
UNIT 1 GLOBALIZATION AND INDIGENOUS CULTURES

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

This module examines the impact of new social, economic, cultural and technological conditions which are generally designated as ‘globalization’, on indigenous cultures. Globalization offers new possibilities, but also new dangers for indigenous people. Indigenous people are often on the frontline of globalization, facing the challenges of extinction or survival indigenous people are living examples in sustainable communities, based on harmony with the natural environment. Powerful forces often threaten their way of life. They often

lack power within existing political and economic systems.

After completing this Unit you will be able to:

- become familiar with varying theories of globalization;
- understand the multiple impacts of globalization and culture;
- know specific effects of globalization on the case studies presented;
- explore the particular relationship between indigenous culture and globalization; and
- understand how globalization might affect your life and culture.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Unit will introduce you to the main concepts of globalization, and many of the theories that have been used to understand it. Globalization is a complex, and controversial subject, open to many interpretations. Different interpretations of globalization can also represent particular biases and agendas. After looking at some of the basic issues, effects, and models of globalization, we will look at specific case studies which reveal some of globalizations facets. Think about where you live. How are you connected with the larger world? Is it through the internet, television, or recorded music? Or is it perhaps through international business, export companies or tourism? As we look at these issues, try to apply them to your own experiences and those of your friends and family. Globalization is something that affects all of us, from major metropolitan cities to the remotest village in the Amazon rain forest. Let us take a journey into this fascination and important subject. Some of the important questions we will be looking at throughout this course are: What happens to traditional culture in the era of globalization? Are there fundamental differences between the processes of change and cultural transmission that are have occurred historically and what is occurring now? How does globalization affect indigenous cultures?

1.2 DEFINING GLOBALIZATION

You probably have heard the term globalization used to describe a new economic initiative, or some type of music or film. But, you might never have thought about what it means. Globalization is a complex phenomenon which encompasses many layers, including the economic, social, cultural, political, religious, and technological domains of life. Because of this complexity it is often better to use the term *globalizations* so as to be aware of the fundamental multiplicity of the term globalization. Many scholars, politicians, and other segments of the society often disagree as to what globalization exactly is, how it works, and how it changes human life. However, no one would disagree that it doesn't exist! So, what is this globalization that everyone is talking about? A simple definition would be "the increasing interconnections of the local and the global, on all levels of culture ranging from the economic to the religious". Some economists define globalization as a purely economic process, where countries and regions are opened up to economic activity in the global marketplace. These definitions are often linked with *neo-liberal economic policies*, something that we will discuss later. Other sees globalization as a cultural process as much, or more than, a

purely economic one. The primary mode of these trans-national cultural transactions is through technologies such as the internet, television, films, and music. The increasing interactions often generate sub-cultures that follow trends and styles developed in far-away lands. Can you think of any examples of this in your own life? The main feature of any type of globalization is the interaction and the transformation of the local, through interaction with global systems. The term 'globalization' itself is often called into question; much of debate centers around the nature and scope of the current transformations, the power differential between local, state, and trans-national actors, and whether or not globalization is something new, or simply the historical evolution of cultural interconnection stretching back millennia. In order to obtain a "thick description" of the cultural processes at work it is of utmost importance to define the boundaries and definitions of this phenomenon within the context of specific research questions.

1.2.1 Basic tenants of globalization

The basic tenants of this analysis of globalization and traditional cultures are: (1) globalization is shaped and influenced by technological change; (2) globalization has its roots in earlier processes of cross-cultural influence; (3) globalization is a process that reconfigures the local, regional and trans-national boundaries of commerce, culture, and humanity (deterritorialization); (4) globalization is uneven: different cultural, social and political entities will be influenced and transformed at varying rates with varying outcomes; (5) all the levels affected by globalization are interconnected in complex and sometimes paradoxical ways- globalization is a multi-dimensional process. Finally, all of these changes are occurring at a sheer scale and rapidity that sets contemporary change apart from previous patterns of cultural transformation.

1.2.2 Reductionism versus inclusivity

The term "globalization" designates the many possible constructions of the current political, economic and cultural landscape, and is open to inquiry by many scholarly fields. The processes occurring simultaneously throughout the world in cultural, economic and technological spheres have been described extensively in a growing body of literature on globalization. Certain modes of inquiry, especially in economics and political science have tended towards a "reductionist" approach, while sociology has generally employed a much broader field of inquiry, examining with multiple agents and interacting systems. Two divergent trends are discernable in much of the literature on globalization- that of increasing social and cultural fragmentation, resulting in ethnic politics and religious fundamentalism, and an increase of cultural homogenization.

The "reductionist" approach is often associated with the "clash of civilizations" model, which posits a liberal, modernized, capitalistic system (democratic) which is pitted against a reactionary, primitive and often violent culture (fascist). However, this can also describe indigenous peoples and their attempts at resistance to this system. The "reductionist" approach is therefore closely allied with Western geo-strategic and economic agendas. The "inclusivist" approach looks at events from a far more complex social structure, in which there are multiple agents and agendas, often over-lapping. This approach is often associated with both economic and cultural agendas. We will look into these approaches in more depth in coming

sections.

Another important way of looking at things, or frame, is that of top-down or bottom-up. What does this mean? Top-down globalization is the belief that cultural processes and systems are imposed from outside, and the creation of new systems is primarily from the powerful, from transnational actors. Bottom-up gives more influence to the local, and posits that change occurs in micro level. This is much more complex, and also allows for more possibility of change.

1.2.3 Types of globalization

Globalization occurs in economic transactions between states. The process of globalization can be easily seen in transnational corporations. These are institutions that cross many national borders, and may not have allegiance to any particular nation. These companies will interact with local environments, perhaps building toys in China, and selling them in America. It thus transcends previous concepts of local production and consumption. Another type of globalization is political globalization, where the boundaries of nation-states are often blurred, and non-state actors can gain tremendous power in local politics. Culture globalization can be seen in the trends and styles that can move around the world in a second and even in the performers who have been discovered on line. Another aspect of this is interactive media, as exemplified by “you-tube” and wikipedia. It is therefore crucial to specify which mode or model of globalization one is discussing: globalization on the economic plane, the cultural, the social, and on the imaginary plane.

It is clear that globalization is a process of interpenetration and influence between all of these spheres. The difficulty arises in parsing these interconnections. For example, how the economic sphere affects the social is difficult to quantify in specific variables with one-to-one correspondences. The level of complexity involved in these systems has led some scholars to posit that the best method of analysis is employ the chaos theory and non-linear equations drawn from the natural sciences. For the purposes of this discussion as it relates to traditional musical culture, we will utilize several conceptions of globalization that are generally agreed upon, and employ a model that includes a broad historical frame, as opposed to a specific narrow time range such as “globalization began in the 1970’s”.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note:** 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;
2) You may check your answers with the possible answers at the end of the Unit.

- 1) What is a transnational corporation?
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2) What is the reductionist model of globalization?

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3) What is the inclusivist model of globalization?

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ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1) What is a transnational corporation?

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2) What is the reductionist model of globalization?

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3) What is the inclusivist model of globalization?

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1.3 THEORIES OF GLOBALIZATION

It is beyond the scope of this course to present all of the theories that have developed to describe globalization. However, we will look at some important models that seem to work well to describe these phenomena. Before beginning

this, we will first look at three basic suppositions which will form the background of our study of globalization and indigenous culture. These suppositions are (1) globalization reflects a change in speed (2) globalization is part of a long history context; and (3) globalization is a complex, multi-layer process.

1.3.1 Speed

The first supposition is that globalization represents fundamental shifts in the speed of cross-cultural communication. The widespread dissemination of mass-mediated images and ideologies and the blurring of national boundaries result from these processes. Fredric Jameson coined the term 'imagined communities' to describe groups that are formed by sharing a particular media experience. He used the example of someone reading a newspaper, an experience shared by thousands of people, as being part of an imagined community. These communities could share ideologies, political or religious beliefs, but never be part of a traditional community. This was an important social force during the age of print capitalism, in the 19th and 20th centuries when newspapers expanded throughout the world. Now, the growth of imagined communities has exploded through the internet, film, television, and the global music business into a vast, interconnected global field. These communities reshape traditional social, cultural and economic structures in myriad ways. This is a result of technological change, including television, the internet, interactive phones, and other types of media. In the past, people could correspond through the mail, but now literally millions of people can share experiences and be part of virtual communities through the internet. Are you part of any 'imagined communities'? Do you take part in social networking sites, or communicate with others through text messaging and other electronic media? If you can imagine life without any of these things, life where these modes of communication were not even thought of, you can get an idea how much of a change this is!

1.3.2 Historical process

Globalization, while a relatively new term, has been with us a long time. The term was first used in the late nineteenth century. During the 1980's globalization began to appear in the business literature, and by the nineties globalization was a hot topic in numerous fields. Some have contended that globalization started in the 1970's, but that seems unlikely looking at history. In placing globalization in a wider historical process, there are four processes that began thousands of years ago that should be kept in mind: (1) ancient migration patterns between continents; (2) cultural trade over vast distances; (3) spread of world religions; and (4) cross-cultural technological diffusion. It is important to be aware of earlier modes of globalization in the analysis and understanding of traditional and indigenous cultures. A wider historical perspective gives the ability to distinguish how current changes differ from those in the past.

1.3.3 Multilayered

Globalization involves the interaction of many layers, from information to commerce, from ideas to emotions. These elements are different in structure, function, and usage. However, these various elements interact with each other, and inform a broad array of social, political, and economic processes. In order to formulate the complex, multi-level processes at work in globalization, the sociologist Arun Appadurai describes separate fields of interacting elements as

‘scapes’. This is a way to try to model these interactions. If you think of a landscape, you will realize that it is possible to look at it from multiple vantage points. This is known as a “perspectival” field. What does that mean? It means that the same vista will depend on who is looking at it, where they are looking from, and how they are observing it. Appadurai classifies global cultural flows as five “scapes”: ethnoscapescapes, mediascapescapes, technoscapescapes, financescapescapes, and ideoscapescapes. Each one of these ‘scapes’ are influenced and constructed by the individual, corporate, nation-state and ethnic actors.

For Appadurai, these ‘scapes’ constitute the building blocks of imagined worlds. These multiple imagined worlds are constituted by the “historically situated” imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe. These ‘imagined worlds’ link the local with diasporic groups.

With these three aspects, it should be clear to you that this is a very complicated process. And, for indigenous peoples, it presents a variety of difficulties, forcing differing ways of adapting. Many misunderstandings and conflicts throughout the world come from different groups not understanding traditional cultures and imposing alien (foreign) models on them.

1.3.4 Globalization and indigenous cultures

How do traditional cultures adapt to outside influence? Many see a hegemonic (dominating or overpowering) influence from Western cultures. However, many times outside cultural influences are adapted to local cultures preferences. In this section we will look at some different approaches to modeling these phenomena. Later, in the case studies, you can see this in action, and decide which theories are better. Can you think of any examples of this in your own experience? A musical example of this is hip-hop music. It is an American phenomenon, but many groups adopt it to their own culture. In Africa, many poor people have used hip-hop to define themselves and speak of the problems to the outside world. It also gives them a sense of empowerment.

Arun Appadurai describes this as a process of “indigenization”.

In “indigenization” cultural, economic, and other processes are reinterpreted and redefined in the local. Globalization is not a one-sided affair but more of a dialogue between the local and the international. The term “trans-local” is often used to describe global configurations of power, commerce, and information. This is a ‘bottom-up’ approach, because it allows for influence from the ground-up, and does not subsume local cultures into an unstoppable international cultural and economic steamroller. However, this depends on the stability, economic viability, and social cohesion of the local culture. If a culture lacks any of these elements, it certainly can be transformed from the outside. One must not forget that sometimes the resources, land, and knowledge of indigenous people’s can be taken from them by force.

1.3.5 Hybridity and difference

What happens when local cultures interact with globalization? How do we describe these results? An important concept for understanding this is hybridity. What is hybridity? The term, originally coming from agriculture, means the mixture of various genetic strands of plant life. Hybridization has obviously

been a crucial component in the development of many artistic, religious, and political systems. For many new countries, the concept of hybridity is criticized, because it diminishes the 'purity' of a national or local identity. This is visible throughout the world, but especially in areas of contested identity, such as Turkey, the Balkans, and Central Asia. Hybridity is essentially opposed to the concept of the authentic. 'Authentic' culture depends on a type of purity which minimizes outside influences.

Some of the controversies associated with hybridity stem from the construction of the 'authentic' and the 'local' which are important factors in the marketing of world music. Hybridity and authenticity can be seen as two closely related poles that are deeply intertwined. We will now look at three models/interpretations of hybridity. These paradigms are difference, convergence, and mixing.

1.3.6 Difference

The first way of modeling cultural interactions is that of difference, also described as cultural differentialism. This emphasizes the immutable differences between cultures and posits a strategic and economic interplay of fundamentally separate cultures. This model has deep roots in earlier evolutionary models of anthropology, and looks at geographic, cultural, and political boundaries as the basis for perpetual war. This thesis has been taken up by many other theorists of globalization. It has parallels with the Marxist conception of the rise of global markets and the continual exploitation of the poor by powerful, global capitalistic forces. This idea has numerous problems, not the least of which is the conception of culture and ethnic identities as solid, defined entities. It also neglects the wide cultural interpenetration between societies, and the complex layers of diverging identities within cultures. For indigenous cultures, the model of difference is very dangerous. Why? Because for traditional cultures this model means that their culture will not adapt, and must either remain separate and marginalized, or be subsumed.

1.3.7 Convergence

The second paradigm is that of convergence. The convergence model believes in increasing cultural homogenization. This is also a 'top-down' model, wherein the global subsumes the local. This has been also called 'McDonaldization'. It is used by many scholars as a model of American cultural and political hegemony which both externally and internally erodes traditional culture and identities. It can result in both cultural fragmentation and increasing political and religious fundamentalism. This has been designated as the creation of 'McWorld'. McWorld refers to the reordering of production and consumption for economic benefit and creating social and culture conformity. In McWorld, the ultimate efficiency is the elimination of interpersonal relationships. Technology creates a culture of distance and indifference by insulating customers from each other and suppliers. The paradigm of convergence has its roots in the anthropological concept of culture diffusion and evolution. This way of interpreting globalization contends that all cultural difference will be subsumed into a world-wide corporate monoculture.

This paradigm has been contested by many scholars. This paradigm can be contested by the observations of how these Western cultural institutions mutate in the context of other cultural systems. Talbott, in her ethnography of McDonalds in Moscow describes the transformation of McDonald's paradigm of the economy

of efficiency into long hours in line, and food prices that were a third of a Russian worker's daily wages. McDonald's in India also took on specific characteristics which reflect Indian cultural values; it was, until recently, an elite restaurant, extremely expensive, and served only lamb, as the consumption of beef is forbidden to Hindus. Rather than cultural homogenization western fast food restaurants usher in difference and variety, giving rise to and reflecting new, mixed social forms. Appadurai aptly describes the current status of American cultural hegemony stating that the United States is no longer the puppeteer of a world system of images but is only one node in a transnational construction of imaginary landscapes. However, in critiquing this model, it is important to be aware that outside cultural influence can destroy or submerge traditional cultures. Imagine that the number of languages that go extinct everyday. Every language that disappears represents the loss of a unique perspective on the world.

1.3.8 Cultural hybridity

The third paradigm, hybridity, is fundamentally opposed to the previous paradigms. It emphasizes border crossings, the permeable boundaries of the ethnic and national identities, and destabilizes the notion of cultural authenticity. The emphasis in most of the work on hybridity has been in the context of global popular music cultures, food, and entertainment. It must be ascertained whether these same arguments apply to traditional indigenous cultures. Hybridity allows for a mixing of cultures, and the creation of new types of cultural interaction.

The paradigm of hybridity is applicable to the wider field of globalization itself. There are in fact many "globalizations" occurring on technological, political, economic and cultural levels. By analyzing the hybridity of globalization as a multidimensional and complex process, it is possible to find a model that can take into account the uneven and varied transformations that are occurring in Hindustani music today. In India, the multiplicity of identities, both local and 'translocal' intersect and are negotiated both between and within individuals, societies, and economic structures. These are important components relation between globalization and indigenous peoples. These multiple identities are constantly in play in interacting fields. These interacting fields are inhabited by the individual and collective social, cultural, economic, and imagined spaces. It is a constant process of creating, defining, and dissolving boundaries.

Hybridity allows for multiple paths of modernization in a historically deep framework. In this sense it transcends some of the limitations inherent in a narrow definition of globalization as inherently part of the process of westernization and modernization. Globalization is composed of multiple levels of hybridity. These hybrid spaces are analogous to Appadurai's concept of the scapes, all of which are in a constant pattern of interaction and mutual influence with each other. These hybridities are on a continuum ranging from an assimilationist hybridity that moves toward a culture center and a "destabilizing" hybridity which subverts a cultural center.

1.3.9 Hybridity vs. authenticity

The fusing of culture into hybrid structures raises several questions. One might ask, "what about authentic culture". Are hybrid cultural forms opposed to authentic cultural forms? This is a difficult question. In order to understand this, we can look at hybridity as continuum. Certain types of hybridity 'take over' or

‘assimilate’ indigenous cultures. This mode of hybridity can create problems for the maintenance and the passing on of traditional cultures. Hybridity can also serve as a mode of resistance, and create new, indigenous forms. This mode can be very effective to preserve traditional modes of life, as new forms gain new resilience through change and evolution.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note:** 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;
2) You may check your answers with the possible answers at the end of the Unit.
3) What are imagined communities?

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- 4) What is “indigenization”?

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- 6) What is the ‘translocal’?

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ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- 1) What are *imagined communities*?

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- 2) What is “*indigenization*”?

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- 3) What is the ‘translocal’?

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1.4 IMPACTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON INDIGENOUS CULTURES

We will now look at the direct effects of globalization on indigenous peoples. There are a wide range of impacts, ranging from land and resources issues, to issues of language and ownership of cultural property. Cultural property can include everything from specific strains of plants, traditional medicines, to music and culture. The following is a list of dangers faced by indigenous peoples:

- 1) Many indigenous peoples live on the frontiers of civilization. These pristine wilderness areas contain many resources which are coveted by trans-national corporations, governments, and other global interests. These resources include bio-diversity, minerals, natural gas, oil, and timber.
- 2) Many countries have re-oriented to an export based economy. This can have dire consequences for indigenous cultures, as local governments are encouraged to ruthlessly extract resources from these cultures.
- 3) Land treaties and hunting and fishing rights are often thrown into doubt due to the signing of international treaties. These international treaties are in murky legal ground. However, because of their lack of resources, indigenous peoples are often at the losing end of these agreements.
- 4) Rules have changed regarding the ownership of bio-diversity. This has resulted in many companies copyrighting plants which have been used for centuries. An example of this is turmeric, which was the subject of an attempt to claim ownership by transnational corporations.
- 5) In many cases, indigenous communities are not consulted when international agreements are entered into. These treaties concern import/export rights as well as resource management.

We will now look at a case-study of the ownership of cultural property. In this case, the example is drawn from Africa.

1.4.1 African music and cultural change

If you have been following current events, you are probably aware of a large number of political conflicts, disease, and revolutions in Africa. These range armed conflict in the Congo, Somalian piracy, and the current cholera epidemic in Zimbabwe. In looking at how these issues affect indigenous music performance and production, we need to keep in mind several important factors. First, globalization has a tremendous impact on music, because cultures are exposed to outside influences, lifestyles and cultures are transformed, and locally produced music is made available to the larger world. This results in adaptation. This term is taken from biology, meaning a process by which an organism changes to become harmonized with its environment. Just as the organisms adapt, so do the individuals and cultures. Along with cultural adaptation, so do modes of cultural production like music, painting, and literature adapt to new environments. Another important issue to keep in mind is that of commodification. In the process of commodification, material or cultural elements become products which can be sold for profit. Commodification is vigorously debated by those that welcome it, and those that feel it is a destructive process. Some indigenous cultures do not

have currency systems, and are not equipped to handle large-scale commercial transactions. We will examine this process by tracing the movement of a recording produced in a rain forest become part of many recordings by pop stars.

1.4.2 Commodification as exploitation

Commodification, as we mentioned above is the selling of something as a commercial product. Some people see this as a process of exploitation. Even if the producers of the item, they are often left out of their fair share of the profits. Sometimes, the extraction of products (for example logging and mining) can have devastating effects on local environments. These factors are usually not included as part of the cost of item. In this case there are several viewpoints. We will look first at the argument that the exploitation locally produced items is positive. In this case we will be focusing on music. The positive view on commodification is that the original music-makers are often marginalized. They are not heard by a wide audience, so their talents languish in obscurity. If indigenous performers are given due credit, their work will be heard by a much wider audience. This can prevent the musicians from being cheated financially. The negative argument is that everyone is 'cheated' by this process. Musicians are still exploited, and they lose control of their own work as it is placed in entirely new contexts.

1.4.3 Commodification as 'Fetishization'

The term commodity fetish was coined by Karl Marx. It describes how commodities are separated from the labour as it was taken to produce them. This means that the commodity is given an intrinsic value, which is quantified by money. This means that value can be abstracted from the real, material conditions in which it is produced. Those that believe that music becomes a 'commodity fetish' contend that music taken from its original context loses its meaning. For religious music, commodification could be sacrilegious, taking the music out of its spiritual context. For those that disagree with this argument state that the meaning of the music is conveyed by liner-notes, videos and websites. The music retains its value, and in fact gains value if it is converted into a commodity.

1.4.4 Commodification as 'Education'

How can we be educated by commodities? This argument holds that by allowing music to be available throughout the world, cultural understanding is promoted. Consumption of world music can make one an enlightened world citizen. This argument holds that this music is an important way to bring the world together, to bring all different cultures to a shared space where ideas and beliefs can be shared and understood. The disagreements with this argument contend the educational value is limited. There are also other negative consequences. In this view, the educational value is very superficial, and doesn't give a real understanding of other cultures. The exotic aspects of the music are often highlighted rather than explained. It becomes, in this sense, a type of cultural tourism, where the consumer enjoys an exotic experience, focused on its entertainment value rather than creating a real understanding.

1.4.5 The Ba-Benzélé people

The Ba-Benzélé are a subgroup of the Baka peoples, also known as the pygmies (however this term is now considered disrespectful). The baka people inhabit

the southeastern rainforests of the northern Republic of Congo, northern Gabon, and southwestern Central African Republic. The Ba-Benzélé live in the far-east of the Baka region. There are three main groups of the Pygmies, a term used to describe their traditional hunter-gatherer life-style and small physical stature. Their societies are nomadic, meaning that they do not have fixed settlements, but instead roam throughout the rain forest. They have an egalitarian society, meaning that they share everything, and do not have fixed political or authoritarian leadership. They also do not have a currency system, using instead barter, sharing, and gifts for economic transactions. They are strongly linked with their environment, and believe that it is a living, spiritual entity. They have a sustainable lifestyle, and make little impact on the forest. They believe that they 'wake-up' the forest through their music. Their way of life and environment cannot be separated. However, they face many challenges today. As we saw in section 1.4, there are many forces which threaten indigenous people throughout the world. The Ba-Benzélé land is sometimes threatened by commercial enterprises such as forestry. Since the Baka have no government representation, their rights are often neglected.

1.4.6 Ba-Benzélé music and commodification

The music of the Ba-Benzélé is very complex, and allows for the participation of every member of the society. Their music is an integral part of their connection with nature and their spiritual beliefs. In 1966 – Ethnomusicologists Simha Aron and Geneviève Taurelle released *The Music of the Ba-Benzélé Pygmies*. This album was sponsored by the non-profit organization, UNESCO. The recording was very obscure, and was intended for educational purposes. This and other such albums have become the raw material for a wide array of commercial recordings. Sometimes their music is copied, and on occasion their recordings have been directly used in recordings. Genres include: jazz, pop, reggae, ambient, world beat, and hip-hop. Sales of these commercial products have generated millions of dollars in revenue for borrowing artists and their labels. Yet, scarcely any of the profit has returned to or benefited the originators of the borrowed material. This is despite the fact that many borrowers claim the intention of “bringing awareness” to the plight of the rain forest people.

1.4.7 Brief history of a Ba-Benzélé recording

As we examine the history of the field recording from 1966, here are some questions to keep in mind and ask yourself. (1) Who owns the rights to this music? (2) At what point does creative license become musical subjugation? (3) Do the benefits to cultural awareness offset financial remuneration? This recording, as others like it, have been very popular in the West, and have generated a great deal of money for Western artists. The Ba-Benzélé recording first gained international attention when it was used by the jazz artist

Herbie Hancock in the song “Watermelon Man” from the album *Headhunters* (1973).

This was a remake of his 1962 song. In the 1973 version includes drummer Bill Summers’ imitation of a *hindewhu* (a Ba-Benzélé instrument) solo, recreated by blowing into a beer bottle. Bill Summers heard the recording and decided it would make a nice addition to the song. This album was the first jazz recording to go gold and until the mid-1990s, remained the biggest selling jazz album in

history. However, the Ba-BenzǺǺ people received no money for the recordings. When asked about the issue of copyright, Hancock replied: “You see, you’ve got to understand, this is a brothers kind of thing, you know, a thing for brothers to work out. I mean, I don’t actually need to go over there and talk to them, I could do it but I know that it’s OK ‘cause it’s just a brothers kind of thing. We’re the people who’ve lost the most, who’ve had the most stolen from us. We know what it means to come up with, you know, a sound or a tune, then to have it copped and turned into a big hit or something like that. We’ve been through all of that. But this isn’t like that. This is a different thing, you see, brothers, we’re all making African music, that’s what I’m talking about.”

This statement contains a number of important points. Hancock states that there is a connection between the pygmies and himself because both are black. However, he doesn’t acknowledge that he also exploiting these peoples. The pop-star Madonna in the song “Sanctuary” from the album *Bedtime Stories* (1994) quotes the *hindewhu* solo, as featured in “Watermelon Man”. Co-credits for the song were given to Herbie Hancock and rights paid to Sony music. In this case, the Ba-BenzǺǺ people still have not received any recognition for their work, and in fact Hancock has taken credit for the music, and receives money from the recording. The music is credited to Hancock as author and Harvey Mason as arranger. Western music industry and copyright law allow performers to freely “adapt” materials. Through close adaptations, performers come to own sounds, styles, etc. without having to acknowledge or compensate the originators or those sounds. From standpoint of the record company there is no evidence that royalties were paid for the near- identical use of music from the Arom and Taurelle recording. The fact that Madonna’s record company paid rights to Hancock and Sony reflects both legal and social changes. The Ba-BenzǺǺ’s music has been used in ten separate recordings, many of which were commercially successful.

1.4.8 Ethical questions

In this example, we can see a number ethical questions raised as to who owns cultural property, land, etc. Whether it is the case of particular plant, or a musical recording, the new international legal framework allows for products to be owned by outside actors. For the Ba-BenzǺǺ people, the result does not appear to have impacted their lives in a positive way. However, it could be argued that this has benefited them in that it has increased awareness of these people throughout the world. But, does this translate into awareness of their plight, in terms of land encroachment and lack of rights in their native land? How can we reconcile the moral vs. the legal questions with regard to appropriation? Is there a level of condescension, even subjugation, within a sphere overtly marked by inspiration and musically coded as homage? How to distinguish between imitation/adaptation and direct appropriation? Beyond commodification: how do musical meanings change with such appropriations? How about images portrayed of traditional cultures? All of these questions do not have easy answers. We will now look at possible solutions which have been offered for the problems of indigenous cultures.

1.4.9 Indigenous survival strategies and the U.N.

In 2007, the United Nations ratified the “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”. This legislation is an attempt to give indigenous peoples rights over

their own land, culture, and traditions without having to be assimilated into the dominant culture. This legislation recognizes the value of indigenous peoples, and the great challenges which face them. However, in order to truly preserve indigenous peoples, it is necessary to properly understand how powerful the forces are, and how little political authority and autonomy that they possess. Often, indigenous peoples' lack of political representation means that others will often speak for them. Sometime treaties are misunderstood, or worded to allow for greater exploitation. One option is international legislation. Another option is organizing indigenous people so that they can have viable political options. Another important strategy is to preserve land rights, and assure that they are internationally protected. It remains to be seen how these developments will unfold in the future. As we have looked at many models of globalization, it should be clear that how the process is understood will greatly influence the understanding of both problems and solutions.

Check Your Progress 1

- Note:** 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;
2) You may check your answers with the possible answers at the end of the Unit.

7) What is commodification?

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8) Who are the Ba BenzŽIŽ People?

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9) What are some of the measures taken by the UN to preserve traditional culture?

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ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1) What is commodification?

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2. Who are the Ba BenzŽIŽ People?

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3) What are some of the measures taken by the UN to preserve traditional culture?

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1.5 LET US SUM UP

In our discussions so far, we have covered much ground. First, it should be clear that globalization is a complex process. Globalization contains many layers, and means different things to different people. For indigenous peoples, the view is quite different than it is in a transnational corporate boardroom! Globalization creates hybrid cultures, which reflect many influences. Hybridity can have both positive and negative influences on traditional cultures. We have seen that intellectual property can have complex, multi-sided arguments. One of the most difficult problems is that of commodification. When resources, music, and plants are seen as commodities, it can be difficult to put the human side into the equation.

1.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

- 1) A transnational corporation is a company with an international organization, and no particular allegiance to any nation-state. Many transnational corporations are more powerful and wealthy than small countries.
- 2) The reductionist model of globalization reduces the process to binary forces pitted against each other- e.g. Islam and modern capitalism.
- 3) A more complex model of globalization that allows for multiple cultures and complex interrelationships between these cultures.
- 4) Imagined communities are networks of people who share similar interests, beliefs, etc. and are connected through media and/or the internet.
- 5) This is a process where international or foreign goods, beliefs, economic systems, etc. are assimilated into local cultures.

Market and Cultural Property

- 6) The translocal refers to economic and political forces, social constructions that are not local, e.g. global.
- 7) Commodification is the process by which something becomes a good to be exchanged for profit.
- 8) They are a group of hunter-gathers, also known as the pygmies, from Central Africa. These people live in a traditional manner in the rainforest.
- 9) In 2007, the United Nations ratified the “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”. This legislation is an attempt to give indigenous peoples rights over their own land, culture, and traditions without having to be assimilated into the dominant culture.