

## 2 Globalization and Its Effects

---

A great amount of information and material is provided with regard to the study of globalization. In general, research in this field of study is mainly focused on economic, technological, or information systems. This work, however, puts the spotlight on the interplay of the very cohesive concepts of globalization and culture. Tomlinson and Nederveen Pieterse, in particular, successfully connect the dots between the two. Globalization carries many different conceptualizations and interpretations, resulting in a plethora of information and arguments. A concise definition of globalization and its accompanying themes and forces constitutes a difficult task.

This chapter aims at preparing the groundwork for a stable discussion on a ‘global turn’ in literary and cultural studies for the analysis of cultural diversity and the contemporary North American global city novel. This is accomplished by a brief introduction to the major themes of globalization in Section 2.1. In Section 2.2 on ‘Global Consensus,’ the recurring characteristics that trigger globalization will be presented. Using the three main approaches to the effects of globalization, the different opinions on globalization theory will be presented in Section 2.3.

### 2.1 MAPPING GLOBALIZATION

Global phenomena continue to entertain the world, including economic issues such as the global financial crisis, ecological issues such as global warming, sport events such as the soccer World Cup or the Olympics, and internationally successful celebrities such as Lady Gaga. Globalization is all-embracing and so is its critique. This work refrains from a more detailed description as ‘globalization’ is a multi-faceted term, used throughout a wide range of fields of studies. In this chapter, however, a brief definition of globalization is provided. Starting

with the pinning down of a global time frame, globalization as a possible result of modernity as well as the coordinates and the population of the topic are laid out.

Due to its all-pervasiveness and easy application, every subject can be linked to and is affected by globalization. In the field of cultural studies, advocates include Tomlinson 2001; Nederveen Pieterse 1995, 2004; Stuart Hall 1992; Featherstone 1995; Kraidy 2002, 2005; Appadurai 1990, and Huntington 1996. In international politics, one advocate among many is McGrew 1992. Thomas L. Friedman (2005) claims that for the best or worst, the world has changed economically. Moreover, Jeffrey D. Sachs argues in favor of globalization in his 2005 book *The End of Poverty*. In sociology, critics include Lash et al 1994; Castells 1996, 1997, 1998; and Robertson 1992. Friedman (1994; 1999) writes about globalization with regard to anthropology. Critics as well as opponents include, among many others, Hirst and Thomson. In *Globalization in Question* (1996), the two critics argue against a solely economically induced and influenced globalization.

The term ‘globalization’ itself was coined by the economist Levitt in 1983. It was used in literature beginning in the mid-1980s and gained strong momentum in the 1990s. Since the beginning of the 1990s (Schnell 2000: 189), the use of the term has been propelled by a growing global economy. The name is derived from the globe, encompassing the entire world on Earth. Different versions of the term are used. Whereas the most frequently employed term ‘globalization’ describes a continuous transnational process of interconnectedness, ‘globalism’ refers to an economically-driven development (Beck 1997) and ‘globality’ refers to an ‘actual condition’ (Stockhammer 2010: 336). Depending on the discipline and the particular national discourse, concepts like ‘mondialisation’ and ‘planetary’ are discussed occasionally. These notions are not derived from the globe but from similar ‘unifying’ concepts such as the world or the planet. The French term ‘mondialisation’ describes the economic process of globalization, the rather ecological function of ‘planetary awareness,’ and the social consciousness of an increasing economic inequality in the world (Augé 2008: x [1995]). The plural form ‘mondialisations’ describes the plurality of the different cultural phenomena of globalization and how we think about the world in different disciplines (Badura 2006). The term ‘planetary’ also functions as a ‘counter concept’ to globalization, thereby highlighting social responsibility. With regard to this concept, unity is conveyed because humankind inhabits one shared planet (Spivak 2003). Nevertheless, ‘globalization’ remains the outstanding term across the disciplines. Moreover, the global city is derived from the term and functions as a

strategic node, both hub, and contact zone of the various processes of globalization. Therefore, ‘globalization’ will be the leading term of this analysis.

Critics argue about the emergence of globalization. Some claim it occurred within the last thirty years, whereas others see a connection between globalization and modernity (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 15f.). This sociological approach, which contemplates whether globalization is a consequence of modernity (Giddens 1990) or not, is fiercely disputed. Some critics claim that the ‘Global Age’ replaced the ‘Modern Age’ (Albrow 1997: 6), while others draw the line between the revisit of modernity and capitalism (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 1). Thus, due to its similar economic settings, globalization is occasionally regarded as the disguised successor to imperialism (Nederveen Pieterse 2004; Tomlinson 2001).

Since globalization is viewed as a result of modernity that originated in Western Europe, heavy critique about its *Euro-centrism*, or the only one kind of modernity, that of the West, arises because it implies the ‘Westernization’ approach to globalization. Some critics claim that globalization started as early as around 1500 (Reichardt 2010: 31) with the voyages of Christopher Columbus and his discovery of the Americas. This timeframe functions as the first stimulus of globalization, followed by the second stimulus of globe-encompassing transportation and communication in the nineteenth century, and the third and more recent stage of supranational economics and transnational cultures (Ette 2004: 29). With the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Eastern and Western Germany in 1990, physical and symbolic walls became translucent, supporting and accelerating our steadily globalizing and seemingly *borderless world* (Ohmae 1992).

Locating the global population seems to be an easy task since globalization encompasses the entire globe. Hence, every citizen in the world is affected. However, its global reach is also disputed because globalization affects some regions of the world more than others due to its unbalanced impact. The erosion of boundaries furthers transactions of every kind so that the globe is increasingly connected, disregarding national boundaries, e.g. through the flow of people, capital, or crimes. This phenomenon is taking place simultaneously with a trend towards a demise of the nation-state (McGrew 1992: 65). Hence, to some critics, the term ‘transnational’ is outdated.<sup>4</sup> However, critics agree that globalization is not a balanced but rather an uneven force. The process is very selective, as it af-

---

4 For more information about the term ‘transnational’ and other expressions used with regard to (cultural) exchange across national borders, see Chapter 4 on ‘Cultural Diversity in a Globalizing Age.’

fects some areas of the world more than others. Nederveen Pieterse calls this effect a ‘selective globalization’ (2004: 13). According to this approach, globalization started in Europe and other Western countries, whereas remote cultures have not been as affected or not as immediately affected. Moreover, not everyone in the world’s population has equal access to markets and technologies (Augé 2008: xi [1995]).

The question of global geography is interrelated with the mapping of a global population. For the first time in history, almost every world citizen is involved. This is the revelation of the globe-encompassing phenomenon. However, each individual is affected on a different scale. These uneven proportions are mainly dependent on the individual’s location. Whereas Western or the most developed countries are more globalized, the so-called ‘Third World’ or less-developed countries are not as much in touch with globalization. The stage of globalization is dependent on *active* and *passive* elements of a country, region, or ethnic group. Active elements can be influenced by the individual, for instance the opportunity to travel or the opportunity to use the Internet. In Germany, for example, almost everyone can afford Internet access; however, not many can afford a transatlantic flight. Passive elements restrict those active possibilities for individuals and are mostly determined by political, economic, and geographical restrictions slowing down the globalization process. China’s restrictions on the Internet are a good example with entire domains being banned, isolating their inhabitants from world news, as in the struggle for Tibet’s independence. Thus, the individual globalization is limited by the political or passive elements of the country.

Pinning down the effects of globalization remains a double-edged sword. Due to the enormity of the material on globalization, fixed and inclusive categories of parallels and controversies of the concept remain a difficult task. Nevertheless, the following two sections will show, on the one hand, parallel opinions and, on the other, disputes in the approach to the topic of globalization and its effects.

## 2.2 GLOBAL CONSENSUS

Most critics from various fields, such as economy, sociology, and cultural studies, agree on the following assumptions. The three forces of globalization, namely increased connectivity, improved technologies, and perceived convergence, lead to three innovations. These include the growing global interdependence, a growing numbers of multi-directional migrations around the world, and the slow

erosion of (national) politics. The forces and innovations trigger international or even global exchange with regard to economic, cultural, and media background. Five types of transnational flows can be identified in a global context: ethnoscapescapes, technoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes, (Appadurai 1996: 33). Moreover, the effects of globalization become driving forces themselves, enriching a circular process of forces and effects. This section will briefly introduce the different forces and effects that accelerate global flows and connectedness. The section will be concluded with a short glimpse at the cultural meaning of globalization.

Increased connectivity translates into fast, almost immediate exchange of information with regard to politics, security, and media. Globalization, as a process, constantly pushes for more connectivity (Hannerz 1990: 237), resulting in increased networking around the globe. Anthony Giddens calls this effect a 'local-global dialect' (1990) in which individual actions on a local level have a global impact, e.g. in the clothing industry: buying a T-shirt has an effect on a Filipino worker thousands of miles away from the purchase. Similarly, news is spread around the world in an instant. One recent example is the Islam-critical YouTube movie from an independent American director, which caused uproar in Pakistan and then quickly spread to further Muslim countries within days. The awareness of this interconnectedness shifts the attention to the so-called *butterfly effect*<sup>5</sup> or *chaos theory* (Kiel et al 1996: 58) in which local events can trigger global actions, problems, disputes, or even catastrophes.<sup>6</sup> Thus, in a global context, "the world has become one network of social relationships" (Hannerz 1990: 237) in which the different cultural flows interconnect the different localities. Castells calls this effect a 'network society.' The global network society is characterized by both its common features and its diversity. It is conceived as a system of different network societies communicating with each other, forming a global network of information (Castells 2004).

Technological advances are accompanied by an increase in connectivity and experienced convergence. The entire globe seems to be connected by new or better means of infrastructure, transportation, information, or digital devices. Ac-

---

5 The 'butterfly effect' is a popular term that describes the 'chaos theory' originating in mathematics. This approach explains how a minor error can grow into a tremendous consequence.

6 Albert-László Barabási's *Linked: How Everything Is Connected to Everything Else and What It Means for Business, Science, and Everyday Life* (2002) provides an entertaining book with regard to the matter of global connectedness as well as the emergence of world-wide events, such as trends or diseases.

cording to Alfonso de Toro, new Internet technology has “transformed the world into an ever-growing virtual surface that, on the one hand, expands the world in an almost infinite way and, on the other hand, compresses it radically so that we live in a permanent implosion” (2006: 20). New technology leads to faster information services and growing global networks of people, capitalism, and ideologies. While global-encompassing instant messaging devices such as Twitter rapidly change information technology and the entertainment industry, social networks such as Facebook have an increasing impact on the world’s youth, forming transnational and translingual ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson 1983). Thus, technology becomes the capitalist vehicle of culture in which different cultural elements are transported via different transportation systems, the mass media, or alternative electronic devices.

The perceived convergence is first and foremost a product of an individual’s consciousness of a global world and its interconnectedness. This awareness of the wholeness of the world (Robertson 1992: 8) or the feeling of more intimacy emerges because remote images are transported to us, e.g. via electronic devices (Tomlinson 2001). An increasing global proximity of places is one possible result. Everything is closer or easier to reach in a certain time frame, e.g. through infrastructure, or it appears closer through the transportation of information and images via electronic or wireless connections. Thus, the image of a ‘shrinking world’ is created by the illusion of a ‘time-space compression’ (Harvey 1989) or an ‘annihilation of space by time’ (Marx 1973).

The first of the three innovations of globalization is the growing interdependence. The global marketplace, for instance, is ruled by global competition (Schnell 2000: 189) and global players in business. This economy-induced globalization interconnects the world economy. However, the process is not a balanced one because economic globalization is mainly influenced by Western countries. Nevertheless, this economically-driven globalization is continuously networking beyond geographical, political, and ethnic boundaries. Free market zones in specific regions of the globe, e.g. NAFTA<sup>7</sup>, are established. Finance and banking have been internationalized. Several good examples include the transna-

---

7 NAFTA, or the North American Free Trade Agreement, is a treaty that facilitates the transaction of money and other goods between the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Please forward to Section 8.2 ‘Los Angeles Imagined: The World City’ to read more about globalization and NAFTA in Karen Tei Yamashita’s *Tropic of Orange* (1997).

tional economy of institutions, such as IMF<sup>8</sup> or the World Bank and the interdependence of Wall Street with other stock markets. Marx and Engels claimed a long time ago that, economically speaking, “the need for a constantly expanding market for its goods chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere” (1967: 83 [1848]). This interconnectedness results in extreme competition when it comes to the positioning of headquarters, production facilities, call center services or to economic strategies, such as *off-shoring* or *outsourcing* due to cheaper labor, taxes, and other cost cuts. Hence, to some extent, the “acceleration of time-space compression [is] propelled by transnational companies” (Barker 2004: 76).

The second innovation of globalization is a growing multidirectional migration. Jan Nederveen Pieterse argues that “we are all migrants” (2004: 32) and that migration furthers the “interethnic mingling and crisscrossing of gene pools and physiological features” (2004: 26). He claims that there has been a process of ‘hybridization’ going on all along because “‘national’ identities are *mélange* identities, combinations of peoples that have been conventionally amalgamated under a political heading” (2004: 33) that has been constructed to create this national identity. There is no question that migration and colonialism, whether boon or bane, have propelled cultural exchange. Newly industrializing countries are longing for an improvement of their standard of living, whereas Western people nowadays strive to go back to their roots or long for an experience of ‘exotic’ lifestyles abroad. People now migrate to every corner of the globe, and this migration has thus led and contributed to a transfer of knowhow and global technological and economic progress (Griffin 2000).

The third innovation of globalization is the gradual erosion of politics. This may either include the decreasing number of voters and less trust in national politics or, it may signify an erosion of boundaries (Scholte 2000), to a so-called *borderless world* (Ohmae 1992). In globalization, the demise of the nation-state “involves a paradigm shift from the era of the nation state and international politics to planetary scope” (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 7). Moreover, transportation and even more so Internet traffic cross boundaries and face even fewer borders or no limits at all, creating an illusion of a world without borders. Hence, the terms ‘transnational’ and ‘international’ fail to capture the global process of exchange, in particular with regard to cultural studies, because they refer to interac-

---

8 IMF stands for International Monetary Fund, an organization that watches world-wide financial transactions.

tions between two or more nations, whereas globalization goes beyond nations or countries by referring to the entire globe.

Jan Nederveen Pieterse argues that the nation-state has been receding; instead, there emerged an ‘age of ethnicity’ (2004: 33). This leads us to the cultural meaning of globalization, which is the most important issue with regard to this study on cultural diversity of the literary global city. John Tomlinson explains the reciprocal relationship between culture and globalization as the following: whereas the latter lies “at the heart of modern culture; cultural practices lie at the heart of globalization” (2001: 1). Thus, the understanding of culture is altered in the process of globalization due to the intrinsic relationship between culture and globalization.

As mentioned before, another effect of globalization is the compression of the world (Barker 2004: 76). This all-encompassing act of imagining ‘one world’ raises awareness and consciousness of the compression process, shrinking the Earth metaphorically, and steadily increasing connectedness. With regard to cultural studies, a compression of the world is beneficial (Barker 2004: 76) because “globalization disturbs the way we conceptualize ‘culture’” (Tomlinson 2001: 27). Due to the formerly prevailing locality concept, culture was seen as a local phenomenon, shaped by specific local influences. Nowadays, culture is no longer restricted to a certain country or region. It breaks through local cultures and breaks off the immobility of the concept. Globalization provides the opportunity for a ‘moving together’ of all human kind beyond constructions such as race, class, and nations by celebrating multiculturalism in the media, fashion, and sports (Schnell 2000: 189). Signs of transcultural relations are transported via our television and shopping centers, giving remote cultures a voice and providing access to other or mainstream cultures. According to Ohmae, this resembles “the new melting pot of today’s cross-border civilization” (1995: 39). Therefore, tastes, styles, and other economically-induced phenomena circumvent or even blur physical or political borders.

Nevertheless, globalization is not a phenomenon that creates opportunity and equality for all. As a matter of fact, apart from the three forces and the three innovations of globalization, there are many controversies inherent in the topic of globalization. Some critics speak of a ‘homogenization’, while some argue for a ‘differentiation’ of cultures. The next section consequently provides an overview of the main approaches to defining globalization and tackling its main directions.



## 2.3 GLOBAL CONTROVERSIES

There are many departure points within the discussion of globalization, its effects, and repercussions. In this study, three main directions of the topic are identified, namely both *westernization* and *standardization* as a process of *homogenization* as well as *hybridization* as a concept of *heterogeneity*. This section aims at featuring an overview of the main directions and several different but nevertheless related approaches to globalization within these directions, providing the perfect cradle for an analysis of cultural diversity in an urban global context.

Globalization can be distinguished in two forms prevailing in literature: uniformity with regard to consumerism (or homogenization) or differentiation as cultural fragmentation (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 1). Within the concept of ‘homogenization’, there are two approaches to global uniformity: Westernization, coined by Serge Latouche’s *The Westernization of the World* (1996: 3), and standardization. The two approaches go hand in hand, both featuring the assumption that globalization is a type of modernization. However, due to this study’s focus on North America, the question needs to be raised with respect to how the United States fits in. Americanization is the latest variety of the Westernization approach (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 49). According to this concept, “hegemony is prepackaged in Los Angeles, shipped out to the global village, and unwrapped in innocent minds” (Liebes et al 1993: xi, quoted in Tomlinson 2001). Therein, cultural icons and values, being predominantly American, are transported beyond borders and continents. The impact of international businesses, rooted foremost in the United States, changes the whole world. Since the 1970s, terms like *Coca-colonization* (Howes 1996), *McWorld* (Barber 1995), and *Disneyfication* (Zukin 1995) have been used in exchange for a standardized Westernization perspective of globalization. *McDonaldization*, for instance, is “the process whereby the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world” (Ritzer 1993: 19). All forms stand for a variety of American influence that, together with the power of the American media, lead to ‘global cultural synchronization’ (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 49).

Hence, Americanization can be translated as *neo-colonialism* due to its focus on consumerism, commercials, mass media, mass production, and sales. Essentially, everything is money-focused. The settling and colonization are no longer performed in a physical manner but rather via the transportation of trends, values, and legends like the ‘American dream.’ Critically speaking, a country in which self-determination, self-development, and self-making are the highest values teaches the world about ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ by means of TV shows, Holly-

wood movies, and hip hop videos. This is not only a transfer of lifestyle but, taken to the extreme, a claim of *manifest destiny* and superiority in disguise of a civilizing mission to bring the world democracy, wealth, and consumerism. Therefore, Americanization, a double-edged sword, is feared to be cultural imperialism in which the hegemonic culture imposes power over non-Western cultures. Critical conceptions include a nightmare scenario in which “the hierarchical nature of imperialism, that is the increasing hegemony of particular central cultures, the diffusion of American values, consumer goods and lifestyles” (Friedman 1994: 195) constitute the focus. Of course, some critics argue against the homogenization effects of economic influence (Lowe et al 1997). Nevertheless, most view the *Westernization* force as a trend towards a so-called *capitalist monoculture* (Tomlinson 2001: 83).

In line with cultural homogenization, globalization as standardization is a process of “synchronization to the demands of standardized consumer culture, making everywhere seem more or less the same” (Tomlinson 2001: 6). This is established by a “commodification of culture” (Tomlinson 2001: 85f), which can be translated into global uniform ways of shopping, fast food, television, Internet, and travel. The most controversial questions raised in that matter are whether the world is becoming a single cultural setting or not and whether cultural convergence leads to unity or uniformity of cultures (Tomlinson 2001: 11). Furthermore, the crucial question is whether time-space compression equals cultural compression.

The *standardization* process is driven by the most developed countries pushing modern elements, e.g. the increased need for convenience or entertainment, to the less modernized areas. Samuel P. Huntington calls this worldwide phenomenon the ‘third wave’ of democratization (1991; Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 48). Since the United States has continually appeared to resemble the most developed country in the past, this wave of consumerism can be described as *McDonaldization* or one of its many variations presented earlier, all of which are closely related to the concept of ‘Americanization’ or ‘Westernization’. However, the so-called ‘BRICS’ countries consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are expected to take over the lead in the long run.

The third position with regard to globalization is that of a global *mélange* or hybridization of culture. In this position, the previous two approaches of uniformity or modernization are opposed because “hegemony is not merely reproduced but refigured in the process of hybridization” (Nederveen Pieterse 1995: 57). This focus on diversity in a globalizing age argues in favor of a *rhizome of culture* that captures the multiple approaches to and the multidirectional way of cultural definition (Deleuze et al 1987). Thus, with regard to diversity, globaliza-

tion as hybridization and global *mélange* is promoted while arguing against the *homogenization* approach of globalization (Nederveen Pieterse 2004).

The global homogenization theory is feared and doubted. García Canclini (1995) and Jesus-Martin Barbero (1993) argue for hybridization rather than cultural imposition, giving the example of Latin America. John Tomlinson also argues against a sole *homogenization* theme (2001: 97). Standardization and Westernization (Americanization) are questioned because there is always translation, adaption, or 'indigenization' of the receiving culture (Appadurai 1990; Tomlinson 2001). Jan Nederveen Pieterse goes a step further and points out that whereas Westernization or standardization appearing in the form of "cultural convergence translates into a politics of assimilation with the dominant group at the cultural center of gravity" (2004: 56), the process of cultural hybridization is influenced by all hierarchical, political, or ethnic directions. In contrast to the 'Westernization' approach, cultural mixing or cultural hybridity refer "to a politics of integration without the need to give up cultural identity while cohabitation is expected to yield new cross-cultural patterns of difference" (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 56).

In contrast to the economic-focused approach, globalization on a cultural studies level is not entirely 'westernized' because the process is not organized but rather is chaotically induced and influenced by more than one force (Barker 2004: 77). Cultural hybridity in a time of globalization can be regarded as a positive outcome of colonization because "population movement and settlement established during colonialism and its aftermath, combined with the more recent acceleration of globalization, particularly of electronic communications, have enabled increased cultural juxtapositioning, meeting and mixing" (Barker 2004: 77). Hence, contemporary culture is highly influenced by hybridization processes (Gómez Peña 1996; Kraidy 2002: 322).

Globalization is an 'age of boundary crossing'; however, those boundaries are not completely erased (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 82). Globalization is the engine that accelerates the process of hybridization, raising awareness of the multidimensional process (Nederveen Pieterse 2004: 14) because "it captures the spirit of our times with its obligatory celebration of cultural difference and fusion" (Kraidy 2005: 1). Critics, such as Salman Rushdie and Marwan M. Kraidy, promote hybridity and the fusion of different cultural elements: "*Mélange*, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is *how newness enters the world*. It is the great possibility that mass migration gives the world" (Rushdie 1991: 394; emphasis original).

The idea of *deterritorialization* is directly linked to cultural hybridity and increasing global migration because "complex connectivity weakens the ties of

culture to place” (Tomlinson 2001: 29). Thus, cultural diversity in a globalizing age is characterized by high mobility. Global migration and deterritorialization lead to a process of hybridization in which cultural elements are mixed and different cultural elements are re-embedded. Moreover, global *mélange* is the perfect playground for diversity in a global environment.

In a globalizing age, intracultural, intercultural, and transcultural exchange has become a global experience. Cultural diversity, as in the sense of intermingling, mixing, and *mélange*, has conquered the entire globe (Tomlinson 2001: 142). Migration is leading to hybridization and the fusion of cultural difference. In a famous everyday example, migration and fusion of difference cultural inspirations can sound like the following: “Thai boxing by Moroccan girls in Amsterdam, Asian rap in London, Irish Bagels, Chinese tacos...” (Nederveen Pieterse 1995: 53). Therefore, in a global context, hybridity and hybridization have shifted from the biological meaning, carrying the inherited shadow of implied racism, to a transcultural exchange, or, as Renato Rosaldo refers to it, a “two-way borrowing and lending between cultures” (1995: xv). This borrowing from both sides does not recognize prejudices but instead celebrates the exotic elements of not only two but multiple influences. On the other hand, there are also critics of the ‘differentiation’ approach because “cultures may well travel and move around the world, but ethnicity is still about the maintenance of social boundaries, something which remains a powerful force in the current phase of globalization” (Featherstone et al 1999: 12).

The standardization, westernization, and hybridization approaches to globalization are valid, each successfully capturing a piece of the globalization pie. To some extent, each approach has its truth and reach. However, the most interesting approach with regard to cultural studies and identity formation is globalization as a process of hybridization or global *mélange*. All three perspectives form the ideal base for an analysis of diversity and the North American global city in a globalizing age because culture is no longer as restricted to a certain region or place. It breaks through local cultures and breaks off the immobility of the concept. Therefore, the effects of globalization become particularly visible in global cities. As Saskia Sassen, one of the most renown urban critics, explains, “an immense array of cultures from around the world, each rooted in a particular country or village, now are reterritorialized in a few single places, places such as New York, Los Angeles, Paris, London (...)” (2000: 89). How global cities function as cultural nodes in a network of world-encompassing flows will be the focal point of the following chapter.