
UNIT 5: GLOBAL ETHNOGRAPHY*

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5.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you should be able to:

- understand and define the process of globalization and ethnography.
- re-define the character of social relations in an era of globalization.
- understand the various perspectives of globalization: the global as forces, connections, and imaginations.
- discuss the issues and challenges to ethnography from globalization.

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5.1 INTRODUCTION

Globalization has strongly exploded the sociological agenda in recent decades. It continues to be an increasingly important issue for contemporary anthropology and sociology as cross-border interconnections and the movement of peoples, capital and culture around the world expand and intensify. Since the 1990s, an increasing number of researchers have become interested in this general topic and the literature on the subject has proliferated. Within this literature has emerged an approach of the study of globalization commonly referred to as global ethnography (Tsuda et al., 2014).

In this chapter, we shall examine the changes brought about by the process of globalization which eventually impacted the site, relations of people, and ethnographic research. We shall also discuss the various alternative approaches to global ethnography and highlight the key issues and challenges emerging in global ethnography. The chapter conclude by discussing the way forward in this most challenging times.

5.2 UNDERSTANDING GLOBALIZATION AND ETHNOGRAPHY

5.2.1 Globalization

Globalization is a trans-planetary process or set of processes involving increasing liquidity and the growing multi-directional flows of people, objects, places and information as well as the structures they encounter and create that are barriers to, or expedite, those flows (Ritzer, 2011). A term that is closely related to globalization is transnationalism and transnationality:

- a) **Transnationalism** is the “processes that interconnect individuals and social groups across specific geo-political borders”.
- b) **Transnationality** denotes “the rise of new communities and formation of new social identities and relations that cannot be defined through the traditional reference point of nation-states”.

5.2.1.1 The three axes of globalization

When considering the site of ethnographic research, it is important to take into account three axes of globalization: global forces, connections and imaginations.

- a) Global forces are understood as those pressures on places, institutions, situations and people from such overarching, often intersecting, imperatives as capitalism, modernity and colonialism.
- b) Global connections refer to trans-national links and networks between such globally mobile people.
- c) Global imagination refers to the different and competing ways that globalization is understood and portrayed.

5.2.2 Ethnography

Ethnography emerged from anthropology, and adopted by sociologists, is a qualitative methodology that lends itself to the study of the beliefs, social

interactions, and behaviours of small societies, involving participation and observation over a period of time, and the interpretation of the data collected. In its early stages, there was a desire by researchers to make ethnography appear scientific, and with this in mind a manual was produced for people in the field, with a set of instructions as to how ethnography should be ‘done. The goal of ethnography, argued Naidoo (2012) then was to give an analytical description of other cultures, an exploration of a particular phenomenon, rather than the testing of a hypothesis. The data consisted of unstructured accounts and the analysis, which provided interpretation of meaning, was done by the researcher, using observation, description and explanation.

The ethnographer’s task, argued Naidoo (2012), is to find what connects to what, and to construct subjects in changing contexts as they act and are acted upon. In taking such a stance, the ethnography becomes an ethnography of the system, too, and the global, “...an emergent dimension of arguing about the connection among sites in a multi-sited ethnography. Ethnography is linked to the lived experience of the ethnographer.

5.2.2.1 Global Ethnography

Ethnography is an especially suitable methodology with which to investigate social structures that are constituted across multiple scales and sites. It can strategically locate itself at critical points of intersection of scales and units of analysis and can directly examine the negotiation of interconnected social actors across multiple scales. Global ethnographies can be outlined through the lens of three slices of globalization—global forces, global connections, and global imaginations (Gille & ‘O’ Riain. 2002).

5.2.2.2 Global Forces

The first type of global ethnographies is those that examines how external transnational forces affect local peoples and how they respond to and appropriate such influences (Tsuda et al. 2014). These transnational forces originate in other countries as part of globalization and therefore impact localities from a distance. Examples include multinational corporations, international agencies and organizations, global migrants and ideologies, and global mass media/popular culture. Ethnographies that examine global forces do not necessarily have to be based on multi-sited research, since they can be studies of how the global affects one locality or community. However, researchers can use multi-sited fieldwork in various countries to compare how global forces affect two or more communities in a different or similar manner (Tsuda et al. 2014).

In studies of global forces, the social actors and places being studied are caught up in a place-making project constituted well beyond their influence that can hardly be shaped by them- although they may develop complex forms of adaptation, avoidance, and survival. Global ethnographies at their best reveal not just the impact of an impersonal force but also how localities are made penetrable by forces, how localities assimilate these forces into their own socio-scapes, and how forces are resisted, accommodated to, and fled from (Gille & ‘O’ Riain. 2002). We include under “forces” what Burawoy (2000) calls “imagination,” that is, local social movements that use aspects of globalization or react against it. In contrast, accommodation

refers to local communities that do not respond contentiously to the effects of globalization, but simply accept, acquiesce and adapt to them or attempt to mitigate their effects, especially in cases where globalization has a negative impact (Tsuda et al. 2014).

5.2.2.3 Global /Transnational Connections

The global forces perspective tends to regard the global and local as dichotomous and separate entities that impact each other depending on whether they are constituted in relations of opposition, accommodation and appropriation. Instead, others approach globalization at the local level as a matrix of transnational interconnections and networks within which local actors and institutions are embedded. Such transnational connections are not simply between two countries, but can involve people living in multiple countries. These cross-border networks are therefore not unidirectional but can fan out and circulate in multiple directions (Burawoy 2000, 30) and enable local communities scattered across the globe to influence each other over considerable geographical distances. They are created and reproduced by peoples and commodities moving across national borders, as well as by de-territorialized social interactions made possible through telecommunications and the Internet (Tsuda et al. 2014:136).

Ethnographic studies about transnational networks can benefit the most from multi-sited fieldwork. Of course, it is possible to conduct research in a single site and explore how local communities maintain connections to other countries through telecommunications, the Internet, and mass media, as well as through the circulation of peoples and commodities across national borders. However, such studies examine only one node in the network and can only provide a geographically limited understanding of how it functions. If a social network extends across two countries, it should ideally be studied from both ends, which requires fieldwork in both sites. For transnational networks that extend across more than two countries, fieldwork in multiple sites may be necessary for a comprehensive global ethnography (Tsuda et al. 2014).

Examining the impact of globalization on local societies, it becomes quite apparent that most “global” influences are locally experienced and manifested only as specific transnational social processes and institutions. In fact, few global processes that affect localities are truly global in scope, since they do not actually encompass the entire world, but consist of more localized transnational processes that are simply part of globalization. Ultimately, all macro-level, global processes manifest themselves as specific, -level transnational flows and connections between local places and communities. Therefore, it is somewhat of a reification to claim that the “global” or “globalization” is actually impacting local societies when, in reality, their effects are actually represented by much more specific and geographically limited transnational forces. In fact, not only are transnational processes and networks smaller in scale, they are more rooted and embedded in specific localities as simply part of larger global forces, making them more amenable to localized, ethnographic study (Tsuda et al. 2014).

5.2.2.4 Global / Transnational Imaginations

In studies of global imaginations, the local actively participates in public discourse about what globalization might look like. The construction of a

global vision has tangible implications for the outcome of a conflict. First of all, references to global ideas and actors today provide an entrance ticket to participating in public discourse, and those unwilling or unable to formulate their claims in global terms often find themselves invisible. Second, when local actors wage their battles with claims about the global, to acquire more credibility they themselves build connections to outside actors and enter globally circulating discourses. (Gille & 'O' Riain. 2002:283).

In addition to being an external force and a configuration of transnational networks, globalization has also become a form of identity making. Ethnographies that focus on the imagination are those that examine how local peoples develop transnational identifications with other peoples, cultures, and societies through the lived experience of globalization. Global migration and mobility, as well as the increasing availability of mass media and the flow of information and communications across borders has enabled people to expand their imaginations and affiliations beyond their geographically confined lives. (Tsuda et al. 2014). As part of the lived experience of globalization, transnational affiliations and subjectivities can also inform local lives and relationships. However, we should not assume that globalization always broadens local people's imaginations and leads to more expansive transnational identifications and affiliations. Although this often happens when the experience of globalization is positive, it just as often evokes negative responses and emotions. As a result, individuals can react against the effects of globalization. This can cause them to strengthen nationalist loyalties and other localized affiliations, leading to more insular and parochial identities (Tsuda et al. 2014).

Check Your Progress I

i) What do you know about Globalization?

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ii) Explain the difference between Transnationalism and Transnationality?

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iii) Examine the three axes of globalization

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- iv) Discuss Global Ethnography.

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5.3 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO GLOBAL ETHNOGRAPHY

The process of globalization challenges conventional ethnography. It destabilizes the meaning of the key concepts (e.g., site, place, and local) of ethnography because of the increasing impact of world-wide interconnectedness and interdependence. In order to study the imagined lives made possible by global mass media, ethnography must engage in cultural studies by examining mass media, film, literary fiction, and other types of public culture. However, if such mass media are to be incorporated into global ethnography, it must consist of much more than simply the researcher’s interpretation of public cultural texts, as is often the case in cultural studies. Instead, we must do actual face-to-face fieldwork to gather information about how local peoples engage, interpret, and respond to such global mass culture from other countries and how it reshapes their subjectivities, identities, and imaginations (Tsuda et al. 2014).

5.3.1 Virtual Ethnography

Another suggested approach to global ethnography is virtual ethnography based on the Internet and online communities. Since the internet is one of the primary means by which local people maintain social relations and communities across national borders. However, ethnographers should be cautious about regressing to a contemporary digital “armchair anthropology” based on secondary sources and interactions captured in cyber-communities. A rich ethnographic account of online communities would ideally explore the relationship between people’s online activities and their actual offline social lives through firsthand fieldwork.

5.3.2 Multi-sited fieldwork

Since traditional ethnographic approaches that are restricted to one locality cannot capture the essence of global flows and trans-border processes, a number of scholars have urged ethnographers to engage in multi-sited fieldwork.

There are three reasons for global ethnographers to conduct multi-sited fieldwork.

- a) To compare how macro global institutions and processes are impacting multiple locales in similar or different ways.
- b) To conduct multisite fieldwork to track the movement and flow of global commodities, migrants, cultures, ideologies, and information across national borders.

- c) To directly study the increasing transnational connections between different places and communities.

Multi-sited ethnography as a research method for globalization:

Varol (2017) argued that the emergence of multi-sited ethnography as an alternative (research method) to the conventional ethnography for better understanding the interconnectedness in the globalized world. The globalization process destabilizes the meaning of the key concepts (e.g., site, place, and local) of ethnography because of the increasing impact of world-wide interconnectedness and interdependence. The world has experienced “time and space compression” because of the technological developments in travel and communication that led to the shrinking map of the world. Thus, distances between different places are no longer important for interaction between different cultures, societies and identities. Capitals and commodities can easily pass local and national barriers. The relationship between space and place are inherently dynamic and inseparable from each other. The identities of place are not fixed and one-dimensional because it is the result of the interconnections and links between local, national, and international. But conventional ethnography is not enough to understand the globalization process because it mostly situates itself in a single place for in-depth understanding of cultures and societies. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account the multiplicity of global network and flows that overlap with one another in the global and local to better understand the globalized world because of the changes in our time and space experience. Thus, the multi-sited ethnography has developed to overcome the risk of avoiding the complexity of the global circulation and its impact on the local. The basic approach within multi-sited ethnography is to follow global flows (e.g., migrants, commodities and movements) to understand global interconnectedness and the interaction between the local and the global (Varol, 2017). Nonetheless, multi-sited fieldwork is by no means the only way to do global ethnography nor even necessary and essential since it is possible to study the impact of globalization in a specific locality through single-sited fieldwork. In addition, there are problems associated with multi-sited fieldwork that cannot always be easily overcome.

5.4 LOCATING THE GLOBAL IN TRANSNATIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Although multi-sited ethnographic methodologies undoubtedly have strengths, we argue that these proposed ethnographic methods are not the only way of studying globalization. This is because traditional ethnography based on intensive and long-term fieldwork in a single location is a completely sufficient method for capturing global dynamics. Global flows may be large-scale, de-territorialized, and trans-local but they are not simply disembodied processes that supersede localities and thus escape ethnographic study. Instead, all global processes are manifested and embedded in specific places (Tsuda et al. 2014).

5.4.1 Two types of globalization: Non-contiguous and Contiguous Globalization

It is important to remember that there are, in fact, two different types of globalization, both of which can be simultaneously experienced at the local level (Tsuda et al. 2014).

5.4.1.1 Non-continuous

The first type can be called non-contiguous globalization—the flow of information and images across national boundaries in which the globalizing agent influences local societies over a geographical distance without being physically present. This type of globalization does not involve the transfer of actual materials or peoples, but occurs in the “space of flows,” the non-contiguous, virtual space of telecommunications networks, the Internet, and other types of digital media make the exchange and transmission of information and images possible over long distances. This enables individuals and institutions to interact and communicate and therefore transcends the constraints imposed by territory. (Tsuda et al. 2014)

5.4.1.2 Continuous Globalization

There is another type of globalization that is contiguous and involves the actual physical movement of people, goods and capital across national borders. It de-territorializes, since it involves social processes that are no longer tied to specific places and territories, but move across national borders. Here the globalizing agent (whether people, goods, capital, or facilities) actually moves and relocates to other countries and is physically present in the local society.

Check Your Progress II

- i) What are the alternative approaches to Global Ethnography
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- ii) State the reasons for global ethnographers to conduct multi-sited fieldwork.
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- iii) Discuss the two types of globalization.
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5.5 RE-IMAGINING THE SOCIAL IN GLOBAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Ethnography is uniquely well placed to deal with the challenges of studying social life under globalization because it does not rely on fixed and comparable units of analysis. It also faces significant challenges in reconfiguring itself for a global era—ethnography explicitly seeks to analyze the social by locating the researcher in the space of the social relations being analyzed, and this ability to straight forwardly access the social by going to the local becomes problematic under conditions of globalization recently, attempts were made in sociology to redefine the social under globalization (Gille & 'O' Riain, 2002).

The conventional postwar social science view assumes that the nation is a container for everything within it, while international relations are assumed to account for all relations outside of the national. Ethnography tends to accept these categories—either, as in sociology, generalizing to the national society or, as in anthropology, taking the local as the site of culture, which is often analyzed in terms of its relationship to the world of nations (colonialism, nation-building, etc.). However, thematic approaches to globalization identify a new empirical phenomenon that has undermined, or at least destabilized, these established hierarchies of the local, national and international. Globalization signifies the increasing significance of trans-local relations, local-global relations, and global-global relations at the expense of national-national relations. (Gille & 'O' Riain, 2002).

Some scholars claim that globalization fundamentally reorders the classical relationship between self and the other, society and knowledge, and most importantly between space and society. According to these authors, we must redefine the concept of the social itself; that under conditions of globalization social relations are disembedded from the local and can operate in contexts where space no longer matters because shared systems of symbols and knowledge circulate globally. Still others define globalization as the culmination of the disembedding of economy from society leading to a world market unbound (Gille & Riain, 2002).

5.5.1 The Social as Flow or Network

Lash & Urry (1994) argue that the disembedded “social” is increasingly constituted by flows of people, information, goods, and particularly signs or cultural symbols. For Appadurai (1990), the entities that “flow” around the world are “scapes” or cultural formations around finance, media, ideologies, technologies and people. Hannerz (1992) sees society as constituted by “networks of networks,” down to networks among individuals. For Castells (1997) the networks are between places, and a space of flows is being superimposed upon, and replacing, a space of places. Those places left outside the space of flows are profoundly disadvantaged by their structural exclusion. A newer set of studies consciously borrows the network concept from economic sociology and talks of a new geography and the need to draw new maps.

5.5.2 The Social as Transnational

Some scholars have sought to retain the insight that cross-national networks are increasingly significant while still providing an analysis of the structured social relations within those networks. Transnational studies are understood as the study of various types of border-crossings by people, texts, discourses, and representations at various geographical levels. (Gille & 'O' Riain. 2002).

5.5.3 The Social as Border Zone

Other authors are more concerned with social relations at the borders and boundaries of social orders. Marcus & Fischer (1986) opposed the imagery of global versus local with a view of still distinct cultural worlds increasingly in communication with one another. Their “anthropology as cultural critique” sought to explore the recombinant, hybrid forms of cultural life that were emerging at these boundary points of cultures in contact with one another and enhancing the possibilities for other societies to provide us with tools for cultural critique of our own society. However, conceiving of the social as a border zone and emphasizing connections and contacts means that the cultural worlds that come into contact with each other are still conceptualized as self-contained, territorial worlds with readily identifiable differences that then clash. Conceiving of the social as a border zone often implies that boundary-localities are liminal, hybrid, syncretic and fluid, an assumption that can only hold if we abstract away from the powers that create and maintain boundaries. (Gille & 'O' Riain. 2002).

5.5.4 The Social as Place-Making Projects

Each of these approaches to redefining the relationship between the social and the local offers a different avenue for future conceptualization. From the discussion of flows, we see the need to redefine place in light of the multiple connections cutting across places. From the study of transnationalism, we see the critical importance of the emergence of new scales of social action and the reconfiguring of relationships among the multiple scales within which places are embedded. Finally, from the study of borders, we see the vital importance of seeing place as politically produced and contested. Together we can combine these various threads into a concept of the social as increasingly embroiled in place-making projects that seek to redefine the connections, scales, borders, and character of particular places and particular social orders. These projects are the critical sites through which global ethnographers can interrogate social relations in an era of globalization. (Gille & 'O' Riain. 2002). Several scholars strongly believed that place continues to be central to global ethnography, albeit in a conceptualized form. In short, the locality-the site is historically produced in interaction with a variety of external connections, and this process also produces distinctive patterns of inequality internal to the locality. Together, these propositions form the basis of a global sense of place.

However, others quite in opposition to the authors advocating the idea of the social as network and flows that imply the fixity of the local—argues that communities in globalized places are fluid and scape-like as well. People may live in the same neighborhood or town, but their meaningful social lives may reach beyond that locality to a highly uneven degree.

These reaches or networks constitute what he calls socio-spheres, “distinct patterns of social activities belonging to networks of social relations of very different intensity, spanning widely different territorial extents, from a few to many thousands of miles” (Albrow, 1997). Prior to the contemporary era of globalization, these socio-spheres usually intersected in the locality, new intersections are now forming that he calls socio-scapes. Socio-scapes are fluid imaginations of spatial belonging and of the social formations created by and making possible the reach of social relations beyond the locality. The contemporary era of globalization consists not simply of a shift of power and of social interaction upward from the national to the global but of a destabilization of the existing hierarchies of spatial scales. While creating a crisis in national social formations, this also opens up opportunities for social actors to develop new combinations of local, national, transnational, and global social relations. Scholars begin to assume a global level of analysis at their peril and must begin their analysis by seeking out place-making projects that seek to define new kinds of places, with new definitions of social relations and their boundaries. Such a concept of global ethnography enables us to make sense of the variety of ethnographies dealing with global processes and to classify them according to how they identify their subjects’ relations to certain place-making projects (Gille & ‘O’ Riain. 2002).

5.6 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN GLOBAL ETHNOGRAPHY

An ethnographic approach to globalization requires the understanding of locally, socially, and culturally specific ways in which people understand the place of their locality in the global scheme of things, and the actions they take to shape that place. These understandings and actions are deeply political, and the very definition of the ethnographer’s topic and site is shaped by the place-making projects within which any particular site is embedded. Globalization involves the contesting of the boundaries of places and negotiations concerning which geographical scale is best suited for action. As a result, the choice of site also becomes political. Thus, the challenge to ethnography from globalization lies in the concept of ‘field’, and the need to provide the ‘hard’ data that characterizes positivist research (Gille, 2001). Some researchers have always questioned the concepts of field or homework, rural or urban, community or corporation, arguing that such dichotomies create boundaries that are in fact non-existent, and are products of discriminatory white western discourses, whereby no alternative way of looking at ‘other’ is presented. Globalization, however, seems to have made such concepts redundant, since the whole notion of location appears to have lost its meaning. Gille (2001) argues that such challenges need to be put into the context of global social relations. For Naidoo (2012), the epistemological basis of ethnography involves the study of people who are in or affected by certain situations, and sometimes locale is difficult to define, even with Marcus’ attempt to put this in the context of multi-sited ethnography, allowing for the fact that many localities are no longer isolated, but linked to the world in often complex ways. In fact, globalization (Tsuda, 2014) is not only instantiated at the local level as specific transnational processes; they often take on an even more localized character. The local

impact of macro-global processes is mediated by various local institutions and states, which are transnationally linked to other countries and places.

5.7 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We have noted the continued relevance of ethnography for an increasingly globalized world. Globalization often refers to de-territorialized and large-scale forces that appear to be beyond the scope of ethnography, which is limited to the intensive study of micro-level social processes in specific localities. However, globalization is not simply an abstract, external force that supersedes and operates outside the purview of localities but that the global exists only as it is embedded and localized in specific places. The global and the local should not be conceptualized as opposed, dichotomous entities, which makes localized ethnographic fieldwork seem incompatible with the action of global forces (Tsuda et al. 2014).

The dynamics of contiguous globalization involve a constant dialectic between brief periods of de-territorialization and longer periods of re-territorialization in specific localities, making it mainly a place-based process. Even for de-territorialized, non-contiguous globalization, the cross-border flow of digital and mass media in virtual space becomes socially meaningful only as they are consumed and incorporated by local peoples according to local cultural understandings and identity-making projects. Because all global processes are territorialized, appropriated and/or challenged, and eventually re-created in localities, it is well suited for ethnographic approaches based on specific places and local communities. In addition, at the local level, most macro-global processes operate as transnational institutional and social networks that connect specific localities. It is therefore possible to study the transnational linkages that are part of globalization in the localized contexts in which fieldworkers traditionally operate. (Tsuda et al. 2014:137-139).

Although globalization is often associated with movement across localities, cyberspace, and mass media, ethnographers do not necessarily have to conduct multi-sited fieldwork that prioritizes breadth at the expense of depth or rely on the Internet or cultural studies. Traditional fieldwork methods based on long-term immersion in one locality are sufficient for global ethnography. The essence of globalization can be captured by face-to-face, single-sited studies of how individuals in a specific locality react to and appropriate global forces, how they create transnational connections to those living in other countries, or how globalization enhances their imagination, enabling them to construct transnational identities and subjectivities (Tsuda et al. 2014).

Most global ethnographies have examined what can be called globalization from below, the engagement of local peoples and communities in trans-border processes. However, we also need more ethnographic studies about the powerful elites and institutions that control globalization from above. Instead of simply focusing on local consumers, factory workers, labor migrants, or grassroots organizations, ethnographers need to “study up” and turn their attention to governmental officials and agencies that regulate globalization, managers of multinational corporations and financial institutions, and transnational NGOs and development organizations (Tsuda et al. 2014).

5.8 LET US SUM UP

Globalization is not simply a unilineal process that leads to increasingly greater transnational interconnectedness between various locales but can also lead to disconnection in some cases. This is true especially if local peoples react negatively to or resist the effects of globalization and actively withdraw from or reduce their connections to other places.

Globalization is often associated with macro-social processes, deterritorialized flows and networks across national borders, and large-scale international institutions and corporations that are either detached from localities or affect many places at once (Tsuda et al., 2014). In contrast, ethnography traditionally consists of in-depth descriptions of micro-social phenomenon in a specific locality and is based on long-term research and face-to-face relations in territorially bounded places. Given such discrepancies between the global and the localized nature of ethnography, how does one do global ethnography? (Tsuda et al., 2014).

Some researchers have advocated new types of ethnographic research in order to make it more appropriate for a globalized world. They include cultural studies, virtual ethnography, and multi-sited fieldwork among others. Although such new approaches can certainly supplement traditional ethnographic methods, some scholars believe they are by no means necessary or even desirable ways to do global ethnography. They argue that traditional ethnography based on in-depth fieldwork in one locale is sufficient to capture the intricacies of an increasingly globalized world, because globalization is ultimately grounded and instantiated in territorialized localities as specific transnational processes (Tsuda et al. 2014). Global ethnography does not necessarily entail new ethnographic methods based on cultural studies, the exclusive use of new digital media, or even multi-sited fieldwork. What differentiates global ethnography from other types of ethnography is not methodology per se, but scope of analysis. It contextualizes local peoples, communities, and practices within larger transnational processes and connections that operate across national borders and are part of globalization.

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5.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress I

- i) Globalization is a trans-planetary process or set of processes involving increasing liquidity and the growing multi-directional flows of people, objects, places and information as well as the structures they encounter and create that are barriers to, or expedite, those flows. A term that is closely related to globalization is transnationalism and transnationality.
- ii) Transnationalism is the “processes that interconnect individuals and social groups across specific geo-political borders” whereas, transnationality denotes “the rise of new communities and formation of new social identities and relations that cannot be defined through the traditional reference point of nation-states”.
- iii) The three axes of globalization are:
 - a) Global forces are understood as those pressures on places, institutions, situations and people from such overarching, often intersecting, imperatives as capitalism, modernity and colonialism.
 - b) Global connections refer to trans-national links and networks between such globally mobile people.
 - c) A global imagination refers to the different and competing ways that globalization is understood and portrayed.
- iv) Ethnography is a qualitative methodology that lends itself to the study of the beliefs, social interactions, and behaviours of small societies, involving participation and observation over a period of time, and the interpretation of the data collected. It is especially suitable methodology to investigate social structures that are constituted across multiple scales and sites. It can strategically locate itself at critical points of intersection of scales and units of analysis and can

directly examine the negotiation of interconnected social actors across multiple scales. Global ethnographies can be outlined through the lens of three slices of globalization—global forces, global connections, and global imaginations

Check Your Progress II

- i) The process of globalization challenges conventional ethnography. It destabilizes the meaning of the key concepts (e.g., site, place, and local) of ethnography because of the increasing impact of world-wide interconnectedness and interdependence. Scholars have suggested an alternative (research method) to the conventional ethnography for better understanding the interconnectedness in the globalized world which include: virtual and multi-sited fieldwork.
 - a) Virtual Ethnography: Another suggested approach to global ethnography is virtual ethnography based on the Internet and online communities. Since the Internet is one of the primary means by which local peoples maintain social relations and communities across national borders. However, ethnographers should be cautious about regressing to a contemporary digital “armchair anthropology” based on secondary sources and interactions captured in cyber-communities. A rich ethnographic account of online communities would ideally explore the relationship between people’s online activities and their actual offline social lives through firsthand fieldwork.
 - b) Multi-sited fieldwork: Since traditional ethnographic approaches that are restricted to one locality cannot capture the essence of global flows and trans-border processes, a number of scholars have urged ethnographers to engage in multi-sited fieldwork.
- ii) Reasons for global ethnographers to conduct multi-sited fieldwork.
 - a) To compare how macro global institutions and processes are impacting multiple locales in similar or different ways.
 - b) To conduct multisite fieldwork is to track the movement and flow of global commodities, migrants, cultures, ideologies, and information across national borders.
 - c) To directly study the increasing transnational connections between different places and communities
- iii) Two types of globalization: Non-contiguous and Contiguous Globalization

There are, in fact, two different types of globalization, both of which can be simultaneously experienced at the local level.
- iv) Non-continuous: The first type can be called non-contiguous globalization—the flow of information and images across national boundaries in which the globalizing agent influences local societies over a geographical distance without being physically present.
- v) There is another type of globalization that is contiguous and involves the actual physical movement of people, goods, and capital across national borders.