

19 THE GLOBAL, THE LOCAL AND THE GLOCAL

Every culture must liberate its creative potential by finding the correct equilibrium between isolation and contact with others.

— Claude Lévi-Strauss

An anecdote is told about a tribe of transhumant camel nomads in North Africa, whose annual migration had taken place in March since the dawn of time. Recently their migration was several months delayed. The reason was that they did not want to miss the final episodes of *Dallas* (D. Miller 1993a, p. 163).

The point is not whether or not this tale is true. What it may tell us is that the world is no longer what it used to be – or rather, perhaps, what we used to imagine it to be. For it is easy to find evidence that changes in the world have been dramatic in earlier times too, that there has been extensive and regular communication and contact between societies, and that even in medieval times there existed truly cosmopolitan cities like Byzantium and Timbuktu. The opening words of the first classic of British social anthropology, Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, read as follows:

Ethnology is in the sadly ludicrous, not to say tragic, position, that at the very moment when it begins to put its workshop in order, to forge its proper tools, to start ready for work on its appointed task, the material of its study melts away with hopeless rapidity. Just now, when the methods and aims of scientific field ethnology have taken shape, when men fully trained for the work have begun to travel into savage countries and study their inhabitants – these die away under our very eyes. (Malinowski 1984 [1922], p. xv)

Malinowski's worries concern phenomena which are today sometimes described as imperialism, or cultural imperialism, and sometimes as the globalisation of culture; that is, the worldwide dissemination of certain cultural forms and social institutions because of colonialism, trade, missionary activity, technological change and the incorporation of tribal peoples into states and large-scale systems of exchange. When the first American anthropologists started to return from Bali in the 1920s, they described, in a concerned tone of voice, how Balinese culture was about to be completely destroyed by mass tourism (which still, in the 1990s, does not seem to have come about; see Wikan 1992; Barth 1993) – and similar grim predictions have been made on behalf of many of the peoples who have been explored anthropologically. Ever since the feeble beginnings of modern comparative

anthropology, practitioners have been worried about the disappearance of that cultural variation which it is our aim to explore. In the 1960s and 1970s many spoke of the importance of 'urgent anthropology', which entailed recording the culture and social organisation of the peoples still living in a traditional way before they disappeared from the face of the earth. In recent years, new concerns have to some extent replaced these, and many anthropologists now investigate, in different ways, the new complexities engendered by the increased contact between societies.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

What has become of the peoples first explored by anthropologists during colonialism? Nearly all of them are, to varying degrees, integrated into larger – in the final instance global – economic, cultural and political systems. To some, such as the Tsembaga Maring of Papua New Guinea, this integration is still of relatively minor importance in their everyday life. Although waged work and a monetary economy have entered their society, they still get their livelihood from pig-raising and horticulture. Because of the increasingly efficient state monopoly of violence, it has nevertheless become difficult to go to war in the highlands.

For many of the other peoples dealt with in earlier chapters of this book, the changes have been more fundamental. The Azande (in the Sudan) have become proletarianised – many of them found waged work in cotton and peanut plantations – and yet, it was reported in the 1960s, the witchcraft institution remained strong. The Yanomamö (in Venezuela) have reluctantly been drawn into the global economy too – among other things, gold has been found in their territory – and, simultaneously, they now have professional spokespeople travelling around the world to promote their interests as an indigenous population. Nevertheless, at the turn of the millennium most of them chiefly live off subsistence horticulture, although the monetary sector is becoming increasingly important. A more tragic part of recent Yanomamö history has been the spread of diseases such as measles, relatively harmless to Europeans but deadly to isolated, formerly unexposed groups. As for the Mundurucú (Brazil), as early as the 1950s they were about to be drawn into a capitalist economic system. Several of the villages depended on waged work on rubber plantations, and in this setting their pattern of settlement was changed: the men's house was gone, and men lived with their wives and children in nuclear families. In general, the Murphys report (Murphy and Murphy 1985), the women were happy with the changes, which meant that men contributed more to the household; whereas the men spoke in nostalgic terms about a largely mythical past, when they fought heroic battles and game was abundant.

One of the most important changes among the Dogon (Mali) since the period of French colonisation has been the fact of peace. Their old enemies,

the Fulani, have efficiently been prevented from attacking them, and thus the Dogon have been able to expand their territory. Like the Fur (in Sudan), the Fulani, the Hausa and many other peoples, however, the Dogon have been severely hit by the combination of recurrent droughts in the Sahel region and population growth. The Dogon are today in many ways integrated into the nation-state of Mali; the children go to school, are vaccinated and learn French as a foreign language. The monetary economy has become more widespread and certain industrial products, such as factory-made clothes, transistor radios and bicycles, have become common. As with many other African peoples, Islam has been an important factor in cultural change among the Dogon. In this respect, the increased peaceful contact with the Fulani, who are Muslims and active missionaries, has been particularly important.

Turning to the Nuer and Fur, their greatest problem apart from devastating droughts has been the long-lasting civil war in the Sudan, which has made trade difficult, apart from draining off both economic and human resources from their societies. Many Nuer fight on the south Sudanese side in the war against the Islamic north; in accordance with Evans-Pritchard's model of segmentary oppositions, one may say that they are now integrated at a higher level of segmentation than they used to be – fighting side by side with Dinka. In Darfur, as in many other local communities in the Sudan, large numbers of refugees from politically unstable Ethiopia have, particularly in the 1980s, led to a further strain on already very scarce resources.

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the Trobriand islanders largely seem to have adapted to processes of modernisation on their own terms. Modernisation has led to changes in political organisation, in the economy and in the politics of identity, but both the kinship system and the system of ceremonial exchange still function, even if they do not have the same meaning as before.

The kind of diachronic perspective implied in these snapshots of change provides a starting-point for anthropological studies of local life which alters and which is connected with systems of enormous scale. The main task of anthropology can no longer be to explore and describe alien ways of life for the first time, but rather to account for processes taking place at various points and various levels in the global system.

A GLOBAL CULTURE?

As the quotation above from Malinowski indicates, since the very beginnings of the subject, anthropologists have been aware of tendencies towards what we may call cultural entropy – that historical process which is today sometimes described as 'the global cultural melting-pot', as 'cultural creolisation' or 'hybridisation' or again, rather inaccurately, 'Westernisation'. However, one may wonder if we are not presently at the threshold of a new

era in the history of humanity, the global era. The previous three chapters have exclusively dealt with phenomena belonging to modern contexts; in some cases, as with nationalism and minority issues, these topics have only been relevant for a few decades in large parts of the world. In these final pages, we investigate in what sense it may be reasonable to consider our time a 'global age' and, above all, look into the relationships between the global and the local. First of all, we need to look more closely at the currently fashionable term 'globalisation'. For this word does not mean that we are all becoming identical, but rather that we become different in ways that are not as they were in earlier times.

If by the word 'modernity' we refer to everything that capitalism, the modern state and individualism mean to human existence, modernity has been hegemonic in the world at least since the First World War; that is to say, it has dominated. The dissemination of modernity has nevertheless accelerated since the Second World War. During the last few decades, there has been an intensified flow of people, commodities, ideas and images on a global scale. Since the appearance of the jet plane, and since satellite television became common in many parts of the world, and even more recently, since the phenomenal rise of the Internet, the limitations on cultural flow represented in space and time have been significantly reduced.

Modern communication technology contributes in two ways to the disengaging of certain cultural phenomena from space. First, a multitude of phenomena – including aspects of 'youth culture', prestige commodities from Coca-Cola cans to pop CDs and jeans, popular films and political problems such as the environmental crisis – exist both globally (everywhere) and locally (in particular places) simultaneously. Second, the jet plane has made it possible for a growing number of people to move rapidly and comfortably all over the world, while telephones, fax machines, the Internet and computerised video systems make it feasible, in principle, to communicate with people anywhere in the world at any time. Space can no longer be said to create a clear buffer between 'cultures'.

To anthropology, which has generally concentrated on the study of local communities, or at least more or less clearly delineated sociocultural systems, these changes imply new and complex challenges, both at the level of theory and at the level of methodology.

DIMENSIONS OF GLOBALISATION

Although modern societies differ in marked ways, modernity has certain shared dimensions everywhere. These commonalities, or parallels, can be observed both at the level of institutions and at the level of cultural representations.

The state and citizenship are today nearly universal principles of social organisation, although they exist in many variants. Their meaning should

not be exaggerated – it is still possible, in some parts of the world, to live a life-time without regular contact with the state. It is nevertheless becoming increasingly difficult. Virtually nobody in today's world can escape citizenship completely, and the state's power over its citizens is reflected in its double monopoly on taxation and legitimate violence. If agents other than the state collect taxes or commit violent acts, they are now guilty of crimes.

Wagework and capitalism are also important dimensions of globalised modernity. Capital is increasingly disembedded from territory, which means that companies and capitalists may invest virtually anywhere. If it is cheaper to produce computer chips in Malaysia than in Scotland, the microchip producer may easily move the assembly plant there. This also means that there is a globally available workforce prepared to enter into labour contracts.

Within modernity, consumption is by and large mediated by money. This simply means that people buy the goods they need in a market where general purpose money is the dominant medium of exchange. Subsistence production and barter are becoming less important.

From this, it follows that both politics and economies are integrated in an abstract, anonymous and globally connected network of investments, exchange and migration. No single person can affect this system in decisive ways, and events taking place at one point in the system can have ramifications – frequently unforeseen – in other parts of it. If the Taiwanese exports of personal computers increase one year, a fashion shop in a middle-class area in California may go bankrupt. The reason is that many of the shop's former customers have lost their jobs in the Silicon Valley computer industry. These processes cannot be described satisfactorily in simple causal or intentional accounts. They take place at the abstract level of the system and can be likened to what is sometimes spoken of as 'butterfly effects': a butterfly flaps its wings in Rio de Janeiro and creates a small wind, triggering a long chain of events of growing magnitude, which eventually creates a storm in New York.

One consequence of increasing systemic integration at a global level is the fact that certain political issues affect the entire planet. The environmental crisis is an obvious example. If the rainforests of Amazonia, Indonesia and Central Africa disappear, there is likely to be a climatic change perceptible everywhere. And when the Chernobyl nuclear reactor suffered a meltdown in 1986, newspapers in Venezuela, Japan and Mauritius carried daily, worried reports about the catastrophe.

The creation of agencies and NGOs with a worldwide scope also indicates the importance of globalisation. The UN and organisations such as the Red Cross and Amnesty International, as well as Fourth World networks, have contributed to the development of a global discourse about morality and politics, although the system of sanctions is still weak. In an earlier chapter it was argued that it is difficult to find universal criteria for human rights;

World Music

Creolisation or hybridisation refers to the intermingling and mutual influencing of two or several distinct bodies of cultural flow (or 'traditions'). This kind of process does not imply that 'everything is becoming the same' or that all kinds of cultural flow are equally susceptible to mixing. Many forms of knowledge and practice remain local, and many are more influenced by others than influential.

An area of signification which is often mentioned as a happy breeding-ground for the exchange of diverse influences, is contemporary rhythmic music. Blues, jazz and rock are thus often described as 'creolised' forms developed by the descendants of African slaves in North America. More recently, and particularly since the mid-1980s, a new trend in rhythmic music has been showcased as an expression of the creative intermingling of discrete traditions; known as 'World Music' or 'World Beat', it features non-European musicians in a European environment, using modern studio equipment and electrical instruments to convey, for example, 'the spirit of Africa'.

There are conflicting views on the nature of world music. Some argue that it represents a commodification and commercialisation of authentic tribal music; that the Western record companies have merely adapted African and Asian music to cater to the jaded palates of Western consumers, and have destroyed it in the act. On the other hand, it could be pointed out that 'Westernised' artists such as Youssou N'Dour are also immensely popular in Africa itself – so how could their recordings be regarded as adulterated and 'inauthentic'? In most cases, the domestic popularity of artists is actually boosted by their recognition abroad. Steven Feld (1994) sees the trend of world beat as a reinvigorating force for rhythmic music in general, where Fela Anikulapo Kuti may just as well borrow from James Brown as Peter Gabriel may hire a group of African drummers. The 'Africanization of world pop music and the Americanization of African pop', Feld writes (1994, p. 245), 'are complexly intertwined', although he also discusses issues of copyright and power inequalities between the metropolitan artists and record companies, and the non-European artists.

Musical discourses are fields where identities are shaped, and for this reason, the global flow of popular music can be a fruitful field for studying contemporary cultural dynamics as well as the political economy of meaning. The debate about authenticity is in itself interesting, as it reveals conflicting views of culture: as unbroken tradition, or as flux and process. These issues, we should keep in mind, are not merely aesthetic ones, but are frequently politicised.

because of the globalisation of culture, politics and economic and military power, it seems that such criteria are about to be developed – at least in theory (R. Wilson 1997).

The worldwide dissemination of AIDS is another instructive – if grotesque – example indicating that globalisation is not limited to contact mediated by abstract structures such as the mass media; contact across national and regional boundaries can be physical and direct. In 1992 Thailand's president asked the authorities in Bonn to stop German tourism to Bangkok, the reason being that many German men who travel to Thailand buy sex from local women and thereby contribute to the spread of the AIDS epidemic in both countries.

LOCAL APPROPRIATIONS OF GLOBAL PROCESSES

At the level of interaction, global process is expressed in a variety of different ways. The Gulf War of 1991 was discussed in Chinese villages whose inhabitants listened to daily news bulletins about the war on the radio. There are, in other words, situations where a large proportion of the world's population takes on an identity as 'citizens of the world' in the sense that they are concerned with problems relevant for all the world's inhabitants.

The fact that a cultural phenomenon is 'global' does not imply, however, that it is known to everybody or concerns every individual on the face of the earth. Even the Coca-Cola bottle, possibly the single most famous object in the world, is not known to everybody. The point, however, is that such phenomena are disembedded from particular places. An event like the Winter Olympics has a truly global dimension (Klausen 1999), even if the majority of the world's population is ignorant of it. Whether one happens to be in Montreal, Milan or Birmingham, one can follow such a sports event simultaneously, thanks to newspapers and television. This does not, we should note, imply that everyone who relates to these cultural forms perceives them in identical ways: global symbols and globalised information are interpreted from a local vantage-point (and contribute to shaping that vantage-point). In this way, a fashion magazine like *Vogue* is read differently in a tropical island such as Mauritius compared with Paris; and a soap opera like *The Young and the Restless* takes on a different meaning in Trinidad compared with the USA (D. Miller 1993a). These and many other cultural phenomena are global in the sense that they are not located in a particular place; at the same time, they are local in that they are always perceived and interpreted locally.

In an analysis of British-Pakistani codifications of the Gulf War, Pnina Werbner (1994) shows how support for Saddam Hussein from this community was chiefly related not to the conflict itself, but to the local British

context. Their support for Saddam was perhaps surprising, since Pakistan backed the UN forces and because this stance created problems for them in wider British society, which was unequivocally opposed to Saddam. However, the Gulf War was framed, particularly by some religious leaders, in a discourse about minority rights (with the fresh Salman Rushdie affair as a sombre background), where they demanded to be granted special concessions as a religious minority. The Muslim leaders were thus concerned to depict Muslims as radically different from mainstream British society, and this explains their 'confrontational posture' (Werbner 1994, p. 234). In Pakistan itself, the discourse about the Gulf War was quite different since it related to other local contexts.

TOURISM AND MIGRATION

One perspective on globalisation thus consists of investigating how people, wherever they are, can participate in a shared production of meaning, appropriate the same information and yet interpret it in widely different life-worlds. A complementary perspective may be an exploration of the ways in which people move physically from place to place. Tourism and business travel are widespread forms of movement, which so far have not received significant attention from anthropologists (but see Hannerz 1992; Appadurai 1996; and, notably, Löfgren 1999). Is it, for example, the case that place, in the meaning of locality, is entirely irrelevant to tourists and business travellers; that international business hotels are 'the same' everywhere, that a shared 'business culture' exists and that there is a shared, global 'leisure' culture – identical in Cancun (Mexico) and the Canary Islands? Further; could these cultural forms, evident in hotels, airports, boardrooms and beach clubs, profitably be seen as 'third cultures' mediating between different local cultures? In a historically oriented study, Orvar Löfgren (1999) charts the rise of tourism from the nineteenth century to the present, indicating how the phenomenon has shifted in meaning as new groups (from middle class to working class) have increasingly come to replace the elite travellers. Among other things, he is fascinated by the sheer growth of the tourism sector. If one goes to the northern shores of the Mediterranean on holiday, one might as well get used to staying at a permanent building site; such is the growth rate. According to the WTO (World Tourism Organization), the number of tourists going abroad will be 1.6 billion by the year 2020. In 2000, it was already about 1 billion.

A related field of interest, which has been researched much more thoroughly, is migration – immigration or emigration, depending on which country one sees it from.

Labour migrants move within the parameters of modernity. They carry passports and are citizens; a precondition for their movement is their

willingness to take part in waged work. For labour migration to be possible, the migrants must already be, at least partially, integrated into the cultural logic of capitalism.

Several possible analytical perspectives may shed light on their situation. One approach is to focus on the relationship between majority and minority in the host country; another is to compare the situation, culture and social organisation of migrants in the home country and in the country of destination. A third approach might be to compare different perspectives on migration. For example, Kuwait and other Gulf states attract many thousands of immigrants or 'guest workers'. From the dominant perspective of the Kuwaiti, these migrants are a 'necessary evil'; they are necessary because they carry out manual work, and they are an evil because they are seen to constitute a potentially threatening foreign element. From a humanist European perspective, frequently invoked in sociological studies of migration, the situation of the migrants can be described as a case of severe exploitation; they are underpaid, overworked and lack certain rights which – thanks to the globalisation of culture – are regarded as universal. From a third perspective, namely that of the migrants themselves, the position generally looks different. Thousands of Malayalees from Kerala, south India, eagerly await their chance to work in the Gulf. When they return to their hometown they bring money and gifts, and they frequently return to the Gulf if given the chance. The Indian Minister of Finance praises them publicly for bringing hard currency to the country.

Every social and cultural phenomenon can be interpreted in a multitude of different ways, according to the perspective from which one sees it. Where interaction within the global system is concerned, ambiguities of this kind are typical, and they may remind us that people do not become 'the same' just because they engage in increased contact with each other. People's lives are neither wholly global nor wholly local – they are *glocal*.

Additionally, it becomes increasingly clear that the term 'Western culture' is notoriously inaccurate. Depending on definition and delineation, 'the West' contains between 700 million and 1 billion inhabitants. It is not, in other words, 'a culture', but a very large number of societies and a large number of strikingly different cultural environments. Besides, the emerging patterns of cultural variation due to migration and cultural globalisation imply that 'the West' exists just as much in a middle-class suburb of Nairobi as in Melbourne, and that Buenos Aires may be seen as a more typical 'Western' city than Bradford, where a large proportion of the population are Muslims of Asian origin. 'The West' cannot meaningfully be conceptualised as a kind of society: it must rather be regarded as an aspect of culture and social organisation not localised in a particular 'cultural area', namely what has here been called 'modernity'.

MIGRATION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

A salient feature of the world around the beginning of the third Christian millennium is mobility, displacement and exile. According to UN statistics, more than 100 million people lived outside their country of birth in 1992, and the number is growing fast. In addition, many descendants of migrants (who are born in their present country of residence) form, whether voluntarily or not, minorities (Chapter 18). An area which has a turbulent past and present in this respect is the Caribbean, and some of the most important anthropological studies of migration have been carried out here.

Karen Fog Olwig's studies of Caribbean culture and history (1985, 1993) reveal clearly why so much contemporary anthropological research can neither have a community focus nor be synchronous 'snapshots'. In her analyses of Nevisian society (Olwig 1993; Nevis forms part of St Kitt's and Nevis, and has about 10,000 inhabitants), she shows that this society has never been self-sufficient politically, culturally or economically – or indeed demographically. The ancestors of the present inhabitants arrived there as slaves and planters, and the Afro-Caribbean culture and social organisation in the island have developed in the interface between local factors and global processes. As part of a worldwide capitalist system, Nevisians are dependent on external forces; but Olwig also shows how they have actively shaped their own way of life. The high level of out-migration in the decades after the Second World war – few Nevisians do not have relatives living in metropolitan cities such as London, New York or Toronto – could similarly be seen as an expression of extreme dependence; but it can equally well be studied as a result of entrepreneurship and remarkable cultural adaptability.

Studying Nevisian migrants in Britain, Olwig shows that the codification and indeed creation of a distinct Nevisian identity takes place there, in intense contact with alien culture, as a counterforce to the local British identity. Further, perhaps more surprisingly, she argues that the annual Caribbean carnival in Notting Hill, West London (see also Abner Cohen 1993) can be seen not just as a construction of a Caribbean cultural identity, but also as a revitalisation of a lost English carnival tradition. Migration, far from severing ties with their island of birth, strengthens the local identifications of Nevisians, who talk of Nevis with compassion and nostalgia. They send remittances to their families, and many even invest in real estate in Nevis. The migrants and their children thus become important actors in both cultural and economic projects in Nevis, even if they live on the other side of the Atlantic.

Cultural identity is a major issue among many migrant or diasporic populations. Calls for purity and 'authenticity' are met – within and outside the minority – by pleas for individual rights, change and choice. In the societies described as post-traditional by Giddens (1991), tradition does not go away, but it has to be chosen self-consciously and defended against its alternatives. As described by Gerd Baumann (1996) in a study of a multi-

ethnic English neighbourhood, the options available are as numerous as they are controversial.

EXILE AND DE-TERRITORIALISATION

The Satanic Verses (Rushdie 1988), the novel which earned its author a *fatwa*, or death penalty, from Shi'ite priests in Teheran, is not primarily a book about Islam. Rather, it is about the condition of exile; about being on Air India's Flight 420 halfway between Bombay and London – permanently. In the book, Rushdie shows how the shift in perspective entailed by exile creates doubt and uncertainty, because the person in exile discovers that the world, the past and (ultimately) even the truth appear differently when viewed from different positions. Ethnic revitalisation among migrant groups may be understood within this perspective. Drawing on nostalgia and a sense of alienation, such movements contrive to re-instil a sense of continuity with the past, ontological security (Giddens 1990) and personal security.

Although it has received intense attention from anthropologists and sociologists, revitalisation represents only one side of the coin. Clearly, the processes which sometimes inspire revitalisation, but which may also lead to the opposite (namely uncertainty, ambivalence and individualism), merit attention. These are the processes of globalisation, whereby people become embedded in shifting social and cultural networks of sometimes staggering scale, where society, in Zygmunt Bauman's view, 'proclaims all restrictions on freedom illegal, at the same time doing away with social certainty and legalizing ethical uncertainty' (1992, p. xxiv).

From an anthropological point of view, this needs to be studied empirically. Appadurai (1990) has thus proposed a framework for exploring cultural flow in the contemporary world. He distinguishes between five dimensions in global cultural flow, which have different ways of functioning.

The *ethnoscape* refers to 'the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live'; in other words, the demographic attributes of the world – tourism, migration, exile, business travel, but also stable communities.

The *technoscape* means the 'global configuration ... of technology', which in important ways shapes the flow of cultural meaning, and also includes the uneven global distribution of technology.

The *finanscape* is the flow of capital, which has increasingly become disembedded from territories. Together, these three dimensions form a global infrastructure of sorts, but it is by no means predictable, since each 'is subject to its own constraints and incentives'.

The final two dimensions, which are ideational, are the *ideoscape* and the *mediascape*; referring, respectively, to ideological messages and mass media constructions.

Challenging Dichotomies

A great part of anthropological theory rests on contrasting pairs, or dichotomies, used analytically to distinguish between ideal types (Weber's term) of societies and cultures. Some of the most widely invoked such dichotomies are: small scale/large scale; oral/written; bricoleur/engineer; traditional/modern; status/contract; *Gemeinschaft* (community)/*Gesellschaft* (society).

An underlying assumption of this kind of dichotomy is the view that modern industrial society is unique and stands out in relation to all other societies, which, by comparison, are depicted as 'more or less the same'. Obviously, these dichotomies are inadequate as descriptive devices. First, traditional societies are not 'all the same' – the ancient kingdoms of India and pastoral societies of North Africa indeed have little in common. Second, this holds for modern societies as well. There are important differences between, say, Japan, the United States and France. Third, the very dichotomous distinction between 'types' of societies is untenable. In most if not all societies of the world, one would be able to identify 'modern' as well as 'traditional' aspects – not least in the age of globalisation.

The world as it is studied by anthropologists is not characterised by clear, 'digital' or binary boundaries, but rather by grey zones and differences in degree – analogic differences. It is not an archipelago of isolated cultures, but an unbounded system of multiple interrelationships. Why, then, should we bother with dichotomies at all? Strangely, perhaps, it seems difficult to do without them. Anthropologists have for a long time been aware of the inadequacies of rigid classificatory schemes, and they have often been discarded, but frequently only to re-emerge in new garb. Perhaps dichotomies are indeed necessary for the anthropological enterprise. If so, we should keep two critical points in mind: first, the models are not identical with the social world but a mere aid in organising facts from the social world; and, second, dichotomies may be envisaged as scales marked by differences in degree rather than as absolute contrasts.

A major point in Appadurai's article, and one that other writers on globalisation have also made, is that de-territorialisation – which does not merely amount to large scale, but to the reduced importance of the spatial dimension as such – necessitates new conceptualisations of the social and cultural world. Ideas, technologies, people and money can be, and are, moved about more frequently, quickly and easily across the globe in the late twentieth century than ever before. One result, often described in terms of displacement, is the growth of populations on the move or living in exile. Another consequence is the self-conscious construction of place, since place, as a

space imbued with cultural meaning, can for many people no longer be taken for granted. One's place of residence may change dramatically, or one may move somewhere else; and places are also multivocal like symbols in the sense that they mean different things to different people or in different situations (Rodman 1992). All this does not mean that people are becoming de-territorialised, but that the construction of place becomes a project in its own right – like that of cultural identity – whereas it could formerly be taken for granted. It also means that 'place' becomes a fluid term, so that 'Nevis' becomes a network with nodal points in London, Nevis and elsewhere. The fact of migration in an era of fast communications thus also paves the way for *long-distance nationalism* (Anderson 1992), whereby the political scene in a given territory may be partly shaped by the agency of migrants. In an account of Tamil immigrants to Norway, Øivind Fuglerud (1998) shows that the overarching concern for many of the migrants does not consist in integrating into a European society, but in supporting the separatist movement in Sri Lanka. Ideological differences and tensions among the migrants replicate differences in Sri Lanka, not in Norway. The Rushdie affair was, in other words, just a spectacular instance of a more general process whereby territorial boundaries do not vanish, but are challenged by telecommunications and diasporic populations.

We now move on to a few further consequences of globalisation (or 'globalisation') for anthropological research.

SOME CONSEQUENCES FOR ANTHROPOLOGY

Globalisation of culture does not mean that groups and individuals become culturally identical, but rather it engenders the growth of new kinds of cultural difference in the interface between the global and the local. Before moving on to some empirical examples, there follows a list of some general points concerning the consequences of globalisation for anthropological thought.

- It is becoming increasingly clear that the concepts 'tradition' and 'modernity' refer to a purely analytical distinction; that is to say, it is untenable to speak of traditional and modern societies in an empirical sense.
- The concepts of society and culture have become more problematic than ever before. The networks of communication, migration, trade, capital investments and politics cross virtually every boundary; with a few exceptions, neither states nor local communities are really clearly delineable in every regard. 'Cultures' are neither closed nor internally uniform.
- Since it has become impossible, in many cases, to delineate clearly the system being investigated, it has become more and more relevant to

explore specified groups or specified cultural phenomena (such as the Olympic Games, tourism, migration) which do not make up autonomous systems in a social or cultural sense, but which can nevertheless be isolated for analytical purposes.

- Classic fieldwork has become quite insufficient as the sole method of collecting the data and insights required to understand social and cultural life on the planet. Fieldwork must generally be supplemented with additional sources giving access to the wider context of the phenomena being explored through participant observation – statistics, mass media transmissions, locally produced texts and so on.

THE 'INDIGENISATION OF MODERNITY'?

As early as the 1960s, the media theorist Marshall McLuhan introduced the concept of 'the global village' (McLuhan 1964). This notion was intended to account for the new cultural situation in the world, following the spread of modern mass media, notably television. The world had become one place, McLuhan argued, and he called this place a global village.

An essential point in anthropological research on globalisation lies in the necessity to account for the relationship between the global on the one hand, and the village, or the localised environment, on the other. To an anthropologist, McLuhan's term therefore implies an unhealthy mix of two levels, the level of interaction and the anonymous level: micro and macro.

The central paradox of globalisation is, perhaps, that it has made the world both larger and smaller at the same time. It has become smaller in the sense that it is possible to travel anywhere in less than 24 hours, and that it is practically possible to have the same lifestyle anywhere in the world. On the other hand, it has become larger in the sense that we thereby know more about remote and 'exotic' places, and thus more easily recognise our mutual differences. Jonathan Friedman puts it like this: 'Ethnic and cultural fragmentation and modernist homogenisation are not two arguments, two opposing views on what is happening in the world today, but two constituent trends in global reality' (1990, p. 311). There is, in other words, a movement towards integration into ever larger systems – where a growing majority of the world's population takes part in a perfectly unlimited system of exchange – and a localising emphasis on cultural uniqueness. What needs to be studied ethnographically, Sahlins argues, is 'the indigenization of modernity' (1994). This, as noted in Chapters 17 and 18, frequently takes the form of 'traditionalist' movements, often presented as ethnic or nationalist ones. Remarking on the modernist, reflexive conception of culture and its global dissemination, Sahlins writes:

'Culture' – the word itself, or some local equivalent – is on everyone's lips. Tibetans and Hawaiians, Ojibway, Kwakiutl and Eskimo, Kazakhs and Mongols, native Australians, Balinese, Kashmiris and New Zealand Maoris: all now discover that they

have a 'culture'. For centuries they may hardly have noticed it. But today, as the New Guinean said to the anthropologist, 'If we didn't have *kastom*, we would be just like white men'. (1994, p. 378)

On a more specific note, Edvard Hviding (1994) shows how Solomon islanders, whose kinship concepts and practices have strong cognatic leanings, have in recent years begun to emphasise patrilineal descent, which proves more efficient in the formation of corporations and the making of land claims. Whether this should be labelled 'indigenisation of modernity' or 'modernisation of indiginity' is an open question, but it is clear that the shift in kinship practices and concepts is related to sociocultural change and the spread of the idea of culture as a political resource.

TWO LOCALISING STRATEGIES

Paris is one of the most important 'African' cities in the world, and it attracts thousands of musicians, students, labour migrants and refugees from the Francophone parts of Africa. Many Parisians have West African parents and a personal identity partly connected to Senegal, Cameroon or the Ivory Coast, and many West Africans travel to and fro between the city and the home country.

Friedman (1990; see also Gandoulou 1989) has described a particular category of labour migrants to Paris. They originate in Brazzaville (Congo), where they are collectively known as *les sapeurs* (literally, 'the underminers'). Most of them are of humble origins, but they manage to travel to Paris, where they work very hard and consume as little as possible, in order to buy expensive fashion clothes to display publicly in the streets of Brazzaville at a later stage. This kind of consumption strategy falls squarely into the general category described earlier as conspicuous consumption: it expresses rank and prestige. What is interesting about 'les sapeurs' is not only the fact that they are much poorer than they look, but also that most of them belong to an ethnic group no longer in power. Friedman thus interprets their conspicuous consumption as a local political strategy: as a way of challenging power by overcommunicating one's own superiority and success. '*La sape*' thus appears as a local countercultural strategy drawing on local evaluations of prestige and power, which in turn draw on what is globally prestigious; that is, expensive fashion clothes. It would not have been possible to understand this phenomenon in its full context without knowledge of both the local and the non-local levels.

An example of a rather different kind is Katarina Sjöberg's (1993) study of the Ainu, a Japanese minority. Officially, the Ainu have no status as an ethnic minority, since the Japanese government does not recognise the existence of minorities. Instead, they are categorised as an 'underdeveloped group'. Like indigenous people elsewhere, the Ainu have been subjected to systematic discrimination (they look more or less like Europeans and are

considered hairy, ugly people); they have lost their traditional right to land and suffer from high rates of alcoholism and unemployment. Until the 1970s, it seemed as though Ainu identity was about to disappear completely. The language was nearly extinct, and the Ainu seemed to be about to become a Japanese underclass instead of an ethnic group. Then an ethnic revitalisation movement emerged – as with many other indigenous peoples during the same period. In the 1970s and 1980s a very active movement developed, its aim being to make the Japanese state recognise the Ainu as an ethnic group with a right to its own customs and its own language. The strategy, however, largely consisted of presenting Ainu culture as a commodity. Old rituals, traditional dress, handicrafts and culinary specialities were revitalised and presented in a commercialised, 'touristified' way. In this way, Japanese tourists to the Ainu north might discover that the Ainu 'had a culture' worthy of their respect, but the language of that 'culture' first had to be translated into the global language of commodity exchange, so to speak.

Commenting on Sjöberg's work and his own, Friedman (1990) notes that the strategies of both 'les sapeurs' and the Ainu may look like recipes for cultural suicide, since they are based on cultural premisses which are not indigenous. The Congolese express prestige and individuality through the appropriation of foreign symbols; the Ainu express (and create) their ethnic identity by turning it into a commodity; they adapt it to a commercial market. The anthropological point in this respect is nevertheless not whether the 'cultures' expressed 'as a matter of fact' are local, 'authentic', etc., but whether they are efficient in promoting the experience of identity and political interests among the groups in question.

A SEAMLESS WORLD: HOMOGENISATION AND DIFFERENTIATION

As the last chapters have shown, cultural identity and 'uniqueness' have, since the 1960s, become legitimate political resources in large parts of the world. A growing number of groups 'discover' their cultural uniqueness and exploit it for political purposes. Why does this happen?

A simple explanation might be that social identities become important only from the moment they feel threatened, and that tendencies towards the globalisation of culture, threatening to eradicate important cultural differences, more or less automatically trigger counter-reactions in the shape of ethnic or traditionalist movements.

A related, but probably more accurate explanation – which is also consistent with the account of ethnicity and nationalism in the two previous chapters – might be that the demarcation of boundaries about social identities (1) is perceived by many as necessary as a result of intensified contact between groups, and (2) becomes possible because of technological and cultural changes following modernisation.

At the beginning of the millennium, a strong case could be made for both homogenisation and differentiation, depending on one's point of view. Indeed, as the examples of the Ainu and the Congolese 'sapeurs' indicate, people may in fact favour both at the same time, in the sense that localising strategies are framed in 'global' terms – in the languages of commodity exchange and individual rights.

One important point to be made here is that the interrelationship between culture and identity is subjective and intersubjective, not objective. A social identity, whether ethnic, national or something else, can be created in a variety of ways. Anthropologists, for example, have a shared identity wherever they are; they form a community of sorts. As with ethnicity, the double criterion for a social identity to be socially valid is 'self-ascription and ascription by others' (see Chapter 17).

Another important point concerns power. Economic dependence in poor countries and poor localities has been studied largely through a focus on underpaid labour, unequal exchange and unequal relations of production. A stronger focus on, and a critical view of, the notion of cultural dependence, coupled with analyses of economic dependence, would certainly give increased depth to studies of the globalisation of culture. For even if people may choose their strategies, they do not do so under circumstances of their own choosing – and these circumstances differ greatly, not only with respect to differential access to, say, CNN on TV, but also regarding personal autonomy and the right to define who they are.

In an interview Lévi-Strauss related the following anecdote. He was visiting South Korea, and his hosts eagerly took him around to show him the great advances made by this much publicised NIC (newly industrialised country). They showed him sports stadia, freeways, skyscrapers and factories. Lévi-Strauss was not particularly interested, and wandered off as often as he could to museums where he could study old masks. 'Professor Lévi-Strauss!', his hosts eventually exclaimed, 'you are only interested in things that no longer exist!' – 'Yes', he replied sullenly, 'I am only interested in things that no longer exist.'

To Lévi-Strauss, the cultural variation within modernity was not sufficient to call for his attention; to him, Seoul appeared more or less identical with Paris.

Seen from this kind of perspective, it is clear that the cultural variation of the world has been radically narrowed. Fewer and fewer anthropologists today encounter radical otherness of the kind described by Lévi-Strauss in *Tristes tropiques* (1976 [1955]). In this beautiful, melancholic book, he describes a field trip to Amazonia, where he met natives who were so close that he could touch them, and yet they seemed infinitely far away: he could not understand them.

From a certain point of view, the world is becoming progressively disenchanting, to use Max Weber's expression about modernity (*Entzauberung*): it

seems to hide fewer and fewer secrets. The white spots on the map are gone, and there are probably no peoples left who have not, to a greater or lesser degree, been in contact with the modern world. Halfway through the twenty-first century, there may be no matrilineal peoples left. A sense of loss is apparent not only among anthropologists, but among very many of the peoples of the world. Yet – and that has been the perspective of this chapter – new cultural forms and social projects are continuously developed in local settings all over the world, and the processes of change happen in unpredictable and frequently surprising ways. In other words, there will always remain variations in world-views, ways of life, power relations and life-projects that are certain to provide ample challenges to anyone who is committed to trying to understand the differences and similarities between humans in societies.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- Arjun Appadurai: *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1996.
 Jonathan Friedman: *Cultural Identity and Global Process*. London: Sage 1994.
 Ulf Hannerz: *Cultural Complexity*. New York: Columbia University Press 1992.
 Marilyn Strathern, ed.: *Shifting Contexts: Transformations in Anthropological Knowledge*. London: Routledge 1995.