CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION:

CONCEPTUALIZING THE ISSUE

1.1. Introduction

Globalization has become one of the most hotly debated issues of the present era. It appears to be the buzzword of the 1990s, the focus of books, articles, and heated debates. It is indeed a daunting task to write an introduction to such a complex topic as 'globalization'. This challenge becomes even more formidable in the case of a general and short introduction. Hence, it is not surprising that this introductory chapter is only a cursory glance at the different definitions of globalization, its academic debate, and its main dimensions.

This chapter does not present a comprehensive account/analysis of globalization. Grasping some of its main features, however, will be important in understanding the concepts or notions dealt with in this study. Competing conceptions of globalization exist throughout the literature since the beginning of the last decade. The literature on globalization ultimately fails to reach an agreement on a precise definition of the term. Similar sentiments were shared by Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton in their introduction to their book Global Transformation. They observe that “[d]espite a vast and expanding literature there is, somewhat surprisingly, no cogent theory of globalization nor even a systematic analysis of its primary features” (1). Since the literature does not present a precise definition of globalization, the purpose of this section is to provide a general introduction to the topic of globalization generally and to conceptualize the process particularly by reviewing some of the existing definitions of globalization.
1.2. Defining Globalization

Many authors have attempted, to some extent, to define globalization in different ways. Some thinkers like Vidya Kumar are of the view that it is unbeneficial matter. In her article “A Critical Methodology of Globalization,” she argues that “the debate about what to do about globalization is still very much a debate about what globalization is” (87). Her focus is on the link between the definition and the day-to-day life. This means that some definitions are closer to reality than others which is not what I intend to do here. I am not here to celebrate some definitions nor to condemn some others. Instead, I am to review some of the available definitions so as to truly understand the concept. I have limited my work to compiling a comprehensive list of definitions of globalization in order to provide a survey of what some academics, theorists, sociologists, politicians, and leaders claim globalization actually is. I divide these definitions into two groups.

The first group of thinkers sees globalization as the constancy of modernization and a force of evolvement and development, increased wealth, and delightfulness. They think of the process as fruitful, generating newly economic opportunities, political democratization, and cultural variedness. They perceive globalization as the product of inexorable process of evolution of human society. A Venture capitalist Roger McNamee defines globalization as “the environment in which we live. We’ve got one world. Get used to it. Make the most of it. Debating globalization? It is like asking fish to debate the merits of living in the sea” (qtd. in Gopinath 8).

Steve Smith and John Baylis in their “Introduction” to their book *The Globalization of World Politics,* define globalization as:

[T]he process of increasing interconnectedness between societies such that events in one part of the world more and more have effect[s] on peoples and societies far away. A globalized world is one in which political, economic, cultural, and social
events become more and more interconnected, and also one in which they have more impact. In other words, societies are [affected] more and more extensively and more and more deeply by events of other societies... the world seems to be shrinking. (8)

Moreover, Jan Aart Scholte in his “The Globalization of World Politics,” defines globalization as: “processes whereby social relations become relatively delinked from territorial geography, so that human lives are increasingly played out in the world as a single place... Globalization is ... an on-going trend whereby the world has—in many respects and at a generally accelerating rate—become one relatively borderless social sphere” (14). Also in his book *Globalization: A Critical Introduction*, Scholte defines globalization as “a far-reaching change in the nature of social space... The proliferation and spread of supraterritorial— or what we can alternatively term ‘transworld’ or ‘transborder’ (46).

The aforementioned definitions illustrate that the process’s influence basically covers social relationships. Scholte’s notion echoes those of Anthony Giddens and David Held who conceptualize the terms as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (Giddens 46). For David Held and others in their “Rethinking Globalization,” globalization is “a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions” (68).

In Scholte’s representation of globalization, the emphasis is on the idea of borderlessness. This resembles Roland Robertson’s interpretation of globalization as “the crystallization of the entire world as a single place” (“Globalization Theory and Civilization” 27). Putting it differently, Robertson avers that globalization is “a process by which we come to experience, or
become aware of the world as a single" (qtd. in Clark 3). He argues that globalization "refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole" (Social Theory 8). Robertson’s view is consistent with Zygmunt Bauman for whom globalization is about “time-space compression.” And with Barrie Axford’s notion, whereby globalization refers to those processes which are serving to ‘compress’ the world… and thus help fashion as a single global space” (5). In Craig Calhoun’s view, globalization is “a catch-all term for the expansion of diverse forms of economic, political, and cultural activity beyond national borders” (192). Hence, I may agree with Martin Albrow’s view of globalization. In his “Introduction” to his book Globalization, Knowledge, and Society, Albrow views globalization as “…all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society” (8).

It is also described as “the increasing global integration of economies, information technology, the spread of global popular culture, and other forms of human interaction” (Lieber and Weisberg 274). Fredric Jameson, in his Preface to The Cultures of Globalization writes that the concept of globalization “reflects the sense of an immense enlargement of world communication, as well as of the horizon of a world market, both of which seem far more tangible and immediate than in earlier stages of modernity” (xi). Indeed, “globalization refers to a multidimensional set of social processes that create, multiply, stretch, and intensify worldwide social interdependencies and exchanges while at the same time fostering in people a growing awareness of deepening connections between the local and the distant” (Steger 13).

Some scholars focus on the process of globalization as a predominantly economic development that argues well for societies. Pavel V. Nikitin and John E. Elliott believe that “…globalization is… the establishment of the global market free from sociopolitical control”
Sociologist Manuel Castells concentrates on the benefits brought up by globalization in the field of information to enhance economy. He refers to it as “an economy with the capacity to work as a unit in real time on a planetary scale” (247). As to M. Panic, globalization is a “process of continuous change—driven by the interaction of economic integration and cultural harmonization—that will eventually engulf every single country in the world” (7). Panic contends that an emphasis on international economic integration and cultural harmonization best interprets globalization. The fundamental driver of globalization is the rise of transnational corporations. He explains that transnational corporations are so dominant that in “one form or another [they] affect virtually every country in the world” (49). Indeed, from a purely economic perspective, globalization centres on the expansion of the frontiers of commerce, through technological advancement and liberalized economic policies. It refers to the systematic integration of national economies into a global economy. In the same vein, Robert Spich in his article “Globalization Folklore,” views globalization as: “a conceptualization of the international political economy which suggests and believes essentially that all economic activity, whether local, regional, or national must be conducted within a perspective and attitude that constantly is global and worldwide in its scope” (10-11). And, according to H. Alapike, in a more detailed manner, globalization is viewed from an economic standpoint as referring to “the increased integration, across countries, of markets for goods, services, and capital. It implies in turn accelerated expansion of economic activities globally and sharp increases in the movement of tangible and intangible goods across national and regional boundaries. With that movement, individual countries are becoming more closely integrated into the global economy” (qtd. in Esikot 130). Some others accent the proliferation of technology. They see globalization as “the latest stage in a long accumulation of technological advance which has given human beings the
ability to conduct their affairs across the world without reference to nationality, government authority, time of day or physical environment" (Langhorne 2).

It is informative to note that some intellectuals have viewed globalization from a more inclusive viewpoint and not narrowly from an economic viewpoint. They focus on the cultural dimension of globalization and see it as a positive progress. In this attitude, Mike Featherstone remarks that:

The process of globalization suggests simultaneously two images of culture. The first image entails the extension outwards of a particular culture to its limit, the globe. Heterogeneous cultures become incorporated and integrated into a dominant culture which eventually covers the whole world. The second image points to the compression of cultures. Things formerly held apart are now brought into contact and juxtaposition. (6)

Furthermore, Held and other writers in their book *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture* expand this idea and argue that globalization is “[the] widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life from the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual” (2). This is in line with Held and McGrew’s definition of globalization. In their “Understanding Globalization,” they define it as growing world interconnectedness, or as they put it in an expanded form: “globalization denotes the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of interregional flows and patterns of social interaction” (4).

Rosabeth Moss Kanter in her definition of globalization remarks that “the world is becoming a global shopping mall in which ideas and products are available everywhere at the same time” (qtd. in Scholte, *World Politics* 15). Globalization, writes George Modelski, is “the
history of growing engagement between the world’s major civilizations. It is captured by modernity” (qtd. in Held and McGrew, “Understanding Globalization” 51). For Imre Szeman, globalization is “the moment of mass migration, multiculturalism, and cosmopolitanism” (94). William Easterly in his article “Channels from Globalization,” is of the view that globalization means “…the movement across international borders of goods and factors of production.” For Philip G. Altbach, globalization is “[the] broad economic, technological, and scientific trends that directly affect higher education and are largely inevitable in the contemporary world. These phenomena include information technology in its various manifestations, the use of a common language for scientific communication, and the imperatives of society’s mass demand for higher education…” (2). Michael Mann offers a broad and open conceptualization of globalization. To him, globalization is “the extension of social relations over the globe” (51). Geographer Peter Dicken defines it as “the umbrella term for the complex set of transformative processes and outcomes that dialectically, and relationally, interact with places and people. [It is], without doubt, one of the biggest issues of our time” (17).

Nayef R.F. Al-Rodhan and Gerard Stoudmann define globalization as “a process that encompasses the causes, course, and consequences of transnational and transcultural integration of human and non-human activities” (20). In a similar vein, Swedish journalist Thomas Larsson states that globalization is “the process of world shrinkage, of distances getting shorter, things moving closer. It pertains to the increasing ease with which somebody on one side of the world can interact, to mutual benefit, with somebody on the other side of the world” (9). My last definition in this group is that of Thomas Friedman to whom globalization is “the integration of everything with everything else”. He defines it as “the inexorable integration of markets, nation-states, and technologies to a degree never witnessed before--in a way that is enabling individuals,
corporations and nation-states to reach around the world farther, faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before and in a way that is enabling the world to reach into individuals, corporations and nation-states farther, faster, deeper, cheaper than ever before” (The Lexus 9). In fact Thomas Friedman and Robert Kaplan’s short definition of globalization as “the integration of everything with everything else” is short and to the point that it summarizes all the ideas included in the aforementioned definitions (64).

The other group of thinkers view globalization as untoward process, delivering more domination and powerfulness for the richer developed nations over the needy underdeveloped countries, thus enhancing the hegemony of the ‘haves’ over the ‘have nots’. For this group of thinkers, globalization is best understood as “a legitimating cover or ideology, a set of ideas that distorts reality so as to serve particular interests” (El-Ojeili and Hayden 12). According to Neeraj Jain “…globalization is nothing but ‘recolonisation’ in a new garb.” In the same way, Martin Khor remarks that “globalization is what we in the Third World have for several centuries called colonization.” Mohammadi and Ahsan believe that globalization is “a recolonization of the Third World, and, in particular, of the Islamic world” (qtd. in Yenigun 178). Immanuel Wallerstein expresses that “globalization represents the triumph of a capitalist world economy tied together by a global division of labour” (qtd. in Holton 11). For Douglas Kellner, globalization is “a cover concept for global capitalism and imperialism, and is accordingly condemned as another form of the imposition of the logic of capital and the market on ever more regions of the world and spheres of life” (“Theorizing” 286). Tony Schirato and Jen Webb in their book Understanding Globalization view globalization as a “discursive regime, a kind of machine that eats up anyone and anything in its path” (199). For Leslie Sklair, globalization should be seen as a new phase of capitalism, one that transcends the unit of the nation-State. Similarly David Steingard and Dale Fitzgibbons are of
the view that “globalization as an ideological construct devised to satisfy capitalism’s need…”

So apart from a purely economic understanding, globalization is also a social or ideological weapon. David Harvey in his “Globalization in Question,” defines globalization as “…a spatial fix for capitalism and an ideological tool with which to attack socialists.” Paul Hirst and Gráhame Thompson believe that globalization is “a myth suitable for a world without illusions, but it is also one that robs us of hope. Global markets are dominant, and they face no threat from any viable contrary political project, for it is held that Western social democracy and socialism of the Soviet bloc are both finished” (6). “I will define globalization”, says Mark Ritchie, “as the process of corporations moving their money, factories and products around the planet at ever more rapid rates of speed in search of cheaper labor and raw materials and governments willing to ignore or abandon consumer, labor and environmental protection laws. As an ideology, it is largely unfettered by ethical or moral considerations.” James H. Mittelman is of the view that “the dominant form of globalization means a historical transformation: in the economy, of livelihoods and modes of existence; in politics, a loss in the degree of control exercised locally… and in culture, a devaluation of a collectivity’s achievements… Globalization is emerging as a political response to the expansion of market power… [It] is a domain of knowledge” (6-7).

C. Walck and D. Bilimoria claim that “…globalization is not an output of the ‘real’ forces of markets and technologies, but is rather an input in the form of rhetorical and discursive constructs, practices and ideologies which some groups are imposing on others for political and economic gain ” (qtd. in Kelly 383). In the same vein, Malcolm Waters believes that “globalization is the direct consequence of the expansion of European culture across the planet via settlement, colonization and cultural replication” (6). He defines globalization as “a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in
which people become increasingly aware that they are receding" (5). It is a “complex
connectivity," says John Tomlinson. Globalization impairs the way one interprets or analyses
culture. It affects “people's sense of identity, the experience of place and of self in relation to
place” (20). In his book *Globalization and Culture*, he explores the type of relation globalization
has with culture and informs the reader “why culture matters for globalization and why
globalization matters for culture” (22-27). In fact, Tomlinson believes that with the emergence
of globalization there is more “physical mobility than ever before, but the key to its cultural
impact is in the transformation of localities themselves” (29). Indeed, the above discussion
reveals that globalization is a complex process that includes reforming the existing world
relations in a way that affects the world, imposing the values, aims, and ideas of the powerful.

Globalization has both positive and negative aspects. While it enriches some people, it
impoverishes some others. It increases and decreases the gap within and among countries. The
Nobel Prize Winner Joseph Stiglitz in his book *Globalization and its Discontents*, defines
globalization as “the removal of barriers to free trade and the closer integration of national
economies—and he believes that it can be a force for good that has the potential to enrich
everyone in the world, particularly the poor, but the way it has been managed (especially the
international trade agreements) needs to be rethought” (ix). Indeed, globalization “represents the
continuing effort by the peoples of the world to interact and share trans-nationally in the pursuit
of their objective” (Gopinath 10).

No matter what definition one adheres to, globalization is complex and multifaceted.
Many of the definitions presented above are useful in a number of cases and disciplines, but
others remain focused on one point or another, which limits their scope. I have compiled the
above definitions from both academic and resource guides in an attempt to look for patterns and
similarities. In general, I found agreement with George Ritzer, who, in his article "The Globalization of Nothing," avers that "attitudes toward globalization depend, among other things, on whether one gains or loses from it" (190). Thus, a common agreement has not yet been established. The concept's future meaning is uncertain. Given this, I take globalization to be a multi-dimensional process characterized by significant and ongoing changes in economics, politics, and culture.

As a student of the phenomenon, one who is sensitive to the postmodern philosophy's critique of functional explanations of complex socio-cultural phenomena, I hesitate to name any one set of events/developments/factors as causes and the others as effects in the socio-cultural complex that has come to be known as globalization. With postmodern theory effectively challenging the base-superstructure hierarchy in the theoretical exposition of social phenomena, it has become increasingly difficult to isolate factors such as the appearance of transnational corporations on the economic scene as being the cause of globalization. The reluctance to indulge in speculations regarding the 'real' causes of globalization does not, however, preclude a discussion of the impact of globalization on the lives of a people. This is precisely what this study aims to do.

1.3. Globalization: Academic Debate

Competing conceptions of globalization exist throughout the discourse on globalization and consequently lead to extreme forms of disagreement on how globalization is to be adequately conceptualized. There are those who doubt globalization as an actual phenomenon worthy of debate; and then there are those who do acknowledge it. Held et al. in their book Global Transformations take the argument even further and want to know how globalization is best
construed and perceived. They provide an extensive summary of the globalization debate in the hope of framing several distinctive positions on globalization. This debate then is useful in conceptualizing globalization. Theories of the phenomenon of globalization are many and to go through them all is not an easy task. It is beyond the scope of this section to address them all. Therefore, I shall limit myself to the generally accepted division according to which three main schools might be differentiated—hyperglobalizers, sceptics, and transformalists. These schools ground their assumptions on a framework of basic issues that are demanded when one studies globalization. The elements of this framework are

- definition of globalization,
- the driving forces of the process,
- the role of the State
- socio-economic consequences, and
- historical trajectories.

1.3.1. The Hyperglobalizers Thesis

The hyperglobalizers see globalization as a new era in human history which is inevitable and necessarily an opulent process. Kenichi Ohmae sees the process as “a new era in which peoples everywhere are increasingly subject to the disciplines of the global marketplace” (qtd. in Held et al. *Global Transformations* 2). Economy is emphasized by this group of thinkers because it causes a denationalization of economic through various types of international exchange. Thus, globalization is the emergence of a unified global market. They see economic globalization as an equivalent to privatization for it encourages the foundation of multinational corporations and global networks of commerce and finance. In this way, local States are belittled or relegated to little more than conducting instruments for global capital.
The hyperglobalizers claim that economic globalization is generating a new pattern of winners as well as losers in the global economy. Globalization may be linked with a growing polarization between winners and losers in the global economy. The hyperglobalizers’ account also rejects the assertion that the concept of globalization can be simply dismissed either as a purely ideological or social construction or as a synonym for Western imperialism. While not denying that the discourse of globalization may well serve “the interests of powerful social forces in the West, the hyperglobalizers’ account also emphasizes that it reflects real structural changes in the scale of modern social organization” (Teubner 19). Rather than conceiving globalization as a solely economic phenomenon, the hyperglobalizers’ analysis gives equal status to the other key dimensions of social relations (political and social development) (Held and McGrew, “The Great” 6). To reduce globalization to a purely economic or technological logic is considered profoundly misleading since it ignores the inherent complexity of the forces that shape modern societies and world order. Thus, the analysis of this group commences from a conception of globalization as “a set of interrelated processes operating across all the primary domains of social power, including the military, the political and the cultural” (6). In this respect, patterns of cultural globalization, for instance, are not presumed necessarily to replicate patterns of economic globalization. The hyperglobalizers’ account promotes a conception of globalization which recognizes this differentiation, allowing for the possibility that it proceeds at different tempos, with distinctive geographies, in different domains.

For the hyperglobalizers, the process of globalization has mono-causal dynamics. Its motor force is the market economy. They emphasize the significance of capitalism and technology. As concerns patterns of international distribution, they give importance to knowledge: “the difference between skilled and unskilled labor will determine the economic
development within as well as between countries” (Teubner 24). As for the historical trajectory of globalization, hyperglobalizers consider it as a linear and end-state process whose final aim is a fully integrated global market. They give no importance to nationality and geopolitical borders. This historicized approach encourages a conception of globalization as a somewhat indeterminate process; for globalization is not inscribed with a preordained logic which presumes a singular historical trajectory or end condition, that is, the emergence of a single world society or global civilization. In fact, teleological or determinist thinking is roundly rejected.

In reference to its implication for the State, many hyperglobalizers conceive that economic globalization supports organizations to replace the local nation states. Today, since a lot of competencies of the State are executed by international and non-governmental organizations, the State has either to redefine its role or to wither away. What is clear is that the State is no more the protagonist on the global scene. There appeared many actors with whom it should coordinate its actions. Indeed, Martin Albrow in his book *The Global Age* summarizes his view of the hyperglobalizers’ thesis and argues that it represents globalization as “embodying nothing less than the fundamental reconfiguration of the ‘framework of human action’” (85).

1.3.2. The Sceptics Thesis

The counteractive view to the hyperglobalizers is that of the sceptics who have repudiated or denied the existence of globalization completely. The sceptics believe that all globe-talk about globalization is empty jargon, fad hype, myth, and rhetoric. Claims concerning globalization are greatly exaggerated, if not pure fantasy. Sceptics have dismissed talks of globalization as a newfangled vocabulary for age-old conditions of world politics. In their eyes, contemporary
history holds nothing novel or distinctive that might be named ‘globalization’. Studies of this phantom subject are therefore a waste of time.

Comparing the present economic integration of the world with that in the 19th century, Paul Q. Hirst and Grahame Thompson remark that nowadays’ economic integration is less important than that in the 19th century. They claim that the whole process of globalization is exaggerated. Hence, these thinkers consider the hyperglobalizers’ notion as naive since they belittle the role of the State. In addition, the sceptics are content that the logic of market would support and widen the differences between people, regarding their wealth, opulence, work, social status, and intellect. Thus, social inequality is increased.

As concerns the historical trajectory of globalization, the sceptics typically consider today’s international transfers as concentrated between the regional blocs, (i.e. USA, Europe and Japan). Hence, “the development goes towards increased contacts between these blocs, and not towards a general globalization” (Teubner 25). The sceptics see the idea of cultural homogenization and world culture as myths. In this regard, they are in line with Samuel Huntington’s notion of ‘the clash of civilizations,’ based on the belief that those nations/cultures that have identical cultural characteristics will be in harmony and support each other while those who have dissimilar characteristics will be in tension. Another argument posted by the sceptics is that they conceive global governance and economic internationalization as primary Western projects, the main object of which is to “sustain the primacy of the West in world affairs which means that ‘international order’ will always be slogans of those who feel strong enough to impose them on others” (Carr 87).
For the sceptics, globalization's driving forces are the State and the market. This goes hand in hand with the assumption that the role of the State is reinforced because most of the companies are still nationally based. In other words, the State has a significant role. It helps in the regulation and active promotion of the cross-border economic activity. As for the socio-economic consequences, the sceptics believe that there are still great inequalities both between and within countries, and that globalization does not have a great impact on this situation.

In general, the sceptics take the issue with all of the primary claims of the hyperglobalizers pointing to the comparatively greater levels of economic interdependence and the more extensive geographical reach of the world economy at the beginning of the twentieth century. They reject the popular ‘myth’ that the power of national governments or state sovereignty is being undermined. The internationalization of capital may “not merely restrict policy choices, but expand them as well” (Weiss 184). If the sceptics were to be believed, rather than the world becoming more interdependent, as the hyperglobalizers assume, the world is a deeply divided space.

1.3.3. The Transformalists Thesis

The third approach is that of the transformalists who neither accept globalization as a whole as the hyperglobalizers nor reject it as the sceptics. Scholars of this group like Anthony Giddens see globalization as “a package of exchange” (qtd. in Teubner 26). He also sees it as “a powerful transformative force, which is responsible for ‘a massive shake-out’ of societies, economies, institutions of governance and world order” (qtd. in Jones 76 and Sallah 25). For this group of thinkers, globalization is “the reordering of interregional relations and action at a distance” (Held et al., Global Transformations 10). It is the main driving force behind the speedy cultural,
economic, and political changes that reform the globe nowadays. Thus, the concept is wider than the sceptics' definition but at the same time narrower than that of the hyperglobalizers. Unlike the hyperglobalizers and the sceptics, the transformalists make no claim about the trajectory of globalization. They also do not attempt to evaluate it. Though they see it as an open-ended historical process, they emphasize the contemporary patterns of the process.

The transformalists believe that globalization remakes the power and function of local governments. The process of globalization is multi-causal dynamics. Its driving forces are economics, politics, and culture. The State plays a major role in organizing the social relations. Hence, the role of the State is not lowered. Indeed, for them, globalization is a sequence of modernity. As for socio-economic consequences, the transformalists predict new patterns of global stratification. Thus, in this view, we have a dual /irreconcilable process one that fragments and integrates, universalizes and particularizes, and in which outcome is yet to be predicted.

To sum up the three positions, for the hyperglobalizers, globalization does exist and is the main reason and cause for the changes the world is expértising nowadays. They contend that "economic globalization is bringing about a 'denationalization of economies' through the establishment of transnational networks of production, trade, and finance" (Held et al. Global Transformation 3). Globalization is slowly aiding in diminishing the role and character of the nation-State. The sceptics, on the other hand, contend that globalization does not exist. It has not influenced or weakened the nation-State. For the sceptics, 'global governance' or 'economic internationalization' is in no way undermining the sovereignty of the State (qtd. in Mena 14). In between the two opposite positions is the transformalists position. They refute many of the arguments of both the hyperglobalizers and the sceptics. They do not accept the hyperglobalizers' belief that there is an end to the sovereign nation-State; and they also do not
accept the sceptics' belief that nothing has changed. Held and company in their book *Politics, Economics* argue that “at the core of the transformalist case is the belief that contemporary globalization is remaking or reshaping the faculty, power, and profession of local governments” (8). The transformalists claim that globalization exists and has an impact on all the fields of life. However, it does not impact all these fields in a similar manner.

Even to a casual observer, the limitations of each of the three approaches are evident. The teleological assumptions of the hyperglobalists are too obvious to miss. As for the sceptics, their inability to see social configurations of an age as unique in some fundamental sense forces them to seek to wish globalization away, by treating it purely as a rhetorical construct with no material basis. The transformalists dream of objectively describing globalization without attempting to interpret or evaluate it flies in the face of the postmodern insight that objective description is, at the bottom, an act of interpretation that carries traces of evaluation.

1.4. Dimensions of Globalization

1.4.1. Economic Globalization

The third and most important point to be addressed in this chapter is the dimensions of globalization (economic, political, and cultural). I start with the economic dimension which is, without doubt, the most commented upon, debated, and controversial topic within the literature on globalization. Economic globalization appears prodigious, and its consequences seem most appreciable. It often seems that economic globalization is the driving force behind the various changes bound up with culture and politics in contemporary world. It refers to “the intensification and stretching of economic interrelations across the globe” (Steger 37). In this
section. I present the economic drivers of globalization among which multinational corporations play the main role. Next, I address the following question: what impact does the process of economic globalization in general and Western transnational corporations in particular have on the developing world? The section concludes by attempting to find an answer to this question.

The concept of globalization is a contentious one, but in simple terms it refers to the idea that economic relations and activities operate on an increasingly transnational scale. Economic globalization describes the processes through which distant and diverse spaces are integrated through economic exchanges, production systems, communication flows, and commodity chains.

The globalization of economic affairs evokes both hopes and fears. Some insist that it has divided humankind even further between the rich and the poor. Others claim that it has assisted the spread of economic development. Economic globalization is mainly related to the practice of economic agencies operating in various locations or nations and doing services in favour of the global market ignoring the local base. These global agents move or change their location on the basis of profit-making. Their development or growth is the result of their efforts which give no importance to the boundaries of the nation-State.

1.4.1.1. Drivers of Globalization

Globalization is driven by many factors. An effective driver is the technological innovations in all spheres of life such as communication, mass media, information, transportations, and so forth. My concern here is with the multinational corporations which have become the main carriers of economic globalization. Transnational corporations can be seen as the institutional driver of globalization. They are globally "organizing production and allocating resources according to the principle of profit maximization" (Shangquan 2). It is estimated that by the end of the 1990s,
transnational corporations accounted for up to one-quarter of global output. While TNCs represent only a small number of all exporting firms, they monopolize global trade (Johnston, Taylor and Watts 21). Leslie Sklair notes that just 15 percent of US exporters in the 1990s operated from multiple sites, but that these firms accounted for around 80 percent of all exports – indeed, almost half of US manufacturing exports came from just fifty firms. He sums it up as follows: “the global economy is dominated by a few gigantic transnational corporations marketing their products, many of them global brands, all over the world, some medium-sized companies producing in a few locations and selling in multiple markets, while many more small firms sell from one location to one or a few other locations” (qtd. in Tonkiss 6).

Joseph Stiglitz in his book *Making Globalization Work* argues that corporations are represented as greedy and heartless entities that place profit above all else. Many instances of corporate evil-doing have rightly become infamous. For instance, Nestles campaign to persuade Third World mothers to use infant formula instead of breast milk to feed their children; and Bechtel’s attempts to privatize Bolivia’s water. The US cigarette companies try to persuade people that there has been no scientific evidence that smoking is bad for health even though their own research has confirmed that it is; and Monsanto develops seeds that produce plants which in turn produce seeds that cannot be replanted, thereby forcing farmers to buy new seeds annually. In a similar vein, Stiglitz adds that, for many people, multinational corporations have come to symbolize what is wrong with globalization; many would say that they are the primary cause of its problems. These companies are richer than most countries in the developing world because “making money is their first priority” (187). These companies survive by getting costs down in any way they can (within the law). They avoid paying taxes when possible; some skip health insurance for their workers; many try to limit spending on cleaning up the pollution they create.
Often the bill is picked up by the governments in the countries where they operate. Furthermore, the multinational corporations have grown more powerful, perhaps much more powerful, than the nation-State. We have to get used to the fact that, “thanks to the globalization process, companies rather than States will be the leading actors in world economy” (Dehesa 85). A rhetoric representation of the above mentioned ills of multinational corporations is to be presented in chapter three of this dissertation.

Yet corporations have been at the centre of bringing the benefits of globalization to the developing countries, helping them to raise standards of living throughout the world. Joseph Stieglitz mentions some advantages of the corporations. To him,

> [corporations] have enabled the goods of developing countries to reach the markets of the advanced industrial countries... [They help] the transfer of technology from advanced industrial countries to developing countries, helping to bridge the knowledge gap between the two. ... They have brought jobs and economic growth to the developing nations, and inexpensive goods of increasingly high quality to the developed ones, lowering the cost of living and so contributing to an era of low inflation and low interest rates. (Making Globalization 188)

Being at the center of globalization, corporations can be blamed for much of its ills as well as given credit for many of its achievements. Just as the issue is not whether globalization itself is good or bad but how we can reshape it to make it work better. It is easy to understand why multinational corporations have played such a central role in globalization: it takes organizations of enormous scope to span the globe, to bring together the markets, technology, and capital of the developed countries with the production capacities of the developing ones.
1.4.1.2. Economic Globalization and the Developing Countries

Any analysis of the phenomenon called globalization is incomplete without discussing it in the context of developing countries. One cannot deny that the participation of developing countries in the process of globalization enables them to better utilize their comparative advantages and introduce advanced technologies, foreign capital, and management experience. Advocates of globalization say that it drives human progress and worldwide economic growth, and they are convinced that the emergence of a global market economy will bring unprecedented prosperity to millions. Nevertheless, while providing more development opportunities for developing countries, the globalization process is also posing enormous problems to the fragile economies outside the Western world. The most obvious problem is that economic globalization has indeed increased rather than decreased the distance between the North and the South. Economic globalization fuels resentment among people who cannot afford the luxuries available to the rich. In developing countries, globalization exploits cheap labour and natural resources where laws protecting workers, human rights, and the environment are weak or nonexistent. Globalization also leads to job losses in higher-wage countries due to imports or production shifts abroad.

An online debate on “Globalization and Poverty” organized by the World Bank Development Forum in mid-2000 echoed the loud and often very aggressive impact of globalization. Nearly all the participants in the debate emphasized the very negative impact of the globalization process on the distribution of income and wealth between and within countries. They affirm that “globalization may improve growth rates, increase productivity, enhance technological capability, but it cannot redistribute created wealth and income in favor of the poor. In fact, it does the reverse—it redistributes wealth and income in favor of the not so poor” (qtd. in Bigman 27). The participants have underscored the harmful impact on the poor. Many
participants also have noted that the market is by no means the panacea for the central problems that the majority of the population in developing countries is facing. They assert that "with the opening of [local] market, [developing countries have] become a supermarket of foreign goods, which are cheaper, killing local industries, rendering many more jobless. The disparity between the rich and the poor has widened, and although some may have benefited from the effect of liberalized economy, the majority continues to languish in poverty" (27-28).

In his "The Pros and Cons of Globalization for Developing Countries," David Bigman argues that globalization is a benefit to the already strong economies of the world giving them the strength to impact the whole world in all fields of life like commerce, cultural patterns, and even politics. The First World nations with America and Britain in the lead make use of the process of globalization as a new form of imperialism which abolishes human rights of the poor countries, pretends to bring progress, yet aims at plundering and profiteering. Bigman holds the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO, and more generally, the high-income countries responsible for influencing and largely determining the route of globalization. They are also seen as the driving forces behind the policy reforms that the developing countries have had to implement as part of their structural adjustment programmes under the stewardship of the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO. He concludes that the benefits brought about by globalization have so far been distributed very unevenly among and within nations. The rich industrial countries have reaped large gains from increased trade and faster growth, whereas most poor nations have actually become worse off and their economies shrunk during the past decade.

Consciously I avoid the trap of deterministic views on globalization as the continuation of capitalism and its imposition on different parts of the globe. For example, Robins and Webster in their book *Times of the Technoculture*, represent globalization as the triumphalness of a globalized
domination of market capitalism which results in a homogeneous world culture of commodification, commercialization, administration, and domination. I also avoid the rhetoric of pro-globalization group who sees it as the spread of free markets, democracy, and individual freedom. Like Douglas Kellner, I believe that globalization is constituted by a complex interconnection between capitalism and democracy, which involves positive and negative features that both empowers and disempowers individuals and groups, undermining and yet creating potential for fresh types of democracy ("Dialectics of Globalization" 182).

While acknowledging the importance of economics in our story of globalization, this section nonetheless ends with the suggestion that we ought not to be one-sided. We have to articulate the contradictions and the conflicting costs and benefits, upsides and downsides of the process. The multidimensional nature of globalization demands a look at the political and cultural aspects of globalization. The following sections discuss these aspects.

1.4.2. Political Globalization

[11/9] exhibited a technological terror that converts benign instruments like airlines and buildings into instruments of mass destruction.

(Douglas Kellner, “Globalization” 262)

The [Iraqi] war had little to do with democracy and everything to do with US geo-economic interests in oil.

(John Macmillan, “The Iraq War” 12)

Political globalization refers to the intensification and expansion of political interrelations across the globe. In this section, I discuss whether it is true that globalization is increasingly understood
to be a synonym of Americanization in the realm of American political foreign policy. Is it true
that the attack on the World Trade Center was an attack on what was a symbol of globalization?
Is it true that 11/9 is the result of the American foreign policy? What is the relation between
globalization and 11/9? And, has globalization become an accomplice of violence?

Many people believe as I do that 11/9 is the outcome of the American foreign policy. Chalmers
Johnson in his article "American Militarism and Blowback," tries to explain the
emergence of global terror with the effect-reaction logic. According to him, 11/9 is the reaction
shown to the past American policies. Therefore, he condemns the past American foreign policy
for causing such an awful disaster. Johnson characterizes the terrorist attacks of 11/9 as
"instances of blowback from US operations in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion" (21).
Here, the concept 'blowback' is used as "a metaphor for the unintended consequences of covert
operations against foreign nations and governments" (23). Johnson emphasizes that "the suicidal
assassins of 11/9 did not attack America as United States' political leaders and news media want
to maintain; but they attacked [the] American foreign policy" (21). This perspective should be
taken into account in the evaluation of 11/9 terrorist attacks, for it has been proven that terrorists
have had connections with Al-Qaeda, which is a terrorist organization.

Understanding conditions that have led to the formation of such terrorist organizations
refer to another level in the explanation of causes. I follow John Urry at this point:

The strategy of liberal globalization, of the relatively unregulated growth of
capitalist markets across the world, produced extraordinarily heightened levels of
economic and social inequality ... Among the many effects of liberal globalization
is the generation of 'wild zones' across the former USSR, sub-Saharan Africa,
the Balkans, central America and central Asia. These zones are places of absence,
of gaps, of lack... In those zones charismatic leaders with alternative armies provide plausible solutions to such massive inequalities, especially those that seem to result from American domination over Islamic societies. (62)

Parallel to this, M. V. Rasmussen emphasizes the use of global civilian infrastructure in 11/9 attacks by non-state actors and goes further noting that "the attack did not originate from the Third World in a geographical sense, but rather from a ‘Third World space’ which globalization imported to the First World" (326). A similar approach to the above scholars is found in Thomas Friedman’s article “Why Those Angry Men,” in which he accuses the American foreign policy to be the main reason behind the sense of hatred developed towards the Americans by simple people. It also enforces them to demonstrate this hatred into violent actions and 11/9 is a case in point. In this regard, an urgent question needs an answer: Is Osama Bin Laden the only responsible for such violence? Are he and his organization the only to be blamed? This question does not mean that I am trying to give a justification to the atrocious actions and the killing of innocent people. Both the American foreign policy and the terrorist organizations are to be blamed. I believe that the aggressive hard-sell of American products and services such as Nike, McDonald’s, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, and so on is another reason for the negative impression about the Americans. The multinational companies that promote a way of life that is remarkably similar to the American way of life have begun to destroy non-Western cultures and have forced them to perform rearguard action. Organizations like the one that Osama Bin Laden is associated with are in fact a creation of the aggressive hard-sell the American-turned multinational companies have unleashed on the soil of less developed nations. In the same article Friedman writes: “the American message particularly tells young people around the world that we [Americans] have a better way than their fathers. This is why the Osama bin Ladens constantly speak of "American
arrogance and how America is ‘emasculating’ the Muslims. That’s why, they just want to kill America.”

Another scholar, Michael Mousseau proposes a complementing perspective turning attention to the social support behind the terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda. Considering that Al-Qaeda and similar terrorist organizations are not isolated groups but represent the values and beliefs of significant numbers of people, Mousseau states that the only possible solution to the problem is “to change the values and beliefs of the supporters” (5). He writes:

\[T\]he social origins of terror are rooted less in poverty—or in growing discontent with [the] US foreign policy—and more in the values and beliefs associated with the mixed economies of developing countries in a globalizing world... As a result of globalization, these values and beliefs are increasingly clashing in the mixed market–clientalist economies of the developing world, triggering intense anti-market resentment directed primarily against the epitome of market civilization: the United States. (6)

So that, there appears to be a link between underdevelopment and terror. However, Mousseau does not put the blame on underdevelopment, “the real culprit is social anarchy produced by globalization and the difficulties attending to the transition to a market economy” (27).

Thus, it is clear that America’s aggression against a sovereign State, with the approval of the so called international community has brought to the surface the real intents and purposes for which terms like globalization provide a smokescreen. America’s foreign policy in its ideological mystification is driven by a civilizational agenda. While the American society does represent a higher stage in humanity’s struggle to give all its members the freedom that an
evolved species is characterized by, American foreign policy, almost invariably fosters contempt for the American society. At this point, I can say that it is American political globalization which has turned many nations against the American way. It may have even caused the terrorist attacks on 11/9.

The other point to deal with in this section and which is a consequence of the above discussion is the relation between globalization and 11/9. To put it differently, globalization has become an accomplice of violence in the sense that terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda terror network used globalization, as it used the Internet, to communicate and move its money, people, propaganda, and terror. In his article "Why Those Angry Men," Friedman remarks that "globalization, through its rapid spread of technologies, also super-empowers them [terrorists] to do just that [terrorism]. It makes it much easier to travel, move money, or communicate by satellite phones or Internet". Saying the same but in different language, 11/9 demonstrates that the most positive aspects of globalization and new technology can be turned into negative ones against the very epicenter of globalization. Aeroplanes, for example, can be used as instruments of terror as well as transportation. Globalization makes possible both global terror networks and networks of commerce and communication. The circulation of commodities, technologies, ideas, money, and people can facilitate networks of terror as well as trade and travel. The Internet facilitates the spreading of hate and terror as well as knowledge and culture. Computers can be an integral part of a terror network just as they are part of business everywhere and many of our own everyday lives. And biotechnology, which holds the promise of medical advances and miracles, also creates weapon of mass destruction.

Thus, 11/9 and its aftermath demonstrate the contradictions and ambiguities of globalization, the Internet, biotechnology, and technology in general in the contemporary age.
Globalization has upsides and downsides, boon and bane, which are often interconnected, and are consequently intrinsically ambiguous. New technologies can be used positively or negatively and in fact are at once potentially empowering and productive, disempowering and destructive, and are thus fraught with contradictions. Hence, whereas the Internet, and cyberspace tended to be on the whole one-sided, either pro or con, 11/9 and its aftermath showed the objective ambiguity and contradictions of these phenomena. On one hand, the events showed the fundamental interdependence of the world, dramatizing how activities in one part of the world effected others and the need for more global consciousness and politics. The aftermath of 11/9 shows the limited possibilities for a single nation to impose its will on the world and to dominate the complex environment of the world economy and politics, as the recent events of Afghanistan and Iraq reveal. In short, globalization divides the world as it unifies, that it produces enemies even as it incorporates participants. The terrorist acts on the United States on 11/9 and the subsequent war on terror dramatically disclose the downsides of globalization, the ways that global flows of technology, goods, information, ideologies, and people can have destructive as well as productive effects.

Another equally important question to be answered in this section is: Is it true that the War on terror is nothing more than a veil for acquiring Third World’s cheap oil to run the US economy? The emphasis on globalization’s impact on democratic politics is my main concern here. One of the most important questions about globalization is its impact on the practice of democracy. Does globalization enhance or hinder democratic practices? Here I attempt to find answers for these questions by using Iraq invasion as the case study. The situation in Iraq is often seen as the result of America’s flawed foreign policy. The US-UK Iraq intervention arguably destabilized the Middle East and created more enemies for the West and new waves of terrorist
violence. However, Iraq invasion can also be seen as representative of many of the processes of globalization. It raises the question about the actual intentions of the United States and Western countries in Iraq. Did the United States really invade Iraq to bring democracy to the country, or were its motivations more nefarious in nature?

The decision to attack Iraq was a major one, even for a superpower like the United States. It is sometimes stated that Bush, the son, took the decision because he wanted to increase his chances of winning the Presidential election in 2004. At least two background factors have to be mentioned to place the decision-making process in this case in the proper perspective. One of these factors is the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. The other is that the policy option of invading Iraq and thereby toppling Saddam Hussein existed as a viable option in leading policy circles in the United States ever since Saddam invaded Kuwait in August 1990 (Hallenberg 20).

Besides directly causing the Afghanistan War, the 11/9 attack also created opportunities for Bush as the president to carry out policies that had been impossible to get through the US political system prior to these events. The 11/9 attack created what political scientist John Kingdon calls a ‘policy window’, a situation in which political actions that are otherwise impossible to carry out can be taken⁴. The invasion of Iraq is the clearest example of this.

It is no exaggeration to state that the issue of what goals the Bush administration has had when invading Iraq has been widely, as well as intensively, discussed, before, during and after the war. My argument here takes sides with the explanation that the main, if not the only, reason for the US invasion of Iraq was a wish to control Iraq’s oil reserves.

Many opponents believe as I do that the United States and England were only interested in invading Iraq to seize the country’s oil. Marcy Katpur says that “the driving force of this potential war on Iraq is oil” (qtd. in Dumbrell 33). Similarly, Denise Von Hermann says: “the
real motive for fighting was oil" (16). Mr. Alan Greenspan has said that it was clear to him that Saddam Hussein had wanted to control the Straits of Hormuz and so control Middle East oil shipments through the vital route out of the Gulf. He said that had Saddam been able to do that, it would have been "devastating to the West" as the former Iraqi president could have just shut off 5 million barrels a day and brought "the industrial world to its knees." He writes that "the Iraq war is largely about oil" (463).

In his lecture on "War and Globalization," Michel Chossudovsky, unveils the misleading claim put up by the Western media that the American goals of invading Iraq were for the sake of democracy and peace. It is all about oil:

If we look at the national security documents going back to Clinton's administration, we have evidence that the war on Iraq was already planned... it is a part of military strategy which says Iraq first, then Iran.... Extending from Saudi Arabia, we have a region which encompasses approximately 75 percent of the world's supply of oil and natural gas. Saudi Arabia 26 percent and Iraq 11 percent of total world reserve, that is, five times those of the US. And this is ultimately the objective of this war. It is to secure access and ownership of these reserves. It is not the only objective, but it is a key objective. (3:00-4:15)

Mikhail Leontiev 2 is known for his anti-American political stance. Regarding the Iraqi war and the Americans' goals of waging such war, Leontiev states three aims:

There are three sub-elements in this frame. The first two are oil prices and the pumping of devalued money into the American economy and, especially, into the military-industrial complex. The third sub-element is the idea that this war provides a perfect pretext for the Bush administration to put direct pressure on
every country in the world not only in the military but also in economic sphere.

(qtd. in Nikolaev 203)

In my viewpoint, I do agree with Mikhail Leontie’s three mentioned above goals and believe that the occupation of Iraq is not only about oil but also it is the first step of a long plan to re-colonize and control the Middle East economically, politically, and militarily. This quotation aptly articulates my view: “if the invasion and attempted colonization of Iraq is not entirely about the seizure of up to 225 billion barrels of possible oil reserves, then it certainly is a significant part of the strategy [colonization of the Middle East]…” (Standlea 4).

In another frame entitled “The Americanization of the Arab World and the Middle Eastern Beachhead”, says Leontiev:

[A] very special goal of the 2003 Iraq war was Americanization of the Arab world and, in particular, of Iraq. But this is not the ultimate goal. The ultimate regional goal of the war is, through this Americanization process, to establish a strong beachhead in the region for future aggressions against other countries that don’t want to serve the Americans…They [Americans] entirely focused on Iraq. They need Iraq in relation to their far-stretching plans of Americanization of the entire Arab world….And this will be achieved through creating an American beachhead in the region: ‘The puppet regime in Iraq is needed as the key to open ‘mop-up’ operations against the rest of the Arab world’. (qtd. in Nikolaev 207-208)

Thus, I believe that ‘Kick Their Ass & Take Their Gas’ was the watchword of Bush and his administration team. The United States and England were only interested in invading Iraq to
seize the country’s oil on the name of fake values such as peace, democracy, human rights, and war on terror.

However, there are some who believe that oil was not the main goal of the US. For example, Jan Hallenberg is of the idea that it is “not reasonable to assume that the US has either control of Iraqi oil, or control of its oil exports, as the main reason for invading Iraq” (21). To him, the first main goal was to demonstrate political and military power by toppling the Iraq regime in a situation where the decision-makers in Washington regarded it as both politically and militarily fairly simple to do. This goal of regime change for the sake of a power demonstration is linked to the other two main goals, but it also has its own separate explanatory power. The second main goal was to prevent the danger that the regime of Saddam Hussein might use WMD (World Mass Destruction) to threaten the US or in the future might form an alliance with al-Qaeda and supply this organization with WMD. The third main goal, which is directly linked to several more detailed objectives, was that the US government wanted to start the process of building a more democratic and thus more stable Middle East. I believe that this goal is the biggest myth that the Americans with George Bush, the son, in the lead wanted the world to believe. I think that the Iraqi occupation is one, if not the main, of the steps to dominate all the Middle East in general and the Gulf wealth in particular. In John Macmillan who believes that “the war had little to do with democracy and everything to do with US geo-economic interests in oil.” I find a fellow-traveller (12). The “US strategic objectives in Iraq were above all to secure a base area that could dominate the region, including the oil reserves and supply lines of the nearby Gulf” (Falk 26). Another theorist who corroborates my belief is Anne-Marie Obajtek-Kirkwood for whom the war on Iraq is “all … about oil again and not about the Iraqi people” (133).
Coming back to Leontiev, he states that the Americans take the invasion of Iraq as a pretext for their military presence in the gulf region. On the first day of the war, he states in his summary commentary:

Saddam Hussein traditionally has been the most effective instrument of the American foreign policy in the Gulf region... The United States have to thank him specifically for the fact of their massive military presence in the region, which they—without any basis for that—consider their most strategic part of the world. And today Saddam Hussein has to render his last services to America. (qtd. in Nikolaev 208)

The fourth objective of the Iraq War is that the Bush administration regarded a democratic Iraq as bringing improved chances for a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As we all know, Saddam was one of the main supporters of the Palestinian resistance. The planned ousting of Saddam from power was regarded as a part of the move to quell the resistance of the Palestinians. In other words, Saddam Hussein’s regime had given fairly substantial sums of money for several years to the families of the men and women who gave their lives in fighting against the Israeli colonizers. So toppling of Saddam’s regime is tantamount to the weakening of the colonized Palestinians and power to the Israeli colonizers.

The above discussion makes it amply clear that the American war on terror, rather than making the world a secure place, has made it more insecure and frightening by lessening human rights, belittling the role of international law. It has increased the gap among people of diverse beliefs and origins.
1.4.3. Cultural Globalization

Before trying to understand how cultural globalization works and affects our lives and consequently see whether it is unifying or rather a subject of discord that tends to separate or segregate people and communities, it is probably more relevant that I first try to define terms like culture and cultural globalization. Obviously, 'culture' is a very broad concept; it is frequently used to describe the whole of human experience. It is defined as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or society or category or nation from another” (Hofstede 25). Cultural globalization refers to “the intensification and expansion of cultural flows across the globe” (Steger 69). The thematic landscape of cultural globalization is vast and the questions to raise are too numerous to be dealt with in this short section. In what follows, I limit my focus on the key concepts of interaction between globalization and culture—namely homogenization, heterogenization, and hybridization.

1.4.3.1. Homogenization

Homogenization refers to the trend towards sameness and the reduction in diversity of cultures around the world. In this view, barriers that disallow flows that would make cultures look similar are feeble and global flows are sturdy. Known as convergence, homogenization maintains that a more powerful culture can impact and reshape local cultures. In such a way, it is not difficult to find a similar global culture of similar beliefs, values, tastes, and desires. Nowadays, more and more people across various countries listen to the same music, watch the same movies, wear similar clothes, and consume the same products. People in America, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, India, or any other place in the globe wear the same jeans, eat the same fast food, and drink the same Pepsi or Coca-Cola. These are indications of the existence of ‘global culture’.
Homogenization is sometimes emblematized as Global culture, Americanization, or McDonaldization.

Helge Ronning sees Americanization as the way about which “the US has become everyone’s second culture” (qtd. in Graffy 72). It is stressed that the world is presently experiencing Americanization, rather than globalization. This is suggestive of the American dominance and cultural impact through the harsh increase of mass communication and spread of their corporations in the rest of the world. The American domination is apparent that their country is the origin of about 85 percent of the Internet web pages. Furthermore, 75 percent of the globe software is governed or controlled by their MNCs (Jaja 118). Cultures which have dissimilar beliefs from that of the Americans are of no significance. So, the Americanization process seems to be in opposition with local cultures.

Another appropriate description of global homogenization is McDonaldization. The creator of the term George Ritzer in his “Introduction to McDonaldization,” defines it as “the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as of the rest of the world” (7). McDonaldization is the notion of worldwide effects of multinational corporations and the success of McDonald’s franchise to spread all over the globe. McDonaldization affects not only the restaurant business but also virtually every other aspect of society. The success of McDonald’s itself is apparent that “there are McDonald’s everywhere. There’s one near to you, and there’s one being built right now even nearer to you. Soon, if McDonald’s goes to expand at its present rate, there might even be one in your house. You could find McDonald’s boots under your bed. And maybe his red wig, too,” writes Ritzer (8). McDonald’s strives to continually extend its reach within American society and beyond. The company’s chairman said, “our goal: to totally dominate the quick
service restaurant industry worldwide ... I want McDonald’s to be more than a leader. I want McDonald’s dominate” (12-13).

Some scholars as Pieterse and Appadurai argue that cultural homogenization is not a very complex process since many local cultures demonstrate their capacity to resist alien or foreign influences. That is why, hybridization as a result of interaction between diverse cultures and nations is preferred to cultural homogenization. Thus, globalization helps to make a combination of global and local cultural norms.

1.4.3.2. Heterogenization

In contrast to global homogeneity, many scholars see increased heterogeneity. Heterogenization, also called differentiation, relates fundamentally to barricades that preclude flows that would partake to make cultures look alike. Globalization generates a state of heterogeneity which “strengthens national cultures rather than undermine[s] them” (Hassi and Storti 9). Also, Roland Robertson in his “Globalization Theory 2000” advocates the notion of heterogeneity with a focus on diversity, multi-directional global flows and the existence of world processes that are independent and sovereign of other nation-States. These flows do not eradicate local cultures, they only change some of their traits and reinforce others. Additionally, Mike Featherstone states that ‘the world is becoming more different’. He writes:

Rather than the emergence of a unified global culture there is a strong tendency for the process of globalization to provide a stage for global differences not only to open up a ‘world showcase of cultures’ in which the examples of the distant exotic are brought directly into the home, but to provide a field for a more discordant clashing of cultures. While cultural integration processes are taking
place on a global level, the situation is becoming increasingly pluralistic, or polytheistic, a world with many competing gods. (13)

In sum, it has been asserted that the values, practices, and beliefs of foreign cultures have impacted local cultures. However, these foreign practices remain in the margin in comparison to native cultures and this leads to the coexistence of the local and global. In spite of the globalization forces, local cultural patterns and differences among cultures remain not weak.

1.4.3.3. Hybridization

The third model of interaction between culture and globalization is termed hybridization. It is the process of cultural mixture or amalgamating. George Ritzer in his book *Basic Text* presents this view and expresses that the indoor and outward practices interplay to make a cultural hybrid that comprehends the two. Indeed, foreign practices or flows are existent and are in power; however, they are not very hefty to clog local cultural practices.

Some hybridization can be close to homogenization with only minimal blends of standardized products. But the hybridization of most interest to globalization scholars has to do with those cases where standard global categories, such as core/periphery, male/female, native/cosmopolitan, art/craft etc., are blurred and subverted. Nevertheless, hybrids are not a new consequence of globalization. All cultures can be seen as hybrid. What globalization adds is an increased pace that makes it more difficult to hide culture’s hybrid nature. Thus, the basic notion of cultural hybridization is the ceaseless process of fusion of cultures. Robertson in his “Theory 2000.” views globalization as a composite fusion of homogenization and heterogenization.

Arjun Appadurai in his very influential essay “Disjunctures and Differences,” argues that we can’t think of globalization as a single dimension. He identifies at least five complex, overlapping and disjunctive dimensions of global cultural flows with no single organizing
principle. These are actually multiple dimensions to globalization and these different dimensions
at times contradict each other and combine in unpredictable ways. Appadurai asks us to consider
the world in terms of a map or landscape. If we look at the world according to economics, then
we get one particular map with key financial centers marked and important flows of investment
and information connecting specific places. But if we look at the world according to the
movement of people, we get a different topography; we see people moving to where jobs are, or
away from famines or wars, or towards the latest trendy tourist hotspot. Each of these
dimensions he refers to as a “scape” (short for landscape). And he delineates five such scapes:

a. ethnoscape: the landscape of persons; tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest
   workers;

b. technoscape: the landscape of technology and the distribution of technologies
   globally; this includes to where manufacturing plants move;

c. finanscape: the landscape of money and investment; this includes stock
   exchanges, monetary exchanges, loans, and investments (follow the money!)

d. mediascape: the landscape of images and stories; and

e. ideoscape: the landscape of political ideas (such as freedom, democracy, and
   social justice). (Modernity at Large 33-37)

These forces combine and disperse to increase heterogeneity, having their greatest effect on the
cultural imagination. Each of these landscapes moves in a slightly different way and each
movement has implications for the others. The movement of a group of guest workers from a
home country to another country for employment has economic effects on both countries. This
group also brings with them their own media images (and the desire to import more media
images from their home culture) and cuisine and political ideas. The resulting economic changes
might have implications for global money markets and potential investment in either country by the World Bank or others.

Leslie Sklair points out that global consumer culture increases resentment because it cannot fulfill the promises that it makes to the world’s poor: “once the culture-ideology of consumerism is adopted, poor people cannot cope economically, and a mode of resistance must develop. In the Muslim case, this mostly manifests itself in religious extremism, whose target is as often Americanization as it is consumerism as such” (qtd. in Goodman 340).

To sum up, globalization and culture interact and impact each other. Their interaction results in discordance in literature since different scholars have attempted to study these interactions. From the homogenization school’s perspective, obstructions that disallow flows that make cultures look similar are feeble or nonexistent. For the heterogenizationists, these obstructions are stronger. And in the hybridization view, local and global flows interplay with each other and produce hybrid that includes the two.

To conclude, the term globalization has become a catch-phrase used by academicians, journalists, and politicians throughout the world. It has come to mean all things to all people, and as such has attracted many sometimes-contradictory definitions. Some writers for example, look at globalization as the shortening of distance and time which leads to live in a global village or global neighbourhood. Like Thomas Friedman, they believe that “globalization is shrinking the world from size small to size tiny” (The World 10). Others however, view it as nothing but capitalism, colonization in a new false garb of human rights, democracy, and improvement of poor nations. They see it as an American project—to foster American hegemony. Economically, globalization is viewed as a boon for the already strong economies while for the impoverished ones, it is seen as exploitation, plundering, and growing inequalities between the rich and the
Others assert that globalization is a fact of economic life. It has to do with the spread of free markets, democracy, and individual freedom. They believe that arguing against globalization is like arguing the laws of gravity. In my viewpoint, globalization is a complex process which involves positive and negative features that both empowers and disempowers individuals and groups. Politically, I may say that globalization along with the aggressive American foreign policy have become accomplice of violence. The new inventions brought up by globalization such as aeroplanes and Internet facilitate the dark side of globalization i.e., terrorism, and 11/9 is a case in point. 11/9 had caused the invasion of two Muslim countries: Afghanistan and Iraq on the name of peace and democracy. In fact, the Iraqi war has nothing to do with democracy, freedom, and human rights and everything with the Arabs’ wealth and the American military presence in the region. Culturally, globalization’s interaction with culture is reflected in three positions: sameness, differences, and in-between. While the homogenizationists claim the existence of a global culture, namely American one, where there is no place for national or local cultures; the heterogenizationists deny the claim of the homogenizationists and argue that globalization strengthens the national cultures. Between these irreconcilable views is the belief that local and global cultural patterns interact with each other to form a new one. This view is carried out by the hybridizationists.
Notes


2) Mikhail Leontiev is journalist and a professional economist. All the quotations by him that have been cited in this chapter have been taken from Alexander G. Nikolaev’s “Why The Russians Did Not Support the 2003 Iraq War.” For full citation see the works cited.