. Wolfram LAASER  
Milly-Steger-Str. 1 C.P. 58093 Hagen, Alemania  
Email: [wolfram.laaser@fernuni-hagen.de](mailto:wolfram.laaser@fernuni-hagen.de)

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