Introduction

Globalization is a big word with a fittingly big reach, and fittingly big literature to go with it: the Harvard University catalog records more than 1800 titles with the word 'globalization' from 1987 onwards - an average of 100 a year. Can there be anything more to say? This study is a critique of globalization, especially as it is applied to the non-Western world, but I explore its 'silences' rather than its sins. I look at networks, relationships and transformations that get discussed little if at all in the conversation or the literature of globalization (the oversight is itself an interesting question to which I will return later in this introduction).

Definitions

But first, two working definitions.[1] 'Globalization' describes the increase of circulation – of goods and services, money, people and ideas – amongst all parts of the world that has been noticeable since the 1980s. It also refers by implication to the new 'tools' – satellite technology and the internet in particular - which have driven this increase – technology which in obliterating the significance of physical space has turned a difference in degree – more circulation - into a difference in kind – a world of new circulation networks and transformed old ones.

Globalization is also about the impact – economic, social, cultural and political – of these changes on continental, national and local arenas. Whether viewed positively or negatively, the reality of the impact is indisputable. To its advocates, globalization is constructive work; for its critics, it's destructive. To the latter globalization is neither more nor less than international capitalism armed with new tools to achieve the longstanding ambition of a 'borderless' world (for capital and commerce if not for labor).

We can accept that these definitions describe realities (even if contested ones) – that globalization is a phenomenon of contemporary life, that global flows are substantial and increasing, globalization shapes the world's politics, economies, societies and cultures. But if these are realities, they are not complete ones.

The first silence: globalization, history and 'multiple modernities'

Much of the discussion of globalization's impact is ahistorical. This is not just a matter of there being earlier phases of globalization – classically the late 19th and early 20th century – although that is the case. It is also because the history of the non-Western world, right up to the present, provides a rich record of adaptability to those same 'globalizing' – or 'westernizing' or 'modernizing' - forces. This record has been the subject of countless studies, by historians and anthropologists in particular, who have explored the way that individuals, families and groups in such societies grappled both with ways of doing new things and new ways of doing old things and in so doing changed their own societies and 'domesticated' outside influences. Traditions have been reshaped, whilst new 'tools' – the railway, the cinema, electricity, organized sport – have been reshaped to familiar ends.

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[1] David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton, *Global transformations: politics, economics and culture*, Palo Alto, Stanford UP, 1999, provides the best introductory discussion

Much of this interpretative work has been inspired by collection of articles edited by historians Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The invention of tradition*.[2] Those articles collectively made the point that in societies, in 'inventing' traditions, were frequently doing so for adaptive reasons, reasons that could readily be applied to understanding how non-Western societies grappled with Western impact.[3] Similarly, in her influential article 'Culture in action: symbols and strategies' sociologist Ann Swidler, contending that cultural values could not determine action because so often a particular culture appeared to be able to accommodate a variety of actions, argued instead that what culture provided was a 'toolkit' of 'strategies for action'.[4] This became particularly cogent in unsettled times, when a society's culture and its circumstances were at odds, as in non-Western worlds in the last two centuries. If the actions of individuals and groups in those societies rested on values alone, then the societies would not be able to act; if they rested only on interests deriving from changing circumstances there would be little or no continuity. Swidler's elegant notion provided a way out of this impasse – confronted with new circumstances, societies could pursue new ends, but can do so by drawing on a 'characteristic repertoire' from which to build 'lines of action'.[5] Train-traveling Hindu or Muslim pilgrims are a case in point – the train became a tool.[6]

The widespread evidence of many different kinds of adaptability to the 'modern' gave rise to the notion of multiple paths to modernity, a notion advanced by anthropologists Carol Breckenridge and Arjun Appadurai in the early 1990s, and subsequently explored by others.[7] The concept unpacked the identity habitually assumed to exist between westernization and modernity. The experience of Japan, the first seemingly modern, but not Western country, has been one field of enquiry, so also India, which has many 'modern' attributes – including a democratic political system – but within a very different frame of reference to that found in Western countries.[8] But the idea has also been applied to East Asia as a whole and to Latin America.[9] Eschewing a 'tight' definition of modernity, the literature on 'multiple modernity' suggests that such

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[2] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds, *The invention of tradition*, Cambridge, CUP, 1983

[3] As for instance, Steven Vlastos, ed *Mirror of modernity: invented traditions of modern Japan*, Berkeley and London, U Calif Press, 1998

[4] Ann Swidler, 'Culture in action: symbols and strategies', *American Sociological Review*, 1986, pp 273-286; note also the influence on Swidler's discussion of Clifford Geertz, 'Thick description' in Clifford Geertz, *The interpretation of cultures: selected essays*, NY, Basic Books, 1973

[5] Swidler, 'Culture in action', p 284

[6] For Hindus, see *Mysore Gazetteer* (1929) vol III, p 336; for Muslims . . .

[7] Carol Breckenridge and Arjun Appadurai, 'Introduction' in Carol Breckenridg, ed, *Consuming modernity: public culture in a South Asian world*, Minneapolis, U Minn Press, 1995; Shmuel Eisenstadt, ed, 'Multiple modernities', *Daedalus* vol 129/1 (winter 2000); a parallel in international relations literature is Samuel Huntington's 'Clash of civilizations' (*Foreign Affairs* 1993 and subsequent iterations).

[8] John Whittier Treat, ed, *Contemporary Japan and popular culture*, Curzon, Richmond, England, 1996; Carol Breckenridge and Arjun Appadurai, 'Public modernity in India' in Breckenridge, ed, *Consuming modernity*, Minneapolis, Minnesota UP, 1995; K Sivaramakrishnan and Arun Agrawal, eds. *Regional modernities: the cultural politics of development in India*, New Delhi, OUP, 2003

[9] Aihwa Ong, *Flexible citizenship: the cultural logics of transnationality*, Durham NC, Duke UP, 1999; Jenny Kwok Wah Lau, ed *Multiple modernities: cinema and popular media in transnational East Asia*, Philadelphia, Temple UP, 2002; Luis Roniger and Carlos H Waisman, eds, *Globality and multiple modernities: comparative North American and Latin American perspectives*, Brighton and Portland, Ore, Sussex Univ Press, 2002

variability, not the centrality of Western modernity, is the ‘default’ condition of a world in which any number of societies can now be called ‘modern’.

Much of this work on multiple modernities was a product of the 1990s, and the 1997 Asian financial crisis, then 9/11, threw it off course. But it remains just as fertile as before, and for Arab and Muslim, no less than for other non-Western societies.

Nonetheless a critique of globalization that rests only on the notion of multiple modernities is shaky. This is in good part because the concept defines process rather than content; critics may argue that many paths lead to modernity but are less exact in specifying what’s different about them. When one commentator asks, ‘so which Chinese and Indian concepts might make the transition from national to global discourse and debate?’ his answer is, ‘it is still very difficult to predict what they might be.’[10]

The second silence: globalization, geography and circulation

Globalization studies focus on flows amongst and between *countries*. If globalization is defined as a process which dilutes national borders this makes sense. Moreover countries – or economies – are the usual building blocks for such discussions, and country-level statistics are far more complete, thorough and comparable than for any other units of analysis.

But in fact such an approach is deeply flawed. The standard (ISO) country list includes China (1.3 billion), Monaco (32,000) and every ‘country’ in between. Some inter-country flows are significant; others, for instance between the Isle of Man and the United Kingdom (two distinct entities in many classifications) are meaningless. Equally some *intra*-country flows – within Monaco – are insignificant, but others – with Japan, the United States, India – are of major significance. What does it mean to rank Luxembourg as more ‘globalized’ than the United States, when Luxembourg is no more than a Rhode Island or New Jersey?

To weigh the significance of exchanges between countries, major domestic flows must *also* be measured. Thus, to take a simple example, a tenfold increase in migration between two countries may be significant. But it will have a different significance if internal migration in both countries has increased less than tenfold, tenfold, or much more than tenfold. Commentators in the developed world are preoccupied with the ‘surge’ of migrants heading north from poorer countries – it’s salutary to realize that even in 2005 just *three* percent of the world’s population lives outside its country of origin – the biggest migrant flows are *within* countries. And when the flows are ‘international’ they are often between adjacent countries, for instance Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

We gain a similar perspective if we consider cities rather than countries. There are at least 200 cities of more than 100,000 people in each of China and India, perhaps 100 in Japan and between 25 and 50 in many other large countries. For such cities, the flows of finance, goods and services, people and even ideas take place as much within a regional or national framework as in a global one. Here’s one attempt to capture such a world, in which even ‘local’ metropolises get short shrift:

> Since the 1960s parts of rural India had experienced considerable urban development and had accumulated surpluses. The sources for this new affluence varied: the ‘green revolution’ in agricultural

[10] Martin Jacques, ‘No monopoly on modernity’, *Guardian* (London), 5 February 2005

productivity in the north; a 'white revolution' in dairy farming in western regions; and in the south, remittances from emigrants working in the Gulf states. Money was invested in small industries, and in properties in provincial cities and small towns. . . India has more than 200 cities with populations of over 100,000, and these are the homelands of India's 'new middle classes', who no longer gaze enviously at the distant metropolitan cities, whose horizons are not shaped by ideas of Bombay and New Delhi – cities, that, if anything, they resent and disparage. This is the India of ZEE TV and cable television, more rawly and frankly consumerist than Doordarshan, which transmit an arresting linguistic hybrid of Hindi and English. Most big city opportunities for consumption are available in these new towns: Maruti car salesrooms, hotels and fast food restaurants, shops selling Reeboks and Proline, Titan watches and Videocon electronics. But surfaced roads, pavements, streetlights, parks – all those essential tokens of modernity that excited the colonial and nationalist imaginations – are barely to be seen here. The streets are nameless, absolving those who pass along them of even a gestural historical memory. The conceptual sense of 'city' is weak. There are few civic amenities, no urban form, no effective police authorities. And their scale – smaller than the metropolis, with its potential to generate anonymity and impersonal relations between strangers – has fostered new and distinct kinds of social relations, neither modern nor traditional. Ties of kin and caste remain strong, but operate here on a more expansive terrain than in the village, and have acquired a thinner, more instrumental form.[11]

As Khilnani's observations make clear, the flows we are discussing include ideas as well as goods or people. Literature that antedates globalization theorizing provides important context for this 'flow' approach. Karl Deutsch's *Nationalism and social communication* and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined communities* both explored ways in which shared ideas have linked otherwise unrelated groups of people and, by implication, how differentiation in the volume and intensity of such flows demarcate peoples one from another.[12] And this indeed is what the world-wide web promises – virtual communities where physical location becomes irrelevant. But what if even in those communities there is a 'bunching' of locations? And what if people hold on to long-ago drawn 'mental maps' in the virtual world?

What is being studied and why?

Six middle-sized non-western cities are the focus of this study: Fukuoka (Japan), Yangzhou (China), Semarang (Indonesia), Mysore (India), Mansoura (Egypt), Queretaro (Mexico). Why cities, why cities of this size, and why just six?

The focus on cities, not rural areas, is easily explained. Culture change and adaptations have taken place for longer and more visibly in towns and cities than in the countryside. And towns and cities, not the countryside, are the future. All indications are that urbanization world wide will continue until the urban proportion of most populations reaches developed country levels – around 80 percent. In Japan - 79 percent - and Mexico -75 percent - urbanization is virtually complete). The other four countries have urban percentages ranging from 28 percent – India - to 43 percent - Egypt.

Middle-sized cities, not massive metropolises, have been selected, for a number of reasons. Contrary to popular ideas of overbearing and overblown megalopolises spreading across the planet, the major urban growth in the developing world will take

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[11] Sunil Khilnani, *The idea of India*, NY, Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, 1999, p. 145

[12] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism,* London, Verso 1983, revised edition, 1991; Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and social communication: an enquiry into the foundations of nationality,* Cambridge, Mass, and New York, Technology Press, MIT and Wiley, 1953, 2nd edn, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1966

place in cities of under 500,000 or between 1 and 5 million people. These cities will collectively double in size by 2030.[13] Moreover, metropolises are unduly favored in the existing literature; there are many titles on Tokyo, Shanghai and Mumbai, few on Nazik, Changzhou, Kokura or their equivalents. That bias might be defended on the grounds that if cities are the 'hearth' of the future, large cities are so, a fortiori. But that's been assumed rather than tested and may well not be true – after all which is the better candidate to explain American civilization in the early 21st century? Manhattan? Or the exurbs of Tampa, San Antonio or Phoenix? And finally, the very existence of metropolises shapes the 'new map' of globalization we want to draw. The lineaments of that part of the map can be seen much more clearly from outside the metropolises than inside them.

The sample cities number just one percent of the population set! A slight proportion, but for a sole inquirer it is at the outer limit of feasibility. Each city has a different principal language, a different secondary literature, a different set of social and political circumstances that have to be negotiated. Whilst choosing six such varied places put paid to my having to be, or becoming, an area or country specialist, any more would have made the project impracticable.

However claims for the representativeness of the six are not just a convenient rationalization. Each of the six is located in a country with a large population on the assumption that resemblances are greater within than between countries. Indeed the six countries collectively account for more than 50 percent of the world's population. And many of the statistical findings can be tested against those for other cities or for whole countries.

Additionally, none of the cities are located in conflict zones. This was not just a matter of personal safety! Such zones are grossly unrepresentative of the non-Western world. Troubled Gaza (population 1.3 million) has probably had 100x as much coverage in the Western media as the relatively untroubled Nile delta with its half dozen cities of 1 million or so population, and a total population of 25 million.

Nor are any of the six on major tourist routes, and in this they are also representative. Far more Western tourists visit Jogjakarta and Solo or Bali than visit Semarang. And rightly so. But there far more Semarangs in Indonesia than there are Jogjakartas, Solos or Balis. The Semarang experience of globalization and modernity is more representative than that of the other three.

Finally, the cities are distributed amongst the major non-Western traditions - Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Meso-American aka Mexican, and Islamic.[14] Two of the six (Semarang, Mansoura) are Muslim majority cities, whilst a third (Mysore) has a significant Muslim minority.

Why overlooked?

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[13] UN-Habitat, *The challenge of slums: global report on human settlements, 2003*, p 3. Clarify why 500,000 to 1 million band excluded.

[14] A longer discussion will explain omission of sub-Saharan Africa and the choice of Mexico as stand-in for rest of Latin America

Before introducing the cities and the rest of the book, it's useful to discuss why such places, and those of which they are representative, are so often overlooked by commentators and analysts in the West.

One set of reasons can be called, with acknowledgement to Edward Said, 'orientalist'. This is the set of reactions and ideas which comprehends the 'East' only as either exotic or traditional. Thus – to use one example already cited – Jogjakarta attracts travelers who want to experience 'authentic' Javanese dance, music and theatre. Javanese cultural life can be found in Semarang but it's harder to find the venues, or to sure of what sort of performance might be entailed – not for 'orientalist' reasons but because but such performances are not 'customized' for foreign visitors.

Another form of oversight can, by analogy, be called 'occidentalism'. In this topography of knowledge 'Western' ranges obscure 'Eastern' valleys and plains. This angle of vision does not 'see' patterns or developments that don't fit within the Westernizing frame. The eye that sights a coca cola sign in Yangzhou misses the neighboring character signage of a Taiwan-owned fast food chain. That sees Western tourists in Bali but not Singaporean, let alone Indonesian, tourists.

You may recall, even if you did not see, *Shakespeare Wallah,* a 1965 film which focuses on the fortunes of a *British* dramatic troupe in post-independence India. This first production by the Merchant Ivory partnership traced the story of the actor-managers of a troupe of traveling Shakespearean actors who had to grapple with their future in a country which seemingly had no place for them or their art. But in fact the story of the reception of Shakespeare in India is primarily a story of *Indians*, and especially Bombay's Parsis, staging the works of Shakespeare and other European playwrights before Indian audiences – and how this practice waned, but in the face of cinema, not of independence. [15]

'Occidentalism' also sees present-day poverty more readily than past progress. The surface infrastructure of these cities (Fukuoka aside) is often poor – potholes in roads, garbage-infested water channels, eating places that are little more than shells with plastic tables and chairs – and so on. It's easy then to overlook the electricity, the piped water, the sewage systems, the functioning schools and hospitals; and the workshops, shops, and government offices that employ many of these cities' inhabitants, just as in the West.

Conclusion

The photograph on p xx is of a suburban street in Rajendrangar in Mysore. There's nothing much going on there and no reason to pay much attention to it. But it is home to several scores of people getting on with their lives. It's unrealistic to expect their lives, and those of millions, even billions like them, to feature on the West's radar – but also unusual for the West to feature on their radar. The combination of multiple modernities and still distinct geographies gives us a notion of 'parallel worlds' – worlds which may or may not be that different but travel on separate tracks. It's a point that can be applied more generally. The 'drifting apart' of the United States and Europe, even the United States and Canada, through the first years of this century, can not only *not* be explained

[15] First Merchant Ivory production, 1965; see further, Ananda Lal, ed, *The Oxford companion to Indian theatre*, Delhi, OUP, 2004, pp xx-xx entry on Kannada theatre; H K Raganath, *The Karnatak Theatre*, Dharwar, Karnatak University, 1960; and K D Kurtkoti, ed *The tradition of Kannada theatre*, in particular S.S. Kotin, 'The professional theatre of Karnataka' (pp 74 ff)

by reference to globalization, it's completely at odds with it. The amalgam of history and geography presented here, while focused on the relationship between 'the West' and 'the rest', could be applied to other relationships such as the transatlantic one or that across the 49th parallel.

This study will draw a new map of globalization. Indeed the map may be so different that 'globalization' will not be the best term to describe it. The physical world is made up of continents and islands, seas and oceans. If sometimes 'restless', as Southeast Asians learnt to their cost late in 2004, these phenomena are nonetheless enduring features of the earth's surface. It's possible that their human equivalents – large countries, regions, clusters of cities – are also more stable, more embedded, and more resilient, than we've thought to be the case.