Moving Cultures

The Perilous Problems of Cultural
Dichotomies in a Globalizing Society

Hubert J. M. Hermans and Harry J. G. Kempen
University of Nijmegen

The accelerating process of globalization and the increasing interconnections between cultures involve an unprecedented challenge to contemporary psychology. In apparent contrast to these trends, academic mainstream conceptions continue to work in a tradition of cultural dichotomies (e.g., individualistic vs. collectivistic, independent vs. interdependent), reflecting a classificatory approach to culture and self. Three developments are presented that challenge this approach: (a) cultural connections leading to hybridization, (b) the emergence of a heterogeneous global system, and (c) the increasing cultural complexity. By elaborating on these challenges, a basic assumption of cross-cultural psychology is questioned: culture as geographically localized. Finally, 3 themes are described as examples of an alternative approach: a focus on the contact zones of cultures rather than on their center, the complexities of self and identity, and the experience of uncertainty.

Difference is encountered in the adjoining neighborhood, the familiar turns up at the ends of the earth. (James Clifford, 1988, p. 14)

In an increasingly interconnected world society, the conception of independent, coherent, and stable cultures becomes increasingly irrelevant. Processes of globalization are drawing people from different cultural origins into close relationships, as can be seen, for example, in the unprecedented expansion of tourism, the flourishing of multinational corporations, the emergence of new geographical unities (e.g., the European Community, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and the new unification of South American countries: Mercosur), the dissemination of pop culture, the increasing flow of migrations, the growth of diasporas, the emergence of Internet communities, and the establishment of global institutions (e.g., the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations). One might reason that there is nothing new about the process of globalization. Indeed, the formation of colonial systems some centuries ago, the metamorphosis of tribal communities as a result of expanding trade, and the emergence and transformation of great empires throughout history can easily be perceived as the precursors of contemporary global changes. This consideration, however, does not refute the unprecedented character of worldwide interconnectedness that is realized by the increasing impact of new technologies, which result in the decrease or even removal of spatial distances as a result of accelerated transportation, increased travel facilities, and the dramatic expansion of media communication.

The Tradition of Cultural Dichotomies: The West Versus the Rest

In apparent contradiction to the global scale of social transformation and its corresponding complexities and dynamics in societal structures, mainstream academic psychologists have worked and continue to work on the premise that cultural differences can be conceptualized in terms of cultural dichotomies. Typically, these dichotomies have been formulated as contrasts between Western and non-Western cultures or selves. For Dumont (1985), the Western conception of self is characterized by individualism (i.e., the individual is of paramount value), and the non-Western conception by wholism (i.e., society as a whole is a paramount value). Shweder and Bourne (1984) described the Western self as egocentric and the self of other cultures (e.g., people from India) as sociocentric. Marsella (1985) distinguished a Western self that is characterized by "independence, autonomy, and differentiation" (p. 290) and a non-Western self that is "extended to include a wide variety of significant others" (p. 290). Weisz, Rothbaum, and Blackburn (1984) described American culture in terms of primary control, that is, individuals enhance their rewards by influencing existing...
realities, and Japanese culture in terms of secondary control, that is, individuals enhance their rewards by adapting to existing realities. Kirkpatrick and White (1985) contrasted Western culture, in which the single person is the basic unit, to non-Western cultures, in which some collectivity (e.g., the family, the community, or even the land) is the main cultural unit. Sampson (1988) opposed self-contained individualism (with a firm self-other boundary) as characteristic of the Western self to enssembled individualism (with a fluid self-other boundary) featuring a non-Western self (see also Spiro, 1993, for a review of cultural categorizations).

Two classifications, one proposed by Triandis (1989) and the other by Markus and Kitayama (1991), have been particularly influential in our discipline. Triandis proposed a distinction between individualism and collectivism: Whereas individualists give priority to personal goals over the goals of collectives, collectivists either make no distinctions between personal and collective aims or, if they do make such distinctions, they subordinate their personal aims to those of the collectivity to which they belong. Markus and Kitayama assumed that in people from the European–American culture, the emphasis is on independence and in many Asian cultures on interdependence. Whereas Americans seek to maintain their independence from others by attending to their individual selves and by expressing their unique inner attributes, Asian people accentuate attention to others, fitting in, and maintaining harmonious relationships.

The concepts of collectivism–individualism and related distinctions have received an overwhelming attention in recent years. Hofstede’s (1980) research on cross-cultural differences in work values has provided a very influential stimulus in this area of research. So much discussion and research have been done in this area that Kagitçibasi (1994) identified the 1980s as the decade of individualism–collectivism, and this trend continues, according to Lonner and Adamopoulos (1997), with no signs of abating (for review, see Kagitçibasi, 1997).

Despite their popularity in discussions and debates in the social sciences and despite the widespread interest that the individualism–collectivism distinction has received in psychological research, it is our thesis that cultural dichotomies do not and cannot meet the challenges raised by the process of globalization. As we argue, globalization involves social processes that are complex and laden with tension. These processes fall squarely outside the scope of cultural dichotomies, which by their nature are oversimplifying and insensitive to the apparent tensions that are so typical of the relationships between cultural groups.

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that cultural differences in the form of dichotomous distinctions do not meet the challenge of globalization and its implications for a psychology of culture and self. It is our belief that we need an alternative approach that is sensitive to the process of cultural interchange, the complexities of social positions, and the dynamics of global interconnectedness.

To demonstrate the limitations of cultural dichotomies as a significant development in cross-cultural psychology, we present three challenges to this approach: (a) the increasing cultural connections with the phenomenon of hybridization as a consequence, (b) the emergence of a world system that implies an interpenetration of the global and the local, and (c) the enlarged cultural complexity as a result of large-scale distribution of cultural meanings and practices.

First Challenge: The Pervasive Influence of Cultural Connections

A comprehensive criticism of cultural dichotomies comes from the anthropologist Wolf (1982, 1994), who questioned them on historical grounds. His central assertion was that the human world comprises a manifold totality of interconnected processes. It looks commonplace, but it has to be repeated: We live increasingly in “one world.” Within this world, there are many connections that have international consequences: ecological connections (e.g., Hong Kong flu in New York or, more recently, the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl threatening Europe), demographic connections (e.g., Chinese migrating to Singapore or Mexicans migrating to the United States), economical connections (e.g., a shutdown of oil wells on the Persian Gulf having a worldwide impact or Japan building automobile factories in America and Europe), and political connections (e.g., the United States intervening in former Yugoslavia or wars begun in Asia reverberating around the globe).

Turning Names Into Things

If there are connections everywhere, Wolf (1982) wondered, why do people persist in turning dynamic, inter-
connected phenomena into static, disconnected things? His answer is that some of this is owed to the way in which people have learned history—that there exists an entity called the West and that one can think of this West as a society independent of and in opposition to other societies. People grew up in the belief that the West has its own genealogy: Ancient Greece begat Rome, Rome gave birth to Christian Europe, Europe produced the Renaissance, the Enlightenment yielded the Western idea of freedom, and the Enlightenment evolved into political democracy and the industrial revolution. Finally, industry, crossed with democracy, yielded the United States, embodying the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (pp. 4-5). Wolf's criticism is similar to that of Bergesen (1995), who objected to the myth that the West rose on its own and went out to conquer, by idea, weapon, and innovation, the rest of the world.

It was Wolf's (1982) conviction that such a developmental scheme is misleading. First, it turns history into a moral success story, "a race in time in which each runner of the race passes on the torch of liberty to the next relay" (p. 5). History is thus converted to a tale about the promotion of virtue, and this turns into a story of how the winners prove that they are virtuous and good by winning. Second, the developmental idea is misleading in that it suggests that each runner in the race is only a precursor of the final apotheosis and not a manifold of social and cultural processes and interconnections. The erroneous implication of this genealogical view is that people turn names into things and endow nations, societies, and cultures with the qualities of internally homogeneous and externally distinctive objects. As part of this false model, social scientists construct a quintessential West counterpoised against an equally quintessential East (Wolf, 1982, pp. 6-7; see also Spiro, 1993, for a similar criticism).

Hybridization: The Emergence of Cultural Mixtures

The phenomenon of hybridization can be seen as a major result of cultural connection, and it further undermines the idea of cultures as internally homogeneous and externally distinctive. The focus here is on intercultural processes that lead to the recombination of existing forms and practices into new forms and practices (Pieterse, 1995; Rowe & Schelling, 1991). Hybrid phenomena result from the transformation of existing cultural practices into new ones. The process of hybridization may create such multiple identities as Mexican schoolgirls dressed in Greek togas dancing in the style of Isadora Duncan, a London boy of Asian origin playing for a local Bengali football club and at the same time supporting the Arsenal football club, Thai boxing by Moroccan girls in Amsterdam, and Native Americans celebrating Mardi Gras in the United States. Pieterse discussed such examples in order to object to the idea that cultural experiences, past or present, are moving toward cultural uniformity or standardization, as, for example, is expressed in views that emphasize the unidirectional cultural influences of the West on the rest of the world. This idea of uniformity overlooks, in his view, the pervasive influence of countercurrents that derive from the local reception of Western culture, as, for example, in the process of indigenization (see also Sinha, 1997). Uniformity also fails to see the influence that non-Western cultures have been exercising on the West and on one another. Any idea of global standardization or uniformity, moreover, fails to take into account that many of the cultural industries exported by the West turn out to be of culturally mixed origin if one examines their cultural lineages. To lend support to his thesis of hybridization, Pieterse pointed to the fact that centuries of south-north cultural osmosis have resulted in an intercontinental "crossover culture" and that European and North American cultures are part of this mélange. Likewise, until the 14th century, Europe was invariably the recipient of cultural influences from "the Orient." In other words, cultural mélange typically precedes the present era in which many social scientists often discuss Western and other cultures as if these were pure in their origin and development.

The processes of interconnection and hybridization offer new ways for cultural practices to become fused and new forms for the development of cultural identities (see also Canclini, 1995). The greater the connection is across cultures, the more these cultures begin to interweave so that complex mixtures and new genres are created. Despite the increasing salience of such phenomena on a world scale, psychologists continue to approach cultures in terms of cultural dichotomies, which by their nature are separating rather than fusing and static rather than flowing.
Second Challenge: World System Analysis

Globalization is a central theme to a group of researchers, mainly historians, sociologists, and political scientists brought together under the term global system theorists (e.g., Robertson, 1995; Sanderson, 1995; Wallerstein, 1974; Wilkinson, 1995). Such theorists are not only interested in cultures and cultural evolution but also in economical, political, demographic, and military changes, so that cultures and civilizations can be studied in the broadest possible terms.

Opposing Cultures as Part of One Civilization

Wilkinson (1995) has developed the thesis that today, on earth, only one civilization exists: a single, global civilization. This global civilization is the direct descendant, or the current manifestation, of a civilization that emerged about 1500 B.C. in the Near East when Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations collided and fused. Since then, this fusional entity has expanded over the entire planet and absorbed all other previously independent civilizations (e.g., Japanese, Chinese, and Western).

For our purposes, Wilkinson's (1995) criterion for defining a civilization is relevant. He proposes a transactional definition with a criterion of connectedness rather than uniformity for locating the spatiotemporal boundaries of society. People who interact intensely, significantly, and continuously, thereby belong to the same civilization, “even if their cultures are very dissimilar and their interactions mostly hostile” (p. 47). Why did Wilkinson make that choice? Because conflict, hostility, and even warfare, when durable (i.e., habitual, protracted, or inescapable), are forms of association that create a social system comprising the contestants and antagonists who do not or cannot live as isolated groups.

A great variety of antagonistic bonding can be observed in religious and social life as well as in language itself. Words such as dissonance, contradiction, argument, disagreement, drama, collision, and war make people recognize that there are entities that consist of, or are even created by, oppositions between ideas, sounds, persons, characters, bodies, and groups: “Israel and Judah, the Homeric pantheon, Congress, counterraiding tribes, the two-party system, the Seven Against Thebes, a Punch and Judy show, and the Hitler–Stalin pact are all antagonistic couples and collections of separate entities commonly recognized as internally antagonistic unities” (Wilkinson, 1995, pp. 48–49). When an interconnectedness criterion is used for the definition of social or societal units, what are the implications of this view for researchers' criticism of cultural dichotomies as internally homogeneous and externally distinctive?

“Glocalization”: Interpenetration of the Global and the Local

In a recent discussion of the first generation of globalization theorists, Featherstone and Lash (1995) noted that there were two main contestants: homogenizers (e.g., Giddens, 1990), for whom globalization is to be seen as a consequence of modernity, and heterogenizers (e.g., Said, 1978), who consider globalization as characterizing postmodernity. Homogenizers tend to think in terms of a world system that leads them to look primarily at the presence of universals. Heterogenizers, on the other hand, tend to dispute that a world system exists and disclaim the validity of universals. Rather, heterogenizers see the dominance of the West over “the Rest” as simply one particular system over another system. As modernists, most homogenizers adhere to a scientific and realist epistemology, which enables them to study the world as an object that has an existence separate from the social analyst. Heterogenizers, in contrast, are typically not realists but hermeneuticians who see social analysts as inseparable from their world and involved in a dialogical relationship with their subjects (Featherstone & Lash, 1995; for the importance of cultural heterogeneity in psychology, see Gergen, Gulecure, Lock, & Misra, 1996).

In an attempt to articulate the relationship between the global and the local, Robertson (1995) objected to the widespread tendency to regard the global—local issue as a polarity consisting of mutually excluding components. This polarity is expressed in the claim that people live in a world of local assertions against globalizing trends. As a consequence, the idea of locality is cast as a form of opposition or resistance to the global, which is seen as hegemonic. An example of such opposition can be found in the idea that people retreat into their smaller communities as a defense against the overruling process of globalization. Rather than considering globalization as a process that overrides locality, Robertson dealt with the global in its local manifestations, which he described using the composite term glocalization.

In economic terms, glocalization can take the form of what is usually called micromarketing: the tailoring and advertising of goods and services on a global basis to increasingly local markets. In a more comprehensive sense, glocalization involves the construction of increasingly differentiated consumers and the invention of consumer traditions of which tourism, as the biggest industry in the world today, is a clear-cut example.

Glocalization in its broadest sense has involved and increasingly involves the creation and incorporation of locality. These processes largely shape, in turn, the compression of the world as a whole, as, for example, is reflected in the emergence of television enterprises such as MTV and CNN seeking global markets and focusing on a great diversity of local developments. Therefore, it makes sense to conjure up a process of glocalization because, in Robertson's (1995) view, it has been directed at making sense of two seemingly opposing trends: homogenization and heterogenization. These trends can be depicted as not only simultaneous but also complementary and interpenetrative. The present century, in particular, has seen a remarkable proliferation with respect to the international organization and promotion of locality. One can refer to the current attempts to organize globally the promotion of the rights and identities of native, or
indigenous, peoples (e.g., the Global Forum in Brazil in 1992). This trend is also reflected in the attempt by the World Health Organization to promote world health by the reactivation or even the invention of indigenous local medicine (Robertson, 1995; for similar conclusions on the interpenetration of the global and the local, see Featherstone, 1993; Kahn, 1995).

The existence of a world system and the phenomenon of glocalization present a particular problem for the notion of cultural dichotomies. As traitlike distinctions, cultural dichotomies are insensitive to any interconnectedness and interaction, and as a consequence, global processes fall squarely outside their view. As classifications, cultural dichotomies are dividing people instead of relating them. Moreover, when cultural dichotomies distinguish individuals or groups of individuals as collectivists or as individualists, or as predominantly collective or predominantly individualist in their orientation, these qualifications are insensitive to the interpenetration of the global and the local. As long as cultures (e.g., Japanese, Balinese, and those of indigenous people) are conceived as localized, cultures are described and investigated without any recognition of the influences that the global has on the local and vice versa. As externally distinctive categories, cultural dichotomies erase the pervasive influence of global and intercultural processes on cultures and individuals. If one takes the process of glocalization seriously, there is an impact of the global on the local cultural level that is not recognized by cultural dichotomies and thereby neglected in mainstream academic, cultural research. This is highly problematic because, in an era of increasing globalization in which the global and the local continuously interpenetrate, cultures increasingly develop as interconnected parts of a world system. As a consequence, both the presumed internal homogeneity of cultures and their conception as externally distinctive are called into question.

Third Challenge: Cultural Complexity

Recent trends in social anthropology provide a third challenge to cultural dichotomies: the increasing cultural complexity. In a comprehensive treatment of this development, Hannerz (1992) proposed the concept of cultural flow in opposition to the view of culture as having a single essence. In elaborating on this idea, he distinguished, not unlike Berger and Luckmann (1966), between three dimensions of culture, which in their combination help to understand culture as susceptible to global dynamics: (a) ideas and modes of thought: the entire array of concepts, propositions, values, and mental operations that people within some social unit carry together; (b) forms of externalization: the different ways in which ideas and modes of thought are made public and accessible to the senses (e.g., forms of art, interstate highways, particular kinds of food or computers); and (c) social distribution: the ways in which the ideas and modes of thought and external forms, that is (a) and (b) together, are spread over a population and its social relationships. A guiding assumption is that the three dimensions are interrelated, so that complexity on one dimension is influenced by the complexity on the others. It follows from this that complexity along the first dimension, in contemporary culture, is to a large extent (although not entirely) a consequence of complexity along the latter two.

For our purposes, it is relevant to point to Hannerz's (1992) observation that traditional anthropology has been especially concerned with the first of the three dimensions. That is, understanding structures of (shared) knowledge, beliefs, experience, and meaning, in all their subtlety and range of variation, has been the core of cultural analysis. Moreover, anthropologists have occupied themselves, to some extent, with the relationship between the first and the second dimensions: the ways in which ideas and modes of thought find expression in a somewhat limited range of manifest forms (e.g., speech, music, graphic arts, or other communicative forms). On the whole, the least attention has been devoted to the third dimension, that of distribution.

Technology plays a major part in the second and third dimension, Hannerz (1992) continued. Media, in particular, are "machineries of meaning": they enable communication without being in one another’s immediate presence. In the small-scale societies of the world, there is little of such technology: drum languages or smoke signals, for example. In these societies, people typically have face-to-face contact through oral communication. The cultures of complex societies, however, make use of writing, print, radio, telephones, telegraph, photography, film, disk and tape recording, television, video, and computers. This range of different modes of externalization simultaneously constrains and makes possible not only the construction of new meaning systems (impact of the second dimension on the first) but also the distribution of such systems globally (impact of the third dimension on the first and second). Given the interrelatedness of the three dimensions, there is an increase in complexity in each of them. (For the emergence of networks of information and their impact on meaning systems, see Castells, 1989; Luke, 1995; for the problem of uneven distribution of knowledge, see Hannerz, 1992, pp. 32–33.)

The authors of the cultural dichotomies, summarized in the beginning of this article (Dumont, 1985; Kirkpatrick & White, 1985; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Marcella, 1985; Sampson, 1988; Shweder & Bourne, 1984; Triandis, 1989; Weisz, Rothbaum, & Blackburn, 1984), have typically proposed a definition of culture as a package of ideas, values, and practices; as a repertoire of schemas; as a system of symbols, and actions; as a syndrome of beliefs, norms, attitudes, and roles; and as a pattern of self definitions centered around a theme. In other words, these authors have mainly focused on definitions of culture along the first dimension (and sometimes the second dimension) as described above. Such a depiction of culture corresponds with the metaphor of the internally homogeneous localized society but neglects the problem of complexity so typical of contemporary societies. It is our view that this complexity can only be properly understood if the dimensions of externalization
and global distribution are more explicitly taken into account.

We have presented three challenges to the tradition of cultural dichotomies: the increasing cultural connections, the impact of the global system, and the accelerating cultural complexity. It is our view that these challenges have implications not only for conceptions of cultural dichotomies but even for one of the core assumptions on which the field of cross-cultural psychology is based: culture as geographically located.

**Toward a Deterritorialization of Culture**

Cross-cultural psychologists are certainly aware that the metaphor of culture as an internally homogeneous society is becoming increasingly problematic. In a theoretical contribution to the recently published *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, Miller (1997) admitted that attention should be paid to the heterogeneity of cultural meanings and practices at the level of subgroups within populations. Cultural knowledge is to some extent shared, but the degree of sharedness varies. Some subgroups have more access to specific cultural messages than others, partly as a result of differential influence on their formation. For example, families or workgroups maintain systems of meaning and practices that may not be maintained within larger population groupings, such as cities, geographical locations, or the nation. However, Miller continued, the existence of heterogeneity should not lead to the conclusion that cultural meanings and practices are so diverse that it is impossible to characterize them in terms of meaningful thematic tendencies. Miller then quoted Geertz (1973):

> It's possible to overthematize, and it's possible to underthemazte... the elements of culture are not like a pile of sand and not like a spider's web. It's more like an octopus, a rather badly integrated creature—what passes for a brain keeps it together, more or less, in one ungainly whole. (Miller, 1997, p. 105)

Although Miller (1997), in the tradition of Geertz (1973), acknowledged the relevance of cultural heterogeneity, the question of whether an organic metaphor (e.g., a brain) is adequate enough for the characterization of cultural processes can be raised. A contrasting view was presented by the anthropologist Clifford (1988), who questioned whether organic metaphors are applicable to the social dimension of cultural phenomena:

Groups negotiating their identity in contexts of domination and exchange persist, patch themselves together in ways different from a living organism. A community, unlike a body, can lose a central "organ" and not die. All the critical elements of identity are in specific conditions replaceable: language, land, blood, leadership, religion. Recognized viable tribes exist in which any one or even most of these elements are missing, replaced, or largely transformed. (Clifford, 1988, p. 338; italics added)

With Clifford (1988), we take the view that a centralized conception of culture, as represented by an organic metaphor, does not fully acknowledge the growing heterogeneity and diversification of cultures. Although a cross-cultural psychologist such as Miller (1997) gave some room for heterogeneity, she did so within the constraints of an organic metaphor. Such a metaphor presupposes by its nature a centralized conception of culture. To more fully acknowledge the impact of increasing interconnectedness, accelerated globalization, and increased complexity, other metaphors are needed that give more room for decentralization.

Centralization and geographical localization are closely related issues. One can only think of organisms as occupying a particular place on earth. In accordance with this idea, research on cultural dichotomies takes geographically localized cultures as its basic units. One of the most comprehensive studies in cross-cultural psychology by Hofstede (1980, 1983) consisted of a comparison of 50 national cultures and three regions. Such an approach is in accord with Triandis’s (1980) conception of culture as defined by three criteria: place (a local community), time (a particular historical period), and language (intelligibility). Research on cultural dichotomies, leading to comparisons among the West and the rest, also takes geographical units as its starting point.

**Travel and Translocality**

Cross-cultural psychology's conception of culture as geographically located and centralized is increasingly challenged by recent developments in social anthropology. In an attempt to account for the dynamics of cultural interconnectedness, Clifford (1997) expanded on his earlier ideas by taking "travel" as a metaphor for capturing the relationship between cultures. Since the generations of Malinowski and Margaret Mead, professional ethnography has been based on intensive dwelling, although temporary, in delimited fields. Such a field was a centered and circumscribed place like a garden, from which the word *culture* derives its original meaning. In later generations, ethnographic work became less a matter of localized dwelling and more a series of travel encounters. Travel represents an increasingly complex range of experiences that troubles the localization implicit in many conceptions of culture. Travel decentralizes the notion of culture, in that cultural action and the making and remaking of identities take place not in the middle of the dwelling but in the contact zones along the intercultural frontiers of nations, peoples, and locales. The metaphor of travel leads to an increased interest in diasporas, borderland, immigration, migration, tourism, museums, exhibitions, pilgrimage, and exile (Clifford, 1997).

**The Emergence of Global Landscapes**

From the metaphor of travel, a familiar term like acculturation becomes complicated because it assumes an
overly linear trajectory from Culture A to Culture B. Contact zones, instead, permit a two-way intensification of contact and are, moreover, open to forms of communication that run across the boundaries of many groups and cultures simultaneously. Cultural flows fragment existing homogeneities of localized groups. A frequently cited example in the literature of global system theory is Appadurai's (1990) distinction between five categories of global landscapes: ethnoscapes (e.g., immigrants, tourists, refugees, guest workers, exiles, and other moving groups), technoscapes (i.e., global configuration of technology, both mechanical and informational), mediascapes (e.g., newspapers, television stations, film production studios), finanscapes (e.g., currency markets, stock exchanges, commodity speculations), and ideoscapes (e.g., ideology of states and counterideologies of movements, ideas about freedom, rights, welfare). Whereas in traditional homogeneous societies, ideology, media communication, and technology are to some degree integrated, they are widely separated and disjunctive in contemporary societies. For example, a disjuncture between ideoscapes and mediascapes can be seen in many countries in the Middle East and Asia, where the lifestyles presented on national and international television and cinema completely overwhelm and undermine the rhetoric of national politics (Appadurai, 1990).

In Appadurai's (1990) analyses, the scapes create new contact zones across national groups and cultures, leading to their deterritorialization, which he considered one of the central forces of the modern world. In principle, the notion of deterritorialization applies to each of the scapes. For example, deterritorialization brings laboring populations from abroad into the lower class sectors of relatively wealthy societies. At the same time, many of these groups have intensive media contact with their homelands, which often leads to deep-felt criticisms or attachments to the politics of their country of origin. Money managers are also in search of the best markets for their investments, independent of national boundaries. Such boundary crossing may be the basis of conflict, as Los Angelinos may worry about the Japanese buying up their city, and, similarly, inhabitants of Bombay object to rich Arabs from the Gulf States who, in the eyes of the population, have profoundly altered the profile of hotels, restaurants, and other services.

Intersystems and scapes create transnational contact zones of a global kind, running across a great diversity of cultures and not only reducing their homogeneity but also transforming their locality into translocality. In fact, this translocality leads, together with the increasing globalization and complexity, to a far-reaching deterritorialization of culture.

In summary, research on cultural dichotomies, a centerpiece of cross-cultural psychology, is based on the implicit assumption of cultures as internally homogeneous and externally distinctive. Three challenges are discussed that increasingly put this assumption under pressure: cultural connection, the impact of global systems, and the notion of cultural complexity. Against the background of these challenges, another assumption of cross-cultural psychology is called into question: culture as geographically located. Instead of conceiving of cultures as being restricted to locations, we emphasize the relevance of intersystems, mixture, travel, contact zones, and multiple identities. What then is the implication of our view? What are the consequences for future research?

Culture as Moving and Mixing

Without the pretension of having an overview of the implications of the presented view, we briefly sketch three themes as suggestive research examples. They are derived from one of the developments described in this article or combinations of them. Without doubt, more topics could be given, and different researchers may see different implications. The presented topics are intended as first orientations.

From Core to Contact Zones

More attention should be given to the contact zones between cultures. Cross-cultural research is typically oriented to the core aspect of culture rather than to its periphery. From the present point of view, the periphery becomes salient as the meeting point between different cultures. This does not mean that the boundaries between cultures are erased but, rather, that they become increasingly permeable. For research, this means that the attention should shift from a comparison between countries or regions to the study of cultural processes on the contact zones as exemplified by the growing amount of international contacts, networks, organizations, and institutions, which are populated by people from different cultural origin. Research could focus on the different global landscapes (Appadurai, 1990) as transnational contact zones. For example, in the ethnoscape, research may deal with cultural changes in the meanings and practices of people who meet other cultural groups through tourism or by their contacts with colleagues or friends from international organizations, institutions, and networks. How do the meanings and practices of the contacting partners change as a result of their communication, understandings, and misunderstandings and conflict and power differences in these contact zones? Does tourism and other forms of international contact lead to an increased or decreased valuation of other cultures and their traditions, and how does it affect the people who are visited? Do they feel that their cultures are undermined or enriched? In the mediascape, research may focus, for example, on emerging Internet communities and networks. What happens in the minds of people, and in their practices, when they entertain intensive contact with representatives of other cultures without any bodily, localized contact? What is the role of imagination and how do people respond to discrepancies between realities defined as imaginal and realities defined as actual? What is the impact of quickly shifting and transient imaginal or actual contacts with people from other cultures, and how do people process information from a great diversity or even an overload of cultural contacts? In this manner, more re-
search questions could be raised along different global landscapes or combinations of them.

**Cultural Complexity of Self and Identity**

As we have argued, cultural complexity follows not only from the multiplicity of meanings and practices shared by a community (Dimension 1) but also from the external forms (Dimension 2) and the ways in which such meanings, practices, and forms are distributed across a population (Dimension 3; see Hannerz, 1992). This has serious implications for a psychology of self and identity. One of them is that these concepts are studied not so much as a learning, developmental, or social process within a culture but as an interactional meeting place of positions from diverse cultural origin. This interactional meeting place can be structured along the three dimensions described above. For example, in a recent Dutch television program, a group of Turkish artists living in the Netherlands played the roles of several migrant and Dutch identities in their mutual interactions, playfully, humoristically, and ironically demonstrating the stereotypes attached to these communities. The Dutch audience could hear the stereotypes they themselves use regarding these migrant groups from the mouth of migrant artists speaking perfectly some of the Dutch dialects. In this example, we find not only an explicitation of cultural meanings (i.e., stereotypes) but also externalization (i.e., television medium) and distribution (i.e., broadcasting and video storage that permits repetitive viewing and further distribution). The psychological relevance of such an event is in the following questions: How does the audience, being confronted with their own stereotypes, change or confirm these stereotypes? How is the xenophobia of the audience affected? To what extent and in what way do the selves of the players change? What is the influence of role playing and shifting between cultural positions on the complexity of selves and identities of players and the audience?

More generally, multivoicedness and dialogue (Bakhtin, 1929/1973; Billig, 1988; Fogel, 1993; Gergen, 1991; Gregg, 1991; Hermans, Kempen, & Van Loon, 1992; Sampson, 1993; Shoter, 1992; Taylor, 1991; Valsiner, 1997; Wertsch, 1991) are closely related to cultural complexity. On the basis of these notions self or identity can be conceived of as a dynamic multiplicity of different and even contrasting positions or voices that allow mutual dialogical relationships (Hermans, 1996a, 1996b; Hermans & Kempen, 1993). Different and contrasting cultures can be part of a repertoire of collective voices playing their part in a multivoiced self: I can speak differentially as a psychologist, a man, a Catholic, a member of a conservative Dutch family, but I can also speak as an American insofar as I am familiar with North American culture. I know this culture from movies, songs, pop art, congresses, and professional contacts. Different research questions can be posed: Which voices are part of the self, how broad is the repertory of voices, which situations require or invite me to shift between the voices? Under what circumstances are new voices introduced, and what are the consequences to other voices and their dialogical potentials? Which voices are introduced as the result of distributive potentials across a population? To what extent are cultural voices heterogeneous, and what is the cultural unit or contact zone where they are shared with other individuals or groups? Ideas and research on multiculturalism (Powers & Richardson, 1996) could be expanded and developed along these lines.

Particular attention is required for the mixing of cultural positions or voices. For example, when an artist of Arabic origin works in Germany, can this be conceptualized in terms of two separate cultural positions (Arabic and German) that are available and between which the person shifts from time to time? Or is a third position emerging that can be seen as a mixture of the two original ones? If so, do the original positions retreat or vanish, or are they accessible in their original forms dependent on change of situation? To what extent is the art produced by this person a mixture of two cultures, and is this art perceived as innovative or traditional in the cultures of origin? More generally, what is the innovative and creative power of hybridity?

**The Experience of Uncertainty**

Without doubt, the process of globalization arouses a great deal of uncertainty. Globalization is easily understood as contrary to living one’s “authentic life” in peace, partly because authenticity and pureness, however conceptualized, is better suited to a homogeneous, stable, localized, and predictable society than an increasingly heterogeneous, changing, translocal, and unpredictable global world. From a research perspective, uncertainty is a highly significant point in case, because it provides an interface between the present view and cross-cultural psychology. The concept of uncertainty is represented in one of Hofstede’s (1980) cultural dimensions (uncertainty avoidance) and is at the same time a significant experience in the process of globalization and hybridization (Canclini, 1995). The following questions can be posed: Under what circumstances do people experience uncertainty, and how do they respond to it? Do they respond with forms of uncertainty reduction or uncertainty avoidance? What strategies are available to people dealing with an increase of uncertainty? Do they prefer relativizing strategies or absolutizing ones? Or, do they simply avoid uncertainty as part of a zapping lifestyle and prefer to travel through an endless series of fragmented cultural pieces?

In our view, uncertainty reduction or avoidance is not conceived as a value that people carry with them or a stabilized trait that they simply “have,” individually or collectively, but as a dynamic and contextualized way of interpreting one’s place in the world. Uncertainty can be studied, for example, by comparing the positions people have in different global landscapes. When a person participates simultaneously in different networks (e.g., financial, ideological, or technological) and these worlds are to a large extent disjunctive, that person may be confronted with uncertainties, contradictions, ambiguities,
and contrasting interests. How do they find their way when they move across such contact zones without any overall integrative knowledge system that might be helpful in organizing their lives intelligibly? How do they respond? Do they construct an individualized combination of some of the landscapes, do they superspecialize in one of them, or are do they recombine elements to form different landscapes into new mixtures? Regardless, uncertainty is not primarily in a culture's core but in its contact zones.

In this article, we have criticized the psychological tradition of cultural dichotomies as representing cultures as internally homogeneous and externally distinctive. We have elaborated our criticism by questioning a core assumption of cross-cultural psychology: culture as geographically located. Cross-cultural psychologists continue to think and do research on the basis of these premises, creating an increasing tension with the otherwise continuing process of globalization. This tension can only be resolved when the social realm receives precedence over the cultural. Only when people are brought back into the picture as interculturally connected are they approached as dialogical beings par excellence.

REFERENCES


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