# 2

# GLOCALIZATION: TIME–SPACE AND HOMOGENEITY–HETEROGENEITY

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### The problem

As the general topic of globalization grows in importance in sociology and in social and cultural theory generally, and as the perspectives generated in the debates about globalization impact upon various intellectual fields, it becomes increasingly necessary to attend to some very basic issues. One such issue, probably the most central one, is discussed here. This is the meaning to be attributed to the very idea of globalization.

There is an evident tendency to think of globalization in a rather casual way as referring to very large-scale phenomena – as being, for example, the preoccupation of sociologists who are interested in big macrosociological problems, in contrast to those who have microsociological or, perhaps, local perspectives. I consider this to be very misleading. It is part of the 'mythology about globalization' (Ferguson, 1992) which sees this concept as referring to developments that involve the triumph of culturally homogeniz- ing forces over all others. This view of globalization often involves other equally doubtful attributions, such as the view that 'bigger is better', that locality – even history – is being obliterated and so on. There are numerous dangers that such conceptions of globalization will in fact become part of 'disciplinary wisdom' – that, for example, when sociology textbooks generally come to reflect the current interest in globalization they will give the impression that globalization designates a special field of sociological interest – that it is but one sort of interest that sociologists may have, and that that interest involves lack of concern with microsociological or local issues.

In all of this there is already an issue of considerable confusion, which arises in part from the quite numerous attempts to 'internationalize' – to extend culturally and anti-ethnocentrically – the curriculum of sociology. Some such attempts go further and propose a global sociology, conceived of as a universal sociology which makes the practice of the discipline increasingly viable on a global scale. Actually some of these ventures in the direction of global sociology make the theme of incorporating indigenous sociologies into a global sociology an imperative. Indeed, the problem of global sociology as a sociology which confirms and includes 'native'

sociologies parallels the more directly analytical issue to which I have already referred. This is the problem of the relationship between homogenizing and heterogenizing thrusts in globalization theory. Many sociologists are happy – or at least not unwilling – to agree that sociology ought to be 'internationalized' and 'de-ethnocentrized', but they are apparently much less inclined to engage in direct and serious study of the empirical, historically formed, global field *per se* (Robertson, 1992b, 1993).

The need to introduce the concept of glocalization firmly into social theory arises from the following considerations. Much of the talk about globalization has tended to assume that it is a process which overrides locality, including large-scale locality such as is exhibited in the various ethnic nationalisms which have seemingly arisen in various parts of the world in recent years. This interpretation neglects two things. First, it neglects the extent to which what is called local is in large degree constructed on a trans- or super-local basis. In other words, much of the promotion of locality is in fact done from above or outside. Much of what is often declared to be local is in fact the local expressed in terms of generalized recipes of locality. Even in cases where there is apparently no concrete recipe at work – as in the case of some of the more aggressive forms of contemporary nationalism – there is still, or so I would claim, a translocal factor at work. Here I am simply maintaining that the contemporary assertion of ethnicity and/or nationality is made within the global terms of identity and particularity (Handler, 1994).

Second, while there has been increasing interest in spatial considerations and expanding attention to the intimate links between temporal and spatial dimensions of human life, these considerations have made relatively little impact as yet on the discussion of globalization and related matters. In particular there has been little attempt to connect the discussion of time-and-space to the thorny issue of universalism-and-particularism. Interest in the theme of postmodernity has involved much attention to the supposed weaknesses of mainstream concern with 'universal time' and advancement of the claim that 'particularistic space' be given much greater attention; but in spite of a few serious efforts to resist the tendency, universalism has been persistently counterposed to particularism (in line with characterizations in the old debate about societal modernization in the 1950s and 1960s). At this time the emphasis on space is frequently expressed as a diminution of temporal considerations.

To be sure, 'time–space' has been given much attention by Giddens and in debates about his structuration theory, but for the most part this discussion has been conducted in abstract terms, with relatively little attention to concrete issues. Nonetheless, an important aspect of the problematic which is under consideration here has been delineated by Giddens. Giddens (1991: 21) argues that 'in a general way, the concept of globalisation is best understood as expressing fundamental aspects of time–space distanciation. Globalisation concerns the intersection of presence and absence, the interlacing of social events and social relations "at distance" with local

contextualities'. Giddens (1991: 22) goes on to say that 'globalisation has to be understood as a dialectical phenomenon, in which events at one pole of a distanciated relation often produce divergent or even contrary occurrences at another'. While the idea that globalization involves the 'intersection of presence and absence' is insightful and helpful, my view is that Giddens to some extent remains captive of old ways of thinking when he speaks of the production of 'divergent or even contrary occurrences'. This seems to imply an 'action–reaction' relationship which does not fully capture the complexities of the 'global–local' theme.

Some of the ambiguity here may arise from the tendency to use the term 'globalization' instead of the term '*globality*' – as in the idea of globalization as a consequence of modernity (Giddens, 1990). In fact the conjunction modernity–globalization in itself suggests a processual and temporal outcome of a social and psychological circumstance, whereas the juxtaposition of the notion of globality with that of modernity raises directly the problem of the relationship between two sets of conditions which are apparently different. In this perspective the issue of space is more specifically and independently raised via the concept of globality. The idea of modernity usually suggests a general homogenization of institutions and basic experiences in a temporal, historical mode. But there is increasing recognition that there have been a number of specific areas where modernity has developed.

Elsewhere in this volume Therborn identifies three major sites other than Europe where modernity developed relatively autonomously: the New World, where modernity developed as the result of the decimation of existing peoples; East Asia, where modernity arose as a response to a threatening external challenge; and much of Africa, where modernity was largely imposed by colonization or imperialism. The perspective involved in such a 'deconstruction' of modernity – or at least its conceptual and empirical differentiation – leads to definite recognition of the relatively independent significance of space and geography under the rubric of globality. Emphasis on globality enables us to avoid the weaknesses of the proposition that globalization is simply a consequence of modernity. Specifically, globality is the general condition which has *facilitated* the diffusion of 'general modernity', globality at this point being viewed in terms of the interpenetration of geographically distinct 'civilizations'.

The leading argument in this discussion is thus centred on the claim that the debate about global homogenization versus heterogenization should be transcended. It is not a question of *either* homogenization or heterogenization, but rather of the ways in which both of these two tendencies have become features of life across much of the late-twentieth-century world. In this perspective the problem becomes that of spelling out the ways in which homogenizing and heterogenizing tendencies are mutually implicative. This is in fact much more of an empirical problem than might at first be thought. In various areas of contemporary life – some of which are discussed in the following pages – there are ongoing, calculated attempts to combine homogeneity with heterogeneity and universalism with particularism.

In this respect we may well speak of the way in which academic disciplines have lagged behind 'real life'. At the same time, we need, of course, to provide analyses and interpretations of these features of 'reality' (recognizing that the distinction between theory and reality is extremely problematic and, I believe, ultimately untenable). I hope to show that outside academic/intellectual discourse there are many who take it for granted that the universal and particular can and *should* be combined. The question for them is: how and in what form should these be synthesized? It is not whether they *can* be interrelated. In order to comprehend the 'how' rather than the 'whether' we need to attend more directly to the question as to what is actually 'going on'. Asking that question does not, as some might well think, involve a disinterest in issues of a 'critical' nature concerning, for example, the interests served by strategies of what I here call glocalization; not least because, as I will intermittently emphasize, strategies of glocalization are – at least at this historical moment and for the foreseeable future – themselves grounded in particularistic frames of reference. There is no viable and practical Archimedean point from which strategies of glocalization can be fully maintained. Nevertheless, we appear to live in a world in which the expectation of uniqueness has become increasingly institutionalized and globally widespread.

### Glocalization

According to *The Oxford Dictionary of New Words* (1991: 134) the term 'glocal' and the process noun 'glocalization' are 'formed by telescoping *global* and *local* to make a blend'. Also according to the *Dictionary* that idea has been 'modelled on Japanese *dochakuka* (deriving from *dochaku* "living on one's own land"), originally the agricultural principle of adapting one's farming techniques to local conditions, but also adopted in Japanese business for *global localization*, a global outlook adapted to local conditions' (emphasis in original). More specifically, the terms 'glocal' and 'glocalization' became aspects of business jargon during the 1980s, but their major locus of origin was in fact Japan, a country which has for a very long time strongly cultivated the spatio-cultural significance of Japan itself and where the general issue of the relationship between the particular and the universal has historically received almost obsessive attention (Miyoshi and Harootunian, 1989). By now it has become, again in the words of *The Oxford Dictionary of New Words* (1991: 134), 'one of the main marketing buzzwords of the beginning of the nineties'.

The idea of glocalization in its business sense is closely related to what in some contexts is called, in more straightforwardly economic terms, micromarketing: the tailoring and advertising of goods and services on a global or near-global basis to increasingly differentiated local and particular markets. Almost needless to say, in the world of capitalistic production for increasingly global markets the adaptation to local and other particular

conditions is not simply a case of business responses to existing global variety – to civilizational, regional, societal, ethnic, gender and still other types of differentiated consumers – as if such variety or heterogeneity existed simply 'in itself'. To a considerable extent micromarketing – or, in the more comprehensive phrase, glocalization – involves *the construction* of increasingly differentiated consumers, the 'invention' of 'consumer traditions' (of which tourism, arguably the biggest 'industry' of the contemporary world, is undoubtedly the most clear-cut example). To put it very simply, diversity sells. From the consumer's point of view it can be a significant basis of cultural capital formation (Bourdieu, 1984). This, it should be emphasized, is not its only function. The proliferation of, for example, 'ethnic' supermarkets in California and elsewhere does to a large extent cater not so much to difference for the sake of difference, but to the desire for the familiar and/or to nostalgic wishes. On the other hand, these too can also be bases of cultural capital formation.

It is not my purpose here to delve into the comparative history of capitalistic business practices. Thus the accuracy of the etymology concerning 'glocalization' provided by *The Oxford Dictionary of New Words* is not a crucial issue.[1] Rather I want to use the general idea of glocalization to make a number of points about the global–local problematic. There is a widespread tendency to regard this problematic as straightforwardly involving a polarity, which assumes its most acute form in the claim that we live in a world of local assertions *against* globalizing trends, a world in which the very idea of locality is sometimes cast as a form of opposition or resistance to the hegemonically global (or one in which the assertion of 'locality' or *Gemeinschaft* is seen as the pitting of subaltern 'universals' against the 'hegemonic universal' of dominant cultures and/or classes). An interesting variant of this general view is to be found in the replication of the German culture–civilization distinction at the global level: the old notion of ('good') culture is pitted against the ('bad') notion of civilization. In this traditional German perspective local culture becomes, in effect, national culture, while civilization is given a distinctively global, world-wide colouring.

We have, in my judgement, to be much more subtle about the dynamics of the production and reproduction of difference and, in the broadest sense, locality. Speaking in reference to the local–cosmopolitan distinction, Hannerz (1990: 250) has remarked that for locals diversity 'happens to be the principle which allows all locals to stick to their respective cultures'. At the same time, cosmopolitans largely depend on 'other people' carving out 'special niches' for their cultures. Thus 'there can be no cosmopolitans without locals'. This point has some bearing on the particular nature of the intellectual interest in and the approach to the local–global issue. In relation to Hannerz's general argument, however, we should note that in the contemporary world, or at least in the West, the current counter-urbanization trend (Champion, 1989), much of which in the USA is producing 'fortress communities', proceeds in terms of the standardization

of locality, rather than straightforwardly in terms of 'the principle of difference'.[2]

In any case, we should become much more historically conscious of the various ways in which the deceptively modern, or postmodern, problem of the relationship between the global and the local, the universal and the particular, and so on, is not by any means as unique to the second half of the twentieth century as many would have us believe. This is clearly shown in Greenfeld's (1992) recent study of the origins of nationalism in England, France, Germany, Russia and America. With the notable exception of English nationalism, she shows that the emergence of all national identities – such constituting 'the most common and salient form of particularism in the modern world' (Greenfeld, 1992: 8) – developed as a part of an 'essentially international process' (Greenfeld, 1992: 14).

The more extreme or adamant claims concerning the contemporary uniqueness of these alleged opposites is a refraction of what some have called the nostalgic paradigm in Western social science (Phillips, 1993; Robertson, 1990; Turner, 1987). It is a manifestation of the not always implicit world view that suggests that we – the global we – once lived in and were distributed not so long ago across a multitude of ontologically secure, collective 'homes'. Now, according to this narrative – or, perhaps, a metanarrative – our sense of home is rapidly being destroyed by waves of (Western?) 'globalization'. In contrast I maintain – although I can present here only part of my overall argument – that globalization has involved the reconstruction, in a sense the production, of 'home', 'community' and 'locality' (cf. J. Abu-Lughod, 1994). To that extent the local is not best seen, at least as an analytic or interpretative departure point, as a counterpoint to the global. Indeed it can be regarded, subject to some qualifications, as *an aspect* of globalization. One part of my argument which must remain underdeveloped in the immediate context is that we are being led into the polar-opposite way of thinking by the thesis that globalization is a direct 'consequence of modernity' (Giddens, 1990; cf. Robertson, 1992a). In this perspective Weber's 'iron cage' is globalized. Moreover, in this view there could never have been any kind of globalization without the instrumental rationality often taken to be the hallmark of modernity (a rationality which, it is readily conceded, Giddens sees as carrying both disabling *and* reflexive enabling possibilities).

Thus the notion of glocalization actually conveys much of what I myself have previously written about globalization. From my own analytic and interpretative standpoint the concept of globalization has involved the simultaneity and the interpenetration of what are conventionally called the global and the local, or – in more abstract vein – the universal and the particular. (Talking strictly of my own position in the current debate about and the discourse of globalization, it may even become necessary to substitute the term 'glocalization' for the contested term 'globalization' in order to make my argument more precise.) I certainly do not wish to fall victim, cognitive or otherwise, to a particular brand of current marketing

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terminology. Insofar as we regard the idea of glocalization as simply a capitalistic business term (of apparent Japanese origin) then I would of course reject it as, *inter alia*, not having sufficient analytic-interpretative leverage. On the other hand, we are surely coming to recognize that seemingly autonomous economic terms frequently have deep cultural roots (for example, Sahlins, 1976). In the Japanese and other societal cases the cognitive and moral 'struggle' even to recognize the economic domain as relatively autonomous has never really been 'won'. In any case, we live in a world which increasingly acknowledges the quotidian conflation of the economic and the cultural. But we inherited from classical social theory, particularly in its German version in the decades from about 1880 to about 1920, a view that talk of 'culture' and 'cultivation' was distinctly at odds with 'materialism' and the rhetoric of economics and instrumental rationality.

My deliberations in this chapter on the local–global problematic hinge upon the view that contemporary conceptions of locality are largely produced in something like global terms, but this certainly does not mean that all forms of locality are thus substantively homogenized (notwithstanding the standardization, for example, of relatively new suburban, fortress communities). An important thing to recognize in this connection is that there is an increasingly globe-wide discourse of locality, community, home and the like. One of the ways of considering the idea of *global culture* is in terms of its being constituted by the increasing interconnectedness of many local cultures both large and small (Hannerz, 1990), although I certainly do not myself think that global culture is entirely constituted by such interconnectedness. In any case we should be careful *not to equate the communicative and interactional connecting of such cultures* – including very asymmetrical forms of such communication and interaction, as well as 'third cultures' of mediation – *with the notion of homogenization of all cultures.*

I have in mind the rapid, recent development of a relatively autonomous discourse of 'intercultural communication'. This discourse is being promoted by a growing number of professionals, along the lines of an older genre of 'how to' literature. So it is not simply a question of social and cultural theorists talking about cultural difference and countervailing forces of homogenization. One of the 'proper objects' of study here is the phenomenon of 'experts' who specialize in the 'instrumentally rational' promotion of intercultural communication. These 'experts' have in fact a vested interest in the promotion and protection of variety and diversity. Their jobs and their profession depend upon the expansion and reproduction of heterogeneity. The same seems to apply to strong themes in modern American business practice (Rhinesmith, 1993; Simons et al., 1993).

We should also be more interested in the conditions for the production of cultural pluralism (Moore, 1989) – as well as geographical pluralism. Let me also say that the idea of locality, indeed of globality, is very relative. In spatial terms a village community is of course local relative to a region of a society, while a society is local relative to a civilizational area, and so on.

Relativity also arises in temporal terms. Contrasting the well-known pair consisting of locals and cosmopolitans, Hannerz (1990: 236) has written that 'what was cosmopolitan in the early 1940s may be counted as a moderate form of localism by now'. I do not in the present context get explicitly involved in the problem of relativity (or relativism). But sensitivity to the problem does inform much of what I say.

There are certain conditions that are currently promoting the production of concern with the local–global problematic within the academy. King (1991: 420) has addressed an important aspect of this. In talking specifically of the spatial compression dimension of globalization he remarks on the increasing numbers of 'protoprofessionals from so-called "Third World" societies' who are travelling to 'the core' for professional education. The educational sector of 'core' countries 'depends increasingly on this input of students from the global periphery'. It is the experience of 'flying round the world and needing schemata to make sense of what they see' on the one hand, and encountering students from all over the world in the classroom on the other, which forms an important experiential basis for academics of what King (1991: 401–2) calls totalizing and global theories. I would maintain, however, that it is *interest in 'the local'* as much as the 'totally global' which is promoted in this way.[3]

### The local in the global? The global in the local?

In one way or another the issue of the relationship between the 'local' and the 'global' has become increasingly salient in a wide variety of intellectual and practical contexts. In some respects this development hinges upon the increasing recognition of the significance of space, as opposed to time, in a number of fields of academic and practical endeavour. The general interest in the idea of postmodernity, whatever its limitations, is probably the most intellectually tangible manifestation of this. The most well known maxim – virtually a cliché – proclaimed in the diagnosis of 'the postmodern condition' is of course that 'grand narratives' have come to an end, and that we are now in a circumstance of proliferating and often competing narratives. In this perspective there are no longer any stable accounts of dominant change in the world. This view itself has developed, on the other hand, at precisely the same time that there has crystallized an increasing interest in the world as a whole as a single place. (Robbins [1993: 187] also notes this, in specific reference to geographers.) As the sense of temporal unidirectionality has faded so, on the other hand, has the sense of 'representational' space within which all kinds of narratives may be inserted expanded. This of course has increasingly raised in recent years the vital question as to whether the apparent collapse – and the 'deconstruction' – of the heretofore dominant social-evolutionist accounts of implicit or explicit world history are leading rapidly to a situation of chaos or one in which, to quote Giddens (1990: 6), 'an infinite number of purely idiosyncratic "histories" can be written'.

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Giddens claims in fact that we *can* make generalizations about 'definite episodes of historical transition'. However, since he also maintains that 'modernity' on a global scale has amounted to a rupture with virtually all prior forms of life he provides no guidance as to how history or histories might actually be done.

In numerous contemporary accounts, then, globalizing trends are regarded as in tension with 'local' assertions of identity and culture. Thus ideas such as the global *versus* the local, the global *versus* the 'tribal', the international *versus* the national, and the universal *versus* the particular are widely promoted. For some, these alleged oppositions are simply puzzles, while for others the second part of each opposition is seen as a reaction against the first. For still others they are contradictions. In the perspective of contradiction the tension between, for example, the universal and the particular may be seen either in the dynamic sense of being a relatively progressive source of overall change or as a modality which preserves an existing global system in its present state. We find both views in Wallerstein's argument that the relation between the universal and the particular is basically a product of expanding world-systemic capitalism (Wallerstein, 1991b). Only what Wallerstein (1991a) calls anti-systemic movements – and then only those which effectively challenge its 'metaphysical presuppositions' – can move the world beyond the presuppositions of its present (capitalist) condition. In that light we may regard the contemporary proliferation of 'minority discourses' (Jan-Mohamed and Lloyd, 1990) as being encouraged by the presentation of a 'world-system'. Indeed, there is much to suggest that adherents to minority discourses have, somewhat paradoxically, a special liking for Wallersteinian or other 'totalistic' forms of world-systems theory. But it must also be noted that many of the enthusiastic participants in the discourse of 'minorities' describe their intellectual practice in terms of the *singular*, minority discourse (JanMohamed and Lloyd, 1990). This suggests that there is indeed a potentially *global* mode of writing and talking on behalf of, or at least about, minorities (cf. Handler, 1994; McGrane, 1989).

Barber (1992) argues that 'tribalism' and 'globalism' have become what he describes as the two axial principles of our time. In this he echoes a very widespread view of 'the new world (dis)order'. I chose to consider his position because it is succinctly stated and has been quite widely disseminated. Barber sees these two principles as inevitably in tension – a 'McWorld' of homogenizing globalization *versus* a 'Jihad world' of particularizing 'lebanonization'. (He might well now say 'balkanization'.) Barber is primarily interested in the bearing which each of these supposedly clashing principles have on the prospects for democracy. That is certainly a very important matter, but I am here only directly concerned with the global–local debate.

Like many others, Barber defines globalization as the opposite of localization. He argues that 'four imperatives make up the dynamic of McWorld: a market imperative, a resource imperative, an information-technology imperative, and an ecological imperative' (Barber, 1992: 54).

Each of these contributes to 'shrinking the world and diminishing the salience of national borders' and together they have 'achieved a considerable victory over factiousness and particularism, and not least over their most virulent traditional form – nationalism' (Barber, 1992: 54; cf. Miyoshi, 1993). Remarking that 'the Enlightenment dream of a universal rational society has to a remarkable degree been realized', Barber (1992: 59) emphasizes that that achievement has, however, been realized in commercialized, bureaucratized, homogenized and what he calls 'depoliticized' form. Moreover, he argues that it is a very incomplete achievement because it is 'in competition with forces of global breakdown, national dissolution, and centrifugal corruption' (cf. Kaplan, 1994). While notions of localism, locality and locale do not figure explicitly in Barber's essay they certainly diffusely inform it.

There is no good reason, other than recently established convention in some quarters, to define globalization largely in terms of homogenization. Of course, anyone is at liberty to so define globalization, but I think that there is a great deal to be said against such a procedure. Indeed, while each of the imperatives of Barber's McWorld appear superficially to suggest homogenization, when one considers them more closely, they each have a local, diversifying aspect. I maintain also that it makes no good sense to define the global as if the global excludes the local. In somewhat technical terms, defining the global in such a way suggests that the global lies beyond all localities, as having systemic properties over and beyond the attributes of units within a global system. This way of talking flows along the lines suggested by the macro–micro distinction, which has held much sway in the discipline of economics and has recently become a popular theme in sociology and other social sciences.

Without denying that the world-as-a-whole has some systemic properties beyond those of the 'units' within it, it must be emphasized, on the other hand, that such units themselves are to a large degree constructed in terms of extra-unit processes and actions, in terms of increasingly global dynamics. For example, nationally organized societies – and the 'local' aspirations for establishing yet more nationally organized societies – are not simply units within a global context or texts within a context or intertext. Both their existence, and particularly the form of their existence, is largely the result of extra-societal – more generally, extra-local – processes and actions. If we grant with Wallerstein (1991b: 92) and Greenfeld (1992) that 'the national' is a 'prototype of the particular' we must, on the other hand, also recognize that the nation-state – more generally, the national society – is in a crucial respect a *cultural idea* (as Greenfeld herself seems to acknowledge). Much of the apparatus of contemporary nations, of the national-state organization of societies, including *the form* of their particularities – the construction of their unique identities – is very similar across the entire world (Meyer, 1980; Robertson, 1991), in spite of much variation in levels of 'development'. This is, perhaps, the most tangible of contemporary sites of the interpenetration of particularism and universalism (Robertson, 1992b).

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Before coming directly to the contemporary circumstance, it is necessary to say a few words about globalization in a longer, historical perspective. One can undoubtedly trace far back into human history developments involving the expansion of chains of connectedness across wide expanses of the earth. In that sense 'world formation' has been proceeding for many hundreds, indeed thousands, of years. At the same time, we can undoubtedly trace through human history periods during which the consciousness of the potential for world 'unity' was in one way or another particularly acute. One of the major tasks of students of globalization is, as I have said, to comprehend *the form* in which the present, seemingly rapid shifts towards a highly interdependent world was structured. I have specifically argued that that form has been centred upon four main elements of the global-human condition: societies, individuals, the international system of societies, and humankind (Robertson, 1992b). It is around the changing relationships between, different emphases upon and often conflicting interpretations of these aspects of human life that the contemporary world as a whole has crystallized. So in my perspective the issue of what is to be included under the notion of the global is treated very comprehensively. The global is not in and of itself counterposed to the local. Rather, what is often referred to as the local is essentially included within the global.

In this respect globalization, defined in its most general sense as the compression of the world as a whole, involves the linking of localities. But it also involves the 'invention' of locality, in the same general sense as the idea of the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983), as well as its 'imagination' (cf. Anderson, 1983).[4] There is indeed currently something like an 'ideology of home' which has in fact come into being partly in response to the constant repetition and global diffusion of the claim that we now live in a condition of homelessness or rootlessness; as if in prior periods of history the vast majority of people lived in 'secure' and homogenized locales.[5] Two things, among others, must be said in objection to such ideas. First, the form of globalization has involved considerable emphasis, at least until now, on the cultural homogenization of nationally constituted societies; but, on the other hand, prior to that emphasis, which began to develop at the end of the eighteenth century, what McNeill (1985) calls polyethnicity was normal. Second, the phenomenological diagnosis of the generalized homelessness of modern man and woman has been developed as if 'the same people are behaving and interpreting at the same time in the same broad social process' (Meyer, 1992: 11); whereas there is in fact much to suggest that it is increasingly global expectations concerning the relationship between individual and society that have produced both routinized and 'existential' selves. On top of that, the very ability to identify 'home', directly or indirectly, is contingent upon the (contested) construction and organization of interlaced categories of space and time.

But it is not my purpose here to go over this ground again, but rather to emphasize the significance of certain periods prior to the second half of the twentieth century when the possibilities for a single world seemed at the time

to be considerable, but also problematic. Developing research along such lines will undoubtedly emphasize a variety of areas of the world and different periods. But as far as relatively recent times are concerned, I would draw attention to two arguments, both of which draw attention to rapid extension of communication across the world as a whole and thematize the central issue of changing conceptions of time-and-space. Johnson (1991) has in his book, *The Birth of the Modern*, argued that 'world society' – or 'international society in its totality' (1991: xviii) – largely crystallized in the period 1815–30. Here the emphasis is upon the crucial significance of the Congress of Vienna which was assembled following Bonaparte's first abdication in 1814. According to Johnson, the peace settlement in Vienna, following what was in effect the first world war (Fregosi, 1990), was 'reinforced by the powerful currents of romanticism sweeping through the world . . .'. Thus was established 'an international order which, in most respects, endured for a century' (Johnson, 1991: xix). Regardless of its particular ideological bent, Johnson's book is important because he does attempt not merely to cover all continents of the world but also to range freely over many aspects of life generally, not just world politics or international relations. He raises significant issues concerning the development of consciousness of the world as a whole, which was largely made possible by the industrial and communicative revolution on the one hand, and the Enlightenment on the other.

Second (and, regardless of the issue of the periodization of globalization, more important), Kern (1983) has drawn attention to the crucial period of 1880–1918, in a way that is particularly relevant to the present set of issues. In his study of the *Culture of Time and Space* Kern's most basic point is that in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first twenty years or so of the twentieth century very consequential shifts took place with respect to both our sense of space and time. There occurred, through international negotiations and technological innovations, a standardization of time–space which was inevitably both universal and particular: world time organized in terms of particularistic space, in a sense the co-ordination of objectiveness and subjectiveness. In other words, homogenization went hand in hand with heterogenization. They made each other possible. It was in this period that 'the world' became locked into a particular *form* of a strong shift to unicity. It was during this time that the four major 'components' of globalization which I have previously specified were given formidable concreteness. Moreover, it was in the late-nineteenth century that there occurred a big spurt in the organized attempts to link localities on an international or ecumenical basis.

An immediate precursor of such was the beginning of international exhibitions in the mid-nineteenth century, involving the internationally organized display of particular national 'glories' and achievements. The last two decades of the century witnessed many more such international or cross-cultural ventures, among them the beginnings of the modern religious ecumenical movement, which at one and the same time celebrated

difference and searched for commonality within the framework of an emergent culture for 'doing' the relationship between the particular and the, certainly not uncontested, universal. An interesting example of the latter is provided by the International Youth Hostel movement, which spread quite rapidly and not only in the northern hemisphere. This movement attempted on an organized international, or global, basis to promote the cultivation of communal, 'back to nature' values. Thus at one and the same time particularity was valorized but this was done on an increasingly globe-wide, pan-local basis.

The present century has seen a remarkable proliferation with respect to the 'international' organization and promotion of locality. A very pertinent example is provided by the current attempts to organize globally the promotion of the rights and identities of native, or indigenous, peoples (Charles, 1993; Chartrand, 1991).[6] This was a strong feature, for example, of the Global Forum in Brazil in 1992, which, so to say, surrounded the official United Nations 'Earth Summit'. Another is the attempt by the World Health Organization to promote 'world health' by the reactivation and, if need be, the invention of 'indigenous' local medicine. It should be stressed that these are only a few examples taken from a multifaceted trend.

## Glocalization and the cultural imperialism thesis

Some of the issues which I have been raising are considered from a very different angle in Appiah's work on the viability of Pan-Africanism (1992). Appiah's primary theme is 'the question of how we are to think about Africa's contemporary cultures in the light of the two main external determinants of her recent history – European and Afro-New World conceptions of Africa – and her own endogenous cultural traditions' (Appiah, 1992: ix–x). His contention is that the 'ideological decolonization' which he seeks to effect can only be made possible by what he calls finding a 'negotiable middle way' between endogenous 'tradition' and 'Western' ideas, both of the latter designations being placed within quotation marks by Appiah himself (Appiah, 1992: x). He objects strongly to what he calls the racial and racist thrusts of much of the Pan-American idea, pointing out that insofar as Pan-Africanism makes assumptions about the racial unity of all Africans, then this derives in large part from the experience and memory of non-African ideas about Africa and Africans which were prevalent in Europe and the USA during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Speaking specifically of the idea of the 'decolonization' of African literature, Appiah insists, I think correctly, that in much of the talk about decoloniz- ation we find what Appiah himself calls (again within quotation marks) a 'reverse discourse':

> The pose of repudiation actually presupposes the cultural institutions of the West and the ideological matrix in which they, in turn, are imbricated. Railing against the cultural hegemony of the West, the nativists are of its party without knowing it . . . . (D)efiance is determined less by 'indigenous' notions of resistance than

> by the dictates of the West's own Herderian legacy – its highly elaborated ideologies of national autonomy, of language and literature as their cultural substrate. Native nostalgia, in short is largely fueled by that Western sentimentalism so familiar after Rousseau; few things, then, are less native than nativism in its current form. (Appiah, 1992: 60)

Appiah's statement facilitates the explication of a particularly important point. It helps to demonstrate that much of the conception of contemporary locality and indigeneity is itself historically contingent upon *encounters* between one civilizational region and another (cf. Nelson, 1981). Within such interactions, many of them historically imperialistic, has developed a sense of particularistic locality. But the latter is in large part a consequence of the increasingly global 'institutionalization' of the expectation and construction of local particularism. Not merely is variety continuously produced and reproduced in the contemporary world, that variety is *largely an aspect of the very dynamics which a considerable number of commentators interpret as homogenization.* So in this light we are again required to come up with a more subtle interpretation than is usually offered in the general debate about locality and globality.

Some important aspects of the local–global issue are manifested in the general and growing debate about and the discourse of cultural imperialism (Tomlinson, 1991). There is of course a quite popular intellectual view which would have it that the entire world is being swamped by Western – more specifically, American – culture. This view has undoubtedly exacerbated recent French political complaints about American cultural imperialism, particularly within the context of GATT negotiations. There are, on the other hand, more probing discussions of and research on this matter. For starters, it should be emphasized that the virtually overwhelming evidence is that even 'cultural messages' which emanate directly from 'the USA' are *differentially* received and interpreted; that 'local' groups 'absorb' communication from the 'centre' in a great variety of ways (Tomlinson, 1991). Second, we have to realize that the major alleged producers of 'global culture' – such as those in Atlanta (CNN) and Los Angeles (Hollywood) – increasingly tailor their products to a differentiated global market (which they partly construct). For example, Hollywood attempts to employ mixed, 'multinational' casts of actors and a variety of 'local' settings when it is particularly concerned, as it increasingly is, to get a global audience. Third, there is much to suggest that seemingly 'national' symbolic resources are in fact increasingly available for differentiated global interpretation and consumption. For example, in a recent discussion of the staging of Shakespeare's plays, Billington (1992) notes that in recent years Shakespeare has been subject to wide-ranging cultural interpretation and staging. Shakespeare no longer belongs to England. Shakespeare has assumed a universalistic significance; and we have to distinguish in this respect between Shakespeare as representing Englishness and Shakespeare as of 'local-cum-global' relevance. Fourth, clearly many have seriously underestimated the flow of ideas and practices from the so-called Third World to the seemingly

dominant societies and regions of the world (J. Abu-Lughod, 1991; Hall, 1991a, 1991b).

Much of global 'mass culture' is in fact impregnated with ideas, styles and genres concerning religion, music, art, cooking, and so on. In fact the whole question of what will 'fly' globally and what will not is a very important question in the present global situation. We know of course that the question of what 'flies' is in part contingent upon issues of power; but we would be very ill-advised to think of this simply as a matter of the hegemonic extension of Western modernity. As Tomlinson (1991) has argued, 'local cultures' are, in Sartre's phrase, *condemned to freedom*. And their global participation has been greatly (and politically) underestimated. At this time 'freedom' is manifested particularly in terms of the social construction of identity-and-tradition, by the appropriation of cultural traditions (Habermas, 1994: 22). Although, as I have emphasized, this reflexiveness is typically undertaken along relatively standardized global-cultural lines. (For example, in 1982 the UN fully recognized the existence of indigenous peoples. In so doing it effectively established *criteria* in terms of which indigenous groups could and should identify themselves and be recognized formally. There are national parallels to this, in the sense that some societies have legal criteria for ethnic groups and cultural traditions.)

Then there is the question of diversity at the local level. This issue has been raised in a particularly salient way by Balibar (1991), who talks of *world spaces*. The latter are places in which the world-as-a-whole is potentially inserted. The general idea of world-space suggests that we should consider the local as a 'micro' manifestation of the global – in opposition, *inter alia*, to the implication that the local indicates enclaves of cultural, ethnic, or racial homogeneity. Where, in other words, is *home* in the late-twentieth century? Balibar's analysis – which is centred on contemporary Europe – suggests that in the present situation of global complexity, the idea of home has to be divorced analytically from the idea of locality. There may well be groups and categories which equate the two, but that doesn't entitle them or their representatives to project their perspective onto humanity as a whole. In fact there is much to suggest that the senses of home and locality are contingent upon alienation from home and/or locale. How else could one have (reflexive) consciousness of such? We talk of the mixing of cultures, of polyethnicity, but we also often underestimate the significance of what Lila Abu-Lughod (1991) calls 'halfies'. As Geertz (1986: 114) has said, 'like nostalgia, diversity is not what it used to be'. One of the most significant aspects of contemporary diversity is indeed the complication it raises for conventional notions of culture. We must be careful not to remain in thrall to the old and rather well established view that cultures are organically binding and sharply bounded. In fact Lila Abu-Lughod opposes the very idea of culture because it seems to her to deny the importance of 'halfies', those who combine in themselves as individuals a number of cultural, ethnic and genderal features (cf. Tsing, 1993). This issue is closely related to the frequently addressed theme of

global hybridization, even more closely to the idea of creolization (Hannerz, 1992: 217–67).

## Conclusion: sameness and difference

My emphasis upon the significance of the concept of glocalization has arisen mainly from what I perceive to be major weaknesses in much of the employment of the term 'globalization'. In particular, I have tried to transcend the tendency to cast the idea of globalization as inevitably in tension with the idea of localization. I have instead maintained that globalization – in the broadest sense, the compression of the world – has involved and increasingly involves the creation and the incorporation of locality, processes which themselves largely shape, in turn, the compression of the world as a whole. Even though we are, for various reasons, likely to continue to use the concept of globalization, it might well be preferable to replace it for certain purposes with the concept of glocalization. The latter concept has the definite advantage of making the concern with space as important as the focus upon temporal issues. At the same time emphasis upon the global condition – that is, upon globality – further constrains us to make our analysis and interpretation of the contemporary world both spatial and temporal, geographical as well as historical (Soja, 1989).

Systematic incorporation of the concept of glocalization into the current debate about globalization is of assistance with respect to the issue of what I have called form. The form of globalization has specifically to do with the way in which the compression of the world is, in the broadest sense, structured. This means that the issue of the form of globalization is related to the ideologically laden notion of world order. However, I want to emphasize strongly that insofar as this is indeed the case, my own effort here has been directed only at making sense of two *seemingly* opposing trends: homogenization and heterogenization. These simultaneous trends are, in the last instance, complementary and interpenetrative; even though they certainly can and do collide in concrete situations. Moreover, glocalization can be – in fact, is – used strategically, as in the strategies of glocalization employed by contemporary TV enterprises seeking global markets (MTV, then CNN, and now others). Thus we should realize that in arguing that the current form of globalization involves what is best described as glocalization I fully acknowledge that there are many different modes of practical glocalization. Thus, even though much of what I said in this chapter has been hinged upon the Japanese conception of glocalization, I have in fact generalized that concept so as, in principle, to encompass the world as a whole. In this latter perspective the Japanese notion of glocalization appears as a *particular version* of a very general phenomenon.

An important issue which arises from my overall discussion has to do with the ways in which, since the era of the nation-state began in the late eighteenth century, the nation-state itself has been a major agency for the

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### Notes

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production of diversity and hybridization. Again, it happens to be the case that Japan provides the most well-known example of what Westney (1987) calls cross-societal emulation, most clearly during the early Meiji period. I would, however, prefer the term, selective incorporation in order to describe the very widespread tendency for nation-states to 'copy' ideas and practices from other societies – to engage, in varying degrees of systematicity, in projects of importation and hybridization. So, even though I have emphasized that the cultural idea of the nation-state is a 'global fact', we also should recognize that nation-states have, particularly since the late nineteenth century (Westney, 1987: 11–12), been engaged in selective learning from other societies, each nation-state thus incorporating a different mixture of 'alien' ideas.

There is still another factor in this brief consideration of 'hybridized national cultures'. This is the phenomenon of cultural nationalism. Yet again, this concept has emerged in particular reference to Japan. On the basis of a discussion of *nihonjinron* (the discourse on and of Japanese uniqueness), Yoshino (1992) argues that *nihonjinron* has, in varying degrees, been a common practice. Specifically, modern nations have tended to promote discourses concerning their own unique difference, a practice much encouraged in and by the great globalizing thrusts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this respect what is sometimes these days called strategic essentialism – mainly in reference to liberation movements of various kinds – is much older than some may think. It is in fact an extension and generalization of a long drawn-out process.

Finally, in returning to the issue of form, I would argue that no matter how much we may speak of global disorder, uncertainty and the like, generalizations and theorizations of such are inevitable. We should not entirely conflate the empirical issues with the interpretative-analytical ones. Speaking in the latter vein we can conclude that the form of globalization is currently being reflexively reshaped in such a way as to increasingly make projects of glocalization the constitutive features of contemporary globalization.

## Notes

1. My colleague, Akiko Hashimoto, informs me that in 'non-business' Japanese *dochakuka* conveys the idea of 'making something indigenous'. For some provocative comments on the connections between multiculturalism (especially in debates about the university curriculum), consumer culture and current trends in commodification and product diversification in contemporary capitalism, see Rieff (1993).

2. This trend is, of course, partly facilitated by the 'electronic cottage' phenomenon, which increasingly enables those who can afford it to be vicinally distant from urban centres, but

communicationally close to increasingly large numbers of people. Various aspects of geographic dispersal in relation to financial globalization and centralization are explored at length in Sassen (1991).

3. Robbins (1993) has addressed issues of this kind at some length in reference to the universalism–particularism theme. See, in particular, his chapter, 'Comparative Cosmopolitans' (Robbins, 1993: 180–211).

4. Habermas (1994: 22) succinctly expresses this way of thinking when he says that 'nationalism is a form of collective consciousness which both presupposes a reflexive appropriation of cultural traditions that has been filtered through historiography and spreads only via the channels of modern mass communication'. However, the notion of reflexive appropriation suggests that the construction of tradition is primarily an *internal* matter, whereas I argue that the construction or reconstruction of tradition is closely tied to globalization (Robertson, 1992b: 146–63).

5. This contemporary ideology of home (or homelessness), as I have called it, actually involves the overlap of two, heretofore distinct discourses. On the one hand, there is the diffuse discourse which has found its clearest expression in the phenomenological notion of homelessness and which has clearly filtered into the public domain and has seemingly acquired a near-global significance (cf. Berger et al., 1973). On the other hand, there is the more specific discourse of homelessness which deals with inadequate shelter (cf. Glasser, 1994).

6. For numerous insights into the current interest in indigenous peoples, see Tsing (1993).

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