Third Year

L4042
Globalisation 1: History, Theories, Culture

global a. world-wide; pertaining to or embracing the whole of a group of items etc; total; hence ~ly adv.

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2012-13
**Globalization 1: History, Theories, Culture**  
**Autumn 2012**

**Aims and Objectives**

We live in a fast-moving world where companies and trade are often international and money can be globally mobile in an instant. Media images and cultural products are transported internationally and tourism and migration are important parts of everyday social experience. Politics is often carried out at supranational levels, whether through international organisations or global social movements. Processes such as these make distance over space less important and interdependency across the globe affects all societies. They raise questions to do with cultural identity, power, inequality and conflict. The two globalisation modules in the sociology department investigate the causes, nature and consequences of globalisation. One focuses on 'history, theories, culture' and the other on 'migration, economy, politics'.

'History, Theories, Culture' looks at different meanings or concepts of globalisation. It analyses the history of globalisation and the extent to which it is a premodern, modern or postmodern phenomenon. The module examines perspectives on globalisation, such as those from globalist, transformationalist and sceptical approaches. It examines theories of globalisation from key sociologists. The module goes on to look at technological developments in media and the way they have led to the globalisation of culture, and whether culture has been made more homogeneous or hybrid. It examines the way processes of globalisation have intersected in global cities.

**Structure of the modules**

There are two globalisation modules. The first in the autumn looks at concepts, history and perspectives on globalisation, cultural globalisation and global cities.

The second in the spring looks at migration, the economy, inequality, politics and the future of globalization.

Students can take just one part of the module. Some of you will be taking both parts.

**Autumn 2012: History, Theories, Culture**

**Topic 1** – Concepts: definitions of globalisation

**Topic 2** – History: premodern globalisation

**Topic 3** – History: modern and postmodern globalisation

**Topic 4** – Critical Perspectives on Globalisation: sceptical, transformationalist and discourse theories
Topic 5 – Sociologists on Globalisation: Ulrich Beck
Topic 6 – Sociologists on Globalisation: Zygmunt Bauman
Topic 7 – Culture: technological change, media and cultural globalisation
Topic 8 – Culture: forms of cultural globalisation – homogenisation or hybridity?
Topic 9 – Global Cities
Topic 10 – Sociologists on Globalisation: Pierre Bourdieu

There will also be two weeks where we focus on study skills and essay supervision.

**Spring 2013: Migration, Economy, Politics**

_Not all of you will be taking this module._

Topic 1 – Migration: causes and patterns of migration
Topic 2 – Migration: effects of migration – problem or solution?
Topic 3 – Economy: global corporations and global finance
Topic 4 – Economy and Inequality: can globalisation solve poverty?
Topic 5 – Inequality: gender and globalisation
Topic 6 – Politics: the decline of the nation-state and national social democracy?
Topic 7 – Politics: global politics and cosmopolitan democracy
Topic 8 – Global protest and social movements
Topic 9 – The decline of American power and the rise of China?
Topic 10 – War and globalisation

There will be two weeks on study skills and essay supervision.

**Module evaluation**

There will be an anonymous online evaluation questionnaire at the end of term for you to assess the module and teaching. Tutors take the feedback very seriously. There may also
be a mid-term feedback session. Your feedback, suggestions or criticism are welcome at any point in the term.

**Lectures and Seminars**

There will be a one hour **lecture** every week. There will then be a two hour **seminar** every week on the same topic.

There will be a study skills week when we look at writing the essays. There will also be a week devoted to essay tutorials when you can discuss your essay with your tutor.

Under each topic there are a list of questions to help with guiding your reading and seminar discussion. Think about how you would answer the questions when you are doing the reading and come along to the seminar with your own answers to as many of the questions as you can.

**Reading**

Substantial reading every week is necessary to get a good understanding of the module. The seminars will assume you have read that week. You should read two or three article or chapter length pieces for each topic week. (A note, especially for V & E students, - you don’t need to read all of the reading listed each week. More than is necessary is listed to help with availability, choice and essay writing).

Some weeks the reading is divided into main and further reading. Where this is not the case it is listed in rough order of priority.

Most of the weeks the reading is available online so everyone should be able to access it. This module and the Spring module will both be on Study Direct. On SyD there will be links and electronic readings. If the main reading is not available on SyD we’ll let you know of other arrangements for accessing it.

Unfortunately neither the library nor the department have the resources at present to check whether all books listed in module documents are stocked in the library. However we have checked that the main ones are and if you notice any others that aren’t please do let us know so we can order them.

These are some core books that are relevant to a number of the topics. You can see what these are below. They are also good introductions to the whole area if you wanted to read something before the module.


Andrew Jones, *Globalization: Key Thinkers*, 2010, overview of some of the key thinkers on globalisation. Chapters 1-7, 12-13 especially useful.


Frank Lechner and John Boli, *The Globalization Reader*, 2000, collection of many short extracts relevant to a number of the topics


Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: a very short introduction*, 2003, as it says, this is a very short introduction!


Saskia Sassen, *A Sociology of Globalization*, 2007, looks at the relation between local and national spaces and globalisation, quite theoretical, more relevant to the Spring module than this Autumn one.
Robin Cohen and Paul Kennedy, *Global Sociology*, 2000, more relevant to a first year than third year level, but useful as a good basic introduction.

You’ll see that there are millions of books and articles on globalisation! So the reading list below is based on those we think you’ll find the most useful (or that we like best!). But there are many more. So feel free to go beyond the reading on this list if you find other things you think look good and interesting.

**Journals and Electronic Journals**

Journals that are useful throughout the module include:

- *Global Networks*
- *Globalizations*
- *Review of International Political Economy*
- *Journal of World Systems Research*
- *Millennium*
- *International Studies Review*

But there are also many others that will be useful.

Don’t forget to use online journals in the electronic library. In the electronic library there are ways that you can search journal article titles by keywords – especially useful when trying to find further reading for essays.

**Assessment**

The credits for all modules are in the BA syllabus which will be available on the Sussex Academic Office website. The assessment weightings of modules (ie how much of your degree they are worth) match the credit weighting, and then are weighted so that the second year is worth 40% of your degree and the third year 60%.

Globalization 1: history, theories, culture in the autumn is worth 30 credits. (Part II in the Spring is also worth 30 credits).

For this Autumn Term module, 70% of the assessment is a 4500 word essay that you hand in during the assessment break after Christmas. 30% of the assessment is a 1500 word policy briefing paper for a non-academic audience that you hand in at the end of the autumn term. Please check your sussex direct for submission dates, times and place.

There will be a study skills week where the focus will be on essay writing. In another week there will be tutorials on writing your essays.

There are essay titles on the module document for the 4500 word essay. If you want to change any of these or make up your own that’s fine. If a title is too broad feel free to pick a more specific angle within it. You can also adapt something from the list of seminar
questions for each week. But in all of these cases check with your tutor first.

Titles and advice for the 1500 word policy briefing will be circulated separately.

**Assessment Guidance**

During the module please feel free to ask at any time about any ideas you have for the essays or any advice you would like.

See below a ‘Guide to Essay Assessment’ and ‘Criteria for Essay Classification’. You should use these when writing your essays as a guide to the sort of things tutors are looking for when marking.

There is good study skills advice at this link: [http://www.sussex.ac.uk/s3/](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/s3/) - this is for first years but is useful for all stages of your degree.

It is essential you read the handbook for candidates for rules and regulations on assessment.

**Plagiarism**

You should read the section on plagiarism in the ‘Handbook for Candidates’.

Plagiarism is the use, without acknowledgement, of the intellectual work of other people, and the act of representing the ideas or discoveries of another as one’s own in written work submitted for assessment. To copy sentences, phrases or even striking expressions without acknowledgement of the source (either by inadequate citation or failure to indicate verbatim quotations), is plagiarism; to paraphrase without acknowledgement is likewise plagiarism. Where such copying or paraphrase has occurred the mere mention of the source in the bibliography shall not be deemed sufficient acknowledgement; each such instance must be referred specifically to its source. Verbatim quotations must be either in inverted commas, or indented, and directly acknowledged.

Note:
- accidental as well as intentional plagiarism is penalised
- plagiarism includes failure to use quotation marks around quotes
- it includes internet plagiarism
- you should reference in the text as well as in the bibliography
- you should give page numbers for the part of the source you used, where relevant
- you should give references for paraphrases as well as quotes
- plagiarism includes using essays written by other people
- you should be careful to avoid ‘collusion’ which is also defined in the exams handbook
- plagiarism is penalised, even if unintentional.

The university has pages on plagiarism and referencing at:
GUIDE TO ESSAY ASSESSMENT

Below are key questions which guide the assessment of your essay:

**Structure and Quality of Argument**
Is the overall structure of the argument clear and coherent?
Is the argument developed and backed up throughout the essay?
Are the points made in a logical sequence?
Is the argument sufficiently analytical?
Is there a conclusion?
Does the conclusion address the essay question directly?
Is the conclusion adequately supported by the preceding argument?

**Use of Evidence**
Are the points made supported by evidence from cited sources?
Are the sources drawn on sufficient and appropriate?
If empirical evidence is used, is it described clearly and in appropriate detail?
Does the evidence presented support the conclusions reached?
Is the interpretation of the evidence presented appropriately qualified (i.e. avoiding overgeneralisations and sweeping statements)?

**Contents**
Is the writer’s argument adequately backed up rather than just asserted?
Are the sources used subjected to analysis and critical reflection?
Has the student researched the topic sufficiently?
Are there any important omissions?
Has the student thought about what they have read or simply reproduced material from sources?
Is there evidence of critical thinking or an original synthesis?
Does the student have an argument?
Has the student gone beyond the essential reading?

**Writing and Presentation Skills**
Is the essay referenced correctly, including page numbers of passages referred to?
Are quotations and paraphrases of others' work identified and fully referenced?
Are the ideas presented fully credited?
Is there any evidence of plagiarism?
Is the essay fluent and readable?
Is the grammar and spelling adequate?
Has the writer made an effort to use their own words?

**Generic Assessment Criteria**

*Basis on which marks are awarded.*

0-19 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is far below the standard required at the current level of your degree course. It indicates that the work is extremely weak and seriously inadequate. This will be because either the work is far too short, is badly jumbled and incoherent in content, or fails to address the essay title or question asked. It will show very little evidence of knowledge or understanding of the relevant module material and may exhibit very weak writing and/or analytical skills.

20-39 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is below, but at the upper end is approaching, the standard required at the current level of your degree course. It indicates weak work of an inadequate standard. This will be because either the work is too short, is very poorly organized, or is poorly directed at the essay title or question asked. It will show very limited knowledge or understanding of the relevant module material and display weak writing and/or analytical skills. Essay work will exhibit no clear argument, may have very weak spelling and grammar, very inadequate or absent references and/or bibliography and may contain major factual errors. Quantitative work will contain significant errors and incorrect conclusions.

40-49 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is of an acceptable standard at the current level of your degree course. Work of this type will show limited knowledge and understanding of relevant module material. It will show evidence of some reading and comprehension, but the essay or answer may be weakly structured, cover only a limited range of the relevant material or have a weakly developed or incomplete argument. The work will exhibit weak essay writing or analytical skills. It may be poorly-presented without properly laid out footnotes and/or a bibliography, or in the case of quantitative work, it may not be possible to follow the several steps in the logic and reasoning leading to the results obtained and the conclusions reached.

50-59 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is of a satisfactory to very satisfactory standard at the current level of your degree course. Work of this quality will show clear knowledge and understanding of relevant module material. It will focus on the essay title or question posed and show evidence that relevant basic works of reference have been read and understood. The work will exhibit sound essay writing and/or analytical skills. It will be reasonably well structured and coherently presented. Essay work should exhibit satisfactory use of footnotes and/or a bibliography and in more quantitative work it should be possible to follow the logical steps leading to the answer obtained and the conclusions reached. Arguments and issues should be discussed and illustrated by reference to examples, but these may not fully documented or detailed.

60-69 A mark in this range is indicative of that the work is of a good to very good standard
for the current level of your degree course. Work of this quality shows a good level of knowledge and understanding of relevant module material. It will show evidence of reading a wide diversity of material and of being able to use ideas gleaned from this reading to support and develop arguments. Essay work will exhibit good writing skills with well organized, accurate footnotes and/or a bibliography that follows the accepted ‘style’ of the subject. Arguments and issues will be illustrated by reference to well documented, detailed and relevant examples. There should be clear evidence of critical engagement with the objects, issues or topics being analysed. Any quantitative work will be clearly presented, the results should be correct and any conclusions clearly and accurately expressed.

70– 84 A mark in this range is indicative that the work is of an excellent standard for the current level of your degree course. The work will exhibit excellent levels of knowledge and understanding comprising all the qualities of good work stated above, with additional elements of originality and flair. The work will demonstrate a range of critical reading that goes well beyond that provided on reading lists. Answers or essays will be fluently-written and include independent argument that demonstrate an awareness of the nuances and assumptions of the question or title. Essays will make excellent use of appropriate, fully referenced, detailed examples.

85 - 100 A mark in this range is indicative of outstanding work. Marks in this range will be awarded for work that exhibits all the attributes of excellent work but has very substantial elements of originality and flair. Marks at the upper end of the range will indicate that the work is of publishable, or near publishable academic standard.

Students may be marked down by up to 10% for inadequate referencing.

Contacts

Important information about the module may be sent to you by email (eg any changes to timetabling arrangements or information which supplements that in this handbook). You should check your email every day.

The best ways of getting hold of tutors are in their office hours or by email. Your tutors will have office hours every week and will tell you when they are when the module starts. If you can’t make their office hours you can email or arrange another time to meet.

Tutor and module convenor: Luke Martell, Friston 261, phone (67)8729, email: l.martell@sussex.ac.uk

Seminar tutor: Laura Morosanu, contact details and office hours to be confirmed.

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Topic 1 - Concepts: definitions of globalisation

The aim of this topic is to look at: different concepts or ideas of globalisation, ie different ideas of what it actually means.

The objective in this first week is not to look at globalisation purely in the abstract and theoretically without any reference to empirical reality. We will look at the concept of globalisation in relation to what actually happens in practice. But the aim is to start to get some understanding of what globalisation is and we can go on to develop this more in later weeks in discussions about actual globalisation in culture, the economy and politics.

Globalisation is a much-used word but what exactly does it mean? How does it differ from other similar sounding ideas such as internationalisation, imperialism, or world systems?

When people describe globalisation what do they mean by ideas such as ‘interdependence’, ‘compression’, ‘time-space distanciation’, and ‘deterritorialisation’? Is globalisation the same as ‘westernisation’ or something different?

What do Held et al mean by extensity, intensity, velocity and impact in assessing globalisation? What characteristics do processes or structures have to make them globalisation?

Does defining globalisation matter?

Questions to guide reading and seminar discussion:

- What are examples of globalisation? What makes them globalisation?
- What makes ‘globalisation’ different from ‘internationalisation’? (Scholte)
- How is globalisation different from westernisation, liberalisation and universalisation? (Scholte)
- What examples of globalisation meet Scholte’s definition?
- Are there any reasons to doubt Scholte’s differentiation of globalisation from these other concepts?
- In what ways is globalisation ‘westernisation’? What reasons might there be for supporting or rejecting the idea of globalisation as ‘westernisation’?
- When globalisation is defined as ‘deterritorialisation’ (eg Scholte) what does this mean and how does this differ from other concepts of globalisation?
- How does globalisation involve ‘interdependence’ or ‘interconnection’? What is the difference between these two?
- In what ways are regularity or stability important to defining globalisation?
- What role do inclusivity or distance have in deciding whether something is globalisation or not?
- What do concepts such as ‘compression’ (eg Harvey) and ‘time-space distanciation’ (eg Giddens) mean?
- How is globalisation different from imperialism, world systems, hegemony or empire?
- Does defining globalisation matter? If so, why? Is defining globalisation just an academic
exercise?

In most weeks we won’t have time to discuss all the questions listed but we'll cover some of them and in each week there are issues we will come back to in future weeks.

**Main Reading**

You won’t be able to read all of these but try to read a couple of them.

Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, 1995 1st edn and 2000 2nd edn. This is a short accessible introduction to globalisation in two editions. Waters argues that globalisation is most developed in the cultural sphere. In the 2nd edn ch 1 ‘A World of Difference’ looks at some of the concepts, perspectives and history. In the 1st edn look at chs 1-3.


David Held and Anthony McGrew (eds), *The Global Transformations Reader*, 2003, Part 1 on conceptualising globalisation which covers conceptual issues in extracts from some of the field’s theorists; also see the introduction by Held and McGrew.

**Further Reading**

Chs 3-5 also on more details of what globalisation involves.

David Held et al, *Global Transformations*, 1999, introduction on the different perspectives, some conceptual issues about what globalisation is. Also in the Held and McGrew reader ch 2. See also http://www.polity.co.uk/global/pdf/INTR.PDF

J. Osterhammel and N. P. Petersson, *Globalization: a short history*, 2005, chs 1 and 2, historians who see globalisation as modern, discuss here some of the background conceptual issues. Chapter 1 is online here: http://www.pupress.princeton.edu/chapters/s7952.html but chapter 2 is the most useful.


**Essay Questions**

What criteria do features of globalisation have to meet to be globalisation?

How does how you define globalisation matter?

‘Important new insight into relatively new conditions is in fact available from a fifth type of definition. This conceptualisation identifies globalisation as deterritorialisation – or, as I would prefer, the growth of “supraterritorial” relations between people’. What does Scholte mean by ‘deterritorialisation’ and how does it compare to other definitions of globalisation?

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**Topic 2 – History: premodern globalisation**

The main aim of this and next week’s topic is to think about the historical location of globalisation. When did it start? When were the bases laid for what is globalisation now?

We will be looking at: different histories of it, ie different views on its history and origins and of when it actually started.

On the question of timing there are many arguments, sometimes differing because, relating back to last week’s topic, people have divergent concepts of globalisation. Is globalisation something that has been going on since the times of ancient empires and world religions? Or since the ages of exploration and trade beyond national boundaries? Since the rise of modernity or capitalism? Is it a post-1945 thing? Or has globalisation really only taken off since the growth of information technology and other modern technologies of communication and media from the 1980s onwards? Did it all start with the end of the cold war?

Sociologists are sometimes accused or being too focused on modern and western
perspectives which associate globalisation with the rise of industrial capitalism. On the other hand, some argue that it was only with capitalist expansionism and industrial technology, or maybe even only with the post-industrial information technology of the late twentieth century, that real globalisation truly became possible.

This week we will focus on those who see globalisation as pre-modern. World systems theory has been divided between those like Wallerstein who see capitalism as starting in about the 16th century and those like Frank who trace capitalist and global connections back as far as 5000 years ago.

Janet Abu-Lughod traces overlapping circles of global connections back to before the 1500s, a period identified by Wallerstein as the start of capitalism. She emphasises the Eastern origins of global and exchange forms, to counteract the focus on globalisation as the expansion of the West. Hopkins mentions earlier forms of archaic and proto-globalisation. Nederveen Pieterse sees globalisation as premodern in an analysis that he, like others, says avoids the Euro-centrism of more modern-focused views. Waters and Scholte also identify pre-18th century globalisation. Osterhammel and Petersson are sceptical about whether pre-modern transnational processes were really globalisation.

1. When did globalisation start? What different perspectives are there on the starting date of globalisation and why do people disagree on when it started?
2. What examples are there of pre-modern globalisation?
3. Were pre-modern migrations and religions the earliest forms of globalisation – or not?
4. Were empires the first forms of globalisation?
5. What early forms of transnational trade were there? Were these the first forms of globalisation?
6. What form did early global imaginings take? Do they amount to examples of globalisation?
7. Why might sociology have a tendency to overlook non-western or pre-modern origins of globalisation?
8. In what way might what is described as pre-modern globalisation actually not be globalisation?
9. How can the way you define globalisation affect how early you see it first occurring?
10. Looking at the criteria for globalisation that we discussed last week – how many of these does pre-modern globalisation meet?
11. How adequate are perspectives which criticise globalisation-as-modern views for Euro-centrism? Are there any ways in which Euro-centric views of globalisation might be defended?

**Main Reading**

Try to look at a couple of these.

J. Osterhammel and N.P. Petersson, *Globalization: a short history*, 2005, ch. 3, historians who think globalisation is modern discuss here some of its possible pre-modern aspects. See also chapter 1 of this book, online link as a reading for last week’s topic.


**Further Reading**


David Held et al, *Global Transformations*, 1999, most of the chapters include a historical section.


Jerry Bentley, ‘Globalizing History and Historicizing Globalization’, *Globalizations*, 1, 1, 2004. Focuses on how academic perspectives can have a longer term historical view and be less Euro-centric.

Roland Robertson, *Globalization*, 1992 sees globalisation as pre-dating modernity, eg ch 3 especially but others also relevant.
George Modelski, *Principles of World Politics*, 1972 chapter 1, one of the first books to use the word ‘globalisation’ looks at its history


**Essay topics**

Are theories of globalisation as modern or postmodern too Eurocentric?

‘Five hundred years or five thousand?’ Critically assess theories that globalisation started before the modern period.

Does premodern globalisation meet the criteria for globalisation?

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**Topic 3 – History – modern and postmodern globalisation**

Other perspectives have tended to see globalisation as more of a modern or late (or even post) modern thing. Osterhammel and Petersson, for instance, think that globalisation is modern, and highlight that how you define globalisation affects when you think it started. Those who focus on modernity tend to see capitalism, markets and industrial technology and also the nation-state as vital to the real development of globalisation. They see all of these as modern institutions (although as we saw last week some have viewed capitalism and markets as older than this).

Others identify globalisation with the post 1945 growth of a global economy and international political organisations. Some like Scholte see globalisation as primarily a post-1960s phenomenon, with IT as crucial. Others see the unification of the world after the cold war as the crucial stage for globalisation. Some of those who emphasise discourses and the concept of globalisation as important (eg post-structuralist perspectives that we will discuss in a later topic) also emphasise more recent days, as globalisation has only really been a discourse based on that word since the 1980s or so.

1. What have been the Eastern inputs into Western globalisation?
2. Why could globalisation be seen as a European originating phenomenon?
3. Is it too Euro-centric to identify globalisation with the expansion of the West?
4. What is meant when people link globalisation with ‘modernisation’ (eg Giddens) or capitalism or markets? Is this when it really first started?
5. In what ways might modern technology be the key to the expansion of globalisation?
6. What developments or institutions of modernity facilitated globalisation?
How did modern globalisation spread?
7. When were the reversals in modern globalisation and why?
8. In what ways is globalisation sometimes linked to ‘postmodernisation’ or ‘postmodernism’
(eg Waters, Harvey, Scholte)?

9. Is globalisation really a post-1945, post-1960s or post-1980s phenomenon rather than a product of older modernity? If so, why and in what way?

10. What phases of globalisation does Scholte identify and why does he see it as becoming full-scale after the 1960s?

11. Globalisation as a discourse has grown since the 1980s – why is that significant in dating globalisation? (Something we will come back to on poststructuralist perspectives).

12. What are the problems with identifying globalisation with modernity or with late/post-modernity?

**Main Reading**


**Further Reading**


David Held et al, *Global Transformations*, 1999, most of the chapters include a historical section. They say intensity, extensity, velocity and impact of globalisation have increased recently.


Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, *Globalization in Question*, 1999 chs 1 and 2 (also in Held and McGrew) give a sceptical perspective arguing that global integration was greater in the *belle epoque* of 1890-1914 than it is now and that what exists now is not really globalisation at all.

Bernard Porter, *The Lion’s Share, a history of British imperialism*, 1975, '84 and '96
editions, shows some early forms of modern global extension.


David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 1989, esp ch 17, puts forward his neo-Marxist view of globalisation as time-space compression in a postmodern world. Also in Held and McGrew reader.


A. Cameron and R. Palan, *The Imagined Economies of Globalization*, not explicitly about historical dating, but raise the point about the rise of the discourse of globalization – we will come back to this when we look at post-structuralist perspectives.

**Essay Topics**

Is globalisation a product of industrialisation and capitalism?

Did globalisation really take off with the information age?

Is globalisation a product of the world unifying with the end of the cold war?

‘If conceived as the growth of supraterritorial spaces, then globalisation has unfolded mainly since the 1960s’ (Scholte 1st edn. p. 74). Critically assess Scholte’s claim about the timing of globalisation.

“'Globalization” implies more than just the existence of relations between distant places on earth. The term should only be used where such relations acquire a certain degree of regularity and stability and where they affect more than tiny numbers of people’. Osterhammel and Petersson 2005: viii). What effect does such a definition have on the dating of globalisation?

What effect does taking a non-Western perspective have on understanding the historical origins of globalisation?
Topic 4 – Critical perspectives on globalisation: sceptical, transformationalist and discourse theories

This week we will look at perspectives on globalisation, ie different interpretations of its extent, speed and impact. In particular we will focus on perspectives which question or try to modify more globalist outlooks – sceptical, transformationalist and discourse theories.

Different perspectives have varying ideas about how far globalisation has occurred – the division usually made is between the advocates of globalisation and sceptics about it. Others add a middle road of people who see globalisation as having transformed things but in a way that involves reconfigurations of old structures rather than a complete change to global forms, and which sees the future as open rather than predetermined (eg see Held et al on transformationalists). This sometimes matches partly with the view of waves in globalisation theory with different perspectives (eg Hay and Marsh).

Transformationalists like Held et al (and others like Scholte who has a similar view although does not call himself a transformationalist) tend to defend the idea of globalisation against the sceptics but try to have a more sophisticated version than has been put forward by the globalists. They try to set out an intermediary position between globalism and scepticism. The question is - do they actually add so many qualifications that they are effectively not talking about globalisation any more but something more in line with what the sceptics outline? Or, on the other hand, do they defend globalisation against the sceptics to the extent that they end up advocating something as simplified as the globalists?

Post-structuralist (or constructivist) perspectives put a lot of emphasis on discourse or culturalist or ideational views of globalisation, that stress the importance of globalisation as a discourse that people go along with as much as something that is ‘real’. They are influenced by the work of people like Foucault who emphasises the power of discourse and Gramsci for whom the notion of hegemony was important. From a discourse theory perspective whether we believe globalisation is happening is more important than whether it really is. Neo-Gramscians like Bruff try to take on the insights of discourse theory but embed it in more materialist or economic understandings.

- What are the differences between the various waves of globalisation theories – in terms of method, view of economy/politics/culture, view of global stratification, predictions for the future, and political prescriptions?
- What are the differences between ‘globalist’ and ‘sceptical’ perspectives?
- How do they differ on their understandings of globalisation in the economy, state, and culture?
- What are the differing political implications of their perspectives?
- What evidence or arguments do sceptics put against the globalists?
- How do sceptics differ from globalists on the extent of globalisation?
- How do sceptics and globalists differ on the historical periodisation of globalisation?
- How do sceptics characterise relations above the level of the nation?
- Are globalists and sceptics as different as they appear to be?
- What do transformationalists say? How do they differ from globalists? How do they differ from sceptics?
- What is distinct about transformationalist views on the economy, the state, culture and normative politics?
- What do transformationalists say about the future direction of globalisation?
- Are transformationalists really different from globalists or sceptics?
- What does it mean if you focus on globalisation in ‘ideational’ or ‘constructivist’ terms?
- What does it mean to say that globalisation is a ‘discourse’ and how does it operate as a discourse?
- In what way do narratives, ideas or conceptions of globalisation shape the world as much as ‘real’ processes of globalisation?
- How does globalisation involve ‘imagined economies’? (Cameron and Palan).
- How does a neo-Gramscian perspective maintain but improve post-structuralist perspectives? (Bruff).
- What are the limits of sceptical, transformationalist and discourse theory perspectives?

**Main Reading**


**Further Reading**


Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: a critical introduction* 2005 edn, ch. 4. Focus here on what he says about constructivist and postmodern perspectives which are akin to the poststructuralist discourse views we are focusing on this week. (2000 edn chapter 4 is different).

A. Cameron and R. Palan, *The Imagined Economies of Globalization*, 2004, introduction and ch. 1 discusses the ‘wave thesis’ of different waves in globalisation theory as well as other perspectives such as Marxist, Gramscian and Culturalist. Their emphasis is on a
discourse or post-structuralist perspective.

Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, *Globalization in Question*, 1999 ch 1 (also in Held and McGrew reader) sceptical perspective arguing that global integration was greater in the *belle époque* of 1890-1914 than it is now and that what exists now is not really globalisation at all.


Andrew Jones, *Globalization: Key Thinkers*, 2010, chapters 5 and 6 on sceptical and transformational thinkers.


**Essay Titles**
Are sceptics about globalisation too sceptical?

What are the main flaws in sceptical theories of globalisation?

‘Central in this respect is the evidence … for the weak development of TNCs and the continued salience of MNCs, and also the ongoing dominance of the advanced countries in both trade and FDI. Such evidence is consistent with a continuing inter-national economy, but much less so with a rapidly globalizing hybrid system’. (Hirst and Thompson). Discuss.

Is transformationalism a coherent alternative to globalism and scepticism, or a failed compromise?

Is globalisation as an idea more important than globalisation as a reality?

‘We should take seriously the possibility that globalisation as a discursive construct has real, causal effects on policy outcomes and on the process of globalisation itself … Consequently, the assertions made by the second against the first wave are irrelevant if globalisation becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy’. (Bruff 2005: 268). Discuss.

‘From ideational perspectives, globalization has resulted from particular forms and dynamics of consciousness’. (Scholte 131). Discuss.

Is globalisation just a discourse?

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Topic 5 – Sociologists on globalisation: Ulrich Beck

This week and next week we will look at a couple of prominent and recent (ish) sociological theorists, Beck and Bauman, who have different perspectives on globalisation. There are others we could focus on (Giddens, Urry, Castells etc) but Beck and Bauman are possibly some of the most interesting to look at in depth and some of the others crop up in other parts of the module. Many of the themes they discuss come up throughout discussions of globalisation. At the end of the module we will look at another sociologist of globalisation, Pierre Bourdieu.

Beck’s analysis follows on from his earlier works on risk, reflexivity and ecology and focuses on both globalisation and the related area of cosmopolitanism. Beck discusses a shift that he says has taken place from a first age to a ’second age of modernity’, in which ‘methodological nationalism’, a ’national outlook’ or the ‘container theory of society’ is no longer appropriate and a cosmopolitan or more global sociology is necessary for an age of reflexive modernisation. Beck is a critic of neoliberal globalisation and distinguishes between globalisation, globality and globalism. He discusses the hybridity of personal life and identity caused by globalisation. On the basis of this analysis he comes to political
conclusions that favour a global or cosmopolitan democracy (including ‘military humanism’), issues which we will return to later in the Spring term topic on global cosmopolitan politics.

Obviously we won’t have time to discuss all the questions below! But use these as a guide to your reading and we’ll pick out some to focus on in the seminar.

1. Who are the ‘Virtual Taxpayers’, why does he call them this and what does Beck have to say about them? What does he have to say about the roles of labour and the state alongside the virtual taxpayers? (pp1-8)
2. What does Beck mean by ‘globalism’, ‘globality’ and ‘globalisation’? What are the differences between these three concepts and why does Beck distinguish between them? (8-13. Also 87-8). How adequate do you find his concepts of these three?
3. What is methodological nationalism? Why does Beck criticise it? Why does he call it a ‘container theory’ (23)? How adequate is his criticism? What is the evidence for and against his criticism of methodological nationalism?
4. What are the differences between the First and Second ages of modernity? When did one end and the other start? How convincing do you find the distinction?
5. What does Beck mean when he says ‘Africa is not a continent but a concept’? (27-8)
6. What does Beck have to say about ‘American Mexicans and Mexican Americans’? What does what he says tell us about globalisation? (28-30)
7. What does Beck say about the concept of ‘capitalist world system’ (31-4)? Is he right? What are monocausal explanations of globalisation and what alternative does Beck have to these? How does his perspective stand up to those that stress capitalism as an explanation?
8. What is ‘polycentric’ politics and how is it different from international and hegemonic politics? What does it mean when it is said that sovereignty has become divided? (34-8)
10. What does Beck have to say about the McDonaldisation thesis? What does he say it involves and what is his interpretation? (42-7)
11. What is significant about Robertson’s view of globalisation? (47-52) What is important about awareness and what does globalisation mean?
12. What does Beck mean when he says ‘both-and’ perspectives are better than ‘either-or’ distinctions? What sort of phenomena might these be applied to? How adequate is his preference for a ‘both-and’ perspective?
13. What criticism of Bauman does Beck make and what alternative interpretation does he have? (54-9 and 67). (We will come back to Bauman next week).
14. What two concepts of culture does Beck put forward? What does he say about these and the relationship between them? (66-7).
15. What does Beck say about Macro- and micro-regionalisms and the relationship between them? What do they have to do with globalisation? (67-8).
16. What does Beck say about global civil society politics? What is novel about it? What is different about the Anti-Shell campaign he discusses? (68-72)
17. What does Beck say about ‘place polygamy’ and globalisation in personal life? (72-77). What are the inner consequences of globalisation? What are ‘multilocation’ and ‘inner mobility’ and how do these fit in here?
18. What does Beck say about inter-cultural critique and contextual universalism? What does the latter mean? How is it different from universalism or contextualism/relativism/ And how does it relate to inter-cultural critique? (81-6)
19. What are third cultures? (88-90). What is distinctive about the third culture view compared to other views of cultural globalisation?
20. What does Beck have to say about cosmopolitan democracy and the transnational state? How is the cosmopolitan view different to realist, international, hegemonic, balance of power views of politics? What social or political basis are there for cosmopolitan democracy (93-5, 108-113). What does he mean by a new medievalism? How does this relate to cosmopolitan democracy?
21. In what way is Europe an example of cosmopolitanism for Beck? Is he right about this? Are there any reasons to doubt his interpretation on this question?
22. What does Beck say about ‘capitalist world society’? What criticism of cosmopolitan democracy does this perspective have and what argument against this criticism does Beck give? (95-8)
23. What implications does World Risk society have for politics? Why may this lead to cosmopolitan democracy? (98-101)
24. What would the world look like without transnational politics? (101-8)
25. What does Beck mean when he says he proposes a substitutive rather than additive concept of globalisation?
26. How does Beck's perspective differ from postmodern and neoliberal perspectives? Where does he fit into the three waves of globalisation theory and what does his perspective tell us about these theories? Are there any flaws in his theory that are typical of any of these waves?
27. Overall what are the strengths and weaknesses of Beck’s theory of globalisation? What contradictions are there in his theory? How good is his evidence?

Main Reading


Further Reading


Ulrich Beck, ‘The Cosmopolitan Perspective: sociology of the second age of modernity’, British Journal of Sociology, 51, 1, 2000, argues for reflexive cosmopolitanism which has a substitutive rather than additive concept of globalisation. Some of this is in his Cosmopolitan Vision book and involves political issues that we will come back to next term.

Ulrich Beck, Power in the Global Age, 2005, focuses on the more political aspects of his views on globalisation and cosmopolitanism.

British Journal of Sociology, 57, 1, 2006, special issue on cosmopolitanism. Includes piece by Beck and Turner's article saying that classic sociology has long been quite global and cosmopolitan is useful.

Daniel Chernilo, ‘Social Theory’s Methodological nationalism: myth and reality’, European Journal of Social Theory, 9, 1, 5-22, includes a critique of Beck’s own criticism of methodological nationalism.


Essay Topics

Is Beck right that sociology is methodologically nationalist and needs to be replaced by a cosmopolitan sociology?

‘Globalization calls into question a basic premise of the first modernity: the conceptual figure that A.D. Smith calls ‘methodological nationalism, according to which the contours of society largely coincide with those of the national state’ (Beck 2000: 21). How successful is Beck’s argument against the national ‘container theory of society' and for a cosmopolitan global sociology?

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Topic 6 – Sociologists on globalisation: Zygmunt Bauman

Bauman has a less benign view of globalisation than Beck, a greater stress on class and inequality and focuses more on the ill-effects of globalisation and less on the positive outcomes as outlined by Beck. For Bauman globalisation leads to the meaning of peoples’ lives being less locally determined and given meaning more by distant things they have less control over. Bauman sees globalisation as leading to social exclusion, and inequalities in the possibilities for mobility. The focus is on mobile elites who are winners, more locally fixed losers from globalisation, or those for whom mobility is a choice and opportunity versus others who are the unwelcome mobile, moving more because of circumstances than choice. There is a polarisation between the free and the trapped, or those for whom mobility is a choice and those for whom it is less so, the tourists and the vagabonds. The implications for politics are less clearly spelled out than they are for Beck, but Bauman’s analysis does seem to lead to different political conclusions to Beck’s.

Focus mainly on questions 1-16 and 23-31

Questions 1-16 What does Bauman have to say about the homogenisation thesis and inequalities and mobility in a globalised world? - inequalities of mobility, meaning and constitution of societies, isolation of elites, public spaces.

Introduction
1. In what way does globalisation not mean the same to all of us but is localising and differentiated? (1-2)
2. In what way do local spaces lose their meaning-generating capacity and why do fundamentalist and neo-tribal responses develop? (2-3)

Ch 1 Time and Class
3. What is different between the experiences of employees, suppliers and shareholders in the company described by Albert J. Dunlap? Why do such differences arise? (6-9)
4. What does Bauman mean by Absentee Landlords mark II and how are they different from Absentee Landlords Mark I? (9-11)
5. How, for Bauman, does freedom of movement affect the self-constitution of societies? (12-18)
6. What does Bauman mean when he says distance is a social product? (12)
7. What does Bauman mean when he says that the signifiers have been set apart from the signifieds and from their carriers and objects? (14)
8. What does Bauman mean when he says developments in the transport of information have effects on social association/dissociation? (15)
9. What does Bauman mean when he says that cheapness of communication leads to mutually incompatible messages? (16)
10. Why were human bodies more important in social relations than they are now? (16-17)
11. What is ‘cybernating space’ and why is it significant? (17)
12. Why do localities both lose their meaning and become something some groups become
trapped in? (18) What is the meaning of locality for elites and the poor respectively?
13. Why do some become trapped in meaninglessness and others gain powers of meaning-creation? (18)
14. What form does the attempt of mobile elites to isolate and insulate themselves from others take? (20-2). What different meanings does isolation have for elites and the poor respectively?
15. What has happened to public spaces in the polarised world, according to Bauman? (21-2, 24-6)
16. How does Bauman’s view on polarisation make his view of globalisation different from Beck’s?

Questions 17-21 What happens to politics in a globalised world according to Bauman

Ch. 3 After the Nation-State – what?
17. Why, according to Bauman, does the world seem out of control? What was the ‘Great Schism’ and what does its end have to do with things seeming out of control? (55-8)
18. What is the difference between universalisation and globalisation according to Bauman? In what ways has the latter taken over and how is Bauman’s view similar here to Beck’s? (59-65)
19. Why does the demise of state sovereignty paradoxically make statehood so popular? (64)
20. Is Bauman right that the economy is progressively exempt from political control? (65-9). How do his views on this issue compare with those of Beck? In what way has the state released the brakes on its own demise? (68-9)
21. How is the extraterritoriality of economic globalisation compatible with political fragmentation or the proliferation of new or weak states (67-9).

Questions 23-31 What is the difference between Tourists and Vagabonds and why are they 'united' and 'differentiated'? - mobility, united, need each other, differentiated.

Ch. 4 Tourists and Vagabonds
22. What is being a consumer like, for Bauman, and how does this parallel what globalisation is like? (79-85)
23. What is different in the experiences of the ‘high up’ and ‘low down’ in terms of mobility? (85-89)
24. What, for Bauman, is the significance of the phasing out of entry visas alongside the tightening of passport control? (87)
25. In what way is there a stratification by time as well as space? (88)
26. What is different in the experiences of mobility of ‘tourists’ and ‘vagabonds’? (92-3). Why is there a green light for the tourists and a red light for the vagabonds? Why is doing this not a problem for capital? (93)
27. Why are the tourists and the vagabonds ‘united’? Why do they share the same world despite being so polarised? (94-8)
28. Why do vagabonds make the tourist’s problems more bearable? (98)
29. Why is the vagabond the tourist’s nightmare? (96-7)
30. And in what way are the tourists and vagabonds sharply differentiated in their perceptions? (99-102)
31. Why is talk of hybridity more an act of self-definition than an ethnographic understanding? (100). What does Bauman mean when he says postmodernism merely articulates a caste-bound experience of the globals? (101)

**Evaluation**

32. What criticisms are there of Bauman? Where is agency and politics in his account? Is it too deterministic? Does it underestimate the poor? Is globalisation different to universalism?
33. What are the political implications of Bauman’s theory and how do they differ from Beck’s?
34. What is Beck’s critique of Bauman? (*What is Globalization?* pp 54-9 and 67)
35. What do Shaw, Brigham and Gane say in criticism of Bauman?

**Main Reading**

Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: the human consequences*, 1998, only 128 small-sized pages, esp chs 1, 3 and 4 (chs 2 and 5 can be skipped).

Two copies of one of the chapters are in the library core Faculty collection available from Luke Martell's box there.

**Further Reading**


Some other publications by Bauman that touch on issues to do with globalisation:
Society Under Siege, 2002, Part I, on the political aspects of globalisation

Zygmunt Bauman, Liquid Modernity, 2000, esp ch.3 'Time/Space'.


**Essay Topic**

What, for Bauman, is unequal about globalisation?

Compare and contrast Beck and Bauman's views of globalisation.

‘Tourists and Vagabonds’. Is this the right way to characterise the structure of globalisation?

Is Bauman too pessimistic about globalisation?

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**Topic 7 – Culture: technological change, media and globalisation**

In this topic and the next one we will look at cultural globalisation. How have technological and institutional change led to the globalisation of culture? What form does globalisation take culturally? How does globalisation change culture? What role do the media play in the development of globalised culture and what changes in the media have allowed this to happen?

This week we will focus on earlier forms of cultural globalisation and on institutional and technological changes that may have led to the globalisation of culture more recently. Next week we will look at what shape contemporary globalised culture takes now.

What earlier forms of the globalisation of culture might there have been and on what basis may they have happened? Many analyses of the globalisation of culture focus on the growth of the technological means that have allowed this to happen. What have these technological means been over the ages and how and why have they been so significant? In what ways do they lead to a ‘global village’ and how do they change the relationship between time and space? Is it too technologically determinist to see technology as the cause of it all? How have structural and institutional changes in the media and culture industries affected the globalisation of culture? Are cultural imperialism and
homogenisation the best way to describe the effect that recent changes in the structure of the media have had?

1. What earlier pre-modern forms of the globalisation of culture have there been?
2. Have religions, empires or political ideologies been forms of cultural globalisation?
3. What technological developments have led to the globalisation of culture?
4. In what way have transport, cable systems, cinema and TV, radio and music, and the internet led to the globalisation of culture?
5. What have the most globally transformative technologies been – do we need to look back to things like the sailboat, or to mechanised transport, or to the telegraph or television or is it the internet which is changing our economic and cultural worlds and our individual lives?
6. What have money, transportation and electronic and photographic developments got to do with cultural globalisation? What developments have there been in these fields and how have they affected culture?
7. What institutional or structural changes in the media and culture industries have affected the globalisation of culture?
8. What role have news agencies, language and communication conglomerates had in cultural globalisation?

Reading

David Held et al, *Global Transformations*, 1999, ch 7 on globalisation, culture and the fate of nations. Looks at the history of cultural globalisation and contemporary changes in the media which affect the globalisation of culture.

John B Thompson, *The Media and Modernity*, 1995, ch 5, on technological and institutional changes that have led to the globalisation of communication (extract in Held and McGrew *Global Transformations Reader*).


Further Reading

Thomas McPhail, *Global Communication*, 2006, describes the changing structure of the global media with a perspective that emphasises US cultural imperialism and homogenisation.


Pierre Bourdieu, 'Culture is in Danger', in *Firing Back*, 2003, polemical criticism of the globalisation of media and culture by radical French sociologist.


J. Nederveen Pieterse, *Globalization and culture: global melange*, 2004, mostly relevant to next week, but gives globalised culture a historical context relevant to this week, esp in chs 1 and 2.


**Essay topic**

In what way have technological changes have led to cultural globalisation?

How have structural and institutional changes to the media industry affected the globalisation of culture?

Did globalisation start with the internet or the sailing ship?

Electronic colonialism. Cultural imperialism. Do these concepts give a fair picture of what media globalisation involves?

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**Topic 8 – Culture: forms of cultural globalisation – homogenisation or hybridity?**

Last week we looked at some of the changes in technology and media that have affected culture in the context of globalisation. This week we will look at some of the ways in which culture is said to have been affected by globalisation.
How does the globalisation of culture change our consciousness? For Robertson it leads to
greater ‘relativisation’, for others more ‘reflexivity’ in the way we think, and to some to a
new interaction between things like universality and particularity where these relate strongly
to one another when previously they were more separate. In short, globalisation, it is said,
changes the way we as individuals think.

What is meant by these interpretations of changes to culture and consciousness in the
global era? Some people argue that what is really happening is an ‘Americanisation’ of
world culture, a sort of media imperialism where McDonalds and American popular culture,
music, films and so on just enforce a homogenisation on the world (eg Ritzer, Schiller and
see McChesney from last week). Others see the effects of cultural globalisation as leading
to a more cosmopolitan world where there is actually a growth of diversity and pluralism
rather than less, and where hybrid or mixed cultures rather than uniform ones emerge (eg
Nederveen Pieterse). What do these different perspectives involve and which seem most
convincing to you?

Or are in fact neither true? Hybridisation is a seductive perspective. But are there any
reasons to doubt it as a description of what cultural globalisation involves? Is globalisation
actually leading to the defence of nationalisms and the growth of defensive
fundamentalisms that clash with globalisation or westernisation? What forms of power,
inequality and conflict are there in the globalisation of culture?

Next week we will look at global cities where global cultures are said to come together and
the following week we will look at Bourdieu’s fierce criticism of globalisation as
Americanisation. At the start of next term we will return to related issues when we look at
the way migration leads to diasporas and transnational or transcultural identity.

1. How have transformations in culture and media gone beyond national boundaries and
national cultures?
2. What is the homogenisation or McDonaldisation thesis of the globalisation of culture?
3. What are Westernisation or cultural imperialism models of the globalisation of culture?
4. What does the clash of civilisations model say about international cultures?
5. What does the hybridisation picture of globalisation of culture say?
6. How are new forms of identity created from the globalisation of culture?
7. What are people referring to when they talk, in relation to globalised culture, about
‘hybridisation’ or ‘creolisation’. Is this what is really going on in the globalisation of culture?
What does bringing the ‘centre to the periphery’ and the ‘periphery to the centre’ mean
(Waters)?
8. What are the limits of the hybridisation thesis?
9. What might be a co-existence/indifference model of the globalisation of culture be?
10. Where does the compression of time and space (Harvey, Giddens etc) come into the
issue of the relationship between technology and culture? What conflicts and tensions may
this involve?
11. What do ‘relativisation’ (eg Robertson) and ‘reflexivity’ (eg Giddens) mean and how are
these connected with issues of culture and identity?
12. How does Robertson describe what the globalisation of culture involves? How does it involve universality and particularism at the same time? The universalisation of particularism and the particularisation of universalism! What does that mean?!
13. What does ‘glocalisation’ mean and how does that explain the globalisation of culture?
14. How does context affect the reception of cultural globalisation?
15. Has the rise of religious fundamentalism got anything to do with the globalisation of culture and, if so, what?
16. How might cultural globalisation lead to greater nationalism or the revalidation of local or national cultures?
17. In what ways are there differences in production, access, consumption, and reading of globalised media and culture?
18. Is Waters right to say that culture is the most globalised sphere, more than economics or politics?
19. What inequalities are there in cultural globalisation?

Main reading

Kevin Robins, ‘What in the World’s going on?’, in Paul du Gay (ed), Production of Culture/Cultures of Production, also in Held and McGrew reader. On the mobility of cultural processes and things across national boundaries and what effects this has in terms of cultural contacts and clashes.

J. Nederveen Pieterse, Globalization and culture: global melange, 2004, on hybrid cultural globalisation with an historical angle, esp (but not only) chs 3 & 4. For other sources for chs 3 and 4 see below.


Further Reading


Tehri Rantanen The Media and Globalization, 2005, looks at the global media from the point of view of individuals’ and families’ experiences.

See also Kraidy’s book *Hybridity*, 2005 extracts are here: http://www.temple.edu/tempress/titles/1770_reg.html


John B Thompson, *The Media and Modernity*, 1995, ch 5, discusses symbolic distancing, asymmetries in access to media and culture, and reception of media messages and culture (extract in Held and McGrew *Global Transformations Reader*).

John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture*, 1999, says that our lived cultural experiences are becoming separated from territorial location. This is unevenly experienced and culture has become hybrid. See excerpt at: http://www.polity.co.uk/global/pdf/GTReader2eTomlinson.pdf

Mike Featherstone ed., *Global Culture: nationalism, globalization and modernity*, 1990. Also available as Theory, Culture and Society, 7, 2/3, 1990. For instance, see the pieces by A.D. Smith and Appadurai but others also.

Robert Holton, *Cosmopolitanisms*, 2009, esp but not only chapter 5, on theories of cosmopolitan culture


Paul Hopper, *Understanding Cultural Globalization*, 2007, accessible overview

Arif Dirlik, Review of Frederick Buell's book National Culture and the New Global System, in *Journal of World History*, 7, 2, 1996, makes some good critical points about postcolonial views that are popular in studies of the globalisation of culture.

Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization*, pages 99-102, uses Friedman to criticise the cosmopolitan elites who advance the hybridisation thesis


than popular culture and questions globalisation theses.


Helmut Anheier et al (eds) *Global Civil Society* annual books include at the rear ‘records’ on things like tourism, trade in cultural goods, languages, media, communication, geographical identification, and others. Fascinating data clearly presented on the extent of cultural globalisation.


Frank J. Lechner and John Boli (eds), *The Globalization Reader*, 2000, Parts VII and VIII on the role of the media and constructing identities.

Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, 2001 2nd edn chs 6 & 7 on international cultures and globalizing cultures. In the 1st edn it is ch 6 on cultural globalisation. Waters says it is in the cultural or symbolic sphere that globalisation is most advanced.

*John Beynon and David Dunkerley (eds), Globalization: the reader*, Parts A, B and C on culture, media and technology.

Alan Scott (ed), *The Limits of Globalization*, 1997, uses specific case studies to question whether culture has become globalised.


**Essay Questions**

Is the globalisation of culture leading to homogenisation or increasing heterogeneity?

Is the globalisation of culture really just Americanisation?

Critically assess the view of cultural globalisation as hybridisation.
'I discovered that a certain way of representing reality, as hybridity was not a mere intellectual interpretation of the state of contemporary reality, but a politicized position … this identity and interpretation is an aspect of the emergence of a new global cultural elite or class faction that takes its particular form as particular state-class structures that pit a cosmopolitan elite against a nationalist ‘red-neck’ and, by definition, backward-looking working class, or remnants thereof’ (Friedman 1999: 230). Discuss.

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**Topic 9 - Global Cities**

Last week we looked at the idea of cultures being made more homogeneous or hybrid by globalisation. And throughout this term we have been looking at globalisation in general. Certain sorts of cities in the world are seen to be amongst the prime locations where globalisation and hybridity are sited. Global cities are an example of local sites for global relations. Cities usually focused on include London, New York, Paris and Tokyo but there are others in both the rich world and poorer countries that are global cities. Here global means not big, but the site of global processes and mobilities, so some global cities are not the most glamorous or most powerful places, although sometimes they are. A small city could be quite global. Similarly a big city may not necessarily be a very global one.

Saskia Sassen is one of the foremost analysts of global cities. She has looked at these in quite a theoretical and economic way, focusing on them as command and control centres necessary in networks of what are otherwise dispersed global economic structures. Globalisation requires local centredness precisely because it is so globally dispersed.

But cities can be global in political, cultural or social ways as well as economically. A lot of analyses of global cities connect their growth to a more post-modern and post-fordist flexible world, with migration of the types Bauman discusses, cultural hybridity as outlined last week and new forms of inequality and exclusion. Cities are seen to displace nations as central nodes in the global system and can reinvigorate the importance of regions. And analyses of global cities link to the popular notion of global networks. Instead of control coming down to individuals from the state, the chief connections are seen as horizontal ones between cities.

At the same time the story of global cities is not all of hybridity and networks. These places are sites of exploitation, imprisonment, inequality, exclusion and conflict. In fact global cities may be a myth. For some, linking back to an earlier topic, global cities are a discourse as much as anything else, more something in a business plan or tourist brochure than a reality.

- What is a global city?
- What is the difference between a big or mega city on one hand and a world or global city on the other?
- What is ‘global’ about global cities – economically, politically, culturally, socially?
- What does globalisation have to do with global cities?
- What do global cities have to do with: post-fordism, post industrialism, economic restructuring; migration; cultural hybridity; identity and community; changes in politics?
- What shape do these take in global cities?
- What does Sassen say about global dispersal and centralised command being combined in relation to global cities?
- How do global cities connect with global networks?
- What do global cities have to do with the decline of the nation-state?
- What does Sassen say about the way global cities fit in with the interaction of the local and global, and multi-scalar organisation? How are these different to pre-globalisation organisation?
- Does the global shape the local in global cities or does the local shape the global? (eg Massey)
- How does the growth of global cities affect the importance of regions?
- How does globalisation help some global cities but make others worse off?
- What happens to divisions and inequalities in global cities as a result of their globality?
- Are global cities the sites of bringing people together or conflict between them?
- What does Paul Gilroy’s shift from postimperial melancholia to conviviality in postcolonial cities involve? (See also Massey on London).
- What is ‘postmodern’ about globalising cities?
- How much is the global city shaped ‘from below’ and how much ‘from above’?
- How is London a global city? (eg Massey)
- What are global cities beyond the rich world like?
- To what extent are global cities discourses?
- Are global cities really global? Is it really globalisation that makes global cities global?

There is a very big literature on global cities, as with most of the topics of this module. So feel free to look around for other reading.


Saskia Sassen, *The Global City*, 2001


Saskia Sassen, *Global Networks, Linked Cities*, 2002

Saskia Sassen, *Cities in a World Economy*, 2006

Peter Marcuse and Ronald van Kempen eds, *Globalizing Cities*, 1999

Peter Taylor, *World City Network*, 2003


Peter Taylor et al eds, *Cities in Globalization: Practices, policies and theories*, 2006, on inter-city relations


*Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31, 2, 2005, special issue on transnational urbanism and migration, also relevant to migration topics next term.

Mark Amen et al eds, *Relocating Global Cities: From the Center to the Margins*, 2006


John Eade (ed), *Living the Global City: globalization as local process*, 1996, looks at some of the cultural dimensions

Oncu A. and Weyland, P. eds, *Space, culture, and power: new identities in globalizing cities*, 1997, cultural focus


Paul Gilroy, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?*, 2004, sees a shift from post-imperial melancholia in Britain to convivial culture, found especially in Britain urban areas and postcolonial cities world-wide.


**Useful Journals**


*Urban Studies*

*Journal of Urban Affairs*
Web sites

http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/ - globalization and world cities website
http://www.global-cities.info/ - RMIT global cities research institute

Essay Questions

Are global cities really global?

Is London a global city?

How are global cities both global and local?

Can a poor city be a global city? Discuss in relation to an example/s.

Are global cities about hybridity and networks or about power and inequality?

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Topic 10 Sociologists on Globalisation: Pierre Bourdieu

Bourdieu was a radical French sociologist and his view of globalisation reflects these aspects of his identity. He is more critical about globalisation than Beck (although Beck has critical moments) and has more of an argument about the alternatives and political agency than Bauman. Bourdieu expresses a very French attitude to globalisation, hostile to neoliberalism and Americanisation and defensive towards the state and public sector. He also has the merit of being able to tackle globalisation both at the level of economics and neoliberalism on the one hand and of media and culture on the other. His writings on globalisation are short, polemical, critical and angry and often argued in non-academic contexts. Bourdieu argues that globalisation is not inevitable but is the deliberate construction of groups who conceal their own role and take globalisation out of the arena of politics and democratic choice. Bourdieu criticises intellectuals and social scientists for being complicit in exploitative processes of globalisation and emphasises the role of social movements and an alternative form of internationalism. His arguments connect both with some of the cultural discussions we have seen in the last few weeks and with some of the more political and economic issues some of you will be looking at next term. He also briefly brings up the issue of immigration, something we will return to at the start of next term.

- What does Bourdieu mean when he says globalisation involves a process of ‘unite and rule’?
- What does Bourdieu say about ‘the invisible hand of the powerful’?
- What does he say about neoliberalism and what has this got to do with globalisation?
- What does ‘the tyranny of the market’ involve?
- What does Bourdieu think globalisation means for institutions like the state, welfare, the public sector, employment, and democracy?
- What does he say about the ‘globalisation myth and the welfare state’? How is globalisation a ‘myth’?
- What is happening to ‘the left hand of the state’? What does the ‘destruction of a civilisation’ involve?
- Who/what is behind globalisation, according to Bourdieu?
- In what way does globalisation involve a ‘policy of depoliticisation’? How can this be countered?
- What does Bourdieu mean by the ‘Abuse of Power by the Advocates of Reason’? What is the ‘imperialism of the universal’?
- What part do Europe, the EU and social democracy play in globalisation, for Bourdieu?
- What does Bourdieu think globalisation means for media and culture?
- Why does Bourdieu think ‘culture is in danger’? What does globalisation have to do with this?
- What does Bourdieu say about ‘the status of foreigners’? What is the significance of ‘the train driver’s remark’?
- What is Bourdieu’s critique of the role of intellectuals in relation to globalisation?
- What sort of movements does Bourdieu see as organising against globalisation?
- What alternative form of internationalism does Bourdieu propose?

Main Reading

Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance*, 1998 and *Firing Back*, 2001. These are two short collections of brief pieces by Bourdieu, both with the sub-title ‘against the tyranny of the market’. Dip into them and pick out a few short pieces to read.

Further Reading


http://loicwacquant.net/assets/Papers/NEOLIBERALNEWSPEAK.pdf
http://www.loicwacquant.net/assets/Papers/CUNNINGIMPERIALISTREASON.pdf
Two similar articles criticising the Americanisation of ideas.

http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-vision_reflections/article_283.jsp


**Essay Questions**

Are Bourdieu’s critics right?

How, for Bourdieu, is globalisation a matter of ‘unite and rule’? Is he right?

Is Bourdieu right that ‘culture is in danger’?

The ‘invisible hand of the powerful’. Who, for Bourdieu, is behind globalisation and what does he think they are doing?

Globalisation is an ‘abuse of power by the advocates of reason’. What does Bourdieu mean?

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Hope you enjoyed the module!