Department of Sociology

LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

The Global Media and Cosmopolitanism

John Urry

> 'The need for a constantly changing market chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere…the bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market give a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country…The individual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible' (Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels 1952: *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*: 46-7; emphasis added)

Introduction

Where the world consisted of antagonistic nation-states, the 'other' was almost always something to fear, to attack, to colonise, to dominate and to keep at bay. The other was dangerous, especially those others who were on the move, such as armies, migrants, traders,

vagrants, travellers who might travel into and stay within one's country. Citizenship came to consist of rights attributable to tightly specified categories of those who were unambiguously within the 'nation'. If for reasons of birth or blood or residence people were not citizens of that nation, then harsh and punitive sanctions would often be delivered against any such outsiders. This system of nation-states and national identities involved massive antagonism towards the 'stranger', especially those strangers deemed to have a different colour, creed or culture. Orientations to the other, and especially to the mobile other, have normally been 'nasty, brutish and short'.

Fortunately not all of recent human history has consisted of quite such hostility against the 'other'; here and there what we might call a more cosmopolitan attitude did prevail. In this paper I more generally interrogate such a notion of cosmopolitanism and ask a simple empirical question: with the development of global processes especially the global media, is cosmopolitanism becoming more widespread, and if it is what does it consist of? In particular I consider the 'global other' and ask whether, and to what degree, what lies 'beyond one's society' is becoming differently valorised, in a post-national, cosmopolitan manner, as no longer quite such an intensely opposed 'other' (see Beck 2000, on the cosmopolitan perspective more generally). Is 'national one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness' becoming a thing of the past as predicted a century-and-a-half ago in the *Communist Manifesto?* (see Harvey 2000, for an extensive reworking of the *Manifesto*).

This set of issues arose from recent research on the connections between the 'environment' and global citizenship (see Szerszynski, Urry, Myers 2000, for a summary). 'Cosmopolitanism' occupied a complex place in our analysis of global citizenship. Many claims concerned with in some sense 'saving the environment' appear to depend upon a some notion of the cosmopolitan. We found ourselves deploying such notions, citing *inter alia* Kant, some recent analyses of cosmopolitan democracy (such as Held 1995; Beck 2000) and analyses of the nature of global scapes, consumption and travel (Hannerz 1990, 1996; Urry 1995).

I begin with three significant thinkers whose writings contribute to thinking through the nature of the cosmopolitan. First, Henry Thoreau in his evocative return to 'nature' on the banks of Walden Pond in the mid-nineteenth century, surprisingly did not complain about the sound of the railway. He considered that he was *'refreshed and expanded when the freight train rattles past me, and I smell the stores which go dispensing their odours all the way from Long Wharf to Lake Champlain, reminding me of foreign parts ... and the extent of the globe. I feel more like a citizen of the world'* (1927: 103). This emphasises that connections between places can get positively transformed by new socio-technical relations – in this case the movement of the railway connecting locality with locality. The railway made Thoreau feel a citizen of the world, a cosmopolitan, connected and not insular. In the contemporary re-imaging of the global other a similar role may be played by air and space travel.

Heidegger in similar vein commented about another new technology, the radio in 1919. He said: *'I live in a dull, drab colliery village ... a bus ride from third rate entertainments and a considerable journey from any educational, musical or social advantages of a first class sort. In such an atmosphere life becomes rusty and apathetic. Into this monotony comes a good radio set and my little world is transformed'*, made we might say cosmopolitan (quoted Scannell 1996: 161). In this paper I consider how the TV and the internet have even more dramatically de-severed the local, national and global worlds. They have transformed all our 'little worlds' through virtual and imaginative travel, without the need to move corporeally outside one's house or workplace (Urry 2000: chap 3).

Finally, E.M. Forster noted that certain kinds of place have come to be nomadic or cosmopolitan in character. He argued that *'London was a foretaste of this nomadic civilization which is altering human nature so profoundly ... Under cosmopolitanism ... we shall receive no help from the earth. Trees and meadows and mountains will only be a spectacle...'* (E. M. Forster 1931: 243). Certain local places seem quintessentially cosmopolitan; other places are not. And certain sorts of places come to be detached from nature and the physical environment. Nature itself gets transformed into a cosmopolitan *spectacle* that is comprised of images of trees and meadows and mountains to be known about, compared, evaluated, possessed, but not according to Forster or Heidegger places that can be 'dwelt-within'.

In the next section I elaborate some of the more precise research questions that were drawn out of these notions, of connections, de-severance and spectacle, for developing a concept of the 'cosmopolitan'.
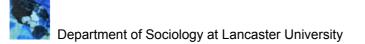
Research Questions

My starting point consists of writings about globalisation that have exponentially grown since 1989 (see Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, Perraton 1999; and the UNDP Report 1999). I take for granted certain points from this 'globalisation-paradigm': the media (and other) industries increasingly involve globally interlocking patterns of ownership and control, there are multiple new forms of 'global governance', there is the proliferation of 'global' images and brands circulating across much of the world (from Coca-Cola to Greenpeace) and the global level is partially self-organising (see Urry 2000). While there is no complete global society, powerful, interconnecting global hybrids, especially capitalist corporations, are transforming social life across exceptional scales of time-space (see Harvey 2000). With regard to the media, McLuhan presciently wrote over thirty years ago: 'Electric circuitry has overthrown the regime of "time" and "space" and pours us instantly and continuously the concerns of all other men [sic]' (McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 16).

Moreover, these processes are also transforming contemporary citizenship. 1989 was also when the Berlin Wall came down (the twentieth century version of 'Chinese walls'), symbolising the emergence (or re-emergence) of various ethnic and national identities and new states that have had massive consequences across much of especially former eastern Europe. But also in the 1990s there has also been the development of various strands of 'post-national' or 'nomadic' citizenship resulting from the increasingly global flows of migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, tourists, environmental risks, information and images (Soysal 1994; Yuval-Davis 1997; Joseph 1999). This globalisation has generated a return to issues of universal rights and the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948 (see Harvey 2000, for extensive discussion and elaboration).

At present however the empirical analysis of the 'global' as 'culture' remains at the institutional/organisational/structural levels. Analysis and research have mainly developed of *ownership* (who owns which media/leisure/fast food etc companies), *consumption* (TV ownership for example ranges from fewer than 20 TVs per 1000 people in Afghanistan to over 800 per 1000 in the US) and *programming* (range and scale of global TV programming; numbers of new internet sites, etc). But there has been very little examination of the *consequences* of such putative global cultures for everyday life and for how these cultures may be transforming the very ways that people conceive of their relationships to a variety of 'others' across the globe and where representations of those lives are widely available on film, TV, the internet and so on. It is how these mediations of 'other' peoples, places and environments are folded into our daily lives that is addressed below, and especially how such others become objects of identification, pity or compassion (see Boltanski 1999). I am concerned with 'thicker', cultural conditions for a possible post-national citizenship. Printed books and newspapers, radio and public service television, helped to form the imagined 'community in anonymity' of nations and national citizenship (Anderson 1989). The formation of anything like cosmopolitan citizenship in the twenty-first century will require massive cultural work to generate a far more extensive community in anonymity.

In Habermas' conception of the 'public sphere' in the late eighteenth century, the salon, coffee house and the periodical press provided a sphere where private individuals could debate and resolve political issues (1989). Central to this notion (criticised for its gender-bias) is that of co-presence and dialogue between people face-to-face. But the 'mediated' character of contemporary social life transforms such a sphere. Thompson hypothesises that 'deliberative democracy' might develop through the media conceived hermeneutically (1995; Cohen 1996). People can develop forms of quasi-interaction through the media, a kind of 'enforced proximity'. Indeed there appears to be an increasingly visual and narrative 'staging' of the public sphere, as it is transformed into a 'public stage' or a 'public screen' (Szerszynski and Toogood 2000; Meyrowitz 1985; Sheller and Urry 2000). This has led Ignatieff to suggest that future conflicts such as that in Kosovo can increasingly be viewed as 'virtual wars' which appears 'to take place on a screen…War affords the pleasures of a spectacle…When war

becomes a spectator sport, the media becomes the decisive theatre of operations' (2000: 191).

Williams describes the global 'televisual flow' that has become part of the everyday mode of dwelling for much of the world's population (1974; Allan 1997; Scannell 1996). Television is not important here not for its cognitive effects or indeed its ideological bias but rather for how it produces and circulates images of places, brands, peoples and the globe itself, and narratives of various figures, heroes and organisations (see Alexander and Jacobs 1998, by contrast on the narrative structure of national civil society). In particular, I consider whether media images and narratives have developed a 'banal globalism' present within various broadcast genres, including advertisements. Does TV displace unreflective identification with national cultures and place them within a wider context so as to facilitate cultural, emotional and moral encounters with various global 'others'? Second, I examine the issue raised by The Commission on Global Governance, set up to report on the first 50 years of the UN. It talks of 'Our Global Neighbourhood' [sic] where a mediated, enforced proximity may be generating a new *cosmopolitan* ethics involving many individuals and social groups (1995; Bauman 1993; Tomlinson 1999: chap 6; Beck 2000). Has there has been any change in the level, impact or nature of cosmopolitanism? How possible is it to be cosmopolitan while still being an unambiguous member of a locality or a nationality? Further, is widespread travel important in the very development of cosmopolitanism? Finally, what consequences would follow from the widespread growth of cosmopolitanism; would it corrode notions of national citizenship and would this be socially, ethically and environmentally desirable?

Banal Globalism

Billig describes the vernacular or banal nationalism that is part of how people think and experience themselves as humans (1995). There are many features that articulate the identities of each society through its mundane differences from each other. These include the waving of celebratory flags, singing national anthems, flying flags on public buildings, identifying with one's own sports-heroes, being addressed in the media as a member of a given society, celebrating independence day and so on. Such banal nationalism is inscribed within language so that when President Clinton deictically points to 'this, the greatest country in human history', the 'this' evokes a national place of belonging, an habitual nation which will implicitly understand that the 'this' refers to the US (Billig 1995: 107). All Americans will understand that the US is 'the greatest country in human history'.

However, this deictic pointing can occur to wider imagined communities stretching way beyond a nation's borders. Mandela refers to 'the people of South Africa and the world who are watching' (Billig 1995: 107). The 'we' in Mandela's speeches almost always evokes those beyond South Africa who watch South Africa upon the global media and have collectively participated in the country's rebirth. When Mandela states that 'we are one people' he is pointing both to South Africa and to the rest of the world. Likewise much of the pointing from the television commentators to the collective 'we' at Princess Diana's funeral, was to the estimated 2.5 billion people watching, as a post-modern saint, a 'global healer', was sanctified in the face of the whole world (see Richards, Wilson, Woodhead 1999: 3).

We undertook a 24-hour survey of all the visual images available on a variety of TV channels within Britain (see for details, Toogood 1998; Szerszynski and Toogood 2000). Numerous examples of the following 'global' images were found over this brief period:

- images of the earth, including the mimetic blue earth without lines or political colouring, but also including a football as indexical of the globe where soccer is conceived of as the iconic game of global citizens

- long, often aerial images of generic environments (a desert, an ocean, a rainforest) which are taken to depict the globe (and threats to it) rather than depicting particular nations

- images of wildlife - especially auratic animals (lions), persecuted species (seals) and indicator species which index the overall state of the environment (eagles)

- images of the family of man where it appears that people from almost all the cultures of the globe can all be happily in one place (a sports stadium) or share one global product (Coke)

- images of relatively exotic places and peoples (beaches, native dancers, ski slopes), often taken with unusual camera perspective, which suggests the endless possibilities of global mobility, communication and cosmopolitanism

- images of global players who are famous in and through the world's media and whose actions (and in cases misdeeds) are endlessly on display to the whole world (OJ Simpson, Madonna, Queen Elizabeth II)

- images of iconic exemplars who, through their setting and costume, demonstrate global responsibility – such people are seen as speaking for, and acting on behalf of, the globe (Mandela, Princess Diana as the 'queen of hearts', Ken Saro-Wiwa)

- images of those engaging in actions ultimately on behalf of the global community, this being represented by a montage of different cultures or places, or of people encountering the needy, the starving, the sick and so on (Red Cross, UN Volunteers, Special Constables)

- images of corporate actions conducted on behalf of the globe and of its long-term future (water companies cleaning up the environment, drug companies spending billions on new medical research)

- images of global reportage which is shown to be present, live and staffed by iconic figures able to speak, to witness, to comment and to interpret the globe (Kate Adie [BBC], Christiane Amanpour [CNN], John Pilger [ITV])

Central to banal globalism are representations of the earth or globe that parallel 'national' flags (Cosgrove 1994). In the case of the 'Blue Globe', the Earth is seen in dark space, as a whole defined against threatening emptiness, with no lines or political colouring, freezing a moment in time. But the globe appears in other forms, as a symbol of authority, organisation, and coverage of global information, particularly in news programmes - the graphic news globe, for instance, shown at the beginning of the BBC's or CNN's regular news broadcasts. These representations draw on the image of the Earth seen from space and altered to incorporate other conventions. This globe suggests a universal perspective, what Franklin, Lury, Stacey term a 'second nature', in which physical and geographical boundaries processes do not obscure the outline of the continents - everything can be seen but a distance (2000). This picture has become an ideological and marketing icon of immense power. It has been used *inter alia* by computer companies and airlines who emphasise the global reach of their activities; by environmentalists who emphasise the loneliness and fragility of the earth in the blackness of space and hence the need for planetary stewardship; and by the American government who saw the American Apollo mission as the crowning achievement of mankind's [sic] universal destiny. This photograph demonstrates the exceptional power of visual representations, representations that presuppose the notion of the visible world as a solid and opaque globe (Ingold 1993). There are many other examples of such a 'flagging of the global': the arcs of airlines traced across the map of the globe; the trademarks of global brands; the footprints of satellite broadcasts; ads for global products such as Benetton or Coca-Cola; 'flags' of international organisations and events such as the Olympics or the EU, and so on (Toogood and Myers 1999).

Overall we found many images, of globes, symbols, individuals, environments, trademarks and advertisements, that articulate a banal globalism, which point beyond national boundaries to the edges of the globe. Considering one advert for CNN's Worldview programme we can see how these images have become 'commonplaces'. In just 29 seconds dozens of global icons and exemplars are employed. This flood of images represents how over just one day there is the observation of, and appeal to, all cultures across the globe: a pagoda by a lake at dawn, dancing Polynesians, an orthodox monk, artillery firing, Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat at the White House, a series of global reporters, helicopters in the sunset, cyclists in China, statues in Rio, the Acropolis, and the Worldview globe. A north American voiceover states that there is: 'Now there's a global newscast that captures it all. Not just in Asia but

around the world. Watched by millions in nearly two hundred countries, who together will discover just how remarkable this day has been … Worldview, only on CNN International' (Toogood and Myers 1999).

The second point is that many of these global representations occur within advertisements, thus demonstrating that global processes often involve curious hybrids of the once-separate public and private spheres. There is increasing overlap between these and hence between issues of citizenship and contemporary consumerism. Stevenson maintains that: 'people are increasingly becoming citizens through their ability to be able to purchase goods in a global market: hence citizenship became less about formalised rights and duties and more about the consumption of exotic foods, Hollywood cinema, Brit pop CDs and Australian wine' (1997: 44). Meijer discusses how branded products and advertising can provide resources whereby people can conceive of themselves as culturally global, as involving curious combinations of the cosmopolitan and citizenship (1998). She suggests that Coca-Cola could be seen as 'the expression of a new way of living and understanding global cultural values' (Meijer 1998: 239). And such consumption can be tied into resistant identities. There are curious alliances between actors, musicians, Brazilian Indians, population music promoters, conservation organisations, the media industry and young consumers who buy records to support the campaign against the destruction of the Amazonian rainforest. People more generally can imagine ourselves as members (or supporters) of resistant organisations through purchases, wearing the T-shirt, hearing the CD, surfing to the page on the Web, buying the video of iconic figures and so on.

Third, these visual images are powerful because many sources of cognitive information appear not to be trusted (see Macnaghten and Urry 1998, on science and BSE). Images can paradoxically provide stable forms of meaning and interpretation in a globalising culture in which 'seeing is believing', especially when those images are repeated time and time again (see Morley and Robins 1995: 38-9, on TV and images). These images can connect local experiences with each other and hence provide powerful sources of hermeneutic interpretation to make sense of what would otherwise be disparate and apparently unconnected events and phenomena (Thompson 1995). It also seems that images are important because, according to Ramonet: 'the objective is not to make us understand a situation, but to make us take part in an event' (quoted Morley and Robins 1995: 195). People want to be a small part of the imagined community concerned about the plight of the Amazonian rainforest, the war in Bosnia, the famine in Ethiopia, but not necessarily to understand the nature of such events or what might be seriously done to eliminate them.

The global is thus 'ready-at-hand', a backcloth to a world of exceptional co-presence. As well as the ubiquitous TV (1 billion worldwide), PCs and planes, mobiles and modems, enable people to straddle that globe, circling it with bodies, messages, bits of information and images that pass over and beyond horizons (see Franklin, Lury, Stacey 2000). This 'banal globalism', and especially the importance of global icons, is of such significance that those in environmental and related NGOs have routinely to address, develop and deploy it. Such a globalism constitutes a ubiquitous background to daily broadcast viewing, transforming conceptions of time, space and community.

In the focus group research described below we found this array of global imagery is familiar to viewers who are well able to discuss its main characteristics. Participants are aware of the rhetorical deployment of global images by corporations, entertainers, and politicians, as well as by charities. They offer competing interpretations of such imagery. Respondents particularly disliked the use of the blue globe in an advertisement for the Norwich Union insurance services. In the small business persons focus group:

> Male 3 The Norwich Union advert, I've seen that one before, I find that type of advert quite cynical

> Moderator Mmmm

> Male 3 Well they are trying to sell you insurance, aren't they? And they are talking about something which, they are bringing in images [in] which are totally false

While in the corporate professionals group:

Female 3 …the Norwich Union, it frustrated me actually, it's very kind of God like, it's like saying we're everywhere

Female 2 [laughs] Big brother

The use of children standing for the globe in charitable appeals was also regarded on occasions as manipulative. While a retired man stated '*It's all staged'*, in the creative professionals group:

Moderator What do you think lies behind the use of children as an image? You know, what do they signify?

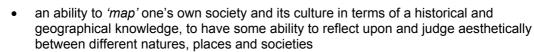Male 4 To nobble people, you know [laughs]

Cosmopolitanism

I turn now to the cosmopolitan. I take this to be a cultural disposition involving an intellectual and aesthetic stance of 'openness' towards peoples, places and experiences from different cultures, especially those from different 'nations' (see Tomlinson 1999: chap 6). Cosmopolitanism should involve the search for, and delight in, the contrasts between societies rather than a longing for superiority or for uniformity. Hannerz especially emphasises the importance of 'openness' and of the way that cosmopolitanism may generate new forms of critical knowledge (1996: 103-9). The cosmopolitan, he says, needs to be in 'a state of readiness, a personal ability to make one's way into other cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting and reflecting' (1990: 239). This parallels Heidegger's description of how the radio 'has so expanded its everyday environment that it has accomplished a de-severance of the "world"' (quoted Scannell 1996: 167). By this he means bringing close, within range, abolishing distance or farness with events and especially people. 'Heidegger interprets the possibility of radio … as making the ... the great world beyond my reach ... as accessible and available for me or anyone' (Scannell 1996: 167). However, communications through the radio, or other forms of communication or travel, do not necessarily produce cosmopolitanism– most argue that the latter entails a particular set of cultural predisposition and practices.

There are however various dangers with suggesting that the cosmopolitan is a specific cultural type that is clearly distinguishable from locals, tourists, visitors, migrants, refugees and so on, First, supposedly cosmopolitan openness mainly refers to masculinist opportunities and dispositions always to be able to remain 'on the move' (Jokinen and Veijola 1997). Second, such a stance of openness is predominantly the preserve of affluent travellers of the 'north' rather than poorer migrants of the 'south' or even of rich (Japanese) tourists from elsewhere. There is a danger that a distinction of social taste is being implemented through deploying the concept of the cosmopolitan (Massey 1994; and see Buzard 1993, on the traveller-tourist cultural binary). Third, so-called cosmopolitans may seek to escape from contributing to national or local states and to move within self-enclosed cosmopolitan enclaves or bubbles (Lasch 1995: 47). Thus fourth, cosmopolitanism is often constructed at the expense of the local and local peoples who are presumed to be narrow, insular and parochial in their patterns of mobility and in their ethics (Tomlinson 1999: chap 6; E.M.Forster interestingly critiques 'cosmopolitan chatter').

The following sets out a more general model of cosmopolitanism that tries to avoid these dangers (see Urry 1995: 167; Tomlinson 1999: 200-2; Beck 2000). Cosmopolitan predispositions and practices involve:

• extensive *mobility* in which people have the right to 'travel' corporeally, imaginatively and virtually and for significant numbers they also have the means to so travel

• the capacity to *consume* many places and environments en route

• a *curiosity* about many places, peoples and cultures and at least a rudimentary ability to locate such places and cultures historically, geographically and anthropologically

• a willingness to take *risks* by virtue of encountering the 'other'

- an ability to *'map'* one's own society and its culture in terms of a historical and geographical knowledge, to have some ability to reflect upon and judge aesthetically between different natures, places and societies

- *semiotic* skill to be able to interpret images of various others, to see what they are meant to represent, and to know when they are ironic

- an *openness* to other peoples and cultures and a willingness/ability to appreciate some elements of the language/culture of the 'other'

Contemporary cosmopolitanism has developed in and through imaginative travel through the TV (Urry 2000: chap 3). Hebdige argues that a 'mundane cosmopolitanism' is part of many people's everyday experience, as they are world travellers, either corporeally or via the TV in their living room: 'It is part of being 'taken for a ride' in and through late-20th century consumer culture. In the 1990s everybody [at least in the 'west'] is more or less cosmopolitan' (1990: 20). Sensations of other places, especially facilitated through channel-hopping, and programmes that simulate channel-hopping, may thus create an awareness of cosmopolitan interdependence. By participating in the practice of consuming in and through the media one can experience oneself to be part of a dispersed, global civicness, united by the sense that one is watching simultaneously with millions of dispersed others (Anderson 1983, Dayan and Katz 1992).

Tomlinson further reworks the notion of the cosmopolitan in terms of transformed relations *between* the global and the local (1999: 194-207). He argues that we should not counterpose the local and the cosmopolitan, maintaining that forceful moralities in the contemporary world will not be either localist and proximate or cosmopolitan and global. Rather Tomlinson advocates a contemporary cosmopolitanism that involves the capacity to live ethically in *both* the global and local, in the proximate and the distant simultaneously. Such a cosmopolitanism involves comprehending the specificity of one's local context, to connect to other locally specific contexts and to be open to a globalising world. He thus develops a kind of 'glocalised cosmopolitanism' or an 'ethical globalism' in which 'in the everyday lifestyle choices they make, cosmopolitans need routinely to experience the wider world as touching their local lifeworld, and vice versa' (Tomlinson 1999: 198).

Tomlinson suggests that the transformation of many 'localities' into 'glocalities' provides some of the preconditions for developing such a cosmopolitanism – 'changes in our actual physical environments, the routine factoring in of distant political-economic processes into life-plans, the penetration of our homes new media and communications technology, multiculturalism as increasingly the norm, increased mobility and foreign travel, even the effects of "cosmopolitanizing" of food culture' (1999: 199-200; and see Rotblat 1997, and Beck 2000, for further processes involved in 'cosmopolitanization'). Also deepening and developing a cosmopolitan stance is the vast amount of localised moral commitment and practice undertaken by people. Berking notes that 45% of US citizens dedicate over 5 hours a week to voluntary activities beyond the individual and family (1996: 192-3). Such a set of mutualities involve forms of 'extended solidarities that are no longer restricted to my own community of shared values' (Berking 1996: 201; Tomlinson 1999: 207; see Keck and Sikkink 1998, on the contemporary scale of 'activists beyond borders').

What commentators do not consider in depth is how important such notions of the cosmopolitan actually are within people's daily lives. In the next section I report upon focus group research concerning mobility and cosmopolitanism, to see if these claims about contemporary cosmopolitanism are empirically significant in one part of the UK.

Researching Cosmopolitanism

We conducted nine focus groups, each meeting twice for two-hour sessions. They were recruited to provide a wide distribution of occupational group, age and gender, as well as of different kinds of local-cosmopolitan lives (see Myers, Szerszynski, Urry 1999, for a lengthy summary). Three groups from Blackpool were chosen to explore different kinds of activity that people pursue in their *leisure* time (local citizenship; consuming the globe through travel; consuming the globe through the media). Three groups were convened in Manchester to explore comparable set of options in different *professional*, working domains (caring for local

places and people; producing the global mediascape; travelling the global corporate world). And three Preston groups were chosen to explore how notions of citizenship might play out within recognisable, existing *subcultures* (local business-people; 'Old Labour' internationalism; global flows of labour).

Few participants claimed an identity as a 'citizen of the world' or to challenge existing conceptions of national identity (for much more detail on the following, see Myers, Szerszynski, Urry 1999). In that sense we found few 'global citizens'. When notions of abstract or formal rights or responsibilities were introduced, the discussion proceeded along national lines, with people exploring what their particular *nation* can and cannot demand of its citizens - and what non-citizens can and should demand of it. We found little evidence of what we had systematically hypothesised as the thesis of 'global citizenship' (see Urry 2000: chap 7).

However, we did find a widespread *cosmopolitanism*. There was a strong awareness of the global flows of money, commodities and pollution; of extended relations connecting them to other peoples, places and environments; of the blurring boundaries of nation, culture and religion; and of a diverse range of possible local, national and global experiences. As a creative professional expressed it: *'globalisation has become more of a possibility and a reality'* (male 4). Such cosmopolitanism was found within all the focus groups, and most interestingly not just amongst those who travelled a great deal or had international links as part of their work. Most groups demonstrated a mundane 'cosmopolitanism' within their daily lives, *even* where their lives were currently based within geographically proximate communities (it should be noted that most groups had shown a history of considerable geographical mobility). Thus the small business persons group happily talked of the idea of a *'shrinking world'* (male 2). Another member of the group (male 5) said of the mobile phone:

> Years ago it didn't happen, you'd link up here, link up here. And it took 10 minutes to get through. The whole world's shrunk.

A retired man (male 2) said that:

> I think we are living in a shrinking world now aren't we, I think you can't do anything without having a you know an environmental effect on everybody else.

While the women involvers group commented:

> Female 7 The media bring it all…they bring it right into your living room
>
> Female 4 Mmm
>
> Female 7 Immediately it happens, it's there…
>
> Female 4 Mmm
>
> Female 7 …on the television, very graphically sometimes

Similarly one of the creative professionals group (female 3) argued that:

> I am a global citizen because I am aware of people, I'm aware of cultures, I'm aware of other countries and to a certain extent the impact that I have on it as well

While on another occasion in the same group:

> Moderator I mean, should everybody everywhere be entitled to travel
>
> Female 3 Without a doubt
>
> Moderator To buy foreign food
>
> Male 3 Without a doubt if you've got any sort of belief in a free world and a free, you know, sure…

One of the young European students (female 1) argued:

> We could say that maybe there are different cultures and different people but there's only one planet, that we're all in it, we're all involved into this planet

For European students cosmopolitanism involved less commitment to specifically local forms of life and embraced a culturally more mobile sense of identity between 'national cultures'. An Italian student (male 6) said that:

> I've got my family, my brothers, my parents and nobody is pulling me away from Italy, at the moment nobody's pushing me away from England so I feel quite comfortable in both places even if they are quite different

Another student contrasted the situation with former East Germany (male 1) bringing out the importance of consumption processes to cosmopolitanism:

> I mean they didn't have the right to travel, they didn't have the right to try any European or Western country food or clothes or cars or anything. And just, I think it's horrible. You should have the right, at least the right to enjoy or to try it

However, people's political formulations also involved an embedded vocabulary of feeling, emotion and localised care. Without prompting participants consistently used the word 'care' for what could be legitimately asked of them to do. Care is concrete, physical and grounded (Lash 1999). The concepts of *global* connectedness and responsibility that people deployed were thus very firmly grounded in *proximate* citizenship and belongingness (see Berking 1996: 192-4). Most respondents had some kind of active and compassionate commitment to an immediate community, as an actually existing way of life, as a lost world of the past, or as an ideal for the future. This community was not necessarily based upon geographical propinquity. People also conceived of wider, dispersed communities based on shared interests in football, collecting for a hospice, scouting, work, the environment, student unions, caravanning, car racing, short wave radio, or even tortoise protection (see Szerszynski 1997, 1998). Just as respondents were well-aware of global culture so too they sought to articulate Lash's second grounded modernity of 'haptic space, as the tactile community, as community, as memory' (1999: 14).

Respondents generally found it difficult to extend the taken-for-granted sense of moral connectedness that pertains in their more grounded communities to the larger and more abstract global community, since the latter seemed to lack the immediacy and groundedness ascribable to the former (see Bauman 1993, on ethics at a distance). Participants found it easier to describe what they felt about what they saw through discussing specific kinds of images of:

- iconic figures (Mandela, Diana, the Pope, Mother Theresa, Bob Geldorf)

- kinds of event (Band Aid)

- kinds of organisations (International Red Cross)

- kinds of figures (especially children who are often deemed to have global concerns. A corporate professional argued: *I think they have own society children, whatever their nationality, I think they've all got their own societies*.

In each case these were mediated through TV. A member of the creative professionals group (female 2) maintained: …Band Aid, look at that. That was amazing, that was huge. I mean, that highlighted charities, most people wouldn't even bother thinking about stuff like that or even care what's going on across the world.

In questions of moral consideration, at times compassion seemed (as might have been predicted) to decrease with distance – as one of the women involvers ironically expressed it: 'oh it's another famine advert' (female 4). Compassion seemed to be directed first at family and friends, then at one's particular 'community', and only then extended further afield. But at other times respondents placed the emphasis not so much on the near but on the particular, the problem being abstraction not distance (Bauman 1993). People were numbed by having to choose between the many moral demands that the globalising world confronts them with, whether these are proximate or distant. They also felt numbed by the very abstractness of many moral demands, often preferring to fill a shoebox with gifts to send a particular child who may not be at all proximate, rather than donating money to a charitable cause where there is an anonymous, general beneficiary.

This particularisation also manifested strongly in the respondents' talk about moral agents. Participants clearly had different interpretations of what 'citizen' might mean in relation to the local, national and the global. As I noted above they found talking about citizenship as an abstract concept difficult and unnatural, preferring to talk about specific figures, types of figures or organisations who might serve as exemplars. These focus groups were held in late 1997, and the discussion often turned to Princess Diana. She was used to show the extension of the local sense of personal responsibility and immediate face-to-face contact. For many participants, she could stand for the personal and affective relations needed for global community, and she could be contrasted to politicians, with their programmes and apparent self-interest. The simplicity and directness of her concern, as well as her apparent cosmopolitanism, were taken as evidence of its sincere authenticity (Richards, Wilson, Woodhead 1999). A corporate professional (male 5) argued that:

> She helped by her personality to bring it a lot more to the public attention. Again landmines is only one issue, she did the same with something like aids, it was an interest and a caring nature to do what she could from her abilities, to influence world opinion.

These focus group discussions showed that relations are 'global' in the sense of being morally and culturally open to diverse other peoples, environments and cultures. But they are not global in the sense of being shared and universal (see Therborn 2000, on this distinction). Ideas of global connectedness, belonging and responsibility were as 'banal' and taken for granted amongst the public as they are in the media, but they are given particular meanings within specific cultures. Amongst younger and more mobile groups, it appears as a cosmopolitan openness to the new and the culturally different (although this too has its limits). For older groups, ideas of responsibility and intervention beyond national boundaries were sometimes interpreted in relation to received notions of British character and the fulfilment of duty, familiar from the days of Empire and the World Wars (see Szerszynski, Urry, Myers 2000). Also, although we never raised issues of immigration, some groups, who otherwise engaged in much localised care, expressed considerable *cultural* hostility to various categories of immigrants (the connections between cosmopolitanism and ethnic difference needs further examination elsewhere). As a corporate professional said '*they don't have the right to come here and insist that they can do whatever they like'* (male 1).

Finally, another part of the research programme showed that media professionals are reflexively aware of this cosmopolitanism and seeks ways of extending it, through brands, icons and narratives, often in ways that enhance the sense of global 'connectedness' (see Szerszynski, Urry, Myers 2000). Two comments from media professionals are interesting here. First, the Director of OneWorld Broadcasting noted a growth of cosmopolitan sentiment and commented on its causes: '*…I wonder whether things like tourism aren't a bigger factor, the international markets for music or whatever. The sort of anti-Japanese feeling that I grew up with completely changed because of really the consumption relationship we now have with Japan'* (2.12.98). Rather like Marx and Engels he argued that consumer interconnectedness might lessen nationalist hostility.

While the Head of Media Affairs, International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva (14.12.98) argued: '*That figureheads are able to convey to an audience is a certain moral authority, a certain message which institutions made of brick and stone, apart from people in them, can't really do. And in a world where you have moving images, a photo of a still red cross probably doesn't have that kind of authority, whereas somebody speaking on television and moving around a landmine field does have significance'*. And this authority appears to derive from the fact that iconic figures are also known for moving around countless other places – it gives them added authority if it is known that they have been and seen many other global sites (as of course with Princess Diana as a cosmopolitan 'media saint'; see Richards, Wilson, Woodhead 1999).

Conclusion

On the basis of this research three conclusions can be drawn. First, a banal globalism is ready-to-hand and increasingly acts as a backcloth for an enormous amount of media output. With the emerging convergence of media, from televisions to computers to phones, this global

vernacular will be increasingly folded into an wide array of other practices - such as advertising, sport, education, arts, travel and so on - that are saturated with media images and information, with a banal globalism that is both outside and within each of us.

Second, a 'cosmopolitan civil society' may be hesitatingly emerging. Such cosmopolitanism appears widespread, based upon the awareness of a 'shrinking world' of global transportation and communications, together with an ethics of care based upon various proximate groundings. What is less clear though is how such cosmopolitan predisposition and practice intersects with national, ethnic and gender practices. But its development will undoubtedly inflect civil society, transforming the conditions under which 'social actors assemble, organize, and mobilize' (Cohen and Arato 1992: 151). And as they do assemble, organise and mobilise differently, so there will be new, unpredictable and emergent cosmopolitan identities, practices and cognitive praxes.

Third, this cosmopolitanism, of what we might call the global and the grounded, is placed upon the visual and narrative 'staging' of contemporary life, as the public sphere is transformed into a cosmopolitan public stage or screen (Szerszynski and Toogood 2000;; Sheller and Urry 2000). Television and travel, the mobile and the modem, seem to be producing a global village, blurring what is private and what is public, what is front-stage and what is back-stage, what is near and what is far (Meyrowitz 1985). Especially, they blur what is co-present and what is mediated, what is local and what is global, what is embodied and what is distant (see Harvey 2000: 85-6, on reconciling material embodiment and universal rights).

What the effects will be of these transformations upon the possibilities of cosmopolitan democracy in the twenty first century remains to be seen, but without doubt they change the context within which social and political life, as we have known it, has been historically located.

References

Alexander, J. and Jacobs, R. 1998. 'Mass communication, ritual and civil society', in T. Liebes and J. Curran (eds) *Media, Ritual and Identity*. London: Routledge

Allan, S. 1997. 'Raymond Williams and the culture of televisual flow', in J. Wallace and S. Nield (eds) *Raymond Williams Now: Knowledge, Limits and the Future*. London: Macmillan

Anderson, B. 1989. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso

Bauman, Z. 1993. *Postmodern Ethics.* Oxford: Blackwell

Beck, U. 2000. 'The cosmopolitan perspective. On the sociology of the second age of modernity', *British Journal of Sociology*, 51: 79-106

Berking, H. 1996. 'Solitary individualism: the moral impact of cultural modernisation in late modernity', in S. Lash, B. Szerszynski, B. Wynne (eds) *Risk, Environment and Modernity*. London: Routledge

Billig, M. 1995. *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage

Boltanski, L. 1999. *Distant Suffering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Buzard, J. 1993. *The Beaten Track*. Oxford: Clarendon Press

Cohen, J. 1996. 'The public sphere, the media and civil society', in A. Sajó and M. Price (eds) *Rights of Access to the Media.* The Hague: Kluwer Law International

Cohen, J. and Arato, A. 1992. *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press.

Commission on Global Governance 1995. *Our Global Neighbourhood: The Report of the Commission on Global Governance.* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Cosgrove, D. 1994. 'Contested Global Visions: One-World, Whole-Earth, and the Apollo Space Photographs', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 84: 270-294

Dayan, D. and Katz, E. 1992. *Media Events: The live broadcasting of history.* Mass.: Harvard University Press

Forster, E.M. [1910] 1931. *Howard's End*. Harmondsworth: Penguin

Franklin, S., Lury, C., Stacey, J. 2000. *Global Nature. Global Cultures*. London: Routledge

Habermas, J. 1989. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: Polity

Hannerz, U. 1990. 'Cosmopolitans and locals in world culture', in M. Featherstone (ed) *Global Culture*, London: Sage

Hannerz, U. 1996. *Transnational Connections*. London: Routledge

Harvey, D. 2000. *Spaces of Hope*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University press

Hebdige, D. 1990. 'Fax to the future', *Marxism Today*, January: 18-23

Held, D. 1995. *Democracy and the Global Order*. Cambridge: Polity

Held, D., McGrew, A., Goldblatt, D., Perraton, J. 1999. *Global Transformations*. Cambridge: Polity

Ignatieff, M. 2000. *Virtual War*. London: Chatto and Windus

Ingold, T. 1993. 'Globes and Spheres: The Topology of Environment' in K. Milton (ed) *Environmentalism: The View from Anthropology*. London: Routledge

Jokinen, E. and Veijola, S. 1997. 'The disoriented tourist: the figuration of the tourist in contemporary cultural critique', in C. Rojek and J. Urry (eds) *Touring Cultures*. London: Routledge

Joseph, M. 1999. *Nomadic Identities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Keck, M. and Sikkink, K. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders*. Ithaca: Princeton University Press

Lasch, C. 1995. *The Revolt of the Elites and the Betrayal of Democracy.* New York: W.W. Norton

Lash, S. 1999. *Another Modernity. A Different Rationality*. Oxford: Blackwell

Macnaghten, P. and Urry, J. 1998. *Contested Natures*. London: Sage

Marx, K. and Engels, F. [1848] 1952. *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Moscow: Foreign Languages

Massey, D. 1994. *Space, Class and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity

McLuhan, M. and Fiore, Q. 1967. *The Medium is the Message.* Harmondsworth: Penguin

Meijer, I. 1998. 'Advertising citizenship: an essay on the performative power of consumer culture', *Media, Culture and Society*, 20: 235-49

Meyrowitz, J. 1985. *No Sense of Place.* New York: Oxford University Press

Morley, D. and Robins, K. 1995. *Spaces of Identity*. London: Routledge

Myers, G., Szerszynski, B., Urry, J. 1999. *Cosmopolitanism and Care in Everyday Lives*. Working Paper, CSEC, Linguistics, Sociology Depts, Lancaster University

Richards, J., Wilson, S., Woodhead, L. (eds) 1999. *Diana. The Making of a Media Saint*. London: I.B.Tauris

Rotblat, J. (ed) 1997. *World Citizenship. Allegiance to Humanity*. London: Macmillan

Scannell, P. 1996. *Radio, Television and Modern Life*. Oxford: Blackwell

Sheller, M. and Urry, J. 2000. 'Mobility and the Transformations of 'Public' and 'Private' Life', ASA paper, Washington, August

Soysal, Y. 1994. *Limits of Citizenship*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Stevenson, N. 1997. 'Globalization, national cultures and cultural citizenship', *The Sociological Quarterly*, 38: 41-66

Szerszynski, B. 1997. 'Voluntary Associations and the Sustainable Society,' in M. Jacobs (ed), *Greening the Millennium? The New Politics of the Environment*. Oxford: Blackwell

Szerszynski, B. 1998. 'Communities of Good Practice,' in I. Christie and L. Nash (eds), *The Good Life*. London: Demos

Szerszynski, B. and Toogood, M. 2000. 'Global citizenship, the environment and the mass media', in S. Allen, B. Adam, C. Carter (eds) *The Media Politics of Environmental Risks*. London: Routledge

Szerszynski, B., Urry, J., Myers, G. 2000. 'Mediating Global Citizenship', in J. Smith (ed) *The Daily Globe*. London: Earthscan.

Therborn, G. 2000. ' At the birth of second century sociology: times of reflexivity, spaces of identity, and nodes of knowledge', *British Journal of Sociology*, 5: 37-57

Thompson, J. 1995. *The Media and Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity

Thoreau, H. [1854] 1927. *Walden or Life in the Woods*. London: Chapman and Hall

Tomlinson, J. 1999. *Globalization and Culture*. Cambridge: Polity

Toogood, M. 1998. *Globcit Image Database: Description and Categorisation of Images*. Mimeo, CSEC, Linguistics, Sociology Depts, Lancaster University

Toogood, M., and Myers, G. 1999. *Banal Globalism and the Media: Images of Belonging, Responsibility, and Citizenship.* Mimeo, CSEC, Linguistics, Sociology Depts Lancaster University

UNDP 1999. Human Development Report CD Rom, New York: UN

Urry, J. 1995. *Consuming Places*. London: Routledge

Urry, J. 2000. *Sociology Beyond Societies*. London: Routledge

Williams, R. 1974. *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. London: Fontana

Yuval-Davis, N. 1997. National Spaces and Collective Identities: Borders, Boundaries, Citizenship and Gender Relations. Inaugural Lecture, University of Greenwich