

CHAPTER 8

GLOBAL CULTURE AND CULTURAL FLOWS

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Chapter Summary

Because much of it exists in the form of ideas, words, images, musical sounds, and so on, culture tends to flow comparatively easily throughout the world. In fact, that flow is increasingly easy because culture exists increasingly in digitized forms. Thus, the Internet permits global downloading and sharing of digitized cultural forms such as movies, videos, music, books, newspapers, photos, and so on. Further, those who see themselves as part of the same culture can maintain contact with one another through e-mail or via virtual face-to-face contact on Skype. They can also remain immersed within the culture in which they exist and/or from which they come by, for example, reading online newspapers from home. While the global flow of digital culture is increasingly easy, the fact is that there are still barriers to its flow, especially the lack of access by many (the "global digital divide"), mostly in the South, to the Internet.

While culture does flow comparatively easily across the globe, not all cultures and forms of culture flow as easily or at the same rate. For one thing, the cultures of the world's most powerful societies (most notably the US) flow around the world much more readily than the cultures of relatively weak and marginal societies. Similarly, some types of culture (pop

music, for example) move quickly and easily around the globe, while others (innovative theories in the social sciences) move in slow motion and may never make it to many parts of the world.

This chapter on culture permits the introduction of additional theories of globalization beyond the neoliberal and neo-Marxian theories discussed in [Chapter 4](#). These are theories of cultural differentialism, hybridization and convergence (Nederveen Pieterse 2009). While these theories are treated here under the heading of culture, they have much broader applicability to many issues covered in this book such as the previously discussed topics of economics and politics. In politics, for example, it could be argued that nation-states throughout the world remain stubbornly different (“differentialism”), are growing increasingly alike (“convergence”), or involve more and more combinations of various political forms drawn from many different parts of the world (“hybridization”). In spite of this broader applicability, the focus here will be on these three types of theories as they relate to global culture.

What makes these three theories particularly attractive from the perspective of this book is that they are all about our focal concern with flows and barriers and take very different positions on them and their relationship to one another. In *differentialism*, the focus is much more on barriers that prevent flows that would serve to make cultures (and much else) more alike. In this view, cultures tend to remain stubbornly different from one another. In the *convergence* perspective, the barriers are much weaker and the global flows stronger, with the result that cultures are subject to many of the same flows and tend to grow more alike. In its extreme form, convergence suggests the possibility that local cultures can be overwhelmed by other, more powerful cultures, or even a globally homogeneous culture. Finally, in the *hybridization* perspective, external flows interact with internal flows in order to produce a unique cultural hybrid that combines elements of the two. Barriers to external cultural flows exist in the hybridization perspective, and while they are strong enough to prevent those flows from overwhelming local culture, they are not strong enough to block all external cultural flows entirely. That which does succeed in gaining entry combines with local culture to produce unique cultural hybrids.



CULTURAL DIFFERENTIALISM

The concept of **cultural differentialism** emphasizes lasting differences among and between cultures largely unaffected by globalization or any other bi-, inter-, multi-, and trans-cultural processes and flows. This is not to say that culture is unaffected by any of these processes, especially globalization, but it is to say that *at their core* they are *largely unaffected* by them; they remain much as they always have been. In this perspective, globalization occurs mainly, if not only, on the surface with the deep structure¹ of cultures largely, if not totally, unaffected by it. Cultures are seen as basically closed not only to global processes, but also to the influences of other cultures. In one image, the world is envisioned as a mosaic of largely separate cultures. More menacing is an image of a billiard ball table, with billiard balls

(representing cultures) seen as bouncing off others (representing other cultures). This is more threatening because it indicates the possibility of dangerous, potentially catastrophic, collisions among and between at least some of the world's cultures.

Cultural differentialism: Cultures tend to remain stubbornly different from one another.

This theory has a long history, but it has attracted increasing attention and adherents (as well as critics) in recent years because of two sets of events. One is the terrorist attacks on September 11 (and after in London, Madrid, etc.) and the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. To many, these events are seen as the product of a clash between Western and Islamic culture and the eternal differences between them. The other is the increasing multiculturalism of both the US (largely the growth of the Hispanic population) and of Western European countries (largely the growing Muslim populations) and the vast differences, and enmity, between majority and minority populations.

CIVILIZATIONS

The most famous, and controversial, example² of this theory is Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*.³ Huntington (2011) traces the beginnings of the current world situation to the end of the Cold War and the reconfiguring of the world from one differentiated on a political-economic basis (democratic/capitalist vs. totalitarian/communist) to one based on cultural differences. Such cultural differences are nothing new, but they were largely submerged (as in the old Yugoslavia and in the differences between, among others, Serbs and Croats) by the overwhelming political-economic differences of the Cold War era. In the last two decades ancient identities, adversaries, and enemies have resurfaced. Huntington uses the term *civilization* to describe the broadest level of culture and cultural identities (indeed, to him civilization is culture "writ large"). What he sees is the emergence of fault lines among and between these civilizations. Given the historic enmities among at least some of the civilizations involved, these fault lines have created a highly dangerous situation.

Huntington differentiates among seven or eight world civilizations: Sinic (Chinese), Japan (sometimes combined with the Sinic as Far Eastern), Hindu, Islamic, Orthodox (centered in Russia), Western Europe, North America (along with the closely aligned Australia, New Zealand), Latin America, and (possibly) Africa.

He sees these civilizations as differing greatly on basic philosophical assumptions, underlying values, social relations, customs, and overall outlooks on life. To Huntington, human history is, in effect, the history of civilizations, especially these civilizations. Every civilization shares a number of characteristics including the fact that there is great agreement on what they are (although they lack clear beginnings and there are no clear-cut boundaries between civilizations which, nonetheless, are quite real). Civilizations are among the most enduring of human associations (although they do change over time), are the broadest level

of cultural identity (short of humanity in its entirety), are the broadest source of subjective self-identification, usually span more than one nation-state (although they do not perform state functions);⁴ are a totality, and are closely aligned with both religion (see below) and race.

Huntington offers a modern grand narrative of the relationships among civilizations. For more than 3,000 years (approximately 1500 bc to 1500 ad) civilizations tended to be widely separated in both time and space. As a result, contacts among them were apt to be almost non-existent. The contacts that did occur tended to be limited or intermittent, but when they occurred they were likely to be quite intense.

The next phase, roughly from 1500 to the close of WW II, was characterized by the sustained, overpowering, and unidirectional impact of Western civilization on all other civilizations. Huntington attributes this to various structural characteristics of the West including the rise there of cities, commerce, state bureaucracy, and an emerging sense of national consciousness. However, the most immediate cause was technological, especially in ocean navigation and the military (including a superior military organization, discipline and training, and, of course, weaponry). In the end, the West excelled in organized violence and while those in the West sometimes forget this, those in other parts of the world have not. Thus, by 1910, just before the beginning of WW I, the world came closer, in Huntington's view, than at any time in history to being one world, one civilization – Western civilization.

The third phase – the multi-civilizational system – is traceable to the end of the expansion of the West and the beginning of the revolt against it. The period after WW II and until about 1990 was characterized by a clash of ideas, especially capitalist and communist ideologies, but with the fall of communism, the major clashes in the world came to revolve around religion, culture, and ultimately civilizations. While the West continues to be dominant, Huntington foresees its decline. It will be a slow decline, it will not occur in a straight line, and it will involve a decline (at least relatively) in the West's resources – population, economic products, and military capability (traceable to such things as the decline of US armed forces and the globalization of the defense industries making generally available weapons once obtainable only, or largely, in the West). Other civilizations will increasingly reject the West, but they will embrace and utilize the advances of modernization which can and should be distinguished from Westernization.

While the West declines, the resurgence of two other civilizations is of greatest importance. The first is the economic growth of Asian societies, especially Sinic civilization. Huntington foresees continuing growth of Asian economies which will soon surpass those of the West. Important in itself, this will translate into increasing power for the East and a corresponding decline in the ability of the West to impose itself on the East. He sees the economic ascendancy of the East as largely traceable to the superior aspects of its culture(s), especially its collectivism in contrast to the individuality dominant in the West. Also helpful to the economic rise of the East are other commonalities among the nations of the region (e.g. religion, especially Confucianism). The successes of Asian economies are not only important in themselves, but also for the role they play as models for other non-Western societies.

This first of Huntington's arguments is not that surprising or original. After all, we witnessed the dramatic growth of the post-WW II Japanese economy and we are now witnessing the amazing economic transformation of China and India. Few would disagree with the view that projecting present economic trends, the Chinese economy will become the largest in the world in the not-too-distant future and that India will experience great economic growth, as well.

More controversial is Huntington's second major contention involving the resurgence of Islam. While the Sinic emergence is rooted in the economy, Islamic expansion is rooted in dramatic population growth and the mobilization of the population.⁵ This has touched virtually every Muslim society, usually first culturally and then socio-politically. It can be seen as part of the global revival of religion. It also can be seen as both a product of, and an effort to come to grips with, modernization.

Huntington goes beyond pointing to these developments to paint a dire portrait of the future of the relations between the West and these other two civilizations, especially Islam. Conflict will occur at the fault lines among and between civilizations, especially the Western, Sinic, and Islamic civilizations. Thus, he foresees dangerous clashes in the future between the West (and what he calls its "arrogance"), Islam (and its "intolerance"), and Sinic "assertiveness." Much of the conflict revolves around the West's view of itself as possessing "universal culture," its desire to export that culture to the rest of the world, and its declining ability to do so. Furthermore, what the West sees as universalism, the rest of the world, especially Islamic civilization, sees as imperialism. More specifically, the West wants to limit weapons proliferation, while other civilizations want weapons, especially the now-infamous "weapons of mass destruction." The most notable instance of this at the moment is the great heat associated with the possibility that Iran is in the process of constructing nuclear weapons. (Another is use of poison gas against rebel forces in Syria in 2013 ostensibly by the government of Bashar al-Assad.) While Iran elected a comparatively moderate president, Hassan Rouhani, in June 2013, it continues the development of its nuclear program and is believed to be close to building its first nuclear weapon. The West also seeks to export democracy to, even impose it on, other societies and civilizations (Iraq and Afghanistan are notable examples in the Islamic world), which often resist it as part of the West's idea of universal culture. And, the West seeks to control and to limit immigration (especially from Islamic civilizations), but many from those civilizations have found their way into the West, or want to be there. As this increases, Huntington sees cleft societies developing *within* both Europe and the United States (in the latter, fault lines will develop not only between Westerners and Muslims, but also between Anglos and Hispanics [Huntington 2004: 30–45]). Huntington's predictions seem to have been borne out, at least in part, in recent years as much tension and conflict has arisen between Muslims and "natives" in Europe (notable instances have occurred in France [Erlanger 2013], the Netherlands [Erlanger 2011], and Denmark [Higgins 2013]), and between Hispanics and "native" Americans over undocumented immigrants from Latin America.

Huntington has earned numerous criticisms and great enmity for his controversial statements about Islamic civilization and Muslims (Huntington 2011). For example, he argues that

wherever Muslims and non-Muslims live in close proximity to one another, violent conflict and intense antagonism are pervasive. And Huntington puts much of the blame for this on Muslims and what is, in his view, their propensity toward violent conflict. He argues that from the beginning, Islam has been a religion of the sword; it glorified military values and there is a history of Islamic conquest. The relationship between Islam and other civilizations has historically been one of mutual indigestibility. (Of course, Western imperialism and military adventurism – often with Islam as a target – has played a key role in this.) Islam also lacks a strong core state to exert control over the various elements that constitute its civilization. But of greatest importance to Huntington are the pressures created by the demographic explosion within Islam. The high birth rate in Islam will force many to move out of the heart of Islamic society in search of income and work. This will serve to bring Muslims and their culture into more and more contact – and conflict – with those in other civilizations.

Huntington is concerned about the decline of the West, especially of the US. He sees the US, indeed all societies, as threatened by their increasing multi-civilizational or multicultural character. For him, the demise of the US effectively means the demise of Western civilization. Without a powerful, uni-civilizational US, the West is, in his view, minuscule.

Huntington argues that for the West to survive and prosper the US must do two things. First, it must reaffirm its identity as a Western (rather than multi-civilizational) nation. Second, it must reaffirm and reassert its role as the leader of Western civilization around the globe. The reassertion and acceptance of Western civilization (which would also involve a renunciation of universalism), indeed all civilizations, is the surest way to prevent warfare between civilizations. The real danger, for Huntington, is multiculturalism within the West and all other civilizations. Thus, Huntington ultimately comes down on the side of cultural continuity and something approaching cultural purity within civilizations. Thus, for him, at least in some ideal sense, globalization becomes a process by which civilizations will continue to exist and move in roughly parallel and largely independent fashion in the coming years. This constitutes a reaffirmation of the importance of civilization, that is, culture, in the epoch of globalization.

Beyond Huntington's specific and highly controversial arguments is a more general theory of culture, especially of the global flow of culture, as well as of the barriers to that flow. At a general level, cultural differentialism emphasizes the barriers to cultural flows and the ways in which those barriers lead cultures to remain largely distinct from, and potentially in conflict with, one another.

It should also be noted that much of the controversy behind Huntington's thesis is that it promotes cultural racism and Islamophobia (Marranchi 2004; Saeed 2007). First, his attempt to characterize any civilization as a monolithic entity may be overly simplistic. He ignores important differences within the West, or within Sinic, or Islamic cultures. For example, consider the differences in US and French attitudes on the recent wars against Iraq and Afghanistan or the different adherents of Islam, many of which do not promote the violence that Huntington assumes from them. Second, his explicit concerns about the fall of Western

civilization and its vulnerability to multiculturalism reflect a belief in the inherent superiority of the West and inferiority of Islam and other “civilizations.” It is on this basis that he legitimates the West’s need to assert itself and is concerned about its waning ability to impose itself on other civilizations. Given that there are significant racial overlaps with each civilizations (e.g. white Westerners and Asian Sinic culture), this theoretical framework reduces each group to a simplified set of cultural criteria and assigns superiority to some groups over others. Most importantly, it promotes a fear toward Islam.

RELIGION

Given the centrality of religion to Huntington’s civilizations, as well as the strongly cultural character of religion, this is a good place for a discussion of that topic and its relationship to globalization (Beyer 1994). The relationship between the two is very much in the news these days (e.g. reactions in various parts of the world to Muslim migrants, their modes of dress [especially head scarves and veils⁶ worn by women], and their increasingly ubiquitous mosques). However, it is clear that this relationship is quite ancient since religion globalized before virtually anything else. In fact, if one focused only on religion, it could be argued that globalization is at least 2,000 years old, and undoubtedly much older than that. While the global spread of various religions is nothing new (see [Figure 8.1](#) for a map of the dominant religions, and more generally belief systems, in the world), it has taken on a new magnitude and importance in the contemporary era of globalization. The focus here is on institutional religion, especially Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism (Abrutyn 2012), and at least a few of the ways in which they relate to globalization.

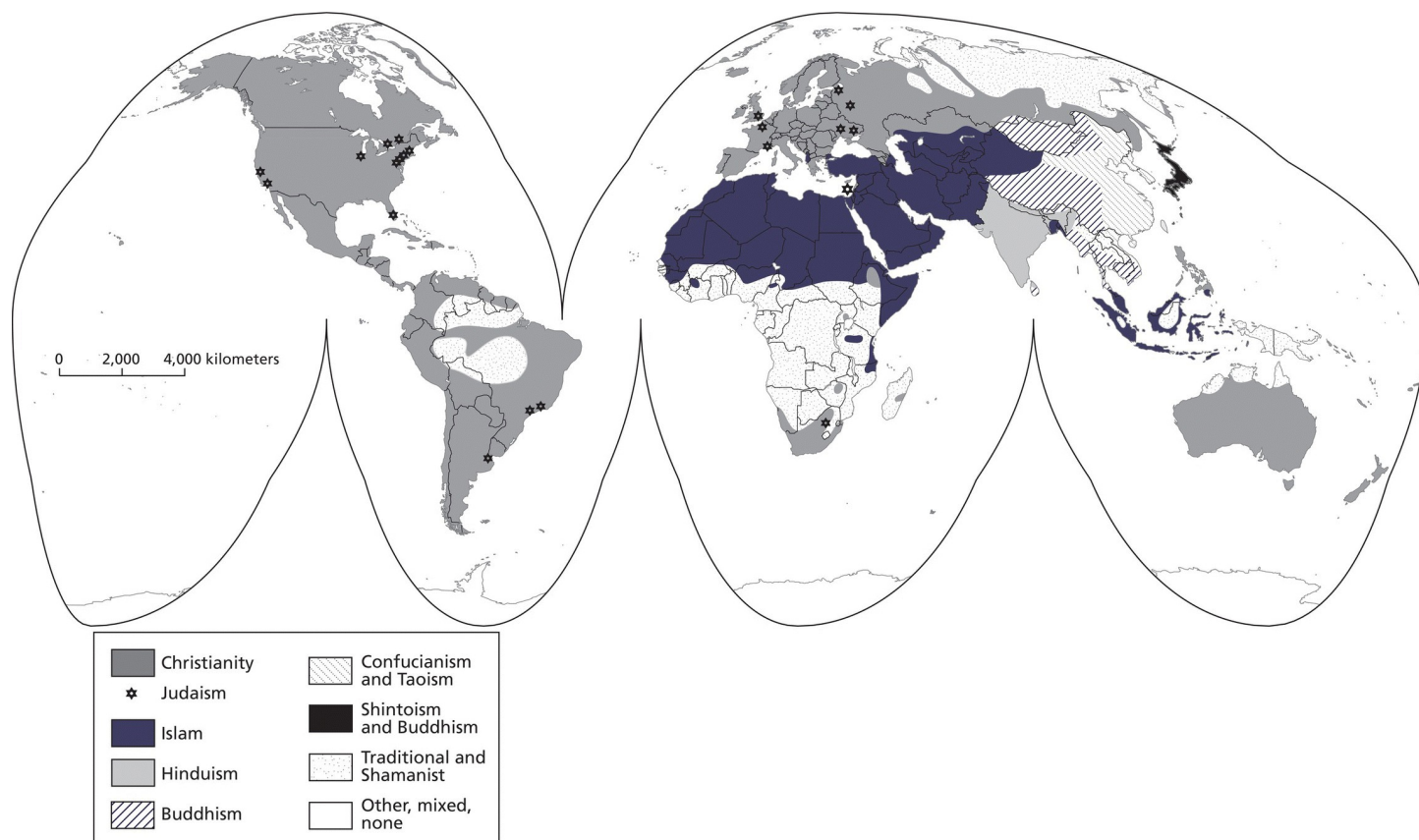


Figure 8.1 The domains of the major religions. At this scale, the map cannot display sectarian divisions or even significant religious minorities (such as the large Muslim presence in Hindu-dominated India). In tropical Africa, Christianity is the leading non-indigenous faith. Confucianism and Taoism are belief systems rather than religions in the traditional sense.

Source: de Blij, Harm J. 2008. *Power of Place: Geography, Destiny, and Globalization's Rough Landscape*. Chapter 3: The Fateful Geography of Religion, pp. 58–9. © 2008 Oxford University Press. Used by permission.

Islam

The founder of Islam is Muhammed who lived in the seventh century. Islam was born on the Arabian peninsula and within a century of Muhammad's death it had spread as far as Spain and China (Arjomand 2007; Lapidus 1988). The lands encompassed by Islam were seen as the center of the world, with all else subordinated to it. Important to its spread was its universalistic world-view; Muslims were not a chosen people and humanity had a common destiny. Its universalistic ideas (e.g. God-given standards that led everyone to search for goodness) led to the belief that they had to be diffused throughout the world. On the one hand, such a world-view led to a global mission to rid the world of competing idea systems such as idolatry and superstition. On the other hand, Islam saw itself as building on, going beyond, but not destroying Judaism and Christianity. Thus, "Islam was the first of world's great religious civilizations to understand itself as one religion among others" (Keane 2003: 42).

Believers in Islam, as well as their armies, spread westward (into Spain and France) and

eastward into Byzantium, Persia, and eventually India and China. They traveled with the belief that they were the messengers of Islam and that the rest of the world was eagerly waiting for, if not being actively denied, their message. Thus, the belief emerged that “Islam would prevail among the world’s peoples, either by willing acceptance, or by spiritual fervour, or (in the face of violent resistances) by conquest” (Keane 2003: 42). Because there was only one God, and therefore only one law, such a view – and mission – took no notice of nation-states and their borders.

In the end, of course, the grand ambitions of Islam were thwarted. One factor was the efforts of alternate religions, especially Christianity. Another was that “the principle of *jihad*, the duty to struggle for God against His doubters and enemies, was rarely put unconditionally” (Keane 2003: 43; Peters 1979). Thus, Islam was willing to compromise with its opponents and this had a negative effect on its ambitions. Furthermore, because Muslims believed that ultimate victory was assured, contact, trade, and traffic with non-believers was considered acceptable, even encouraged. “The point was to change the world by using all means, including the stretching of one’s perceptual horizons, so that all human beings, young and old, rich and poor, black and white, male and female, Christian and Jew, would come to regard Islam as *the* universal religion” (Keane 2003: 43). While these efforts were ultimately only a limited success (because of the Crusades as well as because of military defeats that forced Muslims out of Italy, Spain, and Portugal), the history of such efforts remains strong among many of the 1.6 billion devotees of Islam and helps to inform the contemporary thinking of jihadists.

Today, a wide swath of countries running across northern Africa, the Middle East, and as far west as Pakistan are predominantly Muslim. Islam has also spread rapidly throughout the West largely as a result of people migrating in search of work. Well known are large Islamic populations in various countries in Europe, most notably Great Britain, but Islam has spread far more broadly, even to the US (Detroit is a center of Islamic life there) and Australia. In the post 9/11 era, this has led to tensions in many parts of the world, with some of the most notable examples occurring in the Netherlands, including the trial of Geert Wilders, the right-wing Dutch politician who was charged (and later acquitted) of using anti-Islam hate speech when he made “provocative statements including comparing the Koran with Hitler’s ‘Mein Kampf’ and calling for an end to Muslim immigration” (Jolly 2011). Also of note are the transnational Islamic communications, especially via the Internet, as well as the international organizations that serve to hold these widespread populations together.

Hinduism

There are over 1.03 billion Hindus in the world today, but the vast majority (about 975 million) live in India (Pew Forum 2012). Hinduism is generally thought of as religion even though it lacks many of the characteristics of a religion such as “a founder, an essential set of fundamentals of belief and practice, or a church” (Madan 2007: 571). Nonetheless, Hinduism has spread across six continents. It is spread by both migrants and itinerate religious teachers. While it is heavily concentrated geographically, Hinduism has been important as part of the “Easternization of the World” (see [Chapter 3](#)) in, for example, the spread of yoga,

Transcendental Meditation, etc. (Campbell 2007).

Buddhism

Buddhism arose in the Indic Ganges Basin in about the sixth century bc and began to have a transnational influence about three centuries later (Taylor 2007). There are approximately 488 million Buddhists in the world today, although the vast majority are in Asia (China has the largest number of Buddhists followed by Thailand). However, Buddhism has spread throughout the globe (Abrutyn 2012). In fact, Buddhism has spread in various ways (there is even a “cyber-Buddhism”) producing a number of different variants; many Buddhisms. There are so many varieties that Taylor argues that “we are unlikely to see a ‘McBuddhization’ of the world” (Taylor 2007: 111). (McDonaldization is a concern, however, for other religions as reflected, for example, in John Drane’s [2012] *The McDonaldization of the Church*.)

However, another possibility for Buddhism is decline, even disappearance, especially in Japan. The Japanese have tended to rely on Buddhism for funerals (in Japan it is often called “funeral Buddhism” [Onishi 2008: A6]), while drawing on other religions (e.g. Shintoism, Christianity) for other purposes (e.g. weddings). However, there is a declining interest in using Buddhism for funerals. Instead of having them in Buddhist temples (or at home), many Japanese are using funeral homes (which may supply a Buddhist priest). Some are eschewing funerals altogether by being cremated. In either case, the temples are in decline, although other factors are involved in that, as well (e.g. an aging population). Said one head priest: “If Japanese Buddhism doesn’t act now, it will die out” (quoted in Onishi 2008: A6).

Christianity

Christianity (about 2.2 billion adherents) is one of the two fastest-growing religions in the world today (the other is Islam) (Garrett 2007; Pew Forum 2012). Christianity spread throughout the Middle East following the death of Christ. It grew and spread within the Roman Empire and was an important contributor (along with internal problems within Rome such as corruption and incompetence and external assaults by the “barbarians”) to the latter’s famous “decline and fall” (Gibbon 1998). Emperor Constantine moved Rome in the direction of greater religious tolerance and he, himself, became a Christian. Both by giving Christianity a greater opening in the Roman Empire, and through his founding of the city of Constantinople, Constantine helped set in motion the development of a schism (a formal rupture took place in 1054 and continues to this day) between the Latin-speaking Roman Catholic Church (Casanova 1997) in the West (Pelikan 1971) and the Greek-speaking Eastern Orthodox Church in the East (Pelikan 1974) (at the time, more Christians lived in the East than in the West). By the time of the schism, Christianity had already long become a religion oriented to the “Christianization” of the world. The Crusades were a major event in the history of that Christianization, and of globalization more generally. They began in 1095, shortly after the formal schism had taken place. The Crusades were designed to liberate the Holy Land from Muslims (and others) who had gained control of Jerusalem in 638 ce. This is still a hot-button issue for Muslims as reflected in the firestorm that erupted when former US President George W. Bush used the word “crusades” in a speech shortly after the 9/11

terrorist attacks.

Overall, Christianity today is still growing and expanding globally. A decline in Europe is more than compensated for by strong growth in the South – Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Coleman 2007). Those areas will become the center of Christianity in the not-too-distant future; the global South will dominate Christianity (Jenkins 2002).

Growth is so strong in Latin America that it is predicted that 80% of the world's Christians will be Hispanic by 2050. Southern Christianity is different from Christianity as it has been generally understood and practiced in the North. On the one hand, it is “more Pentecostal, morally conservative, and evangelical” (Garrett 2007: 143). On the other hand, it is also the main source, and remains the center, of *liberation theology* which is more liberal, if not radical, in nature and is oriented toward helping the economically deprived and the oppressed. Liberation theology arose in the 1950s and 1960s, and spread through large portions of the world from the 1960s to the 1980s. Since that time, its growth has slowed at least in part because of opposition from the Vatican (Alves 1969; Segato 2007).

However, it is important to remember that there were not just outflows of Christianity from Europe, but reverse-, as well as cross-, flows producing new variants of Christianity. Multidirectionality is especially important in the case of Christian Pentecostalism which began in the US in the early twentieth century, specifically in a poor black and white revival held in Los Angeles in 1906. Pentecostalism grew rapidly worldwide (Martin 2002) producing many variations and localized forms that are linked to one another through publications, conferences, electronic media, and travel. It is now the second-largest, and fastest-growing, Christian identification in the world with somewhere between 150 and 400 million adherents. It has come to exceed in size all forms of Christianity but Catholicism. Its growth has been especially great in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Lechner and Boli 2005). Indeed, its center is in those geographic areas. Missionaries from there now often travel back to the US and Europe.

It is also important to keep in mind that the spread of institutionalized religion was not unrelated to other institutions and aspects of globalization. For example, the spread of Christianity in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries was closely related to the spread of European political power and influence.

Judaism

Judaism is one of the smallest of the world's religions; only about 14 million people in the world define themselves as Jews, representing about 0.2% of the world's population (Ben-Sasson 1976; Goldberg 2007; Pew Forum 2012). However, for a variety of reasons, the importance of Judaism, both historically and contemporaneously, has been far greater than one would expect looking simply at the numbers involved. By the late nineteenth century there were 12 million Jews in the world who, as a result of the diaspora (see [Chapter 10](#)), had migrated from the Middle East and had come to be spread in small enclaves throughout much of the world. There was, and continued to be, a large concentration of Jews in Europe, but migrations to North America, as well as to Israel (then under Ottoman control) began during

this period. By WW II the number of Jews in the world had grown to 16 million, but the Holocaust led to a reduction of the Jewish population to about 10 million. The founding of Israel in 1948 marked an important turning point for Jews and the mostly Jewish population of Israel is now in excess of 5 million people. Another large concentration of Jews lives in the US; over 80% of all of the 14 million Jews alive today live in either the US or Israel with only about 2.5 million living elsewhere (especially in Europe). The spread of Jews throughout the world, Zionism (which helped lead to the founding of Israel), the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, and the current and seemingly never-ending conflict between Israel and its Muslim neighbors over Palestine are just a few of the factors that make Judaism of great global significance.



CULTURAL HYBRIDIZATION

Cultural hybridization emphasizes the mixing of cultures as a result of globalization and the production, out of the integration of the global and the local (Cvetkovich and Kellner 1997; Stockhammer 2012), of new and unique hybrid cultures that are not reducible to either local or global culture. From this perspective, the focus is on the integration of global processes with various local realities to produce new and distinctive hybrid forms that indicate continued global heterogenization rather than homogenization. Hybridization is a very positive, even romantic, view of globalization as a profoundly creative process out of which emerges new cultural realities, and continuing, if not increasing, heterogeneity, in many different locales.

Cultural hybridization: Mixing of cultures leading to unique combinations.

Glocalization is the concept that gets to the heart of cultural hybridization⁷ as well as to what many contemporary theorists interested in globalization think about the essential nature of global processes (Giulianotti and Robertson 2012). **Glocalization** can be defined as the interpenetration of the global and the local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas.

Glocalization: Interpenetration of the global and the local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas.

Based on the work of Roland Robertson (Friedman 1994; Robertson 2001), the essential elements of the perspective on globalization adopted by those who emphasize glocalization are that the world is growing more pluralistic (glocalization theory is exceptionally alert to differences within and between areas of the world); individuals and local groups have great power to adapt, innovate, and maneuver within a glocalised world (glocalization theory sees individuals and local groups as important and creative agents); social processes are relational and contingent (globalization provokes a variety of reactions – ranging from nationalist

entrenchment to cosmopolitan embrace – that produce glocalization); and commodities and the media are *not* seen as (totally) coercive, but rather as providing material to be used in individual and group creation throughout the glocalized areas of the world.

A discussion of some closely related terms (and related examples) will be of considerable help in getting a better sense of glocalization, as well as the broader issue of cultural hybridization (Canclini 1995; Nederveen Pieterse 2009). Of course, **hybridization** itself is one such term emphasizing increasing diversity associated with the unique mixtures of the global and the local as opposed to the tendency toward *uniformity* often associated with globalization. A cultural hybrid involves the combination of two, or more, elements from different cultures and/or parts of the world. Among the examples of hybridization (and heterogenization, glocalization) are Ugandan tourists visiting Amsterdam to watch Moroccan women engage in Thai boxing, Argentines watching Asian rap performed by a South American band at a London club owned by a Saudi Arabian, and the more mundane experiences of Americans eating such concoctions as Irish bagels, Chinese tacos, Kosher pizza, and so on. Obviously, the list of such hybrids is long and growing rapidly with increasing hybridization. The contrast, of course, would be such uniform experiences as eating hamburgers in the United States, quiche in France, or sushi in Japan.

Hybridization: External flows interact with internal flows producing a unique cultural hybrid that combines their elements.

Yet another concept that is closely related to glocalization is **creolization** (Hannerz 1987). The term “creole” generally refers to people of mixed race, but it has been extended to the idea of the creolization of language and culture involving a combination of languages and cultures that were previously unintelligible to one another (Cohen 2007; Knörr 2012).

Creolization: Combination of languages and cultures previously unintelligible to one another.

While all of the above – glocalization, hybridization, creolization – should give the reader a good feel for what is being discussed here under the heading of cultural hybridization, the following examples should also help.

MUSLIM GIRL SCOUTS

An interesting example of hybridization in the US involves Muslim girls (Sarroub 2005) who participate in one of the quintessentially American institutions, the Girl Scouts (Muslim involvement in the Boy Scouts is thus far less significant, although they are making attempts to be more inclusive [Seelye 2010]) (MacFarquhar 2007: A1, A22). Muslim girls are now wearing a Girl Scout sash (with American flag, troop number, and merit badges) along with the flowing headscarf that is traditional Muslim garb. For some Muslim girls, the Girl Scout garb tends to reduce tension when they interact with non-Muslims. At a cookout, hot dogs

and s'mores are served, but such food meets the dietary restrictions of Islamic law (the hot dogs are made of beef not pork). One Girl Scout broke the fast of Ramadan with a hot dog and s'mores exclaiming, "It's delicious! ... It's a good way to break my fast" (quoted in MacFarquhar 2007: A22). Another won a ribbon, a Bismallah (in the name of God) ribbon, from her group for writing some of God's names in Arabic calligraphy and for memorizing a verse in the Koran that involves protection from gossips and goblins. (Such religious badges are not issued by Girl Scouts, USA, but it does endorse having them issued by specific groups.) However, her favorite badge was awarded for learning "how to make body glitter and to see which colors look good on us and how to clean our nails" (quoted in MacFarquhar 2007: A22).

The Girls Scouts have adapted to Muslims, as well, especially if a given troop is predominantly or wholly Muslim. In one mostly Muslim troop, the Girl Scout Promise is: "On my honor I will try to serve Allah and my country, to help people and live by the Girl Scout law" (quoted in MacFarquhar 2007: A22).

A similar process of hybridization is also happening with the Girl Scouts' global sister organization, Girl Guides. This organization, founded in Britain in 1910, has 10 million members around the world (Mark McDonald 2012). Given its linkage to Britain, the Girl Guides' oath had a reference to the Queen in which girls swore to "do my duty to God, to serve the Queen and my country." However, in 2012, the Girl Guides of Australia removed the reference to both God and the Queen (and a promise that the girls would be obedient). As the organization has become more culturally diverse (including more Jewish and Muslim members), the Girl Guides of Australia has sought to promote more inclusiveness and to create more space for cultural expression. This modified cultural form continues to exist alongside both the Girl Scouts (in the US) and other instances of Girl Guides (around the world).

SALSA

Salsa, a Latin American export, has become a global dance craze. As the salsa has been exported throughout the world, it has *not* come to be practiced in the same way in different geographic locales. In fact, there are important differences even among Latin American countries in the way salsa is danced – in Cuba, it is "vigorous and athletic, with much clockwise circling," in Puerto Rico the "New York style" is preferred with "straighter movements" and "dancers moving to and fro as if on tracks"; in Columbia and Venezuela there is an "elegantly restrained style, with much back-stepping, smaller hand-movements and little use of the elaborate arm-tangling moves beloved by Cuban dancers" (*Economist* 2008: March 27). Thus, salsa has been glocalized even within Latin America let alone throughout the world.

APPADURAI'S "LANDSCAPES"

Arjun Appadurai's *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996) emphasizes the concept – global flows – that, as we saw in [Chapter 1](#), is central to this book,

as well as the disjunctures among them. These flows and disjunctures serve to produce unique cultural realities around the world; they tend to produce cultural hybrids.

Appadurai discusses five global flows – *ethnoscapes*, *mediascapes*, *technoscapes*, *financescapes*, and *ideoscapes*. The use of the suffix *-scape* allows Appadurai to communicate the idea that these processes have fluid, irregular, and variable shapes and are therefore consistent with the idea of heterogenization and not homogenization. The fact that there are a number of these scapes and that they operate independently of one another to some degree, and are perhaps even in conflict with one another, makes this perspective also in tune with those that emphasize cultural diversity and heterogeneity. Furthermore, these scapes are interpreted differently by different agents ranging all the way from individuals, to face-to-face groups, sub-national groups, multinational corporations, and even nation-states. And, these scapes are ultimately navigated by individuals and groups on the basis of their own subjective interpretations of them. In other words, these are imagined worlds and those doing the imagining can range from those who control them to those who live in and traverse them. While power obviously lies with those in control and their imaginings, this perspective gives to those who merely live in these scapes, or pass through them, the power to redefine and ultimately subvert them.

At the center of Appadurai's thinking are the five landscapes mentioned above. **Ethnoscapes** involve those who are mobile, groups and individuals on the move (tourists, refugees, guest workers) that play such an important role in the more rapidly changing world in which we live (Chun 2012). This involves actual movement as well as fantasies about moving. Furthermore, in an ever-changing world, people cannot afford to allow their imaginations to rest too long and thus must keep such fantasies of movement alive.

Ethnoscapes: Actual movement, as well as fantasies about moving, of mobile groups and individuals.

Technoscapes are the ever-fluid, global configurations of high and low, mechanical and informational technology (see, especially, [Chapter 9](#)) and the wide range of material (downloading videos, e-mail) that now moves so freely and quickly around the globe and across borders that were at one time impervious to such movement (or at least thought to be) (Mele 2012).

Technoscapes: Fluid, global configurations of technology and the wide range of material that moves freely and quickly around the globe.

Financescapes involve the processes by which huge sums of money move through nations and around the world at great speed through commodity speculations, currency markets, national stock exchanges, and the like (Powell 2012a). The great importance of this scape was highlighted, if it was ever downplayed, by the global recession that spread rapidly throughout the world following its onset in late 2007.

Financescapes: Processes by which huge sums of money move through nation-states and around the world at great speed.

Mediascapes involve both the electronic capability to produce and transmit information around the world as well as the images of the world that these media create and disseminate (Kuipers 2012). Involved here are those who write blogs online, citizen journalists who provide news to outlets such as CNN, Al Jazeera, global filmmakers and distributors, television stations (SkyNews is a notable example), and newspapers and magazines.

Mediascapes: Electronic capability to produce and transmit information and images globally.

Ideoscapes, like mediascapes, are sets of images (Martínez 2012). However, they are largely restricted to political images either produced by states and in line with their ideology, or the images and counter-ideologies produced by movements that seek to supplant those in power, or at least to gain a piece of that power. For example, Nancy Netting (2010) has described marital ideoscapes, which are communicated among Indian youth, and promote the freedom to choose a partner based on romantic love, instead of abiding by traditional norms for arranged marriage.

Ideoscapes: Flows of images primarily political in nature.

Three things are especially worth noting about Appadurai's landscapes. First, they can be seen as global processes that are partly or wholly independent of any given nation-state. Second, global flows not only occur through the landscapes, but also increasingly in and through the *disjunctures* among them. Thus, to give one example of such a disjuncture, the Japanese tend to be open to ideas (ideoscapes, mediascapes), but notoriously closed to immigration (at least one of the ethnoscapes). More generally, the free movement of some landscapes may be at variance with blockages of others. Studies in this area must be attuned to such disjunctures and to their implications for globalization. Third, territories are going to be affected differently by the five landscapes and their disjunctures lead to important differences among and between cultures. The focus on landscapes and their disjunctures points globalization studies in a set of unique directions. However, the key point here is that such a focus is in line with the idea of hybridization.



CULTURAL CONVERGENCE

While differentialism is rooted in the idea of lasting differences among and between cultures, and hybridization emphasizes differences resulting from the interaction of the global and the local, **cultural convergence** is based on the idea that globalization tends to lead to increasing

sameness throughout the world. Those who support this perspective see cultures changing, sometimes radically, as a result of globalization, specifically flows of global culture and the relative weakness of barriers to those flows. The cultures of the world are seen as growing increasingly similar, at least to some degree and in some ways. There is a tendency to see global assimilation in the direction of dominant groups and societies in the world.

Cultural convergence: Cultures are subject to many of the same global flows and tend to grow more alike.

While the different perspectives to be discussed in this section do focus on cultural convergence, they certainly do *not* argue that that is all that is happening in globalization or that local cultures (Wherry 2008) are disappearing completely, or even necessarily being altered in some fundamental way. While globalization often overwhelms local realities, or at least changes them dramatically, those realities frequently survive in some form or other.

One example is the delivery of home-cooked meals to workers throughout Mumbai (with an estimated metropolitan population of over 20 million people in 2012) by what are called *dabbawallas* (*dabba* is the food box and *wallas* are the people who deliver them) (Kai 2007: C1, C7). Here is the way the system works:

A network of *wallas* picks up the boxes from customers' homes or from people who cook lunch to order, then deliver the meals to a local railway station. The boxes are hand sorted for delivery to different stations in central Mumbai, and then re-sorted and carried to their destinations. After lunch the service reverses, and the empty boxes are delivered back home.

(Kai 2007: C7)

Color codes on the boxes are crucial because they tell the *wallas* where the food comes from, which train stations it must pass through, and where it is ultimately to go. Once they arrive at the right station, the boxes are unloaded, sorted, carried by wooden cart, and ultimately personally delivered to each recipient. As the wife who cooks lunch for one of those recipients said, "The old fashioned, inexpensive dabbawalla system is a rare survivor in this fast-paced world" (quoted in Kai 2007: C7).

CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

The idea of *cultural imperialism* indicates that one or more cultures are imposing themselves, more or less consciously, on other cultures thereby destroying local culture, in whole, or more likely in part. There are many examples of cultural imperialism in the world today with local cultural practices being threatened, or even being destroyed, by the flow of culture from other parts of the world, especially from the North to the South.

Indian sari weavers

One of the traditional crafts being threatened with destruction as a result of globalization is

hand-woven silk sari-making in India (Wax 2007: A1, A17). These silk saris can take as much as two months to make by hand. They involve elaborate designs (such as leaves, elephants, and birds) made with strands of gold thread and green silk. There are about a million sari makers in India today and they are threatened by machine-made saris (such technologies have their roots in Western culture). While some of these are made in India – employing far fewer and less skilled workers – others are being made in, where else, China. Said the head of a local committee in India: “This is the ugly, painful side of globalization” (quoted in Wax 2007: A17). As a result, a local cultural product (the silk sari), practice (making such saris by hand), and practitioners (skilled sari makers) are being threatened by mass manufactured saris (often polyester) made by machine and less skilled workers in China.

India’s professional letter-writers

Another example of cultural imperialism involves the destruction of India’s professional letter-writers. Traditionally, men would place themselves in prominent locations (e.g. near the post office) and write letters for poor, often illiterate migrants. They would be paid a pittance for each letter, but many letter-writers were able to survive on their earnings. However, the spread of cell phones (another product of Western culture) into India, including the possibility of text messaging, is making the professional letter-writer obsolete. However, “creative destruction” (Schumpeter 1976: 81–7; see [Chapter 7](#)) is taking place, in at least some cases, as the children of these letter-writers obtain jobs in telecommunications (and other high-tech industries), often at much higher pay than the parent ever earned. Disappearing in much the same way are bank tellers (replaced by ATMs), phone-booth operators (by cell phones), and rural moneylenders (supermarket chains now do business directly with farmers eliminating the need for such middlemen). On the other hand, all sorts of new occupations are being created such as shopping mall attendants (such malls only appeared recently in India), cashiers in fast-food restaurants, auto sales executives, and software engineers. Much of the above involves cultural imperialism with the exportation to India of such creations and expressions of Western culture as ATMs, supermarkets, shopping malls, and fast-food restaurants. However, what is being destroyed are cultural practices indigenous to India (letter-writing, rural money-lending), as well as the occupations that engage in those practices. Replacing them are cultural practices (e.g. selling and consuming fast food) and occupations (software engineers) that are more global in character and less tied to the specific nature of Indian culture. That is, Indian fast food and software engineering have more in common with global culture than they do with Indian culture.

Examples such as these have led to the argument that what we are seeing throughout the world is increasing convergence as a result of cultural imperialism. In fact, UNESCO was sufficiently concerned about the issue of cultural imperialism and its deleterious effect on cultural diversity that on November 2, 2001, it adopted a Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity.⁸

In spite of many examples of, and much hand-wringing about, cultural imperialism (including UNESCO’s great concern about threats to cultural diversity), many observers have

argued that the danger of cultural imperialism is greatly exaggerated. Mike Featherstone (1995: 13–14) was an early critic of the idea of a global culture, as well as associated ideas such as cultural imperialism and increasing global homogeneity: “The process of globalization, then, does not seem to be producing cultural uniformity; rather it makes us aware of new levels of diversity. If there is a global culture, it would be better to conceive of it not as a common culture, but as field in which differences, power struggles and cultural prestige contests are played out.”

John Tomlinson (2007) sees many obvious examples of increasing similarity around the globe in the operations of the global capitalist system and its effects, but there are also many global differences and countervailing trends. Globalization is uneven and neglects and even excludes some areas. Thus, globalization, to Tomlinson, is not quite global. However, he is critical of the view that a global culture is being formed, most generally by cultural imperialism emanating from the West, especially the United States. Involved in this view is the simultaneous loss of distinct, non-Western cultural traditions. He sees this perspective as focusing on the superficial⁹ issue of the global distribution of cultural goods (e.g. Coke, Big Macs, iPods, and the like).

Deterritorialization

Central to Tomlinson’s work is the issue of *deterritorialization*, or the declining significance of the geographic location in which culture exists; culture is no longer as tied as it once was to the constraints of local geography. This means that in Tomlinson’s terms “global connectivity” is reaching into local culture and the localities of everyday life. This transformation is both perplexing/disruptive and exhilarating/empowering (here Tomlinson is following the theorizing of Anthony Giddens¹⁰). Involved is the penetration of everyday life by distant forces and the dislodging of everyday meanings from the anchors of the local environment. In the long run, it may be that this weakening of traditional bonds between cultural experience and geographic territory will be the most far-reaching effect of cultural globalization. However, Tomlinson is careful to point out that this does not simply involve loss, but localities also thrive on globalization. Yet, he admits that the culture produced by locality (if such a narrow source of production was ever the case¹¹) is no longer the single most important factor in our lived reality. It has been attenuated by deterritorialization with the integration of distant events, processes, and relationships into everyday lives. Tomlinson singles out the role of the media and communication technology for their role in deterritorialization (Kellner and Pierce 2007). He is very even-handed, arguing that while there might be negatives associated with all of this and their effects on emotions, social relations, and cultural identity, there are also many positive potentialities including a new sensibility of cultural openness, human mutuality, and global ethical responsibility.¹²

WORLD CULTURE¹³

A distinctive theoretical approach to convergence in general, and cultural convergence in particular, is known as **world culture** theory (Meyer et al. 1997). They argue that there has

developed, especially in recent years, a series of global models in a variety of different domains – politics, business, education, family, religion, and so on – and that their spread has led to a surprising amount of uniformity throughout the world. This is, in part, a result of the fact that such global models have become more codified and publicized than at any time in history. In addition, there are more organizations involved in, and they are more active in, educating and advising various populations about the models. As a result, there is a striking amount of structural **isomorphism** throughout the world as a result of the spread of these models (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). These models have been spread by a wide variety of cultural and associational processes. An assumption behind this approach is the decline of the nation-state as a significant player in the global world. Indeed, the authors often describe the world society in terms of “statelessness.” As a result, the models of concern in this theory are able to flow relatively freely throughout world and are not impeded to any great extent by the nation-state.

World culture: Spread of global models leading to global convergence.

Isomorphism: A series of global models has led to a great uniformity throughout the world.

While a variety of forms of isomorphism are discussed by world culture theorists, culture is accorded pride of place. In fact, world culture scholars describe the world in terms of an enactment of culture. More specifically, culture is associated with a “cultural order” and “institutions,” both of which are seen as “rationalized” (e.g. carried and legitimated by professional and scientific organizations). Culture is seen as shaping (and being shaped by) the macro- (states and the state system), meso- (organizations like schools and firms, associations including voluntary associations), and micro- (individual citizenship and identity) levels throughout the world.

John Boli and Velina Petrova (2007) demonstrate the general tendency in this approach to emphasize homogenization. While they acknowledge the existence of global resistance, their emphasis is on the spread of world culture, standardized cultural models, and the tendency toward organizational isomorphism around the globe. All of this is part of a “soft” model of increasing global homogeneity. These things tend not to be imposed on people, institutions, or societies, but rather are more likely to be welcomed by them. Thus, globalization, in their view, tends to be seen as something legitimate rather than as something that is imposed on people illegitimately. People tend to feel increasingly part of, included in, a global culture. While global culture can be constraining, the emphasis in this approach is on how that culture is enabling; how it permits people to self-actualize.

There has been a globalization of models that place great value on the individual. They are manifest in the educational system (the emphasis on the education and well-being of the individual student), the economy (it is individuals who are to be paid, to have property rights,

etc.), an increasingly pervasive ideology of human rights, and so on. Then there are global models for the state that expect it to be responsible to its citizens for schooling, medical care, development, gender empowerment, control over state corruption, etc. Not only have we seen the spread of global models for the state, but also of methods for assessing the performance of the state. There is also the spread of methods for deciding whether the state is, in fact, handling its responsibilities, including the possibility that the state can fail to fulfill its responsibilities to such a degree that it can be considered a “failed state.” A failed state is characterized by high levels of poverty, violence, and social disorder. In the realm of economic organizations, the corporation has become the globally favored model. A global model of corporate morality has emerged, as well. Fairly standard organizational forms have also developed globally for universities, sports clubs, hobby groups, and professional associations.

The power of globalization from this perspective is that it is *both* internal and external to actors. Culture is manifest cognitively in the individual, but it also exists outside the actor in the form of the larger culture and increasingly isomorphic organizations that reflect that culture. The school is crucial here since it is a prime agent for teaching world culture and it is an organizational form that is both increasingly similar throughout the world and is a structural reflection of world culture.

While the thrust of this is to emphasize increasing global homogeneity, there is also diversity, glocalization, and resistance. The emphasis is not on globalized homogeneity inducing resistance, but rather globalization is seen as producing legitimate differences and diversity.

One way of getting at world culture is to examine the INGO as an organizational form that is shaped by it. There is a common set of principles among most INGOs throughout the world (Boli and Thomas 1997). They include universalism, individualism (e.g. the one-person, one-vote rule), rational voluntaristic authority (rational individuals organizing themselves on a global basis to undertake purposive action and employing rational procedures; the collectivities in which they exist create and come to employ rules that are efficient, just, and equitable), rational progress (economic development, collective security, justice, and the self-actualization of individuals), and world citizenship (everyone is seen as having various rights and obligations, including the taking of actions to deal with global problems; everyone is seen as a citizen of the global polity).

McDONALDIZATION

The McDonaldization thesis (Ritzer 1997b, 2012) is based on Max Weber’s classic, turn-of-the-twentieth-century, theory of the rationalization of the West. In fact, Weber’s theory of rationalization was, at least in part, an early theory of globalization since he tended to see not only the Occident (i.e. the West) increasingly dominated by rationalization, but much of the rest of the world was destined to rationalize, as well. Weber’s model for the rationalization process was the bureaucracy, while the end-of-the-twentieth-century McDonaldization thesis takes the fast-food restaurant as its model. The McDonaldization thesis also brings the theory into the twenty-first century, and views rationalization extending its reach into more sectors

of society and areas of the world than Weber ever imagined. Of greatest concern here is the fact that McDonaldization is a force in global cultural homogenization.

McDonaldization is defined as the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society, as well as the rest of the world. It is the latter aspect of the definition that makes it clear that McDonaldization is a globalizing force.

McDonaldization: Process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more of the world.

The nature of the McDonaldization process may be delineated by outlining its five basic dimensions: efficiency, calculability, predictability, control through the substitution of technology for people, and, paradoxically, the irrationality of rationality.¹⁴ The key point for our purposes is that these five principles, as well as the McDonaldization process of which they are part, are becoming increasingly global.

First, a McDonaldizing society emphasizes *efficiency*, or the effort to discover the best possible means to whatever end is desired. Workers in fast-food restaurants clearly must work efficiently; for example, burgers are assembled, and sometimes even cooked, in an assembly-line fashion. Customers want, and are expected, to acquire and consume their meals efficiently. The drive-through window is a highly efficient means for customers to obtain, and employees to dole out, meals. Overall, a variety of norms, rules, regulations, procedures, and structures have been put in place in the fast-food restaurant in order to ensure that *both* employees and customers act in an efficient manner. Furthermore, the efficiency of one party helps to ensure that the other will behave in a similar manner.

Second, great importance is given to *calculability*, to an emphasis on quantity, often to the detriment of quality. Various aspects of the work of employees at fast-food restaurants are timed; this emphasis on speed often serves to affect adversely the quality of the work, from the point of view of the employee, resulting in dissatisfaction, alienation, and high turnover rates. Similarly, customers are expected to spend as little time as possible in the fast-food restaurant. In fact, the drive-through window reduces this time to zero, but if the customers desire to eat in the restaurant, the chairs may be designed to feel increasingly uncomfortable in order to impel them to leave after about 20 minutes. This emphasis on speed clearly has a negative effect on the quality of the dining experience at a fast-food restaurant. Furthermore, the emphasis on how fast the work is to be done means that customers cannot be served high-quality food that, almost by definition, requires a good deal of time to prepare.

McDonaldization also involves an emphasis on *predictability* meaning that things (products, settings, employee and customer behavior, and so on) are pretty much the same from one geographic setting to another (globalization!) and from one time to another. Employees are expected to perform their work in a predictable manner and, for their part, customers are expected to respond with similarly predictable behavior. Thus, when customers enter, employees ask, following scripts, what they wish to order. For their part, customers are

expected to know what they want, or where to look to find what they want, and they are expected to order, pay, and leave quickly. Employees (following another script) are expected to thank them when they do leave. A highly predictable ritual is played out in the fast-food restaurant – one that involves highly predictable foods that vary little from one time or place to another.

In addition, great *control* exists in McDonaldized systems and a good deal of that control comes from technologies. Although these technologies currently dominate employees, increasingly they will be replacing them. Employees are clearly controlled by such technologies as french-fry machines that ring when the fries are done and even automatically lift the fries out of the hot oil. For their part, customers are controlled both by the employees who are constrained by such technologies as well as more directly by the technologies themselves. Thus, the automatic fry machine makes it impossible for a customer to request well-done, well-browned fries.

Finally, both employees and customers suffer from the *irrationality of rationality* that seems inevitably to accompany McDonaldization. That is, paradoxically, rationality seems often to lead to its exact opposite – irrationality. For example, the efficiency of the fast-food restaurant is often replaced by the inefficiencies associated with long lines of people at the counters or long lines of cars at the drive-through window. Another of the irrationalities of rationality is dehumanization. Employees are forced to work in dehumanizing jobs and customers are forced to eat in dehumanizing settings (e.g. in their cars) and circumstances (e.g. on the move). The fast-food restaurant can be a source of degradation for employees and customers alike.

The most important irrationality of rationality, at least from the point of view of globalization, is that McDonaldization is a force for increasing global homogeneity.¹⁵ This is because fast-food restaurants and many other businesses and organizations throughout the world are based on the same fundamental principles – efficiency, predictability, calculability, and control. This serves to give them a high degree of structural similarity even though they may sell (or do) very different things, even things (e.g. foods) that are quite local in nature. They are also similar in the sense that they all tend to spawn various irrationalities of rationality. Thus, the McDonaldization thesis describes a process of increasing global homogenization, but it is critical of that process for helping to reduce global differences and to produce a rather depressing sameness throughout the world.

McDonaldization, expansionism, and globalization

The fast-food restaurant in general, and McDonald's in particular, has been a resounding success in the international arena. More than half of McDonald's restaurants are outside the US (in the mid-1980s only 25% of McDonald's were outside the US). The vast majority of new restaurants opened each year are overseas – in 2012, McDonald's opened 1,000 new restaurants outside the US (although overall sales flat-lined in 2013). As of 2013, it had over 34,000 locations in 118 countries. Two-thirds of McDonald's revenue comes from its overseas operations. The highly McDonaldized Starbucks has also become an increasingly

global force. Despite a setback in growth in 2008, Starbucks continues to grow and as of 2013, it has 19,000 stores in 59 countries besides the US, with a strong presence in Latin America, Europe (it is particularly visible in London), the Middle East, and the Pacific Rim.

Many highly McDonaldized firms outside of the fast-food industry have also had success globally. Perhaps the most famous (or notorious) example is Wal-Mart. Although Wal-Mart opened its first international store (in Mexico) in 1991, it now operates over 6,238 international units in 26 countries (in 2012, 40% of Wal-Mart's net sales were outside the US).

Another indicator of globalization is the fact that other nations have developed their own variants of McDonaldized fast-food restaurants. Canada has a chain of coffee shops, Tim Hortons (merged with Wendy's in 1995), with 4,264 outlets (804 in the United States). Paris, a city whose love for fine cuisine might lead one to think it would prove immune to fast food, has a large number of fast-food *croissanteries*; the revered French bread has also been McDonaldized. India has a chain of fast-food restaurants, Nirula's, which sells mutton burgers (about 80% of Indians are Hindus, who eat no beef) as well as local Indian cuisine. Mos Burger is a Japanese chain with over 1,740 restaurants that, in addition to the usual fare, sells Teriyaki chicken burgers, rice burgers, and Oshiruko with brown rice cake. Russkoye Bistro, a Russian chain, sells traditional Russian fare like *pirogi* (meat and vegetable pies), *blini* (thin pancakes), Cossack apricot curd tart, and, of course, vodka. Perhaps the most unlikely spot for an indigenous fast-food restaurant, war-ravaged Beirut of 1984, witnessed the opening of Juicy Burger, with a rainbow instead of golden arches and J. B. the Clown standing in for Ronald McDonald. Its owners hoped that it would become the McDonald's of the Arab world. After the 2003 war with Iraq, a number of clones of McDonald's ("Madonal," "Matbax") quickly opened there. In spite of the great hostility between the governments of Iran and the US, many Iranians are very positive toward Americans and America and this is reflected in their fast-food restaurants. While there were almost no American chains there as of 2013 (KFC opened a branch there in 2012), there are local shops that are modeled after them such as an ice cream shop that emulates Baskin-Robbins down to its 31 flavors, a T. G. I. Friday's clone featuring burgers, Cobb Salad, and waiters with familiar Friday's garb, as well as "Starcups and Kabooky Fried Chicken" (Blackman 2008: A11).

Now McDonaldization is coming full circle. Other countries with their own McDonaldized institutions are beginning to export them to the US. The Body Shop, a British cosmetics chain, had over 2,500 shops in 60 nations in 2013. Three hundred of them were in the US. Furthermore, American firms are now opening copies of this British chain, such as Bath and Body Works. Pollo Campero, a Guatemalan chain specializing in fried chicken, is currently in 12 countries and is spreading rapidly throughout the US.

As the model of the process, McDonald's has come to occupy a central position throughout the world. At the opening of McDonald's in Moscow, it was described as the ultimate American icon. When Pizza Hut opened in Moscow in 1990, customers saw it as a small piece of America. Reflecting on the growth of fast-food restaurants in Brazil, an executive

associated with Pizza Hut of Brazil said that his nation is passionate about things American.

Beyond fast food

While the fast-food restaurant is the model for the process of McDonaldization, the process extends far beyond it. A wide range of studies have analyzed the McDonaldization of higher education (Hayes and Wynyard 2002), the church (Drane 2012, 2008; White and Yeats 2011), social work (Dominelli 2010; Dustin 2007), and much else.¹⁶ The point is that not only have many sectors of society been McDonaldized, but those sectors, like McDonald's itself, are increasingly global in character.

McDonaldization, as a theory of globalization, certainly emphasizes convergence, but it does *not* argue that everything throughout the world is growing increasingly homogeneous. Overall, we do see the global proliferation of systems that operate on the basis of the basic principles of McDonaldization. However, while that represents some degree of convergence, there is considerable variation around the world in terms of the degree, and the way in which, McDonaldized systems operate efficiently, predictably, and so on. Further, McDonaldized systems often provoke resistance and this helps to lead to continued, or even greater, differences in many parts of the world.

Interestingly, most of the debate over McDonaldization and globalization has focused on the wrong issue. In the main, it has focused on the end-products arguing against convergence because the products differ, at least to some degree, from one geographic locale to another. However, McDonaldization is *not* about end-products (e.g. Big Macs), but rather about the system and its principles. That system has been globalized, and in many different domains, but it operates at least slightly differently from sector to sector and in different parts of the world. There is convergence, but it does not result in uniformity and homogeneity.

THE GLOBALIZATION OF NOTHING

The globalization of nothing (Ritzer 2007), like McDonaldization, implies growing

convergence as more and more nations around the world are increasingly characterized by various forms of nothing (see below for the definition of this concept). The argument is that there is an *elective affinity*, using a term borrowed from Weber (1921/1968), between globalization and nothing. That is, one does not cause the other, but they do tend to vary together. Note: the argument is *not* that globalization is nothing; indeed it is clear that, if for no other reason than this lengthy book, the process is of enormous significance.

Central to this argument is the idea of **grobalization** (a companion to the notion of glocalization) which is defined as the imperialistic ambitions of nation-states, corporations, organizations, and the like and their desire, indeed need, to impose themselves on various geographic areas throughout the world (Ryan 2007: 2022–3). Their main interest is in seeing their power, influence, and in some cases profits *grow* (hence the term *grobalization*, a combination of grow and globalization) throughout the world. Grobalization involves a variety of sub-processes, three of which – capitalism, Americanization, as well as McDonaldization – are not only central driving forces in grobalization, but also of great significance in the worldwide spread of nothingness.

Grobalization: Imperialistic ambitions of nation-states, corporations, and organizations, and their imposition throughout the world.

Nothing involves (largely) empty forms; forms largely devoid of distinctive content.¹⁷ (Conversely, **something** is defined as [largely] full forms; forms rich in distinctive content.) It is easier to export empty forms (nothing) throughout the globe than it is forms that are loaded with distinctive content (something). The latter are more likely to be rejected by at least some cultures and societies because the content conflicts, is at variance, with local content. In contrast, since they are largely devoid of distinctive content, empty forms are less likely to come into conflict with the local. In addition, empty forms have other advantages from the point of view of globalization including the fact that since they are so minimalist, they are easy to replicate over and over and they have a cost advantage since they are relatively inexpensive to reproduce.

Nothing: Social forms largely devoid of distinctive content.

Something: Largely full social forms, those rich in distinctive content.

A good example of nothing in these terms is the shopping mall (especially chains of malls) which is an empty structure (largely) that is easily replicated around the world. These malls could be filled with an endless array of specific content (e.g. local shops, local foods, etc. – something!) that could vary enormously from one locale in the world to another. However, increasingly they are filled with chain stores, themselves meeting the definition of nothing, carrying a wide range of various types of ... nothing! That is, chain stores throughout the

world sell goods that are more or less the same everywhere they are sold. Since more and more countries in the world have these malls, chain stores, and chain-store products, this is an example of the globalization of nothing and of increasing global convergence.

There are four sub-types of nothing and all of them are largely empty of distinctive content and are being globalized. The four types are **non-places**, or settings that are largely empty of content (e.g. the malls and chain stores discussed above); **non-things** such as chain-store products and credit cards (there is little to distinguish one credit card from the billions of others, all of which work in exactly the same way for all who use them anywhere in the world); **non-people**, or the kind of employees associated with non-places, for example, telemarketers (who may be virtually anywhere in the world) who interact with all customers in much the same way relying heavily on scripts; and **non-services** such as those provided by ATMs (the services provided are identical; the customer does all the work involved in obtaining the services) as opposed to human bank tellers. The global proliferation of non-places, non-things, non-people, and non-services is another indication of increasing convergence.

Non-places: Settings largely devoid of distinctive content.

Non-things: Objects largely devoid of distinctive content.

Non-people: Those who occupy positions that lead them to be devoid of distinctive content at least in those positions.

Non-services: Services largely devoid of distinctive content.

SPORT: GLOBAL, GLOCAL, GROBAL

Sport (Andrews and Mower 2012) is a particularly appropriate topic to examine at this point. It is a very important cultural phenomenon, it is globalizing to a great degree, and it is an excellent domain in which to examine the relationship between the last two theories¹⁸ – hybridization (especially glocalization) and convergence (especially globalization).

Sport has become increasingly global throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries “with the growth of international sporting bodies, competitions, tournaments, migratory flows of competitors and associated globally extensive forms of media representation, especially in the form of terrestrial (later satellite) television and the internet” (Smart 2007: 7). In fact, it has become increasingly possible to think in terms of a global sporting, or athletic, system.

The beginnings of this development can be traced to the late 1800s and early 1900s. Tennis was arguably the first global sport. The forerunner of the Davis Cup took place in the US in 1878 and involved players from the US, Canada, and England. The first international team-tennis competition of what later became known as the Davis Cup occurred in 1900. The number of teams involved was limited at first, but by the 1960s, 50 or more nations were competing for the Cup.

Also of importance in the history of global sports is the first “modern” Olympics that occurred in Athens in 1896 (Guttman 2002, 2007). What became known as the Summer Games has taken place every four years since then (except during WW I and II). While 13 nations participated in the first games, over 200 nations now compete in the Summer Olympics. It was joined by the Winter Olympics in 1924. Today, the Summer and Winter Olympics occur at alternate two-year intervals. Both are global events in many senses of the term, although the summer games are far more popular, and involve many more participants, than the winter games. Both are global because so many nations participate and so many people come from so many parts of the world not only to compete, but also to be in the audience. Perhaps of greater importance is the fact that they have become great global media events with, for example, 1 billion people around the world watching the opening ceremony of the 2012 Olympic Games in London. This has been fostered by the fact that global corporations and brands have found that sponsoring a portion of the television coverage of the games is good for the global increase and spread of the sales of their products.

However, the most global of sports is certainly soccer (called football in most places outside the US). Football is run globally by the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), founded in 1904. FIFA has 209 member nations and is therefore larger than the UN (the UN has 193 member nations). The World Cup is watched by billions of people around the world. What occurs in those matches is global news (e.g. the head-butting incident involving Zidane in the 2006 World Cup final was front-page news throughout the world). There are super-clubs like Manchester United (in England) and Juventus (in Italy) that are far more important globally than, say, the New York Yankees in baseball or the Los Angeles Lakers in basketball. Soccer’s media-darlings such as Argentina’s Lionel Messi and Portugal’s Cristiano Ronaldo are bigger global celebrities than even the American basketball player, Michael Jordan, in his prime. There is a huge global market for paraphernalia (e.g. team jerseys) associated with major soccer teams.

Also of great importance are the global sports companies that attach themselves to these sports and their stars and sell their paraphernalia globally. Among the most famous of these are Adidas, Reebok, and Nike. Not only are their names known around the world, and their products used worldwide, but their logos (e.g. the Nike “swoosh” [Goldman and Papon 1998]). Adidas’s stripes are also recognized almost everywhere in the world (Klein 2009). Global sports have generated global sports stars (e.g. Messi, Tiger Woods) and these stars have been used by the sports companies to sell their wares throughout the world (Smart 2007). Of course, the sports stars have earned many millions of dollars for being “used” in this way. In fact there is a symbiotic relationship between the athletes and the sports companies with each involved in not only selling each other, but themselves.

Isolated role of US

There is a tendency to see the US as the hegemonic power in the world of sports, but there is much that contradicts that idea. In fact, in many realms of the sports world, the US is second-rate or a relatively insignificant factor (e.g. global soccer). Its greatest success is in sports – especially baseball and American football – that enjoy their greatest popularity and have their greatest appeal within the borders of the US. As Eriksen (2007: 48) puts it, “the United States, often seen as the main source of global culture, despised by middle classes everywhere else, is almost an island unto itself when it comes to team sports.” The relatively isolated status of the US in the realm of sports is well illustrated by the case of baseball. Baseball did begin to spread beyond the confines of the US well before the spread of the English sports of soccer and rugby (although after the spread of cricket). It had moved to Cuba by 1860, China in 1863, and Japan and Korea by the early 1870s (Kelly 2007). However, despite its early start, the spread of baseball slowed. In fact, it was Japan that later did more to disseminate baseball by promoting it in its empire in countries like Korea, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and Oceania in the Pacific.

There are several factors that limited the global spread of baseball. First, it became a big business in the US monopolized by a small number of owners. They helped to stabilize and systematize the sport “into regular seasons, stadium fixtures, continuing player contracts and monopolistic associations of owner-operators” (Kelly 2007: 84). This tended to solidify baseball in an American context and left little room for, or interest in, global expansion. Second, baseball was “promoted in highly nationalistic terms as embodying American values and inculcating an American character” (Kelly 2007: 84). Finally, unlike soccer or cricket, baseball was not disseminated through colonialism, but more informally and less coercively by missionaries, teachers, and so on.

While the most successful example of the spread of baseball is to be found in Japan, baseball there is quite different from the game played in the US. It has been aggressively appropriated by the Japanese. As one former American baseball star put it after playing a year in Japan: “This isn’t baseball – it only looks like it” (quoted in Kelly 2007: 88). The following is a good comparison of the differences between baseball in the two countries: “Free-spirited, hard-hitting, fun-loving, independent-minded American baseball players are pitted symbolically against team-spirited, cautious, self-sacrificing, deeply deferential, intensely loyal [Japanese] samurai with bats” (Kelly 2007: 86). Nonetheless, Bud Selig (the Major League Baseball Commissioner in the US) continues to promote a “real World Series” where the top US and Japanese teams would play in a championship match (Rogers 2013). As of this writing, Major League Baseball was exploring this possibility, which could help further the globalization of baseball.

Basketball was invented in the US by James Naismith (born in Canada) in 1871 and it was exported throughout the world through the efforts of the YMCA (founded in England). It was dominated by the US, especially with the emergence of the professional National Basketball Association (NBA; founded in 1946) and the amateur National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and its national basketball championships (begun in 1939). The US

continued to dominate global basketball through much of the last half of the twentieth century.

However, in recent years basketball has become a much more global phenomenon and the US has lost its hegemonic position in the sport (Veseth 2005). This is reflected in the increasing difficulty US teams, even those dominated by star professional players, have had in recent years in winning international tournaments, including Olympic championships (although the US men and women did win the respective 2012 championships in London). It is also reflected in not only the increasing presence of foreign players in the NBA, but also by the fact that they have become some of the dominant players in the league (e.g. Marc Gasol of Spain). However, this flow is not one way; lesser US basketball players (and those in other sports such as American baseball players going to Japan) often play in leagues in Europe.

Professional athletes (“sports workers” [Sayers and Edwards 2004: 243–8], albeit often very highly paid ones) have increasing global mobility; more and more of them can be seen as “border crossers” (Maguire and Stead 1998). There are several types of border crossers in the sports world, including “pioneers” (those who move to a new country with a zeal to bring and promote their sport), “settlers” (those who move to a new country and remain there), “mercenaries” (those solely motivated by money and who are likely to move from locale to locale depending on where the rewards are greatest), and “nomads” who move about “simply because they enjoy migration and being strangers in a new culture and society” (Grainger 2008: 303). It should be noted that there are also totally nomadic global sports like professional golf and tennis where athletes are constantly moving from tournament to tournament throughout the world (Grainger 2008: 288). Whatever the reason, an increasing number of athletes have been, and are, flowing throughout the world.

Again contrary to the Americanization thesis, much of this flow is into rather than out of the US (as well as other countries in the North; this has prompted concern in the South about a “brawn drain” (Bale 1994) paralleling worry about the “brain drain” – see [Chapter 10](#)). In addition to the influx of foreign players into the NBA, there is the signing of an increasing number of Japanese players by Major League Baseball. In 2012 the Texas Rangers signed star Japanese pitcher Yu Darvish (an icon of Japanese baseball) for a long-term salary of over \$60 million and, more striking, they paid his team, the Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters, \$51.7 million just for the right to negotiate with him. In 2007 one of America’s Major League soccer teams, the Los Angeles Galaxy, signed the British superstar David Beckham to a contract that earned him \$255 million (including \$50 million in salary and the rest in lucrative endorsements) over five years (Badenhausen 2012).

While in various ways global sport appears to contradict the Americanization thesis, Barry Smart points out that in many broader senses global sport has been “Americanized.” Included under the heading of the Americanization of global sport are “the extensive commercialization of sport that first became evident in America, exemplified by the cultivation of sport as an entertainment spectacle, developments in television sports broadcasting, and the extension of a culture of celebrity to include sports stars” (Smart 2007:

23).

There is movement of professional athletes in various sports from less to more developed countries. For example, no country sends more baseball players to the US than the Dominican Republic (Marcano and Fidler 2012). These border crossers often view baseball as a vehicle for social mobility, but because of the unequal power relations between the Dominican Republic and the US, such exchanges involve many abuses (as depicted in the documentary *Ballplayer: Pelotero* [dirs. Ross Finkel, Trevor Martin, and Jon Paley]). To note one example, over 100,000 boys train full time in the Dominican Republic in hopes of eventually playing in the US. However, only a very few of them succeed. Furthermore, this system involves the buying and selling of these boys as commodities. One less widely known example is the movement of rugby players from Samoa to New Zealand where they can earn much more money and acquire much greater, even world, fame (Grainger 2008). This can be seen as neo-colonial exploitation with the imperial nation (New Zealand in this case) exploiting a natural resource (talented athletes) of a former colony. The very best Samoan rugby players now compete in, and for, New Zealand and this has served to diminish the quality of the game in Samoa.

Local, glocal, grobal

A central issue in the study of the globalization of sport is the degree to which it has been glocalized (its global aspects have been integrated with more local aspects) (Giulianotti and Robertson 2004). There is a wide-scale belief among those who study the topic that sport has been glocalized to a large degree and that glocalization is the best concept for thinking about the globalization of sport. While it is certainly the case that there is a great deal of glocalization in sport, this is far from the entire picture as far as the globalization of sport (or anything else) is concerned.

Roland Robertson and Richard Giulianotti have directly addressed this issue as it relates to sport, especially football (soccer) (Giulianotti and Robertson 2007). They go beyond the idea of glocalization involving the interpenetration of the global and the local to argue that glocalization involves the “societal *co-presence* of sameness and difference” (Giulianotti and Robertson 2007: 60) of “homogenizing and heterogenizing trends in globalization *tout court*” (Giulianotti and Robertson 2007: 61). They see the concept of glocalization as encompassing *both* homogenization and heterogenization.

However, this combination of homogenization and heterogenization under the heading of glocalization obscures the often conflicting pressures toward one or the other. What is needed is the distinctions, discussed above, between grobalization and glocalization, as well as something and nothing. Based on those distinctions, it is the grobalization of nothing that tends to produce homogeneity in whatever locale it asserts itself and gains hegemony. In contrast, the glocalization of something inherently involves heterogeneity since what is “something” (indigenously conceived, controlled, and rich in the distinctive content of that locale) in one setting will be different from something in another setting (conceived and controlled in a different locale with inevitably different distinctive content).

Much of what is often interpreted as the glocal in sport is, in fact, better thought of as grobal. For example, while much attention is paid to the way cricket has been glocalized (in India, for example; see below), the fact is that cricket was grobalized by the British. Also important in the grobalization of sport in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were international sporting organizations and competitions, national governing bodies and leagues (Andrews and Ritzer 2007: 32), multinational corporations (and their global brands), and the media. All of these served to grobalize sport and produce increasing homogeneity in sport throughout the world. That is not to say that there are not also pressures toward heterogenization and that those are best captured by the concept of glocalization. While it is true that there are forces for homogenization (and heterogenization) in the glocal, overall it is the combination of glocalization and grobalization that produces that which is unique in a given locale and that tends toward the heterogeneous rather than the homogeneous. Thus, it is best to use the concept of grobalization, especially the grobalization of nothing, when we focus on homogeneity and the concept of glocalization (of something) for the production of heterogeneity.¹⁹

In his analysis of sport, especially the highly local Gaelic football and hurling, Eriksen (2007: 56) argues that they are not examples of glocalization of something, but rather

represent something that cannot, and will not, be globalized because they symbolize a cultural identity that is by default associated with a particular place ... Ritzer's sociology of globalization needs a third term to grasp this kind of phenomenon which is exclusively global ... Ritzer's approach ... is limited because it rules out the possibility of anything being merely local ... the self-contained, local system continues to exist, by carving out a niche where there is sufficient nourishment and no external competition.

In effect, Eriksen wants to add the "local" to the "grobale" and the "glocal" as key concepts for analyzing globalization, especially of sport. The problem is that it is difficult to think of *any* phenomenon in the world of sports, or any other realm, that is totally self-contained, devoid of any impact from the global. This is especially the case with the examples used by Eriksen – hurling and Gaelic football – since their roots are in Ireland, the country which is almost always rated, and considered, the *most* globalized country in the world.

Cricket: local, glocal, or grobal?

The sport of cricket has attracted a lot of attention from those interested in globalization in general and of sport in particular (Kaufman and Patterson 2005; Rumford and Wagg 2010), with perhaps the best-known work on it done by Appadurai (1996). His argument is that cricket has become decolonized, indigenized in India so that it is "no longer English-mediated" (Appadurai 1996: 104). That is, it has been glocalized, if not localized. He recognizes that cricket was brought to India by England; it was one aspect of colonization. England needed to create teams that it could play against. India and the other colonies were perfect for this role. However, the Indians have transformed cricket (just as the Japanese transformed baseball) and made it their own.

Of particular importance has been the role played by the media and language in the

transformation of cricket in India. Mass Indian publications – books, magazines, and pamphlets – liberated cricket from its “Englishness” and dealt with cricket matches in native terms; they “vernacularized” cricket. The game came to be played widely in the streets, playgrounds, and villages of India so that it became inculcated in the bodily practice of many Indians. Indians also read about their favorite teams and stars and heard about them on the radio and saw them on TV. This served to make cricket an important part of the fantasy lives of many Indians.

In India, and elsewhere in former English colonies, cricket has come to be dominated by the locals and not by England; they have “hijacked” the game from the English (Mustafa 2013). In the process, they have transformed cricket, making it a much more aggressive game, one that is less “sportsmanlike,” and perhaps most importantly, much more spectacular (just as the Japanese game of baseball is more spectacular than the American version). To Appadurai (1996: 107), cricket “now belongs to a different moral and aesthetic world.” It has become an “instrument for mobilizing national sentiment in the service of transnational spectacles and commoditization” (Appadurai 1996: 109). Thus, to take one example, it is at the heart of matches between rivals India and Pakistan that resemble a war. As a result, in such matches, as well as in many other international cricket matches, “England ... is no longer part of the equation” (Appadurai 1996: 109).

While there is much merit in Appadurai’s analysis, it is important to remember that cricket was globalized by the English. It is out of the interaction between the cricket globalized by the English that was centrally conceived, controlled, and lacking in distinctive content (“nothing”) and the indigenously conceived, controlled, rich in distinctive content cricket (“something”) produced by glocalization in India, that the distinctive form of Indian cricket emerged. As with all other cultural forms, cricket cannot be reduced to glocalization or globalization, or something or nothing. In today’s world, all cultural forms involve elements of all of these.



CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter examines the global flows of culture, which tend to move more easily around the globe than ever before, especially through non-material digital forms. Three perspectives on global cultural flows are examined – differentialism, hybridization, and convergence.

Cultural differentialism emphasizes the fact that cultures are essentially different and are only superficially affected by global flows. The interaction of cultures is deemed to contain the potential for “catastrophic collision.” Samuel Huntington’s theory of a clash of the civilizations best exemplifies this approach. According to him, after the Cold War, political-economic differences were overshadowed by new fault lines which were primarily cultural in nature. Increasing interaction among different “civilizations” (such as the Sinic, Islamic, Orthodox, Western) would lead to intense clashes, especially economic conflict between the West and Sinic civilization and bloody political conflict between the Western and the Islamic civilizations. This theory has been critiqued for a number of reasons, especially its portrayal of Muslims as being “prone to violence.”

The process of globalization, considered as involving the spread of religion (closely related to civilizations), could be said to be more than 2,000 years old. The growth of major world religions such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Judaism, is examined, as is also the fact they involve global flows as well as the processes through which they adapt to other flows.

The cultural hybridization approach emphasizes the integration of local and global cultures. Therefore, globalization is considered to be a creative process which gives rise to hybrid entities that are not reducible to either the global or the local. A key concept is “glocalization,” or the interpenetration of the global and local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas. Another key concept is Arjun Appadurai’s “scapes” (global flows involving people, technology, finance, political images, and media) and the disjunctures between them, which lead to the creation of cultural hybrids.

The cultural convergence approach stresses homogeneity introduced by globalization. Cultures are deemed to be radically altered by strong flows. Cultural imperialism, wherein one culture imposes itself and tends to destroy at least parts of another culture, is also analyzed under the heading of this approach. One important critique of cultural imperialism is based on the idea of “deterritorialization” of culture. This means that it is much more difficult to tie culture to a specific geographic point of its origin.

McDonaldization involves the global spread of rational systems, based on the principles of fast-food restaurants, such as efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control. This process is extended to other businesses, sectors, and geographical areas. Globalization (in contrast to glocalization) is a process wherein nations, corporations, etc. impose themselves on geographic areas in order to gain profits, power, and so on.

Globalization can also be seen as a flow of “nothing” (as opposed to “something”), involving the spread of non-places, non-things, non-people, and non-services. The interplay between

these processes (grobalization and glocalization; nothing and something) can be clearly seen in the globalization of sports, a phenomenon that is an important part of culture.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Analyze the three main perspectives discussed in this chapter with respect to the deterritorialization of culture.
2. Analyze “clash of the civilizations” as a perspective on globalization. What are the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing a “civilizational” approach?
3. Critique “differentialism” and “convergence,” using the concept of “scapes.”
4. Make a case for cultural hybridization in the study of religion.
5. Contrast glocalization with grobalization. Examine the relative significance of each to the study of globalization.

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NOTES

- 1 Social theorists known as “structuralists” tend to take the view that there are “deep” structures that are largely unaffected by surface changes. Further, they see those deep structures as being of great importance, far more important than that which exists on the surface. Famous examples include Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and Claude Lévi-Strauss.
- 2 See also Barber (1995).
- 3 Huntington (2011). For at least a partial test of Huntington’s (and Fukuyama’s) thesis, see Diez-Nicolas (2002).
- 4 For example, due to a long history of out-migration, the Chinese nation extends not only to “greater China” – the nation-states of China and Taiwan, as well as to Hong Kong – but far beyond it with large numbers of Chinese people found, often in enclaves, in almost all parts of the world. The Chinese state does not govern these people. See Harding (1993).
- 5 Increased oil wealth in a number of Muslim countries is also important.
- 6 For a series of articles on this, see *Sociology of Religion* 68, 3 (2007); Gokariksel and Mitchell (2005: 147–65).
- 7 Although it serves to obscure many things about the global–local relationship including the fact that some processes are simply incompatible; they cannot be combined. More generally, glocalization ignores global–local conflicts.
- 8 <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>.
- 9 For my part, I am not so sure that they are superficial, but in any case my concern, and that of others, is the global spread of systems, like those of McDonald’s and Disney, and *not* their products.
- 10 See, for example, Giddens (1990).
- 11 For a critique of this view, see Caldwell and Lozada, Jr (2007).
- 12 This stands in contrast to a view of ethics in a postmodern age which rejects such a totalizing ethic, see Bauman (1993).
- 13 This approach is emphasized in Boli and Lechner (2009).
- 14 In fact, these were also the basic characteristics of Weber’s rationalization process.
- 15 For some evidence against this argument, at least as far as values are concerned, see

Esmer (2006).

- [16](#) A variety of these other applications are to be found in essays in Ritzer (2006).
- [17](#) For another critique of globalization that relies heavily on the concept of nothing, albeit defined much differently, see Nancy (2007).
- [18](#) It is hard to make a strong argument for differentialism within the world of sports.
- [19](#) The issue is more complex than this because the grobalization of something would lead to greater heterogeneity and the glocalization of nothing would tend toward homogeneity. Thus all four combinations of the grobalization–glocalization and nothing–something conceptualization must be employed in order to understand globalization more fully.