

# World culture theory



People around the globe are more connected to each other than ever before. World culture theory is a label for a particular interpretation of globalization that focuses on the way in which participants in the process become conscious of and gives meaning to living in the world as a single place. According to the Robertson R. (1992) it covers the acceleration in concrete global interdependence and in consciousness of the global whole. The aim of the study is to demonstrate this theory by development a study of a multicultural market. This essay will discuss to what extent the globalization is represent in Dewsbury market, and then it will attempt to back up with the findings of the observation.

### **Ethnographic Study**

Dewsbury market is conveniently located in the heart of Dewsbury town centre. Dewsbury is a market town within the Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees in West Yorkshire. In April, 2007 Dewsbury Market won the award as a Britain's best Market. It was first established in the area in 1318. It has around 300 stalls. As soon as I have entered the car park the signs of "Dewsbury Market" and Christmas lighting grab my attention. It's very cold and wet day. I cannot see that many peoples in the Dewsbury market, normally it's quite busy at this time (11: 30 am on Wednesday). I walked through the gate on my left hand side there is a meat stall where you can find beef, chicken, pig, fish etc. The staff wearing white overall jacket and cap for hygiene reason and all three staff are white (British). Next stall is another meat stall almost same products. Opposite meat stall I can see ladies purse stall. They have lot of variety of ladies fashionable purses. They have little hocks everywhere in the shop to hang purses. Next to the purse stall there is a baby's toys stall. They have quite few different types of toys

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and teddy bears. The sales man of the stall is an Asian man (Pakistani). I can see a white (British) family they have a little baby boy about 3 years old in a pram. When they passed the toys stall, the baby start crying, and they had to buy a toy for their baby. I can see the customers; they are all mixed and belong to different ethnic background, I can see white peoples mostly British, Asians (Pakistani, Indians, Bangladesh and Iraq) and some peoples from different African countries. I managed to talk to them, asked them about their ethnic origin, religion, nationality etc. I managed to talk to some shop keepers as well, they looked mixed as well. Right opposite there is a fast food stall where peoples are eating hot dog, jacket potatoes, burgers etc. I can see mixed customers. They are enjoying their food. Everybody is wearing coats and jackets because it is very cold. It's a huge market I cannot explain every single stall because there are around 300 stalls. You can find almost everything from this market. For example food, furniture, fruits, vegetables, fast food, carpets, flowers, cloths, electronics products etc.

I can see some stalls for ladies cloths for Asian women (Shalwar kameez, Lehnga, Kurta). Few Asian women are buying these cloths. They are wearing the same type of dress like shalwar kameez etc. There is another stall where you can find some traditional Asian products like Henna, bangels, scarfs etc.

Truly it is a multicultural market, where you can find peoples from different ethnic background, religion, culture, nationalities and different products from different parts of the world.

These pictures has been taken from Dewsbury Market, it gives us an idea how the market looks like.

## **Literature Review**

Globalization is a relatively new term used to describe a very old process. The Economist Chanda (2002) has called it “ The most abused word of the 21st century”. Globalization is a continuous process through which different societies, economies, traditions and culture integrate which each other on a global scale through the means of communication and interchange of ideas. According to Legrain (2003) “ The beauty of globalization is that it can free people from the tyranny of geography”. By having an idea of the history of globalization, one will be able to properly understand the causes which led to such social and economic change.

Globalization is an historical process. Alexander the great forges eastward link with Chandragupta Maurya for overland routes between the Mediterranean, Persia, India, and Central Asia. During the 1st century CE the trans-world trade makes its first major appearance in China under the Han Dynasty and successfully established trade relations with Asian and European countries. The period from 650-850 AD records the expansion of Islam and trade relations with the West Mediterranean region with the Indian sub-continent. The rise of Genghis Khan during 1100 AD gave rise to the integration of overland routes across Eurasia. The 1650s marks the expansion of the slave trade and it sustained the expansion of Atlantic Economic, giving birth to integrated economic and industrial systems across the Ocean. The period from 1776 to 1789 AD marks the US and French Revolutions and the creation of modern state as a fall-out of military and business interests. These integrated empires expand during the industrial revolution. The eighteen century marks the merging of the modernity with

globalization and it also marks the foundation for the creation of international trade law.

The world history describes that there were three biggest dominions of human history. They were, The Roman Empire, The British Empire, and The Mongol Empire.

“ The Mongols opened a transcontinental road between East and West along which, for the first time in one thousand years, humans and cultural objects and influences could once again be safely exchanged. They linked Asia and Europe by horse relay stations that shortened the distance between the central places of the two continents” (Onon, 2001).

There is no doubt that Globalization has made way for free trade and connected the peoples from different parts of the world. Most of the British companies have call centre in different part of the world. For example, if a person living in UK and he is ringing his insurance company and the call centre in India answers his query. McDonald’s corporation (McDonalds) world largest chain of fast food has 31000 restaurants in 119 countries worldwide. (McDonalds 2009) According to Gould (1996) before the introduction of McDonald’s overseas fast food was almost unknown. McDonalds’s was the first company to try to export America’s love of fast food and changes in eating habits of other nations.

Starbucks Corporation is a coffeehouse chain. It is world largest coffee chain. It has over 16000 stores in 49 different countries in the world. (Starbucks 2009)

The Coca Cola Company (TCCC) is leading beverage company in the world. The company claims that its beverage sells in 200 countries in the world. (Coca Cola 2009)

English is widely spoken language in the world even though in most of the countries of the world it is not official language but still it is spoken widely. English is the official language of the organizations that promote globalization like the United Nations, The WTO, trade blocs like NAFTA and EU, and media like BBC World, CNN, and Hollywood entertainment. The dominant role of English in international politics and commerce is viewed as one more imposition on cultures where English is not spoken. As Philipson (2001) argues, English is integral to the globalization processes that characterize the contemporary post-cold war phase of aggressive casino capitalism, economic restructuring, McDonalidization and militarization on all continents.

Legrain (2003) explain that Globalization not only increases individual freedom, but also revitalizes cultures artifacts through foreign influences, technologies, and markets. Thriving cultures are not set in stone. They are forever changing from within and without.

Due to the complexity of the topic, I will consider following strands:

“ World Culture Theory”

“ Social and Political”

“ Economical and Financial”

World culture theory is a label for a particular interpretation of globalization that focuses on the way in which participants in the process become conscious of and gives meaning to living in the world as a single place. Social and political strand concerns about micro level of impacts on people's life. For example people's daily life living standards, working conditions etc. The third strand social and political represents macro level of impacts on globalization for example global industry, established companies, and countries in the world.

### **Analysis**

From the above ethnographic study quite a few aspects of the market itself, the customers and the staff (stall holders) conformed to the globalization theory. Dewsbury Market hailed as one of the finest in the North. This market is an example of a developed country market. Looking at the people present in the market wearing different dresses of different cultures reminds me the blessings of globalization but it will be more fair to say that " impact of globalization in the culture sphere has, most generally seen in pessimistic view." The dresses and communication of different people confused me a lot they were seemed to be from Pakistan, India, China but they were dressed in a same way (westernized way). Typically Globalization is linked with destruction of culture identities, victims of accelerating encroachment of homogenized, westernized, consumer culture This point view, the constituency for which extends from academics to anti-globalization activists ( Shepard and Hayduk 2002), tends to interpret globalization as a seamless extension of – indeed, as a euphemism for western cultural imperialism.

This is a typical and probably the most prominent and important factors of cultural globalization. When people start spending time together they begin to adopt bits and pieces of each others culture. This creates a mixed culture and many theorists believe this is the starting point of cultural globalization.

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