

Freedom as Familiar Markets: Negotiating the Influences of Globalisation on the Marketplace

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One aspect of Amartya Sen's conception of *capabilities* that requires elaboration in the light of recent debates on individual agency and globalisation is his notion of market freedom. Sen acknowledges the problematic linguistic connotations 'free markets' in the light of recent hegemonic discourses on neoliberal market globalisation, and prefers to revisit the notion that it is one's freedom to access and interact with markets that is of chief importance (Sen, 1999: 12). In this paper, I hope to expand upon this conception by investigating the way in which consumers and traders (re)conceptualise their relationship with the physical marketplace in the context of expanding cultural globalisation and neoliberal market forces. In particular, I will answer the question of how various strategies for negotiating the influences of cultural globalisation facilitate or impede access to, and comfort with, local marketplaces whilst critically examining whether the outcomes of these strategies are substantive or superficial. The importance of this question for development rests on normative notions of how, given the imperative to 'catch up with' the North, developing countries might develop hybrid or reflexive cultures of consumption and marketplace that accommodate and integrate diverse local approaches to nature and society.¹

Three Views of Cultural Globalisation

There are at least three separate but overlapping views explaining cultural globalisation—each with its respective strengths, weaknesses, and bodies of evidence. Respectively, these are the *global homogenisation* paradigm, the '*bubble lives*' or active-resistance view, and the *hybridisation*² paradigm. I will describe each briefly before proceeding to highlight some of their myopic biases and partially deconstructing their usefulness as analytical tools for understanding the shifting conceptualisation of the local marketplace in a time of globalisation.

The global homogenisation paradigm, often euphemistically referred to as 'Coca-colonization' or 'McDonaldization', sees Western cultural hegemony embedded in an internal logic of universality that dictates its monolithic proliferation from a centre throughout the world (Howes, 1996: 3-5; Nederveen Pieterse, 2004: 49). According to this paradigm, increases in global capital flows, communication systems, and transport mechanisms have opened cultural channels from the West, from which emanate desirable consumer products, media, and lifestyles that are inevitably absorbed by receiving communities (Classen, 1996). The deterministic quality of this paradigm is seductively attractive for the casual observer, especially journalists and world travellers, because it neatly explains the ubiquity of things like American fast food, blue jeans, Coca-Cola and hip-hop music. This is said to be the case particularly of the Third World consumer, "who was deemed to be at the mercy of the 'dream machine' of Western marketing" (Classen & Howes, 1996: 178). The narratives typically accompanying the global homogenisation paradigm are typically those of Western cultural hegemony, cultural

¹ This normative question derives from a debate highlighted in Robins (1999) and Carley and Spapens (1998), and draws upon commentary by Josefa Bautista, the Vice President of the Development Academy of the Philippines.

² This view of cultural globalisation is also referred to as 'creolization'. However, to avoid confusion with prior views on this topic, I opt for hybridisation.

convergence and teleology (or inevitability) (Nederveen Pieterse, 2004: 61). Although the pre-eminence of this theory has long been challenged (c.f., Talbott, 1995 as cited in Nederveen Pieterse, 2004: 50), I will show later that, following Giddens (2003: 392), there is a “definite power system in globalization”, and this power system has retreated from many of its readily apparent expressions only to emerge in other more subversive and elusive forms of homogenisation.

The so-called ‘bubble lives’ or active-resistance view of cultural globalisation, in contrast to the above paradigm, describes peoples’ lives as being inextricably rooted to ethnic, national and social class attachments, which are, upon exposure to the global sphere, able to subsume these influences or remain relatively unaffected by them (Kennedy, 2007). Paradoxically, this view on cultural globalisation is often as intuitively seductive as the global homogenisation view because, in the midst of McDonalds and blue jeans, one often finds evidence of the “local” passively or aggressively reasserting or maintaining itself. As Kennedy maintains,

“There is a sense [...] in which globalization theory needs ‘to come back to earth’ and accept that everyone is compelled to live and work in a particular locale at any one time and to survive by constructing appropriate and meaningful ethnic, regional, class or national bubble-lives. Here, for all sorts of reasons—not least language barriers, material needs and everyday affective commitments—actors engender multiple primordial affiliations. While these are not necessarily hostile or oblivious to the lives of more socially or geographically distant others, more often than not the latter’s lives seem remote, impenetrable and scarcely relevant.” (2007: 280)

Local ‘marketplace forms’ are, on the surface, a clear example of this. What we witness is the continuing and substantial role in various regions of Arab bazaars, Southeast Asian morning markets, Northeast Asian midnight markets, European farmers markets, and so on. The range of vegetables or consumer products available for purchase has changed somewhat due to its sourcing from the global capitalist market, but, so the argument goes, this effect is subsumed, or rendered irrelevant by, the dominant market form. However, as I will argue below, these “forces of conservation” may, ironically, be concealing the subversive power of cultural homogenisation.

The third paradigm of cultural globalisation I present is the hybridisation paradigm, which, in various permutations and definitions, outlines a series of processes by which foreign cultural elements are blended with local ones to form discrete entities. This is closely associated with post-modern sensibilities, which see borders of identity and culture as less fixed and territorially distinctive, and thus conducive to blending upon contact with (or travel to) foreign cultures. The primary contentions within this paradigm concern how much agency is asserted by receivers, in which directions the flows of cultural influence travel, and how much endogeneity (or exogeneity) describes what “local” or “indigenous” culture is at any moment in time. Evidence of hybridisation in the world is ample, although defining specifically what constitutes hybridisation (as opposed to, say, evolving styles or purposeful product placement) has absorbed much academic writing on the subject. Most generally, it can be said that hybridisation takes into account the “creativity of the consumer” (Howes, 1996: 5).

Amongst the most apparent examples of hybridisation are those in which the mutability of the commodity form comes into focus. This phenomenon usually takes the form of items that do not necessarily transmit the loaded sociocultural message from the host culture, and instead are imbued with different, and often surprising meanings (Ibid.: 8). The movie *The Gods Must Be Crazy* exemplifies this phenomenon in its characterisation of the !Kung tribespeoples’ response to the introduction of an empty Coca-Cola bottle into their society. For populist writers, hybridisation is either seen as a sad result of dependence and impurity (Nederveen

Pieterse, 2004: 71), and by others, hybridisation is touted as the ‘last line of defence’ against the forces of global cultural homogenisation. For development apologists, hybridisation can be seen as a mitigating influence on the culturally destructive—but necessary—effects of rapid economic development (Sen, 1999: 31-32). However, as with the ‘bubble lives’ view, hybridity carries with it the potential for covering over substantive homogenisation influences with superficial adaptations and appropriations of global cultural influences. It is to the mechanics of this process that I now turn.

The Emergence of a “Double Consciousness”

Suggesting the possibility of a symbiotic parallel existence of the local with the global is at odds with various ‘clash of civilisations’ and hybridisation models of cultural globalisation, which see the global and the local as either diametrically opposed or, in the case of hybridity, abrading one another in a reconcilable way. The post-modern view of globalisation has gone a long way towards sedimenting the emotive conceptualisation that the world is experiencing an unprecedented pre-eminence of global cultural and financial hegemonies that are bearing down on local societies.³ Theories concerning individual agency in this period of globalisation are newly being challenged to escape from, or at least problematise, the narrowly encapsulated dichotomy of the global and the local (Moreiras, 1999: 388). Debates surfacing from this broad and cross-disciplinary corpus tend to draw inspiration from Gramscian and Polanyian debates on hegemony, counter-hegemony and the ‘double-movement’,⁴ and consistently find evidence pointing towards resolution through cultural homogenisation (hegemony), glocalisation⁵ and re-territorialisation (counter-hegemony and the ‘double movement’), or, more modestly, through hybridisation. What these outcomes have in common is that they fit snugly into one or more of the above-mentioned views of cultural globalisation. Thus, on the one hand we have an overly antagonistic view of globalisation, which sees various forces and counter-forces negotiating cultural globalisation; on the other hand, we have a release valve in the form of hybridisation that has, historically, led to the establishment of discrete cultural entities. This dialectic of fragmentation and convergence is, however, challenged and supplemented by the potential for a symbiotic existence predicated on Moreiras’s concept of a “double consciousness”.

My overall view, taking into account the lessons from the above-mentioned views of cultural globalisation, is that the forces of global cultural homogenisation are indeed strongly compelling and pervasive, but can actually operate *in tandem with and not against* attempts to secure a ‘bubble life’ or hybridise. Moreiras’s (1999) “double consciousness” of global sociocultural reflexivity is a state in which one dwells simultaneously “within the epistemology of Western modernity” and also within the interactional framework of the locale. The Arab bazaar of today continues to function on a barter and trade system despite being undergirded by a global capitalist economic system which would seemingly have rendered bartering obsolete. This is not wholly unexpected. Bourdieu notes that it is the “permanence or survival of the institutions and agents of the old order undergoing dismantlement, and [...] all the social solidarities, familial or of other kinds, which make it possible that the social order does not sink

³ This is in reference to dramatic characterisations of Coca-Colonization, McDonaldization, and McDisneyfication.

⁴ Polanyi’s conception of the ‘double-movement’ is, strictly speaking, related to the masses reasserting social control over a liberalising market sphere, but is more recently being applied to various movements contesting the spread of market globalism (or neoliberal globalisation).

⁵ Although in use earlier, the term glocalisation was brought into popular use by the British sociologist Roland Robertson in the early 1990’s. It describes the processes through which global ideas and ideas are fashioned (by the host or the receiver) to suit the local context. Generally, processes of glocalisation are considered to stop short of initiating hybridisation.

into chaos” (Bourdieu, 1998: 3, cited in Moreiras, 1999: 379). In short, partial demands of all “parties” can be met simultaneously: neoliberal economics determines prices and can position world products in the Arab bazaar, whilst the consumer continues (however superficially) to feel as if she is still connected to an indigenous and familiar marketplace culture. In this, the “system of dispositions” or the *habitus*, is instrumentally maintained in order to prevent radical disruption in the social sphere that might spread into the markets (Bourdieu, 1977: 85). This same process has occurred on a large scale in urban European farmer markets. The casual consumer is at ease in the familiar marketplace environment, perhaps even romanticising it to some degree. She might (mistakenly) feel as if she is purchasing from a real farmer; in fact, she is simply purchasing strategically-presented globalised agriculture.⁶ For those consumers who are aware of the empty nature of the “farmer market”, their patronage often continues because context (the marketplace culture) is more important than the product.

In the context of cultural globalisation, the ‘double consciousness’ facilitates reconciliation between non-contradictory “transcultural historical affinities”⁷ (Nederveen Pieterse, 2004: 77-78). But this phenomenon might also be seen as a “backdoor” or “Trojan horse” for market globalism, allowing neoliberal market forms to operate as a superstructure to the interactive arena of the marketplace. Following this argument, the ‘bubble bazaar’ effectively provides global markets (the prices and the products) with significantly more access to consumers than normal by virtue of being concealed subtly under the veneer of the bazaar’s (non-substantive) barter and trade system. The bazaar locale thus continues to exist in a unique cultural space, but it is nonetheless connected globally through capitalist market technology and various symbolic tokens (such as world products being sold in the market).⁸ The significant outcome is that, whilst various products and pricing mechanisms have been subverted by market globalism and cultural homogenisation, the marketplace form is retained.

The Elusive Power of Market Globalism

In the Gramscian sense, the hegemony of cultural globalisation, which includes a mix of coercion and consent, only partially describes the basis for the formation of a ‘double consciousness’.⁹ Whilst coercively competitive markets and consent tacitly underlie the acceptance of traders and consumers in a bazaar to operate within a global capitalist framework, this consent can be achieved in a subversive, or rather, “elusive” manner (to borrow from Cohen (2007)). This complicity in deception, which relies on a cadre of critically reflexive actors to facilitate, is what sets apart the concept of ‘double consciousness’ from hybridisation, which is a more self-conscious process. Later, I will discuss how the global imperative to marketise culture for consumption operates in a similar coercive and elusive manner, leading ultimately to cultural commodification and fragmentation. The ethical implications of this type of deceptive transformation are a matter that I cannot delve into here, except to point out that, if nothing else, the “elusive” form of market globalism might provide a bridge, or transition period, which allows some time for adaptation. Sen (1999) acknowledges this implicitly in his worry that, whilst limiting market access is an unfreedom, freeing markets artificially (fast) is potentially damaging as well. The criticism I face in this assertion is comparable to that received by global

⁶ The strategy of appealing to tradition is also well understood by those who design wine and spirits labels and packaging for “traditional” products.

⁷ Nederveen Pieterse sees “transcultural historical affinities” as cultural characteristics that facilitate the compatible internalisation of foreign cultural elements.

⁸ This sentence loosely follows Giddens’s concept of time-space “distanciation”.

⁹ This is based on Mittelman’s (2000) understanding of Gramsci’s works contained in, “Selections from the Prison Notebooks” (1971).

warming scientists who were obliged to begin speaking of ‘adaptation’ whilst continuing to holding out for, and support, mitigation strategies. In similar fashion, I do not intend to concede the unstoppable of market liberalisation merely because I have begun discussing strategies for easing the cultural difficulties of liberalisation.

Negotiating the Influences of Globalisation

It is clear enough that in cases where cultural globalisation has a deleterious effect on indigenous culture, that at least a combination of active resistance, hybridisation, and formation of a ‘double consciousness’ is necessary to stay the damage. However, I contend that there is a strategic element to this conservation—perhaps even a strategy that is commensurate with economic development. For example, holding on to ‘bazaar culture’ requires a different strategy than holding on to the culture of traditionally produced cheeses. To outline a framework for the sustainable and strategic conservation of indigenous culture and/or authenticity, I will proceed to outline ways in which consumers and brokers conceptualise their roles and, in this, how much room to manoeuvre they have to hybridise, resist, or form a ‘double consciousness’.

For consumers and traders, the essential point of reference for indigenous culture is authenticity, with the struggle revolving around how to define authenticity, and at what cost this definition will come. However, before expanding upon the authenticity debate, I will present a compatible model for investigating the layers of influence inside globalisation as presented in Burawoy et al.’s (2000) *Global Ethnography*. What the authors call “global (supranational) forces”, such as financial flows, consumer product exports and migration prospects, are mediated to the local level by “global (transnational) connections”, such as travellers, businessmen, advertising agencies and international organisations; these global connections, in turn, provide local people the symbolic material and structural basis from which to assemble “global imaginations” that render the local effects of globalisation comprehensible, or at least manageable. Local authenticity is generally taken for granted until it is exposed to the market by various global connections, at which point it can (and often does) diverge into multiple authenticities whose nature depend on how the actors involved fashion their global imagination (Wherry, 2006).

Authenticity Through Hybridisation and the Formation of ‘Double Consciousnesses’

Wherry (2006) describes four distinct sources of authenticity, categorised by the conditions under which authenticity was forged. The first, *reactive identity* against gentrification, is the pressure to crystallise or lock-in an authentic identity that is being threatened by expropriation. This describes, for instance, the growing authenticity of the bazaar or farmer market in the context of encroaching supermarkets. This source of authenticity is similar to the situations I have described thus far and is particularly well mediated by a ‘double consciousness’. The second source of authenticity, *reluctant engagement*, arises when commerce comes to be seen as hostile to authenticity, and the local actors are thus drawn into an unwilling defence of their product or lifestyle. This describes, for example, the struggle of farmers in a unique goat-herding region to band together and produce a certification that gives their products particular recognition. This is an example of the active-resistance mode of conserving culture, which goes towards erecting a nominal ‘bubble life’ around, say, the production of goat cheese. The third source of authenticity, *complicit appropriation*, occurs when it becomes known that an inauthentic product or service will suffice for a certain market segment without detracting from the authenticity of the original entity. This describes Las Vegas and Disneyland recreations of famous historical monuments, or such Champagne substitutes as

'sparkling white wine'. This source of authenticity is predicated on the creation of an instrumental 'double consciousness' that allows the consumer to live vicariously through the inauthentic entity. The final source of authenticity outlined by Wherry (2006) is *transcendental appropriations*, a case in which both the brokers and consumers realise and respect the need to maintain authenticity. This is a demand and supply-driven process of active resistance, and describes the popularity of, and loyalty to, various local elements, such as the thinness of New York Pizza, the spiciness of Thai food or the aroma of Turkish coffee. This source of authenticity is most effectively negotiated by fashioning a 'bubble life', within which the core attributes of a product are mutually sanctified.

As suggested above, it is generally the case that maintaining authenticity of *material products* is more readily accomplished by instrumentally fashioning 'bubble lives' through active resistance to expropriation. Encouraging a 'double consciousness', it follows, might be employed to maintain the authenticity of *various experiences, events, or contexts*. These sources of authenticity, however, are not mutually exclusive and, indeed, are likely more effective at maintaining authenticity if employed simultaneously.

Indigenous Culture Preserved Through Hybridisation

The process of defending authenticity cannot be accomplished through hybridisation, as hybridisation inherently entails some alteration of the authentic original. This is not to say that hybridisation is not effective at conserving indigenous culture in some form, but merely to note that it can only be employed in a zero-sum game, in which some local is substituted out in favour of the foreign. As Moreiras notes, "Arguing for hybridity against the reification of cultural identities as some kind of recipe for perpetual flexibility overdoes its usefulness once it is made clear that hybridity can also produce a form of conceptual reification" (1999: 377). This phenomenon is not new; some of the richest (and now considered most unified) cultural traditions of the past, including Athens, the Indus Valley, Sudan and Mexico "emerged at the meeting point of markedly different cultures historically" (Nederveen Pieterse, 2004: 54).

There are also many contemporary cases in which hybridisation has contributed to the maintenance, in some formulation, of indigenous cultural elements. South Korean midnight wholesale markets, for instance, have adapted to become trendy hang-outs for Korean youth in addition to serving their original function. This is reinforced (i.e., patronised) further by Korean *apgu-jung* culture, which is a hybridised version of the post-modern yuppie consumer culture extant in the West (Kang, 1999). Consumer culture in Korea is also heavily mediated by the transculturation practices of Korean advertising firms working for Western companies. These firms effectively prepare pre-hybridised messages that, in addition to promoting consumer culture generally, also adapt specific products and marketing to Korean sensibilities (Kang, 1999: 27). In doing so, Korean advertising firms create a sense of "hyperreality", in which a frontier modern reality encouraging hybridity is reproduced in modern imagery (advertisements, product packaging, etc.) in order to control how foreign (Western) images are internalised by Korean society (Firat, 1995: 110). The result is the fragmentation of the foreign cultural element into hybridised forms that not only resist re-convergence on the cultural hegemony, but now move on parallel and path dependent trajectories due to their indigenous moulding (Grove, 2007).

Strategising the Preservation of Authenticity and Indigenous Culture

The three non-exclusive strategies for negotiating cultural globalisation (active resistance, hybridisation, and equilibrating a 'double consciousness') are thus employed both instrumentally

and passively under various conditions to facilitate the internalisation of foreign cultural elements. As Firat notes,

The postmodern stance is not to try to dominate conditions by imposing one single (meta)narrative (a single, totalizing ideological story system) on the increasingly fragmented and spectacularized (symbolic) conditions of human existence but to playfully, even if critically, employ these conditions in allowing the sampling of varied and experimentable lifestyles and states of being by the consumers of society. (1995: 111)

The degree to which the strategies for negotiating cultural globalisation succeed in maintaining authenticity and/or indigenous culture is thus incumbent on the strategy to which they were employed and the type of imagery being received. There are, however, a number of critiques available to this position that should be explicated before moving on. Firstly, there are various influences, which are not readily hybridised or appropriated by receiving cultures. For example, historically, this might describe hegemonic British trade technology from the mid 18th Century¹⁰ onward and, more contemporarily, computers and high technology. Secondly, societies are not necessarily unified in the pursuit of maintaining cultural integrity, if they could ever agree on what there is to protect. Indeed, the 'old order' is not inherently good or enfranchising for many (Lowe, 1996: 171). In addition, there is a propensity in the case of information systems, telecommunications, and higher education, to converge on some basic global standards. And lastly, but perhaps most importantly, over time and with the natural cultural evolution, strategies for maintaining culture can begin to lose traction or can be undermined by new elements if not updated appropriately.

Critical Reflexivity in the (Re)Production of Culture

As alluded to above in the discussion of bazaar traders and Korean advertising firms, the strength of a society's ability to negotiate with foreign cultural elements is somewhat dependent upon the critical reflexivity of those global connections (these might be called gatekeepers) who mediate global culture to the local (Firat, 1995). Bazaar traders' reflexive understanding of their precarious position between the global capitalist marketplace and the conventional consumer challenges them to create a "scientific consciousness" for interacting with markets and a "social consciousness" enabling them to understand how to provide customers with the consumer experience they expect (their normalised *habitus*) (Beck, 1992: 181; Giddens, 1991: 187). Cosmopolitans, such as *apgu-jung* youth, are also commonly seen as more critically reflexive elements of society, and often more directly involved in the processes of transculturation (Tomlinson, 1999: 187-189). Critical reflexivity can thus be seen as a "cultural resource" that can, to some degree, be instrumentalised for the purposes of negotiating cultural globalisation (Tomlinson, 1999: 30). This goes beyond simple reflection of subjects on their own "modernised" circumstances, and involves living with, adapting to and engaging positively with change and contingency.

Reflexivity can serve to accentuate the cultural differences resulting from globalisation, rendering them visible and thus manageable. As paraphrased in Kennedy (2007: 270) from Giddens (1990), the "trio of rational modern orientations" includes,

¹⁰ This is in reference to the hegemonic power of British transport systems and trade-related technology, which began superceding and displacing previous forms due to efficiency and also as a result of the bureaucratic conditions that East Asia, in particular, had to fill in order to gain access to British technology (Curtin, 1984: 251-254).

the capacity of humans to experience events in time and space as separate from each other and disconnected from concrete places; the disembedding of social relations through the increased use of symbolic tokens, expert systems and impersonal knowledge and forms of communication; and the increased ability of self-monitoring, reflexive social actors to reconstitute incoming knowledge and not merely to interpret it along the guidelines indicated by tradition.

This set of reflexive abilities and tools for self-analysis has led to a growing sensitivity, and thus appreciation for and critical engagement with, cultural differences (Nederveen Pieterse, 2004: 41). Migration, long-distance trade, diffusion of technology, literacy and capitalism have, although not monolithically, all pushed this wider self-reflexivity along. As Robertson (1992: 8) maintains, globalisation involves the “intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole”. As a result, instead of melting pots (a modernist expectation), we are finding more and more cultural mosaics (Firat, 1995: 115). Ames (2004: 175), in his discussion of the dialectic evolution of Chinese and Western philosophy, describes China’s emergence as a modern world power as part-and-parcel to gaining reflexive control and power over its ‘absorption’ of the other. As this discussion shows, the increase in the available modes of organisation and negotiation, such as the ‘bubble lives’, ‘double consciousness’ and hybridisation have led to an uneven articulation and asymmetric integration of global forces, of which none has a monopoly (Nederveen Pieterse, 2004: 65-67).

Although only one of the possible approaches for managing and negotiating cultural globalisation, many commentators have put forward that the so-called ‘marketisation of culture’ or ‘commodification of tradition’ has become rather essential for cultural survival. One clear conclusion from Wherry’s (2006: 28) analysis of authenticity in handicraft markets in Thailand is that “those concerned with the disappearance of authenticity must defend it through their active engagement in the commercial markets”. Various, such commodification can bring international recognition and appreciation, create employment for the youth, and save cultures from ‘museumification’ (Howes, 1996: 13). Cultures that, “are able to translate their qualities into marketable commodities and spectacles find themselves maintained, experienced, and globalized. Cultures that cannot or do not (re)present themselves in terms of marketable qualities, simulated instances, experiences, and products are finding themselves divested of numbers” (Firat, 1995: 118). Displays of ‘local culture’ for tourists, handicrafts and other rural cottage industry products are the most abundant examples of this phenomenon. But cultures, as Firat contends (1995: 119), “cannot be owned” because marketisation is highly conducive to fragmentation. Under marketisation, culture tends to fragment into singular qualities, such as food, attire, music, art, dance, consumer culture and media, which are then translated into marketable items. My contention is that this fragmentation can be accommodated strategically through hybridisation, equilibrating a ‘double consciousness’, or crystallising a ‘bubble life’ through active resistance in the short-term. In the long-term, the loss of control over “cultural assets” owing to the loss of “ownership” over culture due to fragmentation does erode the efficacy of negotiation.

Conclusion

In this essay, I have outlined the ways in which the forces of cultural globalisation have, in reference to local marketplace cultures, been strategically negotiated and internalised with an eye toward defending authenticity and/or indigenous culture. To the two well-worn strategies for

accommodating cultural globalisation—the active resistance ‘bubble life’ strategy and hybridisation—I have substantiated a third (more passive) strategy, Moreiras’s “double consciousness”, because it has been made increasingly relevant by the elusive power of market globalism. Finally, I have contended that the value of each of these strategies is dependent upon the aggregate ability to be critically self-reflexive and to continually renegotiate the terms under which cultural globalisation proceeds. In this conclusion, I wish to revisit Sen’s notion of market freedom by asking whether such negotiation substantively increases, or at least maintains, people’s access and capability to engage meaningfully with their local marketplaces.

The conclusion I draw stands somewhat in contradiction to that of Robertson (1992) in his seminal work, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*. In this work, as Cohen contends, “[Robertson] argued that the idea of the inevitability of global cultural integration was flawed in that local cultures could now see themselves in relation to other cultures and to a global whole. This element of reflexivity could result in a negative assessment of global culture and a re-evaluation and re-assertion of the local, often in complex ways” (2007: 370-371). In my discussions of the negotiation of the influences of cultural globalisation, I argue that global cultural integration is, in fact inevitable, although I agree with Robertson that large-scale integration is unlikely. However, in contrast to Robertson, I note that critical reflexivity is challenged by the “elusive power” of market globalism, and, furthermore, that decidedly “negative” assessments of global culture are rare in practice. As accepted by Beck, Giddens and Lash, in a more open, reflexive society, established beliefs and habits are seen to be routinely called into question as a means of people living their lives less as fate and more as a conscious negotiation (Beck et al., 1994). The strategies for resistance and accommodation based on self-reflexivity that I have described are thusly conscious measures for maintaining marketplace freedom, access and comfort in the short-term. In the long term, however, the ‘double consciousness’ can conceal homogenising influences of market globalism (Moreiras, 1999: 380), hybridisation only manages to prevent cultural convergence but not parallelism, and authenticity can be undermined by the fragmenting influences of marketisation.

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