

## **Globalization: Theoretical Perspectives**

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### **Lecture No. 06**

#### **Cultural Globalization**

Welcome back to the class, and we are starting the second week of the class for this course, Globalization Theoretical Perspectives. In the previous week, we discussed certain introductory aspects of globalization, some of the key debates within the political and academic circles on globalization. We also followed two essays, one on the forms of globalization and the second essay on the important players of globalization.

So, I hope that you must have got some rudimentary understanding of the complexity of this phenomenon at hand because there is no easy definition, there are no unanimously accepted frameworks. The academic and political worlds are heavily divided based on a host of issues concerning globalization, starting with its definition, reach, direction, desirability, consequences, and course of action that one needs to adapt to deal with globalization.

So, as you must have understood, it is a highly complex field that we are dealing with. We are now moving forward to the second week and the third week, where we will discuss a very important dimension of globalization: cultural globalization. So, as per the syllabus, I am devoting two weeks to discussing cultural globalization because it is crucial or the central theme of globalization theory when you look at it from the sociological perspective.

Moreover, as I have told you initially, I am a sociologist, and I am looking at globalization from the perspective of this particular discipline. So, cultural globalization is one of the central themes of sociological analysis. We need to spend much time and provide adequate time to understand the essential debates within academia about the kind of globalization taking place in the sphere of culture.

So, for this lecture and the following lecture, I am using this book 'Cultural Globalization: A User's Guide' by J Macgregor Wise. So, this is the book that I depend upon mainly for these two lectures. I am not using this whole book but rather a selective adaptation. This book is available on the internet, and you can download it.

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- An important dimension of globalization
- Consensus that cultural implications are as important as economic implications of globalization
- Engages with transformations in the spheres of consumption, identity, tradition, religion, value orientations and so on
- The tension between 'Cosmopolitanism' and 'cultural rootedness' in the global era



Cultural globalization is very important, or it is the central dimension of globalization. Conventionally globalization was understood primarily as an economic phenomenon. Especially during the 80s and 90s, the economic centric understanding of globalization was the most dominant. People understood globalization as primarily driven by economic factors.

Nevertheless, later, it became clear or undeniable that globalization also has a significant cultural dimension. We need to pay close attention to that. Moreover, if you are sensitive to the kind of debates and controversies and then the argument around society, we know that people are talking about the consequences of cultural globalization. Most often in a negative sense. Our culture is getting spoiled, and then the youth are losing their hold off on the culture. Traditional culture and the unwanted culture from the West is colonizing our culture, so it is corrupting our culture.

Moreover, this kind of sentiment is very commonly expressed by the elderly population. So, we live in a scenario where these arguments are vibrant. These arguments are very loud so that nobody can escape this question of cultural globalization. So, there is a consensus that cultural implications are as important as the economic implications of globalization.

It will become clear as we proceed to the next section of the classes. I am emphasizing or reiterating the argument that the cultural implications of globalization are as crucial as economic implications because when we discuss some of the essential theorems.

For example, when we discuss this whole debate about the clash of civilizations by Samuel Huntington, an extremely famous or rather infamous theoretical argument about the world's future. He builds up his theory revolving around the whole question of cultural conflict. So, we are witnessing all these kinds of changes happening around the globe, cultural ideas, the kind of claims based on culture, violence in the name of culture, and hatred in the name of culture, we are witnessing all these kinds of changes happening around the globe.

So, the whole idea that globalization revolves around the question of culture, or culture is a vital aspect of globalization, is taken for granted, and there is a consensus. We will spend some time looking at the kind of the engages with the transformations in the sphere of consumption, identity, tradition, religion, value orientations, etc.

We are going to discuss what the system culture means. But I hope you all know that this term is extensive. We use this term 'culture' to indicate a host of essential themes, including consumption, identity, tradition, religion, value orientation and a host of other aspects. Because it is such a broad and loose term that virtually almost everything is usually put under this particular definition of culture and consumption. It could be the kind of tools or technology or food or clothes or fashion or the whole question of identity, and everything comes under this more extensive debate about culture.

So, this is all tension between cosmopolitanisms and cultural rootedness in the global era. We will come back to this point later. At least one significant value orientation today or one visible critical tension in the field of cultural globalization is what we see as a kind of tension between

cosmopolitanism on the one side where people want you to be cosmopolitan in your outlook. They want you not to be identified with a particular geography, state, or region. You are supposed to transient all your primordial identities to be a global citizen, have a lot of cosmopolitan values, taste, cosmopolitan ideas, and a kind of a truly global citizen. So, globalization promised that kind of a transition.

On the other side, some people or movements despise this particular cosmopolitan term or are very much against this argument of cosmopolitanism. Moreover, they are arguing for a kind of cultural rootedness. They want their people to be deeply rooted in their culture, their culture to be protected, defined in a particular manner, incredibly cautious, or exceptionally rigorously protecting their idea of culture.

So, we see this kind of conflict in our everyday life. If you look around, the kind of controversies, incidents that we see today, for example, one of the best examples could be the celebrations like 'Halloween'. Our children in India have started celebrating Halloween. Some people or organizations protest against Indian youth celebrating Valentine's Day. So, all these arguments come this kind of a value orientation that we need to protect our culture against a foreign invasion or a foreign corruption.

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## Culture

*Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language.* (Williams, 1983, p. 87)



Highly ubiquitous, yet highly powerful, conceptually rigorous term

Transformation of its definition over the years/centuries

- Before the Industrial Revolution, culture meant the tending of natural growth, like plants or animals – 'agriculture'. When applied to humans it came to mean the process of human development such as training and growth. Culture was a process, one was cultivated.



I want to spend some time introducing or having some discussion on the question of culture. Because without spending some time on culture, I think it is challenging to discuss this whole question of cultural globalization or the influence or impact of globalization on culture. Because this term is significant, a widely used term in Sociology and Anthropology. However, a term that is so ambiguous, the term that is so nebulous, is quite vague and very vaguely used in Sociology and common sense.

And so, I think that we need to spend some time discussing the time to understand how this particular term was defined and its historical trajectory. So, Raymond Williams is one of the critical scholars of the twentieth century. He is widely considered an authority of cultural anthropology, so this section follows his argument.

So, he says that culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. It is a fascinating argument that it is a prevalent term. It is a highly ubiquitous yet compelling, conceptually rigorous term. So, we use this term in our everyday language. We talk about cultural festivals, cultural programs, the need to protect our culture. When we get angry with somebody, we call them a cultureless fellow. So, this term culture is widely used in our everyday life.

For example, this term 'cultureless fellow'. When we get angry with somebody or get upset with somebody, we use this term that that fellow is cultureless. Nevertheless, that statement does not make any sense in sociology or anthropology because no ordinary human being can be called a cultureless fellow. His culture may be wrong, or he expresses his culture differently, but there is nobody as cultureless. Because everybody has a kind of culture with them and a person with a sound mind cannot be cultureless.

So, we use this term. We come across this term in our everyday lives. This term has also been used extensively in Sociology and Anthropology. It is a full term. It is a central theme or term in sociology or anthropology. So, we need to spend some time trying to understand some of these transformations of the definitions over the years or centuries.

So, this term culture has been defined by different people during different epochs. We need to understand that kind of a transition, that kind of a trajectory of its definitions. Because unlike in Physical Sciences, where one definition is given, it stays there for centuries as that is an exact definition. That definition does not change as per the time or place.

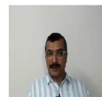
But social sciences do not have that kind of luxury. You will see that terms are constantly defined, constantly redefined, and reinterpreted. And suppose you look at the trajectory of these definitions. In that case, this trajectory shows the kind of different influences, the influence of different historical contexts, intellectual influences, political context, and a host of other influences. So, if you look at the trajectory of how culture was defined in different contexts by different people, that itself is something very, very fascinating.

For example, Raymond Williams argues that in Europe before the industrial revolution, culture meant the tending of natural growth, like plants or animals. So, you have the term agriculture, so culture was used to indicate the process of taking care of something, growing something. You have pisciculture, agriculture, horticulture, and other things that are even now used. However, all of them have a similar meaning to indicate that we tend to do something, grow certain things, and take care of certain things to grow.

When applied to humans, it came to mean the process of Human Development such as training and growth. So, culture was a process, and one was cultivated. So, you were understood as having cultivated, your growth was never seen as a kind of very natural growth, but it was seen as a kind of cultivation, a very conscious form of cultivation.

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- With the turn of the nineteenth century, culture became a thing in and of itself. A person had culture if they had been appropriately trained and educated. But the term was also thought more broadly to mean "the general state of intellectual development, in a society as a whole" (Williams, 1961, p. 16). Culture became synonymous with Civilization. Culture was then the embodiment of a tradition and a history, the artistic record of a society. Often indicating the elite section of society.
- At the height of colonialism, culture became a means of comparison, if not moral evaluation, of the supposed worth of a group of people.



He says that culture became a thing in and of itself with the nineteenth century. A person had culture if they had been appropriately trained and educated. So, from a term that we saw earlier as indicating to growing up a particular thing or tending to do a sure thing, it is now being used to indicate a specific thing. A person had a culture if they had been appropriately trained and educated.

But the term was also thought of more broadly to mean the general state of the intellectual development in society. So, here we again see a kind of an expansion of its meaning, from that of an individual's growth, development. We are beginning to look at the culture of a society as a whole, a kind of a state of intellectual development.

Now, culture has become synonymous with civilization. The culture was then the embodiment of a tradition and history, the artistic record of a society often indicating elite sections of society.

From a very neutral understanding or very general understanding of anything that grows or anything cultivated, there is a gradual shift in the nineteenth century that takes the meaning of culture into a more specific direction. In which culture is understood as synonym of civilization. Culture was then the embodiment of traditional history, the artistic record of a society, the more creative things, the things that the artists create, and things expressed by the elite. So, often indicating the elite section of society.

So, that is why when you say that a particular city or a particular culture has a very thriving culture, a specific country has a flourishing culture. We mean that the country or society or that particular city they live in has a very vibrant intellectual group of people engaged in creative stuff. Some people are involved in this kind of creative expression. So, culture gradually assumed that kind of a character. And at the height of colonialism, culture became a means of comparison, if not a moral evaluation of the supposed worth of a group of people.

These transformations became extremely important, especially during the colonial context, because the Europeans moved to different parts of the globe during the colonial context. They began to come across completely different alien groups whose cultures were completely different from what they had experienced or seen so far. So, that gave rise to a kind of comparison. Then that, of course, led to the Europeans believing that they had reached the zenith. They have reached the pinnacle of human progress.

And we know how there are quite a lot of discussions about how the westerners identified or understood them as the most developed section of people. They even justified colonialism as a way of civilizing the other, the civilizational mission or the white man's burden. All these terms came into existence because the Western culture was seen as the most advanced. Moreover, they used this primitive culture to reflect upon their own culture and then to feel and to create a sense of identity for themselves.

So, these comparative elements come when you are encountered other cultures. There is no reference point because you only know your culture until then. But colonialism provided a



significant reference point for the Europeans to contrast different cultures with theirs and then feel happy about it, happy but their own culture.

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### Culture and Anthropology



- Culture...is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (E B Tylor 1920 [1871]: 1).
- Franz Boas, a German American anthropologist, challenged Tylor's approach. Boas thought that cultures did not follow a linear progression as espoused by cultural evolutionists like Tylor, but developed in different directions based on historical events.
- The vast instrumentality through which man achieves his ends (Malinowski, 1941, p.182)



Now, let me take a detour into culture and anthropology because anthropology is the most crucial discipline that concerns culture among all other fields and all other social science disciplines. Especially cultural anthropology is one of the important subdivisions of anthropology that deals with the cultural question. You know that anthropology has several subdivisions: Physical anthropology, Social anthropology, Linguistic anthropology, and Cultural anthropology.

So, cultural anthropology deals exclusively or centrally with the sole question of culture. So, we must spend some time trying to understand how anthropology dealt with this whole question of culture and how anthropology provided different definitions of culture in different periods. Edward B Tylor gave one of the most widespread definitions of culture in the 1920s. He defined *culture* as a complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

Undoubtedly this is one of the most popular or most influential definitions of culture.

'Culture as that complex whole includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. This is the crux of the

whole argument. Please remember that he is using the term man, not as human beings, because he assumed that man would also include women, which is an assumption. However, we know that assumption itself is problematic.

So, all these features or qualities, capabilities which are acquired by them are not innate. They are not biologically given; instead, they are acquired by a man or human beings as members of society. So, the interdependency of human beings and society's significance is critical here. Culture is a product of society. A person gets an opportunity to acquire culture because he happened to be a member of that particular society. If he or she were not a member of society, then this question of culture does not arise.

So, Edward B Tylor defined culture, which continues to be one of the most important definitions. And then Franz Boas, a German American anthropologist, challenged Tylor's approach. Boas thought that cultures did not follow a linear progression as espoused by cultural evolutionists like Tylor, but developed in different directions based on historical events. So, Tylor also shared the kind of argument commonly held by the intellectuals of that particular time, which came to be known as the modernization theory.

A modernization theory would argue that every society in the world is supposed to move in a particular uni-directional manner. They would argue that every culture in this whole world is supposed to move. A kind of a historical, natural, or social law that takes all these cultures in a particular direction. The European culture has already reached the Zenith, the top. Moreover, all other countries have to do this catching up job.

So, this particular argument is an evolutionary argument evident in almost all important intellectuals of the enlightenment period in Europe. You will see this among philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists. Almost everybody believes that human society is moving in one particular direction- the direction of rationality, in the scientific revolution, all the traditional values and everything are lost. Moreover, they contended that the West represents the ultimate goal, and all other societies are doing this catching up business. So, Boas disagreed with this argument, which Edward B Tylor also shared. So, he made an essential qualification to this particular idea.

A very important British anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski defined 'culture' as a vast instrumentality through which man achieves his ends. So, here this definition looks at man, culture as a capable instrumentality. It is not about the kind of habits or knowledge or other things. It is basically about the kind of knowledge used instrumentally to achieve their goals.

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The interpretative turn and Clifford Geertz- Influence of Weber, Parsons etc

*The concept of culture I espouse, and whose utility the essays below attempt to demonstrate, is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs,...* (Geertz, 1971a, p. 5)



The study of culture proceeds by ethnography and that the proper subject matter of ethnography is the vast array of symbols or symbolic forms that constitute everyday life, ranging from language and sacred rituals to artifacts and etiquette. These symbols must be understood from the actor's own point of view.

Geertz insisted that ethnography, like literary criticism, must be thought of as interpretation, which, borrowing from the philosopher Gilbert Ryle, he also calls "thick description."



Talcott Parsons came and then his arguments about personal systems, social systems, and cultural systems during the 1950s. A significant turn in cultural anthropology comes with Clifford Geertz, one of the most celebrated cultural anthropologists. He provides a kind of an interpretative turn or framework to understand the culture.

For him, the concept of culture is false and whose utility the essay below attempts to demonstrate is essentially semiotic. Believing with Max Weber that 'man is an animal suspended in the web of significance, he has spun', I take culture to be those webs. This is an essential argument that Clifford Geertz put forward. He is invoking Max Weber, Because Max Weber was one of the most important sociologists or the first sociologist of prominence who challenged a positivistic understanding of sociology.

So, Sociology emerged as a positive science. The founding fathers of Sociology, including August Comte and Emil Durkheim, wanted to craft or create Sociology in a natural science like Physics or Chemistry. They were deeply impressed by the scientific methods and the natural sciences or physical science's positivistic approach. They believed that sociology could also be developed as a science of society; hence, Socius and logos, logos means science. So, they wanted a science of society that can use scientific methods to understand society objectively so that the truth can be understood. So, this was the most important feature of sociology when it emerged. It was seen as a positivist one.

When Weber came up with his theory of social action or his argument about interpretative action, it is known as Verstehen in German. He argued that there is a difference between the natural and social worlds. Human beings do not behave based on stimulus and response. Human beings act in a very complex manner. We act based on ideas and values and attach specific meanings to our actions which are necessary to understand the exact meaning of the action.

So, Weber brings a critical antipositivist turn, which was later extensively used to develop a phenomenological or interactionist approach. The fundamental rule here is that there is nothing called a social reality out there for one to go and observe and then collect and then come back. Social reality is constructed. Social realities are mutually constituted through interaction. So, human beings are animals suspended in the webs of significance he has spun. So, we are creating a social world in which we live.

So, that is why it is essentially a semiotic one. One needs to understand, to learn to decide for it. One needs to learn to understand the role of symbols and other things to make sense of that. It is instead an interpretative enterprise. It is not that one goes and measures with a scale or wait with a weighing scale and then come back and then do the analysis; it is simply not that. The study of culture proceeds by ethnography. The proper subject matter of ethnography is a vast array of symbols or symbolic forms that constitute everyday life ranging from language and sacred rituals to artefacts and etiquettes. These symbols must be understood from the actor's point of view.

So, Anthropology by then or even from the very beginning had developed this particular methodology called ethnography. In ethnographic research, the researcher goes and then lives with the host community. Anthropologists have studied almost every tribe of the world by using this particular ethnographic method. This method is also referred to as participant observation. The researcher goes and stays with the community, learns their language, lives there for an extended period, participate in their everyday activity, understand their lifestyle, make sense of their life and then try to understand the complexity of their life.

So, he argues that this ethnography makes sense of the vast array of symbols or symbolic forms that constitute everyday life. What is the meaning of these symbolic forms that constitute everyday life? Geertz would argue, or every anthropologist would argue that there are deeper meanings behind what we do in our everyday lives. What one does, execute, perform is only observable. An ethnographer needs to penetrate deep into the realm of meanings to understand why that person does certain things in a particular way.

So, that is why one needs to understand it from the actor's point of view. That understanding would be utterly different from one's understanding because one comes from a very different cultural context. So, Geertz insisted that ethnography, like literary criticism, must be thought of as an interpretation which borrowing from the philosopher Gilbert Ryle, he also calls "thick description". This was a significant turning point, his argument about thick description. He does a very famous essay about the cock fight in Bali. He uses these particular methods to explain the symbolic meaning of a cock fight and why this fight represents the social organization of the particular village.

So, going into the thick description, thick analysis, layers of meanings, layers of significance, and layers of symbolism, Clifford Geertz argues for making sense of culture.

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*the analysis of culture to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical. (Geertz.)*



Geertz's concept of culture as webs of meaning and his corresponding concept of ethnography as textual interpretation were quickly absorbed not only by anthropologists of the 1970s and 80s but also by historians, literary theorists, political economists, and sociologists.

The post-Geertzian turn where ethnography and 'writing cultures' became an object of reflexive analysis...



Therefore, the analysis of culture is not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning. Again, he criticizes the positivistic argument. Because positivism always wanted to discover the laws, they believed that immutable laws govern social life everywhere. These scholars, including Max Weber, will not agree with that. However, an interpretative one is such of meanings. So, he says it is an explication and after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical. One needs to go deeper than the surface matter and understand its meaning.

Geertz's concept of culture as webs of meaning and its corresponding concept of ethnography as textual interpretation were quickly observed by anthropologists of the 1970s and 80s and by historians, literary theorists, political economists, and sociologists. Because this was the major cultural turn of Clifford Geertz. Then there was this post-Geertzian turn where ethnography and 'writing cultures' became an object of reflexive analysis.

Furthermore, this came up later with his very famous book writing cultures, where the authors talked about a power relation involved in ethnography. They challenged the taken for granted notions about the ethnographer going and then interpreting the world and then writing about it and then coming back. So, that led to a host of other essential descriptions and debates about reflexivity. What are anthropologists doing to the host community? To what extent is this

anthropologist free from a Eurocentric or a sense of superiority than the others. So, that became very important after that.

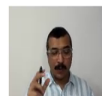
These kinds of changes, so this kind of different currents in the discipline of anthropology, played a significant role in defining or providing different definitions of culture and thereby shaping the trajectory of anthropologists and discipline in its analysis of culture. So, when we are talking about the globalization of culture, these points are vital because there is no given definition of culture to make sense of. Suppose you look at the history of social sciences. In that case, the term culture has been used is quite varied, so that is the point that I am trying to explain, especially when you look at it from the perspective of anthropologists in discipline. It becomes very evident.

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- The growth of mass culture brought about by the industrialization of printing (resulting in cheap newspapers) and the increase in literacy among the working classes and hence, two different cultures: High culture, which embodied the ideals of the nation (associated with high art, philosophy, and education) and low culture (or mass culture), which is what the bulk of the population consumed.



*"We use the word culture in these two senses: to mean a whole way of life – the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning – the special processes of discovery and creative effort. Some writers reserve the word for one or the other of these senses; I insist on both, and on the significance of their conjunction. The questions I ask about our culture are questions about our general and common purposes, yet also questions about deep personal meanings. Culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind".*  
(Williams, 1989, p. 4)



Let us come back to another two important themes closely connected with modernity and globalization. So, the growth of mass culture brought about by printing resulted in cheap newspapers and increased literacy among the working class. Hence, two different cultures. The high culture embedded in the nation's ideals is associated with high art, philosophy and education, and low cultures or mass culture, which the bulk of the population consumed.

The high culture and the popular culture or mass culture are very important. Because conventionally, the term culture was reserved only to indicate the kind of artistic productions or artistic constructions of the people who occupied the elite positions, the rich, the affluent, the aristocrats. Their creations and artistic productions were seen as a kind of cultural ethos or the cultural repertoire of a particular society. However, industrialization puts forward or provides many printing opportunities, so cheap newspapers are brought out, and the literacy rate among the working class increases when they start reading it.

So, a host of these new ideas and other things emerged among the lower class, and their cultural forms developed. But still, this definition, this dichotomy, always existed. The kind of high culture, say the abstract paintings, poems that ordinary people do not understand and the sculptures are on the one side and the lower section or the kind of cultural idioms and practices and creations available to the ordinary mass on the other side. It includes maybe the folk songs or film songs or rap music or a host of other cultural items seen as lower, not as essential or as great valuable thing as the high culture. So, these two divisions among high and low cultures were still very evident.

"We use the word culture in these two senses: To mean a whole way of life-the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning-the special processes of discovery and creative effort. Some writers reserve the word for one or the other of these sentences; I insist on both and the significance of their conjunction. The questions I ask about our culture are questions about our general and common purposes, yet also questions about deep personal meanings, culture is ordinary in every society and in every mind"(Williams, 1989, P.4). So, Raymond Williams put forward this solid argument that the definition of culture must not be or it should not be confined only to the cultural repertoire of the elite sections.

Because then you are providing a highly restricted, extremely narrow definition of culture, culture refers to everybody it is very ordinary. You tend to think that the lower class people, those at the bottom of the society, do not have this culture because you are not sensitive enough to understand that. Unless you try to understand how culture gets articulated among the lower



class, the working class, and the poor, you will not understand the fascinating world of ideas and meanings. So, this is something very important.

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- The terms *popular culture* and *mass culture* are often confused. Mass culture refers to cultural products that are mass produced (like CDs). Popular culture is often thought of as culture that is popular (that is, that many people purchase or participate in), but a better way of thinking about it is that popular culture is culture that people themselves have made, rather than culture that is made for them.



- Emergence of cultural studies
- Increasing interest on globalization of culture
- Debates whether cultures are undergoing a process of homogenization or Americanization or are they simply getting more complex?



The terms popular culture and mass culture are often confused. Mass culture refers to the cultural products that are mass-produced like the ordinary people whom themselves produce it. It is not produced by some extremely talented people or some elite artist, its available, ordinary people produce it. May be right now mass culture refers to cultural products that are mass-produced like CDs or at present, the most popular one is the YouTube channels. Almost everybody is starting a YouTube channel into cooking, travelling, Vlogging, and almost everything you name it. You will see all these things in the YouTube. That kind of cultural expression is what he calls popular culture, mass culture. Popular culture is often thought of as something many people purchase or participate in. But a better way of thinking about it is that popular culture is a culture that people themselves have made rather than a culture that is made for them. So, something that is more popular among the people rather than something produced by certain people and then sent downwards.

These are some of the important terms you will encounter when discussing cultural globalization. Especially with the emergence of cultural studies from the 1980s, the whole direction of studying a society has been fundamentally changed. Because cultural studies now has very interestingly identified a host of hitherto neglected areas. A host of areas that were so far neglected by social scientists who consider these as kind of unworthy of studying something seriously have been studied by cultural studies.

For example, film fandom, because there is a huge fan following in every regional language, the film stars are real stars. So, how do we look at this whole phenomenon? You can easily brush them aside by saying that they are all irrational people. They are all simply blindly believing or blindly worshipping that particular hero. But the scholars of cultural studies would argue that it is a fundamental phenomenon, you keep aside your value judgement whether that is good or bad, but that is a significant indication.

For example, why is there a huge fan following for important film stars? important film stars like that MG Ramachandran, or Rajinikanth, why Rajinikanth is such an important, influential figure in Tamil Nadu?. So, these are crucial questions, you cannot brush them aside. So, there are studies that emphasize within cultural studies that look into these hitherto neglected areas of society. Furthermore, that also brought the whole debate about the various kinds of articulations of culture and how this culture shapes them and reshapes them in the era of globalization.

So, increasing interest on globalization of culture. And that leads to a host of other set of questions which I indicated in the very first class or the last week. what can we have a theory about the general direction of this particular move. Can we say that all the cultures are undergoing a process of homogenization?, Are all the cultures going to be same, their arguments about the Americanization or even new imperialism, McDonaldization which I am going to discuss in coming classes or are they simply getting more complex?

Are we seeing a kind of a complication of the cultures, it is not that there is homogenization, there is a unification of culture is happening but what we are seeing is a world of bewildering kind of wider of diversity, enormous diversity is what we are seeing. These are some of

important debates that we will discuss in the coming classes. So, I am ending the class now and we will continue with the class in the next session. Thank you.