



International School

Chapter 5: Globalisation

5.1 Perspectives on globalisation



Key concepts in 5.1

- KC 1 – Inequality and opportunity
- KC 2 – Power, control and resistance
- **KC3 – Social change and development**
- **KC4 – Socialisation, culture and identity**
- KC5 – Structure and human agency



The key concepts for Cambridge International AS & A Level Sociology





Key definitions and issues

- Globalisations refers to the speed with which connections can be made between people, goods, services, information and ideas.
- Globalisation is a process that, through the speed of its occurrence, transforms the nature of other processes and, in so doing, refers also to many changes that have global consequences. Scholte (2000):
 - Internationalisation of 'cross-border relations between countries'
 - Liberalisation of political and economic relationships
 - Universalisation of cultural forms
 - Modernisation





Key definitions and issues

- Giddens (1990) - separation of time and space - distancing
- Deterritorialisation
- Disembedding
 - Objects
 - Processes
 - People:
 - communications,
 - physical disembedding,
 - cultural disembedding





Key definitions and issues

Distanciación: the separation of time and space, so that individuals increasingly interact less face-to-face and more through, for example, the internet and money.

Deterritorialisation : social and cultural activities are no longer associated with particular geographical places but are instead transnational.

Disembedding: the lifting out of social relations from their original context so that communication becomes increasingly abstract.

Hybrid cultures: when elements of two or more cultures combine to create a new culture.

Simulacra: as used by Baudrillard, a simulacrum is a copy of something that has no original or for which the original has been lost.

- Baudrillard (1998) - simulacra





Key definitions and issues

- Globalisation - Adamu (2003): combination of globalisation and localisation
 - Family
 - Business
 - Act local - help global ([mundialisation](#))
 - Nation states
- Malone (2002): glocal subcultures are a form of hybridity in contemporary societies - hip-hop

Glocalisation: the process by which the global and the local are increasingly connected to each other.

Mundialisation: a movement in which cities around the world declare themselves to be world citizen cities and assume global rights and responsibilities.





Key definitions and issues

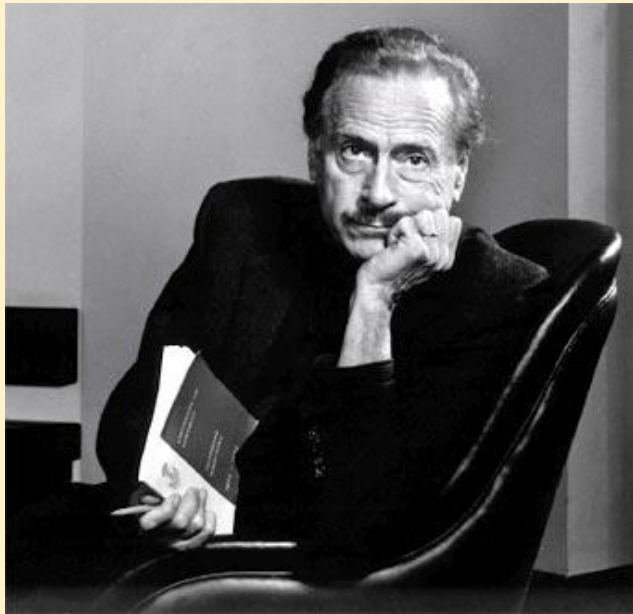
- Appadurai (1990): variety of 'scapes' - imagined that cross territorial borders and are connected in variety of ways:
 - Ethnoscapes
 - Technoscapes
 - Finanscapes
 - Mediascapes
 - Ideoscapes

Global culture: a single world culture, in which distinctive ways of life (language, clothing, norms and values and so on) have been lost.

Global village: McLuhan's term to describe how electronic media have metaphorically shrunk the world into village.



Key sociologist



Marshall McLuhan
(1911 - 1980)

- Formulated ideas of globalisation long before the term became current.
- Communication studies and media studies
- 'The Medium is the Message and understanding Media'





Cultural dimensions of globalisation

- Examples:
 - Global information and communication systems
 - Global patterns of consumerism
 - Cosmopolitan lifestyle
 - Global sport
 - Global tourism
- Opposed tendencies: diversity (difference) vs homogenisation (similarity)
- Outcomes: cultural hybrides or arguments

<https://revisesociology.com/2017/05/24/factors-contributing-to-globalisation/>





Political dimensions of globalisation

- Examples:
 - Political system of liberal democracy
 - Political ideas - human rights and gender equalities
 - Nation states less important than supranational political entities and TNCs
 - Nations states give up power to local political structures
 - Nation states can not deal with global problems





Economic dimensions of globalisation

- Examples:
 - Capital mobility
 - Labour mobility
 - Information mobility
- TNCs
- Global commodity chains - economic structures (hierarchies)
- Dependency networks
- Castells (1997) - change in globalised capitalism
- Thompson (2000): globalisation is not truly global





Perspectives on who benefits from globalisation: Marxism

- Karl Marx's analysis on Britain from mid-19th century: capitalist economic system was already operating globally. He expected a growing division between bourgeoisie and proletariat.
- "Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains.", The Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
- Marxist writers have emphasised how successful capitalism is at creating wealth and so how an integrated capitalist world system is an essential step towards a more equal socialist system in the future.
- **World systems theory** by Immanuel Wallerstein - more recent approach building on Marx's view (core regions, periphery regions, semi-peripheral regions)

World systems theory: theory that argues development must be understood in the context of global systems and networks, with the focus on understanding how nations are locked into political and economic relationships that make them interdependent.



Perspectives on who benefits from globalisation: Feminism

Intersectionality: the interconnected nature of dimensions of inequality, such as social class, gender and ethnicity, as they apply to particular individuals and groups.

- Systems of oppression interact so that gender injustices cannot be understood only in terms of gender around the world. They take different forms around the world, but women everywhere face systematic disadvantages - expectation to do domestic work).
- Discrimination at work - e.g. textile industry in Bangladesh, Rana Plaza in Dhaka collapsed in 2013 - 'sweatshops'





Perspectives on who benefits from globalisation: Feminism

- A lot of migration in the globalisation period involves women, often to provide care for people in more developed countries.
- Arlie Hochschild (2000): described **global care chains** which involve the exchange of services around the world.

Global care chains: personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring.

Remittances: transfers of money sent home by migrants to their family in their home country.

- Positive sides of globalisation
 - The United Nations have drawn attention to gender issues and are able to put pressure on nation states to bring about change
 - Opportunity for women around the world to work together
 - Spread of ideas about gender equality





Perspectives on who benefits from globalisation: Postmodernism

- Postmodernism emphasises choice and consumerism, which until recently have been limited in developing countries.
- Globalisation is seen as one of the developments associated with postmodernism and postmodernity; therefore it contributes to developing countries today becoming postmodern.
- Postmodernists claim that **metanarratives** no longer apply. Globalisation itself is metanarrative, especially when defined as the unstoppable spread of neoliberalism
- Globalisation is many changes (sometimes contradictory) leading to hybridity and diversity
- Globalisation makes possible unique blends of the local and the global

Metanarrative: a term used by postmodernists for large-scale theories or stories explaining the world and human life.





Perspectives on who benefits from globalisation: Globalist perspective (hyper-globalist or optimistic)

- Globalisation is seen as spread of neoliberal economics and as a positive process involving economic growth, increasing prosperity and democracy.
- Nations states have held progress back by not providing business friendly environments.
- Globalisation restricts the powers of nation states so makes trade easier and helps capitalism to expand. Spread of Western values - individualism and entrepreneurialism
- The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund - structural adjustment programmes
- TNCs bring positive change by investing in developing countries
- Globalisation will bring about a homogenised global culture (traditional values barrier to progress)

Structural adjustment programme: set of neo-liberal policies that developing nations can be made to accept as a condition of receiving financial or other support.





Perspectives on who benefits from globalisation: Globalisation sceptics (global pessimists)

- They see the same process as globalists but interpret them differently
- It benefits developed countries more than developing - it distributes resources unfairly
- Global spread of neo-liberalism is widening gap between rich and poor (within and between countries)
- Works in favour of wealthy (privileged) by helping them to maintain their dominant position in the world economy
- Sceptics are not opposed to globalisation but its neoliberal form
- Globalisation involves cultural imperialism - the domination of Western culture at the expense of local cultures





Perspectives on who benefits from globalisation: Transformationalism

- Globalisation is the complex process involving many exchanges between global institutions and local culture - there are contradictory trends: Nations states stay powerful but less important.
- We are living in period of transformation and the outcome is uncertain.
- Transformationalists claim that globalisation can be controlled (unlike globalists and global sceptics)
- When cultures meet, rather than one destroying the other, the two can merge to create a new and vibrant hybrid, enriching rather than weakening cultural heritage.

