

Chapter 1: Globalization and Culture

Globalization lies at the heart of modern culture; cultural practices lie at the heart of globalization. This is the reciprocal relationship I shall try to establish in this chapter and explore in the chapters which follow. This is not a reckless claim: it is not to say that globalization is the single determinant of modern cultural experience, nor that culture alone is the conceptual key that unlocks globalization's inner dynamic. It is not, therefore, to claim that the politics and economics of globalization yield to a cultural account which takes conceptual precedence. But it is to maintain that the huge transformative processes of our time that globalization describes cannot be properly understood until they are grasped through the conceptual vocabulary of culture; likewise that these transformations change the very fabric of cultural experience and, indeed, affect our sense of what culture actually is in the modern world. Both globalization and culture are concepts of the highest order of generality and notoriously contested in their meanings. This book certainly does not aim at an exhaustive analysis of either: more modestly it tries to grasp the main elements of globalization in what might be called a cultural register. In this first chapter I offer an orientating understanding of the concept of globalization within this register, and then try to show why culture and globalization matter intrinsically to each other.

Globalization as Complex Connectivity

To construct this argument I begin with a simple and relatively uncontentious basic understanding of globalization as an empirical condition of the modern world: what I shall call complex connectivity. By this I mean that globalization refers to the rapidly developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependences that characterize modern social life. The notion of connectivity is found in one form or another in most contemporary accounts of globalization. McGrew, to give a typical example, speaks of globalization as 'simply the intensification of global interconnectedness' and stresses the multiplicity of linkages it implies: 'Nowadays, goods, capital, people, knowledge, images, crime, pollutants, drugs, fashions and beliefs all readily flow across territorial boundaries. Transnational networks, social movements and relationships are extensive in virtually all areas from the academic to the sexual' (1992: 65, 67). An important point to draw out here is that the linkages suggested exist in a number of different *modalities*, varying from the social-institutional relationships that are proliferating between individuals and collectivities worldwide, to the idea of the increasing 'flow' of goods, information, people and practices across national borders, to the more 'concrete' modalities of connection provided by technological developments such as the international system of rapid air transport and the more literal 'wiredness' of electronic communications systems.

McGrew writes from the perspective of international politics, but similar formulations - 'interconnections', 'networks', 'flows' - can be found in sociological (Lash and Urry 1994; Castells 1996, 1997, 1998), cultural studies (Hall 1992) or anthropological accounts (Friedman 1995). What this attests to is at least a basic degree of consensus on the empirical reality that globalization refers us to. It is these multivalent connections that now bind our practices, our experiences and our political, economic and environmental fates together across the modern world. And so the broad task of globalization theory is both to understand the sources of this condition of complex connectivity and to interpret its implications across the various spheres of social existence.

One of the most striking features of the idea of globalization is just how readily and plentifully all manner of implications seem to flow from it. It is an extraordinarily fecund concept in its capacity to generate speculations, hypotheses and powerful social images and metaphors which reach far beyond the bare social facts. In one sense of course this can be counted to its credit, since the simple fact of increasing connectivity is limited in its interest and, without interpretation and elaboration, could remain an almost banal observation. Connectivity is thus a condition which immediately needs elaboration and interpretation. However there is also a danger of confusion arising from the tendency towards conceptual slippage that seems to attend the idea. Because of this, we need to exercise a degree of circumspection in the way we elaborate the core idea

of connectivity. To illustrate both the need for elaboration and its pitfalls, I want to look at two ways in which the simple idea of connectivity shades into other themes.

Connectivity and Proximity

First the idea of connectivity could be taken to imply increasing global-spatial *proximity*: what Marx in the *Grundrisse* (1973a) talked of as the 'annihilation of space by time' and what David Harvey (1989) has referred to as 'time-space compression'. What is involved here is a sense of the shrinking of distances through the dramatic reduction in the time taken, either physically (for instance, via air travel) or representationally (via the transmission of electronically mediated information and images), to cross them. At another level of analysis connectivity shades into the idea of spatial proximity via the idea of the 'stretching' of social relations across distance (Giddens 1990, 1994a, b). The discourse of globalization is replete with metaphors of global proximity, of a 'shrinking world': from Marshall McLuhan's famous 'global village' to the United Nations' recent coining of the term 'Our Global Neighbourhood' to describe an emerging, world political context. All such metaphors and images derive their sense of increasing intimacy precisely out of the extension and the elaboration of different modalities of connectivity. But proximity/ intimacy is not the same thing as connectivity: it is at best an elaboration, at worst a slippage.

Proximity has its own truth as a description of the condition of global modernity and this is generally of either a phenomenological or a metaphorical order. In the first case it describes a common conscious *appearance* of the world as more intimate, more compressed, more part of everyday reckoning - for example in our experience of rapid transport or our mundane use of media technologies to bring distant images into our most intimate local spaces. In the second, it conveys the increasing immediacy and consequentiality of real distanced relations metaphorically. Here the connections that affect our lives (for example, the financial networks that tie our bank accounts into the global capitalist market or shared global environmental threats like 'global warming' which we confront) are made sense of *as though* they really bring us into closer contact. Proximity, then, takes us beyond the 'empirical' condition of connectivity. It is not that this language is misleading or invalid, but it is nevertheless important to maintain the distinction between this idea and the idea of connectivity.

For the condition of connectivity not only underwrites the notion of proximity, but places its own stamp on the way we understand global 'closeness'. Being connected means being close in very specific ways: the experience of proximity afforded by these connections coexists with an undeniable, stubbornly enduring physical distance between places and people in the world, which the technological and social transformations of globalization have not conjured away. In a globalized world, people in Spain really do continue to be 5,500 miles away from people in Mexico, separated, just as the Spanish conquistadores were in the sixteenth century, by a huge, inhospitable and perilous tract of ocean. What connectivity means is that we now experience this distance in different ways. We think of such distant places as routinely accessible, either representationally through communications technology or the mass media, or physically, through the expenditure of a relatively small amount of time (and, of course, of money) on a transatlantic flight. So Mexico City is no longer meaningfully 5,500 miles from Madrid: it is eleven hours' flying time away.

One way indeed of thinking about the particular sense of proximity produced by a 'technical' modality of connectivity is to consider the transformation of spatial experience into temporal experience that is characteristic of airline journeys. Planes are truly time capsules. When we board them we enter a self-contained and independent temporal regime which seems designed to remove our experience almost entirely from the business of ultra-high-speed movement through the air. The familiar sequence of take-off routine, distribution of newspapers, complimentary drinks, meals, sale of duty-free goods and in-flight movies all focus us on the internal time-frame of the cabin. So, phenomenologically, our 'journey' is one through this familiar sequence of time rather than through space. Going from London to Madrid is one mealtime; from Madrid to Mexico two mealtimes, a movie and a period of sleep. And so forth for the longer hauls. It is only when we occasionally look out of the window, perhaps to trace a coastline, that we might fleetingly grasp a sense of the vast tracts of distance that we are actually passing over. And the sense of the enormity of this space, linking quickly to discomfiting thoughts of our vulnerability, probably discourages us from dwelling on this external reality.' Much more comforting to focus on the flight data display within the cabin, 'Constantly translating thousands of kilometers into 'hours to destination': our true lived reality. It is only very rarely indeed that the territory we fly over intrudes at all into the experience of airline travel. Perhaps the flight crew

may draw our attention to some particular physical feature -'On our left you can see Cape Cod- but examples of any deeper sense of human territory are so rare as to appear eccentric: 'When an international flight crosses Saudi Arabia, the hostess announces that during the overflight the drinking of alcohol will be forbidden in the aircraft. This signifies the intrusion of territory into space. Land = society = nation = culture = religion: the equation of anthropological place, fleetingly inscribed in space' (Aug6 1995:116). Marc Aug6 interprets this as the brief intrusion of the thickness of culture into the 'nonplace' of the airline's space, but we can equally see it as emblematic of the curious penetration of an enclosed journey through time by externalities of *space* (territory) which seem entirely remote from, indeed irrelevant to, this experience.

After a few hours of this enclosed time-journey we arrive, clear customs, walk out of the terminal building and magically 'there we are', deposited in the same clothes in which we boarded (the tangible attachments to our not-so-distant home) into a strange environment, a different climate, probably a different language, certainly a different cultural tempo. What sort of 'proximity' does such a process involve? How, precisely has the connectivity provided by air travel brought us closer? It undeniably makes distant places accessible without a great expense of time, energy or (relatively) money. It makes physical relocation a matter of routine - something often to be fitted into a few hours, a day or so at most. But this proximity is also surely a problematic one, born as it is out of the technologically achieved compression of space by time. For the space we traverse in these journeys through the routine sequence of 'cabin time' is not just physical distance but the social and cultural distance (Saudi Arabia = Islam = no alcohol) that 'real' material space preserves. The connectivity of air travel thus poses for us sharply the question of the overcoming of social-cultural distance.

From the suspended animation of the flight, then, we have to confront the cultural adjustment of arrival. Our experienced journey though time rather than space has not prepared us for the new reality of this place. We have not experienced the sense of the traversing of 'real' distance: the gradual changes of scene, the gradations in climate, the series of social interactions, the *longueurs*, the interruptions and pauses, the symbolical moments of border crossings and the sheer physicality which travel in the 'real time' of, say, a railway journey affords. This compression of distance has left us temporarily dislocated and we need to adjust to a reality which is immediate and challenging in its otherness, precisely because it is so accessible. One measure of the accomplishment of globalization, then, is how far the overcoming of physical distance is matched by that of cultural distance.

There are various ways in which we can think about this. The most obvious is to ask how different the place of arrival actually is, in the modern world, from the place of embarkation. This is to enter the discourse of cultural homogenization. The homogenization thesis presents globalization as synchronization to the demands of a standardized consumer culture, making everywhere seem more or less the same. So to assert cultural homogenization as a consequence of globalization is to move from connectivity through proximity to the supposition of global uniformity and ubiquity. As I shall argue in chapter 3, this is a precipitate and in many ways an unjustifiable movement. However, we can see how it has a certain plausibility, particularly when thought through in relation to the example of air travel. For there is no denying the similarity between air terminals worldwide. The exits and entrances to different cultural spaces are, as has often been remarked, curiously uniform and standardized. However, this observation may be of limited significance, since airports are pretty clearly special kinds of places defined by the functional demands of their business, which is precisely to minimize cultural difference in the interests of a functional commonality, smoothing the passage of international travellers. To decide whether the homogenization thesis really obtains you have to venture outside the security of the terminal and get progressively deeper into the dangerous cultural hinterland. This may be something that theorists are unwilling to do. For the encounter with the messiness and particularity of actual cultural practices is of course dangerous for theories - like the homogenization thesis - established at the distance of broad abstraction. Noting different disciplinary tendencies towards progressive levels of theoretical abstraction, Nestor Garcia Canclini wryly observes that 'The anthropologist arrives in the city on foot, the sociologist by car and via the main highway, the communications specialist by plane' (1995: 4). The assertion of global homogenization of culture is a little like arriving by plane but never leaving the terminal, spending all one's time browsing amongst the global brands of the duty-free shops.

So, leaving aside the suppositions of broad cultural homogenization for the present, let us pursue the idea of the relation between connectivity and cultural proximity by thinking about the process of adjustment that occurs outside the airline terminal. The accomplishment of globalization appears here as a function of the ease with which this adjustment can be made. And this reveals some of the intrinsic 'unevenness' of

globalization. At one end of a continuum of experience we might find the accomplished business-class passenger who displays his (mostly, 'his') credentials with the insouciance with which he enacts the social-cultural adjustments of arrival: the swift location of the taxi, the easy transit to the pre-booked international hotel whilst gradually, comfortably, absorbing the changed scene, the assurance of finding all the facilities - faxes, CNN business news, international cuisine - that will allow him to function independently of context. For the orientation of business travel is actually to *minimize* cultural difference so as to allow the 'universal' practices of the international business culture to function smoothly. This is connectivity working functionally to achieve a manufactured form of 'proximity' experienced as universality. Distant places are culturally close for business executives because they are carefully negotiated according to the business in hand: international standardization in the hotel and the board room, enhanced, perhaps, by some local colour in the evening's entertainment.

From the instrumental point of view of capitalism, then, connectivity works towards increasing *functional* proximity. It doesn't make all places the same, but it creates globalized spaces and connecting corridors which ease the flow of capital (including its commodities and its personnel) by matching the time-space compression of connectivity with a degree of cultural 'compression'. This is certainly an important dimension of globalization. But it does not grasp the whole picture, and risks exaggerating the shading of connectivity into cultural proximity. What the business-class traveller does not typically experience is the fine grain of everyday cultural practices defined by locality rather than globality and maintaining cultural difference in the face of encroaching connectivity. This culture does not reveal itself in five-star international hotels, but in the streets, the houses, the churches, the workplaces, the bars and the shops that lie beyond the business or tourist centres.

Such 'localities' are quite simply the places where people live their everyday lives: the day-to-day environments of 'home'. For some they may exist pressed hard up against the perimeter fence of the airfield and yet they are part of an entirely different cultural 'world' from that of the connectivity of air travel. And they are clearly not governed by the same immediate demands of an instrumental connectivity and standardization that organize international business culture. Entering such environments means entering the order of social life which feels the sway of local affairs more than the demands of globality, and which exhibits the particularity - the cultural difference - of 'locality'. When discussions of globalization raise (as most do) the 'global-local' relationship, this is the vast order of everyday life that they invoke.

Few business travellers stray into these environments (until, of course, they are returned to their own comfortable localities). So this level of cultural difference is often invisible when viewed from the perspective of the smooth-functioning globalization of capital. It is more likely to be encountered by less well-organized or resourced travellers: by labour migrants or perhaps by independent tourists on a low budget. In the global space of the terminal such people may appear less accomplished in the rituals of arrival, but their lack of resources means that they quickly penetrate deeper into the culture of locality: the bus rather than the taxi, a basic hotel in a workingclass neighbourhood lacking the cultural 'insulation' provided by five-star status, the need to shop in cheap local stores. These travellers quickly become more accomplished hermeneuticians, testing out the real, extents of cultural proximity outside of the enclaves of a global business culture. The journey into localities then is a journey into the challenging reality of cultural difference, posing the question of how far connectivity establishes 'proximity' beyond the technological modality of increasing access.

At this point we have to move beyond the example of air travel. Tracing the phenomenology of this modality of connectivity pushes us towards a 'high-profile' understanding of globalization which is seductive but restricted in its application. Jet travel is an intrinsic part of connectivity and, in its increasing commonplace integration into everyday life, demands attention as cultural experience. But obviously it reveals only one aspect of what connectivity implies. First because, despite its increasing ubiquity, it is still restricted to *relatively* small numbers of people and, within this group, to an even smaller, more exclusive, cadre of frequent users. Many people in the most developed countries of the world have never been on an aeroplane, and this obviously applies to many millions in less developed countries. Air travel, like the use of the internet, could thus be seen as merely the globalization available to the affluent. And if this were so, it would lose much of its claim to be a *general* condition of our time. But, more significantly, the sense of global connectivity implied by this sort of high-profile globalizing technology pushes, as we have seen, towards a particular and exaggerated sense of proximity.

If connectivity really does imply proximity as a *general* social-cultural condition, this has to be understood in terms of a transformation of practice and experience which is felt *actually within localities* as much as in the increasing technological means of access to or egress from them. Lash and Urry (1994: 252) suggest that 'modern society is society on the move', and that 'the modern world is inconceivable without ... new forms of long-distance transportation and travel.' I don't want to disagree with this, but I think it is also important not to exaggerate the way long-distance travel figures either in the lives of the majority of people in the world today or in the overall process of globalization. 'Local life'- contrasted here with the transient 'global life' of the space of the air terminal (or indeed the computer terminal) - is the vast order of human social existence which continues, because of the constraints of physical embodiment, to dominate even in a globalized world. Local life occupies the majority of time and space. Although the increasing ability to move - physically and representationally - between places is a highly significant mode of connectivity, it is ultimately subordinate to indeed derivative of - the order of location in time and space which we grasp as 'home'. Globalization is transforming this local order, but the significance of this transformation reaches beyond the technological accomplishments of communications and transport. Putting it simply, connectivity means changing the nature of localities and not just occasionally lifting some people out of them. So I think a statement like 'the paradigmatic modern experience is that of rapid mobility over long distances '(Lash and Urry 1994: 253) needs to be treated with some caution. It might be nearer the mark to say that the paradigmatic experience of global modernity for most people and this is not of course unrelated to the correlation between income and mobility - is that of staying in one place but experiencing the 'dis-placement' that global modernity *brings to them*.

To understand globalization in this way is to pay attention to the other modalities of connectivity that we have mentioned. In particular it is to grasp the 'proximity' that comes from the networking of social relations across large tracts of time-space, causing distant events and powers to penetrate our local experience. It is to understand how someone may face unemployment as a result of 'downsizing' decisions made at a company head office on another continent, or how the food we find in our supermarkets is radically different today from twenty years ago because of the complex interaction between cosmopolitan taste and the global economics of the food industry, or of how our very sense of cultural belonging - of being 'at home'- may be subtly transfigured by the penetration of globalizing media into our everyday lives. It is these sorts of transformation that I shall mainly be concerned with in the chapters that follow.

Connectivity and Global Unicity

But now I want to turn, briefly, to another significant elaboration/slippage from the core idea of connectivity. This is the idea that connectivity is globally encompassing and thus implies a certain 'unicity': a sense that the world is becoming, for the first time in history, a single social and cultural setting. Whereas it was in the past possible to understand social and cultural processes and practices as a set of local, relatively 'independent' phenomena, globalization makes the world a 'single place'. Obvious examples of this are the way in which the economic affairs of nation-states are locked into a global capitalist economy, or how the environmental effects of local industrial processes can rapidly become global problems.

In a strict sense, however, the idea of the world becoming one place is only contingently related to the idea of increasing connectivity. Although it is plausible to speculate that the rapid development of networks of interconnection will eventually encompass all of human society, this is by no means a logical entailment of the idea. Despite its reach, few would dare to claim that the complex connectivity of globalization currently extends in any profound way to every single person or place on the planet, and speculation on its spread must surely be tempered by the many countervailing trends towards social and cultural division that we see around us.

Nevertheless we also have to recognize a certain pull in the direction of the 'unitary' both in the concept of globalization and in the empirical processes it describes. The term 'global' itself has powerful connotations of wholeness and inclusiveness deriving both from its metaphorical usage (global as 'total') and from the sheer semantics of geometric form: for example in the connection of terms like 'encompassing' with the spherical form of the earth. Globalization as a concept, then, surely has a connotational force of 'tending towards unicity', and if the empirical state of connectivity we have identified has no such implications, then it simply looks as though, with 'globalization', we have all somehow got hold of the wrong word! What we require is a

way of thinking through the implications of unicity that doesn't fetch up in more controversial slippages: unicity's shading into either 'uniformity' or 'unity'.

Roland Robertson's extensive work on globalization has centred on these problems and he offers a sophisticated formulation of the idea of 'the compression of the world into a "single place"' (1992: 6). Whilst maintaining that, 'the trends towards the unicity of the world are, when all is said and done, inexorable' (1992: 26), Robertson provides a model which disarms some of the immediate criticisms that such a view might attract. In essence Robertson's sense of global unicity is of a context which increasingly determines social relations and simultaneously of a frame of reference within which social agents increasingly figure their existence, identities and actions. For Robertson, then, global unicity does not imply a simplistic uniformity - something like a 'world culture'. Rather, it is a complex social and phenomenological condition - the 'global-human condition' in which different orders of human life are brought into articulation with one another. He identifies four such orders: individual human beings, national societies, the 'world system of societies' and the overarching collectivity of 'humankind'. Globalization, for him, is the increasing interaction between these orders of human life, and so 'the world as a single place' implies the transformation of these forms of life as they are increasingly positioned against, and forced to take account of, each other. This is neither the unicity of homogenization nor a naive sense of emergent global (comm)unity. Indeed, far from suggesting an unproblematic process of integration, Robertson's model of unicity is one in which social and cultural difference may become accentuated precisely as it is identified in relation to the 'world as a whole'.

As an example, we can consider how Robertson's approach copes with the obvious objection to the broad idea of global unicity: the many counter-instances of fragmentation in the modern world racial and ethnic hostilities, economic protectionism, religious fundamentalism and so on. Robertson's response is to point to a significant aspect of these counter-instances: the fact that they are 'reflexively monitored'. Taking the example of contemporary economic protectionism he argues that: *Compared to the older protectionisms and autarkies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ... the new ones are more self-consciously situated within a worldwide system of global rules and regulations concerning economic trade and a consciousness of the global economy as a whole. This certainly does not mean that protectionism will be overcome by such factors, but it does mean that relevant parties, including 'average citizens', are increasingly constrained to think in terms, not necessarily favourable terms, of the world as a whole.* (Robertson 1992: 26)

For Robertson, then, the structures of global connectivity combine with a pervasive *awareness* of this situation to raise any local events inevitably to the horizon of a single world. A similar case might be made for the 'cultural protectionism' implicit in religious fundamentalism, which may be read as a *self-conscious* defence of 'traditional' beliefs, values and practices precisely defined by the undermining of tradition threatened by global compression.

One of the great strengths of Robertson's approach is in providing a conceptual framework which preserves the important sense of globalization as involving wholeness and inclusiveness - as context - whilst allowing it to cope with the empirical complexities of a world which seems to display simultaneous processes of integration and differentiation. The sort of world in which the technological connectivity of the internet can be used - as in the current proliferation of 'sectarian' websites - for the aggressive assertion of ethnic, religious or racial differences. So I think Robertson is basically correct to see globalization in terms of an underlying unicity. This is not just because of the sophistication of his model, but because there is also an urgent political need to retain the idea. As connectivity reaches into localities, it transforms local lived experience but it also confronts people with a world in which their fates undeniably are bound together in a single global frame. This is clear in terms of the economic integrations of the global market or of global environmental risk which, as Ulrich Beck (1992: 47) puts it, 'makes the utopia of a world society a little more real or at least more urgent'. Connectivity thus supposes unicity as a cultural-political principle. Local experience has to be raised to the horizon of a 'single world' if we are to understand it, and local practices and lifestyles increasingly need to be examined and evaluated in terms of their global consequences.

Culture as a Dimension of Globalization

Most of the foregoing discussion has been within a broadly cultural 'register', distinguishable in its vocabulary and its stress from that of, say, economics or politics. But how precisely should we think of culture as a concept and an entity in relation to globalization? One common answer is to see it as a 'dimension' of

globalization. Globalization is now widely regarded as a 'multidimensional' phenomenon - on the surface an unproblematic description but, taken seriously enough, one with demanding implications for (not least, cultural) analysis.

The Multidimensionality of Globalization

Multidimensionality is closely related to the idea of complex connectivity. For the complexity of the linkages established by globalization extends to phenomena which social scientists have laboured to separate out into the categories into which we now, familiarly, break down human life: the economic, the political, the social, the interpersonal, the technological, the environmental, the cultural and so forth. Globalization arguably confounds such taxonomy.

Take the example of an environmental issue like ozone depletion caused by the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in aerosol sprays or refrigerators. The recognition of the effects of these chemicals on the earth's protective ozone layer established a prime example of a global problem, one involving, as Steven Yearley says, the 'compression of the globe'. This in the sense that some of the main (if unknowing) culprits - deodorant users and furniture polish sprayers in the dense centres of population of the developed world - were producing pollution which could 'despoil the environment of [their] neighbours, thousands of kilometers away on the planet' - most intensely at the polar regions (Yearley 1996: 27). The CFC problem is certainly one of connectivity in this direct geographical sense. But it is also one which, in its complex ramifications, links together a number of interpretative discourses. It is obviously a technological matter for which a technical

'solution' in the form of alternative chemical propellants was quickly developed. But the adoption of this technical solution raised a whole raft of international political issues in the attempt to achieve a treaty on the regulation of CFC use: the 1987 'Montreal Protocol'. During these negotiations differences emerged between the economic interests of CFC-producing nations and those that were only consumers of the products.

These problems were amplified in the case of 'First

World' as opposed to 'Third World' interests, where universal compliance raised the vexed question of economic assistance from the developed world as an incentive for poor countries such as India to make the transition to non-CFC technologies (Yearley 1996: 107ff). The CFC issue thus linked together political, legal, scientific, environmental-ethical and economic discourses. And there are several senses in which it was also a deeply cultural issue: for example the change in cultural sensibility ('green thinking') it involved as people began to link mundane aspects of their lifestyle with global consequences, or the change in cultural practices it produced as sunbathing suddenly became a matter of risk, linked with the danger of cancer, one of the great symbolic fears of the developed world.

Examples like this demonstrate that globalizing phenomena are, of their essence, complex and multidimensional, putting pressure on the conceptual frameworks by which we have traditionally grasped the social world. However, given both the difficulty of accounting simultaneously for all the aspects of such phenomena and the power of academic disciplines in the organization of knowledge, it is not surprising that attempts persist to account for globalization in 'one-dimensional' terms. People come to the issue from different traditions of thought and with different priorities and informing principles and these, understandably, tug back from complexity to the relative 'simplicity' of master concepts such as capitalism, the nation-state and so on. But if we take multidimensionality seriously, such accounts are bound to misrepresent globalization: lose the complexity and you have lost the phenomenon.

To illustrate this we can briefly consider two approaches, very different in their analysis and their politics, but twinned in terms of their conceptualization of globalization within the single domain of the economic - as a phenomenon of the capitalist market.

The first of these is drawn from the literature of corporate business strategy. One of the most prolific writers in this mould, the Japanese business strategist Kenichi Ohmae argues that the nation-state is becoming irrelevant seen from the point of view of the capitalist market. He claims that 'traditional nation states have become unnatural, even impossible, business units in a global economy.' Rather, he argues, we should think of a world of regional economies 'where the real work gets done and the real markets flourish': 'What defines [these] is not the location of their political borders but the fact that they are the right size and scale to be the

true natural business units in today's global economy. There are the borders - and the connections - that matter in a 'borderless world' (Ohmae 1995: 5).

The tendency to see the world simply as a business opportunity is unsurprising within this discourse. On this reading, people like Ohmae are just understanding the idea of globalization within their own discursive universe - a coherent, albeit a rather impoverished and instrumental one. But it is not quite so self-contained as this, for this discourse inevitably spills over into other realms. Not only does Ohmae obviously make claims about the political sphere of the nation-state system which are highly controversial (Anderson 1995; McGrew and Lewis 1992; Cerny 1996), he also intervenes in a cultural discourse. For example, he argues that the global market is producing, 'a cross-border civilization'. This is based in the (predictable) claim about 'convergence of consumer tastes and preferences': 'Global brands of blue jeans, colas, and stylish athletic shoes' (1995: 29). But he goes further than this simple consumption-convergence thesis, to argue that more profound cultural/ generational cleavages are occurring, for instance in Japanese society, as the 'Nintendo kids' - Japanese teenagers of the 1990s - have learned a different set of perceptions and social values from those of their parents and grandparents. This generation he argues is much less accepting of traditional Japanese notions of authority and conformity, much more culturally open, questioning and creative: 'Everything can be explored, rearranged, reprogrammed ... Everything, finally, is open to considered choice, initiative, creativity - and daring' (p. 36). This shift derives, Ohmae claims, from the technological modality of connectivity: the use of computers, computer games and interactive multimedia: 'watching how a kid from another culture whom you've never seen before reveals character and mind-set through programming style' (p. 37).

The sort of cultural inferences Ohmae draws are deeply coloured by the unidimensionality of his framework. The emergent values he recognizes in Japanese kids are pretty plainly those of enterprise capitalism, and he paints a predictably Panglossian picture of 'the new melting pot of today's cross-border civilization' (p. 39). But the fault here is not just ideological: it involves sociological reductionism and mono-causal logics precisely characterizing a one-dimensional approach.

Some of the sharpest criticism of Ohmae and the position he represents comes in Hirst and Thompson's sceptical analysis of the thesis of economic globalization, *Globalization in Question* (1996). Hirst and Thompson specifically challenge the connected ideas of the transnationalization of the economy and the redundancy of the nation-state, as conceived in 'extreme globalization theorists like Ohmae' (1996: 185). Without examining the details of their critique, we can notice the self-consciously narrow terms within which it is constructed. Hirst and Thompson are *principled* one-dimensional analysts, deliberately defining globalization as a function of economics.

In arguing that the economic globalization which thinkers like Ohmae present 'is largely a myth' (1996: 2), Hirst and Thompson are extremely careful to point out the limits of their critique. They recognize the 'vast and diverse' literature on globalization and the different understandings of the process in different disciplinary contexts. But despite this, they claim that a critique of the economic dimension is also fatal for all other understandings: '[W]e believe that without the notion of a truly globalized economy many of the other consequences adduced in the domains of culture and politics would either cease to be sustainable or become less threatening' (p. 3). But this is clearly to fall towards a reductionism in which the economy drives all else before it. Hirst and Thompson pay lip service to the idea that globalization is multiform, but then ignore any of the implications of this, on the assumption that the whole edifice of globalization theory is built upon the 'untenable assumptions' of the sort of economic position they criticize.

And, in fact, the failure to pursue the multidimensional nature of globalization has direct consequences for some of their claims about its 'mythical' nature. For they go on to argue, very properly, that accepting hyperbolic claims about global capitalist power can be politically disabling: 'One can only call the political impact of "globalization" the pathology of over-diminished expectations ... we have a myth which exaggerates the degree of our helplessness in the face of contemporary economic forces' (1996: 6). Now such arguments have considerable force when directed at the rhetoric of globalization which views it simply as the untrammelled power of transnational capitalism. But to accept the *definition* of globalization in these narrow economic terms is to share the one-dimensionality of the positions they criticize. For if globalization is understood in terms of simultaneous, complexly related processes in the realms of economy, politics, culture, technology and so forth, we can see that it involves all sorts of contradictions, resistances and countervailing forces. Indeed the understanding of globalization as involving a 'dialectic' of opposed principles and

tendencies - the local and the global, universalism and particularism - is now common, particularly in accounts which foreground cultural issues (Axford 1995, Featherstone 1995; Giddens 1990; Hall 1992; Lash and Urry 1994; Robertson 1995; Sreberny-Mohammadi 1991). None of this is to diminish the importance of the economic in the process of globalization. The dynamics of capitalism in each of its moments of the production, circulation and consumption of commodities is heavy with implications for our increasing interconnectedness. However this does not mean that the economic analysis of transnational capitalism is the royal road to grasping globalization.

But if we insist on the complexly related multidimensionality of globalization, what does this imply for a 'cultural approach' ?

The Cultural Dimension

Taking multidimensionality seriously can actually be too demanding. The sheer scale and complexity of the empirical reality of global connectivity is something, which defies attempts to encompass it: it is something we can only grasp by cutting into it in various ways. What this suggests is that we are pretty much bound to lose some of the complexity of globalization in any feasible account of it, but it doesn't follow that an account of one dimension - one way of slicing into globalization - has to be a 'one-dimensional' account. For there are better and worse ways of doing this.

A bad way would be to start from the premise that the dimension under consideration is the master discourse, the domain that 'things really all boil down to', the logic that unlocks all else. A better way would be to identify the specific way of describing the world that is contained within an economic, a political or a cultural discourse, and to try to draw out an understanding of globalization within these terms, whilst always denying them conceptual priority: pursuing one dimension in the self-conscious recognition of multidimensionality. This sort of deliberately anti-reductionist analysis should also make us sensitive to the points at which different dimensions interconnect and interact.

So it must be for cultural analysis. Particularly so since the concept of culture is so 'encompassing' that it can easily be taken as the ultimate level of analysis - isn't everything in the end 'cultural'? Well, no. Or, at least it gets us nowhere to think of culture in this way, as simply a description of a 'total way of life'. For, as Clifford Geertz once memorably described it (Geertz 1973: 4), this leads to '*pot-au-feu*' theorizing - the throwing of anything and everything into the conceptual stew that is the 'complex whole' of human existence.

The dimension of culture has to be made more specific, and yet this has proved difficult to achieve, since culture is anyway such a complex and elusive idea (Williams 1981; Clifford 1988; Thompson 1990; Tomlinson 1991; McGuigan 1992). I do not, however, intend to dwell here on problems of definition. There are some fairly widely accepted features of 'the cultural' which we can build upon to get a reasonable sense of what properly belongs to the cultural dimension of globalization.

In the first place culture can be understood as the order of life in which human beings construct meaning through practices of symbolic representation. If this sounds a rather dry generalization, it nevertheless allows us to make some useful distinctions. Very broadly, if we are talking about the economic we are concerned with practices by which humans produce, exchange and consume material goods; if we are discussing the political we mean practices by which power is concentrated, distributed and deployed in societies; and if we are talking culture, we mean the ways in which people make their lives, individually and collectively, meaningful by communicating with each other.

The important thing is that to grasp these as 'dimensions' of social life is not to see them as entirely *discrete* spheres of activity: people don't turn from 'doing the economic' to 'doing the' cultural' in the way that we might imagine them ending work for the day and turning to leisure activities. If this were so then we would have to suppose that no one ever derived any meaning from the activities by which they earned a living. And yet this way of thinking is quite deeply engrained in common-sense views of culture referring to the practices and products of art, literature, music, film and so on. These are all important *forms* in which specific meanings are generated, but they will not do to define, exclusively, the cultural dimension.

Rather, we have to unravel from the complexly intertwined practices of the cultural, the economic and the political, a sense of the purpose of the cultural - that of making life meaningful. Now everything that is symbolizable is, in a broad sense, meaningful. There are, for example, vast amounts of symbolizations attaching to economic practices, for instance the technical language of the production process (such as the specifications of a car engine) or of the market-place (such as the daily announcement of share prices). But such symbolizations do not, for me, press to the heart of the 'cultural', and I am happy to cede most of this area of *instrumental symbolization* to the domains of the economic, the technical and so on.

On the other hand, many of the symbolic representations found in marketing, whilst having ultimately an instrumental (economic) end, are, for my purposes, very properly cultural. Advertising texts, for instance, though part of what Horkheimer and Adorno (1979) referred to disparagingly as the 'culture industry' linked to the instrumental purposes of capitalism, remain significant cultural texts. The way people make use of advertising texts may often be similar to the way they use novels or films. This is because they offer narratives (however ideologically suspect) of how life may be lived, references to shared notions of identity, appeals to self-image, pictures of 'ideal' human relations, versions of human fulfilment, happiness and so on.

This is the sense of the cultural dimension that I want to stress, with the emphasis on meanings as ends in themselves, as distinct from simply instrumental meanings. To use a slightly high-blown formulation we could think of culture in this sense as the realm of 'existentially significant' meaning. By this I don't mean to emphasize the 'problem of existence' as formulated either in the ontological anxieties of existentialist philosophy, or yet in the range of formal religious responses to the human condition. However important these may be for the way many people interpret their lives - and notwithstanding the significance of globalization for religious institutions (Beyer 1994) - these are, as it were, too specialized existential discourses to grasp what I am after in the idea of existentially significant meaning. We have to add to this Raymond Williams's famous dictum that 'culture is ordinary' (Williams 1989; McGuigan 1992). Williams first used this phrase of course in opposition to the elite sense of culture as a rarefied 'special' form of life available only to the few through the 'cultivation' of certain sensibilities. Culture is ordinary, then, in the 'democratic anthropological' sense that it describes 'a whole way of life': it is not the exclusive property of the privileged, but inclusive of all manner of everyday practices. But for Williams this sense coexisted, importantly, with a sense of culture as providing 'personal meanings': 'The questions I ask about our culture are questions about our general and common purposes, yet also questions about deep personal meanings. Culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind' (Williams 1989: 4).

The principle that 'culture is ordinary' makes what I am calling questions of existential significance matters that every human being routinely addresses in their everyday practices and experiences. It is not a question of some symbolic practices being more 'edifying' than others, getting closer to the quick of the human situation, being more concerned with the big questions of life. Nor is it a question of cultural or aesthetic value in relation to particular cultural 'texts'. The Tao-te-Ching, the late quartets of Beethoven, Picasso's Guernica, or Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs are no more and no less 'cultural texts' than *NYPD Blue*, a Spice Girls album, the media coverage of the death of Princess Diana, football 'fanzines' and the latest Levis advert. All qualify to the extent that people draw upon them in making sense of their existence. And, indeed, we have to include on this reading of culture all sorts of practices which do not directly hinge on a relationship between a 'reader' and a 'text': the trip around the local supermarket aisles, or to the restaurant, the sports hall, the dance club or the garden centre, the conversation in the bar or on the street corner. Culture for my purposes refers to all these mundane practices that directly contribute to people's ongoing 'life-narratives': the stories by which we, chronically, interpret our existence in what Heidegger calls the 'thrownness' of the human situation.

When we slice into complex connectivity from this perspective, what we are concerned with is how globalization alters the context of meaning construction: how it affects people's sense of identity, the experience of place and of the self in relation to place, how it impacts on the shared understandings, values, desires, myths, hopes and fears that have developed around locally situated life. The cultural dimension therefore spans what Anthony Giddens has called both the 'out-there-ness' and the 'in-here-ness' of globalization: the connection between vast systemic transformations, and transformations in our most local and intimate 'worlds' of everyday experience (Giddens 1994b: 95).

Culture Distinguished from its Technologies

One particular reason for stressing this understanding of the cultural dimension is that discussions of globalization often take 'culture' to mean something rather different, eliding it with the globalizing communications and media *technologies* via which cultural representations are transmitted. This tendency is perhaps most evident in the widely distributed 'journalistic' discourse on globalization which often seems obsessed with the 'Gee-Whizzery' of new communications technologies: the internet, the global information superhighway and so on. Now though communication technologies are absolutely central to the globalization process, their development is clearly not *identical* with cultural globalization. In fact their impact has both broader and narrower implications. Broader because they have a significant role - as technology itself and, thus, in my sense, as transmitters of *instrumental* symbolizations - in *all* the dimensions in which globalization proceeds. An example of this is in the increasing integration of global news-gathering practices and the provision of market intelligence in global economic trading. But they are narrower because the media form only part of the total process by which symbolic meaning construction proceeds and only one of the forms in which globalization is experienced culturally. The mass media and other forms of mediated communication are increasingly significant in our daily lives, but they are not the only source of a globalized cultural experience. And, equally, not everything that can be said about the globalization of media and communications systems is directly relevant to discussions of culture.

An example of the conflation of culture and its technologies is, rather surprisingly, found in the otherwise sophisticated account of globalization provided by Anthony Giddens. Towards the end of a long discussion of the institutional dimensions of globalization, Giddens mentions, '... a further and quite fundamental aspect of globalization, which lies behind each of the various institutional dimensions ... and which might be referred to as cultural globalization' (1990: 77). But the reader looking for an account of culture as meaning construction will be disappointed: what Giddens discusses is how 'mechanized technologies of communication have dramatically influenced all aspects of globalization'. He stresses the importance of pooled information in the global extension of the institutions of modernity and, significantly, takes the 'instrumental' context of global money markets as his prime example. This, and the fact that his discussion of 'culture' (scarcely one page) is tucked away at the end of a long discussion of industrialism, suggests an interest in the 'disembedding' properties of technologies of communication rather than in culture in our sense' of the social production of existentially significant meaning.

It is fair to say that Giddens has not paid all that much attention to the *concept* of culture in his work on globalization, and this may account for this rather offhand conflation of culture with communication technologies. And, to be fair, there are many other points in his discussion, which we shall come to in the following chapter, that suggest, albeit indirectly, a more nuanced view of the cultural. But what this example illustrates is the importance of tying down quite firmly the rather elastic and accommodating concept of 'culture' in relation to globalization. I certainly agree with Giddens that the cultural dimension is 'fundamental' to globalization, but I want to understand this in much broader terms than those available simply from the analysis of the impact of communications technologies however significant these may be for the institutional and systemic connectivity of our world. And now I shall try to suggest how this may be done.

Why Culture Matters for Globalization

Culture matters for globalization in the obvious sense that it is an intrinsic aspect of the whole process of complex connectivity. But we can go further than this. We can try to understand the sense in which culture is actually *constitutive* of complex connectivity. Again there are better and worse ways of going about this.

One obvious hazard is to fall into arguments that assert a degree of causal priority to culture, privileging this dimension in just the same way we saw Hirst and Thompson do for the economy. An example of this is found in Malcolm Waters's account in which, having set up the standard economy/polity /culture distinction in terms, respectively, of sets of material, political and symbolic exchange relations, he goes on to claim, somewhat provocatively, that **material exchanges localize; political exchanges internationalize, and symbolic exchanges globalize**. *It follows that the globalization of human society is contingent on the extent to which cultural relations are effective relative to economic and political arrangements. We can expect the economy and the polity to be globalized to the extent that they are culturalized, that is to the extent that the exchanges that take place within them are accomplished symbolically. We would also expect that the degree*

of globalization is greater in the cultural arena than either of the other two. (Waters 1995: 9-10 - emphasis in original)

Waters's justification for so privileging the cultural is, briefly, that the nature of symbolic exchanges means they are inherently less limited by the constraints of place than either material (economic) or political exchanges. He argues, for example, that material exchanges are 'rooted in localized markets, factories, offices and shops', simply because of the practical necessity or the cost advantage of physical proximity in the production and exchange of goods and services. In contrast to these constraints which 'tend to tie economic exchanges to localities', cultural symbols 'can be produced anywhere and at any time and there are relatively few resource constraints on their production and reproduction' (Waters 1995: 9). Culture is thus intrinsically more globalizing on account of the ease of the 'stretching' of the relations involved and the inherent mobility of cultural forms and products.

This is scarcely a convincing argument. For clearly there are all sorts of examples - the impact of multinational corporations, the international division of labour (involved for example in the production of automobiles or in the clothing industry), the increasing phenomenon of labour migration, financial and commodity trading, the significance of international trading regulatory agreements and bodies such as the GATT and now the World Trade Organization that testify to the globalization of the 'material exchanges' involved in economic relations. Obviously there are lots of instances in which the production, exchange and consumption of commodities do remain relatively local activities, but a trip around the neighbourhood mall will quickly reveal how much is not local produce. It is of course true that all production has to be situated *somewhere* in the world. But as celebrated examples such as the intensive production of mange-tout peas in countries like Zimbabwe exclusively for the European market, or the journey of Australian parsnips 17,000 miles to the UK to provide year-round availability show, this is no real inhibitant to the globalization process. Equally the idea that symbolic exchanges float free of material constraints might suggest a strangely 'idealist' view - for don't symbolizations ultimately have to take material form - as books, CDs, celluloid, electron flows on to TV screens and VDUs and so forth? Although, obviously, electronically mediated 'products' are technically much more mobile, all the material production processes related to these various cultural forms surely suppose similar constraints to those involved in any other form of commodity production.

Such objections cast doubt on the plausibility of Waters's rather swashbuckling generalizations about the localizing and globalizing properties of various social spheres. But on closer examination, what he turns out to be arguing is anyway something rather more modest: simply that those sectors of the economy that are most symbolically mediated or as he puts it 'tokenized'- for example financial markets - are the ones most amenable to globalization. This is a far more plausible claim, for clearly the movement of symbolic tokens like money by electronic means is far easier than the movement of large quantities of root vegetables.

But does this in any way support the claim of culture to predominance in the globalization process? I don't think so. Not, at least, in our preferred sense. For Waters is using culture here with the stress firmly on *instrumental symbolization* rather than on existentially significant meaning construction, and so trading on the elision warned against earlier. We can quite agree that some economic processes are becoming more 'tokenized' but this simply means they are more *informationalized* - the symbolizations employed are intrinsic to the economic process - not that they are 'culturalized'. To be more culturalized would mean that the processes and practices by which people furnish for themselves meaningful accounts of their social existence are becoming somehow more closely articulated with the economic sphere. This may in fact be so, but the argument needs to be based in something other than problematic claims about the 'dematerialized' nature of symbolic goods. Waters, then, may turn out to be right about the overall significance of culture in globalization, but for the wrong reasons.

The problem of understanding culture as constitutive of globalization turns on how we conceive of culture as having consequences. 'Culture is not a power, something to which social events can be causally attributed', says Clifford Geertz, and this is surely right to the extent that we should think of cultural processes as the construction of meanings, in Geertz's terms, as 'a context in which [events] can be intelligibly ... described' (Geertz 1973: 14). To think in directly 'causal' terms pushes us towards the confusion of culture with its technologies. However this does not mean that culture is not consequential. It is certainly so in that meaning construction informs individual and collective actions which are themselves consequential. People do not produce meanings within some entirely separate interpretative channel which, as it were, runs parallel with other social practices but leaves them untouched. Cultural signification and interpretation constantly

orientates people, individually and collectively, towards particular actions. Often our actions may be fairly instrumental ones, following a logic of practical or economic necessity, but even here they are undertaken within the 'context' of a broader cultural understanding. Even the most basic instrumental actions of satisfying bodily needs are not in this sense outside culture: in certain circumstances (slimming, religious fasting, hunger strikes) the decision to eat or to starve is a cultural decision.

One way to think about the consequentiality of culture for globalization, then, is to grasp how culturally informed 'local' actions can have globalizing consequences. Complex connectivity is not just the tighter integration of social institutions, but involves the integration of individual and collective actions into the way that institutions actually work. Thus cultural connectivity introduces the idea of the reflexivity of global-modern life.

The central insight of theories of reflexivity (Beck 1997; Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994; Giddens 1990) is the recursive nature of social activity: the various ways in which social entities may be said to act 'back upon' themselves, to adjust to incoming information about their behaviour or their workings. The idea builds upon the inherent reflexivity of human beings: the capacity we all have to be constantly aware of ourselves as acting in the process of acting, to 'routinely "keep in touch" with the grounds of what [we] do as an integral element of doing it' (Giddens 1990: 36). Social theories of reflexivity attempt to articulate how this sort of self-monitoring manifests itself at the level of social institutions, or rather the interface between social agents and institutions. In Giddens's account, this occurs in the phenomenon of 'institutional reflexivity': modern institutions are ones in which 'social practices are constantly examined and reformulated in the light of incoming information about those practices, thus constitutively altering their character' (Giddens 1990: 38). Modern institutions are thus increasingly, like human beings, 'learning entities'. It is this reflexive sensitivity of institutions in relation to inputs from human agents that marks the peculiar dynamism of modern social life and that defines the connectivity between a multiplicity of small individual local actions and the highest-level global structures and processes.

To illustrate this we can consider a claim that Giddens makes in relation to the 'local-global dialectic'. He writes that 'local lifestyle habits have become globally consequential. Thus my decision to buy a certain item of clothing has implications not only for the international division of labour but for the earth's ecosystems' (Giddens 1994a: 5). How might this be true? Well, first, in the sense that the global clothing industry is a highly reflexive institution, attuned to the choices of a multiplicity of actors expressing themselves in the market-place through the cultural codes of fashion. Trace the consequences of the cultural choices made by a group of teenagers in a European shopping mall on a Saturday afternoon with their eyes on how they will look that evening in the local club: this uncovers a level of connectivity leading to the employment prospects of a sweatshop worker in the Philippines. And second, the connectivity implied is in the fact that clothing choices, like all consumption choices, have global ecological consequences in terms of the natural resources they consume and the industrial production processes they entail.

A world of complex connectivity (a global market-place, international fashion codes, an international division of labour, a shared eco-system) thus links the myriad small everyday actions of millions with the fates of distant, unknown others and even with the possible fate of the planet. All these individual actions are undertaken within the culturally meaningful context of local mundane lifeworlds in which dress codes and the subtle differentiations of fashion establish personal and cultural identity. The way in which these 'cultural actions' become globally consequential is the prime sense in which culture matters for globalization. To be sure, the complexity of this chain of consequences simultaneously entails the political, economic and technological dimensions of globalization. But the point is that the 'moment of the cultural' is indispensable in interpreting complex connectivity.

Thinking about globalization in its cultural dimension also discloses its essentially dialectical character in a particularly vivid way. The fact that individual actions are intimately connected with large structural-institutional features of the social world via reflexivity means globalization is not a 'one-way' process of the determination of events by massive global structures, but involves at least the possibility for local intervention in global processes. There exists a cultural politics of the global which we can grasp by continuing the example of the ecological consequences of local actions.

Though the consequentiality of routine lifestyle choices may not always be recognized - most of us surely don't shop habitually as 'eco-aware' consumers - there is nevertheless a trend in certain sections of all

societies towards deliberate eco-friendly consumption practices, which is itself a manifestation of connectivity. The famous Green movement slogan *'Think globally, act locally'* suggests a political strategy motivated by a very clear collective cultural narrative of what the 'good life' entails. This strategy involves the mobilization of agents - increasingly via sophisticated media campaigns - to achieve institutional changes at a global level (Lash 1994: 211). And if such a strategy is (sometimes) successful, it is because it draws on and appeals to very general cultural dispositions more than engagement with scientific-technical arguments over environmental problems.

For instance, Greenpeace's spectacular defeat of Shell UK over the deep-sea dumping of the Brent Spar oil platform in June 1995 was achieved by mobilizing public opinion - particularly in Germany, Denmark and The Netherlands - which directly threatened Shell's 'customer relations' at the filling stations. From the perspective of the Green movement this could be seen as a conspicuous success story of social reflexivity. But if we ask what lay behind the mobilization of public opinion, it seems likely that it was something other than the precise issues of the campaign itself - over which there was considerable confusion. For example, many of those boycotting Shell's filling stations apparently thought that the plan was to dump the platform in the North Sea - their 'locality' - rather than the Atlantic. Furthermore, Greenpeace later admitted to having been themselves misled about the actual composition of the chemicals on board the platform. There were in fact claims following the campaign that the media had been 'bounced' into providing favourable coverage of Greenpeace, along with emotive footage of the activists under siege by Shell's security staff, at the expense of the full complex scientific argument. The senior commissioning editor for the UK's Channel 4 claimed, 'The pictures provided to us [by Greenpeace] showed plucky helicopters riding into a fusillade of water canons. Try and write the analytical science into that'.

However, we can understand all this differently if we see the Brent Spar campaign as appealing to people's ongoing life-narratives, rather than to specific environmental arguments whose technicalities few can anyway grasp. So what was, perhaps, most significant was the symbolic value of the occupation of the platform: a particular dramatization of a 'battle' against a generalized threat of environmental degradation that people experience as part of their everyday 'lifeworld'. Understood in this way, the strategy of Greenpeace is (at least in part) a cultural one. Even the issue of scientific accuracy could be seen as having cultural significance in the maintenance of general trust relations between Greenpeace (or Shell), the media and the public - as much as in terms of information or misinformation. As Scott Lash puts it, environmental politics now involve 'the social construction of reality' - 'a struggle in the media between environmental protest actors, business actors and policy-makers around a set of meanings to be disseminated among the lay public [and framing] their reality' (1994: 208). Environmental politics are thus cultural politics, dependent for their success on the degree to which they can tap into the horizon of relevance of local lifeworlds. So culture also matters for globalization in this sense: that it marks out a symbolic terrain of meaning-construction as the arena for global political interventions.

Why Globalization Matters for Culture

Globalization disturbs the way we conceptualize 'culture'. For culture has long had connotations tying it to the idea of a fixed locality. The idea of 'a culture' implicitly connects meaning construction with particularity and location. As Eade (1997:25) notes, 'an emphasis on boundedness and coherence traditionally dominated the sociological treatment of the idea of culture', particularly in the functionalist tradition where collective meaning construction was dealt with largely as serving the purposes of social integration. So 'a culture' parallels the problematic notion of 'a society' as a bounded entity (Mann 1986) occupying a physical territory mapped as a political territory (predominantly the nation-state) and binding individual meaning constructions into this circumscribed social, political space. The connectivity of globalization is clearly threatening to such conceptualizations, not only because the multiform penetration of localities breaks into this binding of meanings to place, but because it undermines the thinking through which culture and fixity of location are originally paired.

In anthropology, James Clifford's work on 'travelling cultures' (Clifford 1992, 1997) has focused on prising culture apart from location. Writing of the 'practices of crossing and interaction that troubled the localism of many common assumptions about culture' he argues: 'In these assumptions authentic social existence is, or should be, centred in circumscribed places - like the gardens where the word "culture" derived its European meanings. Dwelling was understood to be the local ground of collective life, travel a supplement; roots

always precede routes' (1997:3). Clifford demonstrates how the practices of anthropological fieldwork have contributed to the localizing of the concept of culture: 'centering the *culture* around a particular locus, the *village*, and around a certain spatial practice of dwelling/research which itself depended on a complementary localization - that of the field' (1997: 20). So the traditional research methods of anthropology - the village taken as a 'manageable unit' for cultural analysis, the practice of ethnography as 'dwelling' with the community - have contributed to a synecdoche in which location (village) is taken for culture. And, Clifford argues, this has endured into contemporary ethnographic fieldwork practices where the locations may be, 'hospitals, labs, urban neighbourhoods, tourist hotels' rather than remote villages, but the informing assumption for the researcher and subject is one of 'localized dwelling'.

Clifford goes against the grain of this inheritance to think of culture as essentially mobile rather than static, to treat 'practices of displacement ... as constitutive of cultural meanings'. And in this he raises something very close to the conceptual challenge globalization makes to culture. Culture cannot be thought of as having these inevitable conceptual ties to location, for meanings are equally generated by people 'on the move' and in the flows and connections between 'cultures'.

Yet the notion of 'travelling culture' can also be tendentious. It's not that we have to *reverse* the priority between 'roots and routes', insisting on the essence of culture as restless nomadic movement. Rather we need to see 'roots and routes' as always coexistent in culture, and both as subject to transformation in global modernity. To return to the earlier discussion of travel, we have to remember that a huge proportion of cultural experience is still for the majority the day-to-day experience of physical location, rather than of constant movement. In fact Clifford admits this point in describing an objection to the trope of 'travel', made by another anthropologist, Christina Turner. Turner pointed to the obvious limitations on movement that vast numbers are subject to - being 'kept in their place' by their class and gender position. Her ethnographic work with female Japanese factory workers, 'women who have not "travelled" by any standard definition', led her to question Clifford's stress on 'literal travel'. But these women's 'local' cultural experience and practice also disturbed the culture-locality connection: 'They do watch TV; they do have a global/local sense; they do contradict the anthropologist's typifications; and they don't simply enact a culture' (Clifford 1997: 28). In accepting this, Clifford concedes that the notion of travelling culture 'can involve forces that pass powerfully through - television, radio, tourists, commodities, armies' (ibid.).

This is precisely the point I want to stress: globalization promotes much more physical mobility than ever before, but the key to its cultural impact is in the transformation of localities themselves. It is important to keep to the fore the material conditions of physical embodiment and of political-economic necessity that 'keep people in their place', and so for me the transformation of culture is not grasped in the trope of travel but in the idea of *deterritorialization*. What I shall understand by this - as I explore it in chapter 4 - is that complex connectivity weakens the ties of culture to place. This is in many ways a troubling phenomenon, involving the simultaneous penetration of local worlds by distant forces, and the dislodging of everyday meanings from their 'anchors' in the local environment. Embodiment and the forces of material circumstance keep most of us, most of the time, situated, but in places that are changing around us and gradually, subtly, losing their power to define the terms of our existence. This is undoubtedly an uneven and often contradictory business, felt more forcibly in some places than others, and sometimes met by countervailing tendencies to re-establish the power of locality. Nevertheless deterritorialization is, I believe, the major cultural impact of global connectivity. And it's not all bad news.

For the final point to make is that connectivity also furnishes people with a *cultural resource* that they lacked before its expansion: a cultural awareness which is, in various senses, 'global'. Roland Robertson has always stressed that globalization intrinsically involves 'the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole'(1992: 8) and Giddens (1991: 187) also argues that people's 'phenomenal worlds', though situated locally, 'for the most part are truly global'.

This doesn't mean that we all experience the world as cultural cosmopolitans, much less that a 'global culture' is emerging. But it does imply that 'the global' increasingly exists as a cultural horizon within which we (to varying degrees) frame our existence. The penetration of localities which connectivity brings is thus double-edged: as it dissolves the securities of locality, it offers new understandings of experience in wider - ultimately global - terms.

Grasping the nature and significance of this global consciousness constitutes an important agenda in the cultural analysis of globalization. The Japanese women Christina Turner describes are surely not unusual in

having a 'global/local sense' as part of their everyday life, and one obvious source of this is the images and information that flows to them - as to millions of us - through the routine use of globalizing media technologies like television. One task for cultural analysis is therefore to understand the 'phenomenology' of this global consciousness, particularly in the mediated form in which it mostly appears to us. And it is not difficult to see that the horizon of significance made available by the connectivity of media technologies suggests possibilities not only for the reconstitution of the cultural meanings and identities depleted by deterritorialization, but also for associated forms of global cultural politics. A sense of our mutual interdependency combined with the means for communicating across distance is producing new forms of cultural/political alliance and solidarity. These are undoubtedly weakly developed at present in comparison with the concentrations of power within, for instance, transnational capitalism. But as some argue (Castells 1997), the global perspective of the 'new social movements' may prove to be embryonic forms of a wider, more powerful order of social resistance to the repressive aspects of globalization. However this turns out, it is clear that the reconfiguration of cultural experience that connectivity produces will be crucial to the possibilities of a cosmopolitan politics. Globalization therefore matters for culture in the sense that it brings the negotiation of cultural experience into the centre of strategies for intervention in the other realms of connectivity: the political, the environmental, the economic.

This concludes the broad discussion of the scope of cultural globalization. The chapters which follow pursue the cultural implications of complex connectivity along a number of different trajectories: pursuing the theme of unicity into ideas of a global culture (chapter 3); examining the 'lifting off' of cultural experience from locality (chapter 4); interrogating the significance of mediated experience in globalized culture (chapter 5) and finally discussing the role of culture in an emergent 'cosmopolitan' politics (chapter 6). But before this, we turn in the following chapter to arguments that locate globalization within the historical and theoretical context of social modernity, and try to draw out the cultural implications of this way of thinking about the complex connectivity which defines our times.