

Chapter 2 Identity and the Forces of Globalization



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Figure 2-1 Forces like trade, transportation, communication technology, and international media have increased the pace of globalization and changed what you buy, watch, and read, how you communicate, where you go, and how you get there. These changes have shaped — and been shaped by — people's individual and collective identity.

CHAPTER ISSUE

To what extent do identity and the forces of globalization shape each other?

YOU WON'T FIND the word “glocal” in dictionaries. At least, not yet. But enter this word in an Internet search engine, and you will get hundreds of thousands of hits.

What might this one example of a word that is widely used but does not yet appear in dictionaries tell you about the pace of change sparked by the forces of globalization? “Glocal” combines the words “global” and “local” to create a new word that expresses how the global and the local are related. It sums up the idea that things that happen at a global level, such as international trade, affect things that happen at a local level, such as what you buy in local stores — and vice versa. In other words, the globalizing world shapes your everyday life and your everyday life shapes the globalizing world.

Examine the photographs on the previous page. Each shows a force that links the global and the local.

- What forces do you think the photographs show?
- How do you think each connects the global and the local?
- How do these connections affect your everyday life, your relationships with family and friends, and your views on global and local events — your identity?

KEY TERMS

transnational corporation

media concentration

media convergence

economies of scale

biodiversity

homogenization

acculturation

accommodation

assimilation

cultural revitalization

LOOKING AHEAD

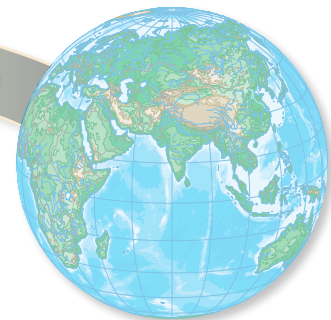
In this chapter, you will explore answers to the following questions:

- What are some forces of globalization?
- How is identity affected by some economic, political, environmental, and social dimensions of globalization?
- How do some forces of globalization present challenges to identity?
- How do some forces of globalization provide opportunities to affirm and promote identity?



My Point of View on Globalization

Look back at the notes you recorded at the beginning of Chapter 1. Have your understandings of globalization changed since then? Use words or images — or both — to explain how. Date your ideas and add them to the notebook, learning log, portfolio, or computer file you are keeping as you progress through this course.



WHAT ARE SOME FORCES OF GLOBALIZATION?



Figure 2-2 Creating soapstone sculptures is a traditional Inuit art. This carving, titled *Bird Creature*, was created in 1990 by Inuit artist Kiawak Ashoona, who lives near Cape Dorset, Nunavut. How do carvings like this link the identity of today's Inuit with their heritage?

Did you eat a banana or an orange for breakfast today? Did you season your eggs with pepper? Spread peanut butter on your toast? If you did any of these things, you were taking part in the same exchange of goods that has connected people around the world for thousands of years.

Bananas, oranges, and pepper do not grow in Canada. And though a small number of farmers in southern Ontario grow peanuts, they do not produce nearly enough to supply the demand across the country. Yet Canadians can enjoy these foods — and many others — because of international trade.

International trade is a major globalizing force — a power that promotes change. But trade is not the only globalizing force at work in the world. Transportation, communication technology, and the media have all speeded up the pace at which the world's people are becoming interconnected and interdependent. How do you think this growing interconnectedness and interdependence affects your individual and collective identity?

Trade as a Globalizing Force

People have always reached out to others to obtain things they cannot grow or make themselves. In North America, for example, some areas of the Eastern Arctic are rich in soapstone, a soft rock that can be easily carved.

At the same time, wood is scarce. So the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic reached out to other Aboriginal groups, such as the James Bay Cree, who lived farther south, where wood was more plentiful. The Inuit traded their soapstone for wood.

In the same way as the Inuit connected with nearby peoples through the exchange of goods, people who live in different parts of the world have connected with one another through trade for thousands of years. People trade with one another to obtain goods and services that are

- not available in their own region
- better quality or less expensive
- different from goods produced at home

Trade goods may be anything from natural resources, such as lumber and oil, to clothing, car parts, agricultural products, and stocks and

bonds. Goods may be imported into a country from other countries — or exported out of a country to other countries.

Except in a small area of southern Ontario, for example, the Canadian climate is unsuitable for growing peanuts. So Canadian supermarkets import peanuts grown in the United States and other countries, such as China. At the same time, Canada is rich in oil, which is exported to the United States and other countries.



Figure 2-3 During summer, when the weather is warmer, many Inuit once lived in tents like this, photographed in 1915. This photograph also shows one way the Inuit used wood. What other uses might the Inuit have had for wood? Why would they have prized wood so highly? Does this reflect Inuit lives today?

Transnational corporations and international trade

You probably recognize the logos on this page. All three are symbols that represent familiar “Canadian” companies — but none is now owned by Canadians.

The Hudson’s Bay Company, North America’s oldest corporation, was sold to American billionaire Jerry Zucker in 2006. Zellers, which was founded during the Great Depression of the 1930s and later bought by the Bay, went to Zucker in the same sale. Tim Hortons was founded by and named for Tim Horton, a Stanley Cup-winning Toronto Maple Leaf defenceman in the 1960s. This company was sold to the American fast-food chain Wendy’s International in 1995. Where do you think the decisions about running these companies are now made?

A business like Wendy’s is a **transnational corporation** — also called a multinational corporation. A transnational corporation is a company that is based in one country while developing and manufacturing its products, or delivering its goods and services, in more than one country. Transnationals such as Wendy’s, Wal-Mart, Nike, Coca-Cola, McDonald’s, Microsoft, Dole, Del Monte, and Daishowa provide goods and services to Canadians and other people around the world every day.

This means that when you buy a donut at Tim Hortons or a banana at your neighbourhood supermarket, you are participating in the global economy. How is this so?

Transnationals and globalization

Transnational corporations play an important role in the globalization process. Companies like McDonald’s, Coca-Cola, and Nike sell fast food, soft drinks, and shoes around the world. In many countries, they provide training and jobs for people who might not otherwise have work.

But critics of transnationals say that the jobs are often “McJobs”: low-level positions that require little skill and provide few opportunities to advance. Critics also argue that the profits earned by transnationals, such as Daishowa Paper Manufacturing of Japan and Coca-Cola of the United States, go to the country where the company has its headquarters. The profits do not benefit the people of the country where the goods are actually made or sold.

If you ran a transnational corporation, what do you think your three most important goals would be? Rate these goals in order of importance. With a partner or group, discuss the goals you identified. Are your lists and ratings the same or different? What might account for the similarities and differences?



Figure 2-4 These commercial logos are probably familiar to most Canadians, and all three companies were Canadian-owned at one time. They are now owned by American companies. Does it matter that so many “Canadian” businesses are owned by American corporations?



CHECKBACK

You read about the Japanese company Daishowa Paper Manufacturing in Chapter 1 when you learned about the struggle of the Lubicon Cree to affirm their identity.

FYI

Of the world’s top 500 transnational corporations based on total revenues, 170 are in the United States, 70 in Japan, 38 in Britain, 38 in France, 35 in Germany, and 14 in Canada.

FYI

Although Canadian author Douglas Coupland did not coin the word “McJob,” he made it popular in his 1991 book, *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture*. A play on the McDonald’s brand name, this bit of slang pokes fun at the company’s habit of adding the prefix “Mc” to its products (e.g., McMuffin). “McJob” is defined in *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* as “a low-paying job that requires little skill and provides little opportunity for advancement.”

VOICES



Just as the computer revolutionized the flow of information, the shipping container revolutionized the flow of goods. As generic as the 1's and 0's of computer code, a container can hold just about anything, from coffee beans to cellphone components. By sharply cutting costs and enhancing reliability, container-based shipping enormously increased the volume of international trade and made complex supply chains possible.

— Virginia Postrel, *American cultural commentator*

Transportation as a Globalizing Force

Transportation is essential for trade. Over the millennia, various forms of transportation — people, camels, draft horses, carts, ships, trains, trucks, and planes — have been used to move products to market, the place where they are sold.

Today, products can be moved farther and faster than ever before. About 40 per cent of the world's trade goods are shipped in containers: large metal shipping boxes built in standard sizes so they can be sealed, then transferred easily from one form of transport, such as a ship, to another, such as a truck or train. At any time, about 18 million containers are moving across the world's seas and oceans.

Containers revolutionized the shipping industry when they were introduced in the late 1950s. Until then, stevedores — people who load and unload ships — usually moved crates and cartons piece by piece onto ships. Twenty stevedores could load about 20 tonnes in an hour.

Goods are now loaded into containers. Cranes then hoist the containers on and off specially designed ships such as the *Emma Maersk*, shown in the photograph. In a few minutes, a crew of 10 can load 40 tonnes of goods onto a container ship.

Containers made it much cheaper and faster to ship goods over long distances. It also made shipping more reliable because it is easier to keep track of one large container than many smaller crates and cartons. It is also harder to steal goods from a sealed container. How do you think cheaper, faster, and more reliable transportation affects the price of goods? How might this affect your identity as a consumer?

The container revolution of the last half of the 20th century speeded up the globalizing process. “Low transport costs help make it economically sensible for a factory in China to produce Barbie dolls with Japanese hair, Taiwanese plastics and American colorants, and ship them off to eager girls all over the world,” wrote Marc Levinson in *The Box: How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger*. As a result, containers are sometimes called the building blocks of the global village.

Other transportation changes, such as the development of passenger jets after World War II, also meant that people could move around the world much more quickly and easily. This development also increased the pace of globalization. How do you think travel might have done this?

Figure 2-5 When the *Emma Maersk* was launched, it was the biggest container ship ever built. Nearly as long as four Canadian football fields and wider than the Panama Canal, this floating giant can carry up to 11 000 20-foot (6.1 m) containers. The containers are transferred to trucks, trains, and even planes, which carry them to local markets. How might the availability of larger volumes of imported goods affect your buying decisions — and your individual and collective identity?



How does the subtitle of Marc Levinson's book capture the importance of containers to the globalizing process? On a two-column chart, list people who might have benefited — and those who might have suffered — because of the container revolution. Discuss your ideas with a partner, then revise your chart to reflect changes that resulted from this discussion.

Communication Technology as a Globalizing Force

Just as containers revolutionized the way goods are transported, so the computer revolutionized the way information flows. The development of computers took a big leap forward during World War II, but these early machines were huge, complex, and very expensive to build. They could be operated only by highly trained experts, and only businesses, governments, and the military could afford to run them. This began to change when the first personal computers — computers that were simple enough for individuals to buy and use — appeared in the late 1970s.

Since then, advances in digital technology, which involves changing data into numerical digits that can be processed by a computer, have allowed these machines to become cheaper, smaller, more powerful, and even easier to operate. The digital technologies that sparked advances in computers also paved the way for the development of other devices, such as cellphones, MP3 players, and digital cameras.

The Internet and the World Wide Web

The Internet is a network that connects millions of personal computers around the world. But when the Internet was first created, it was slow and awkward to use. This changed when the World Wide Web developed in the 1990s.

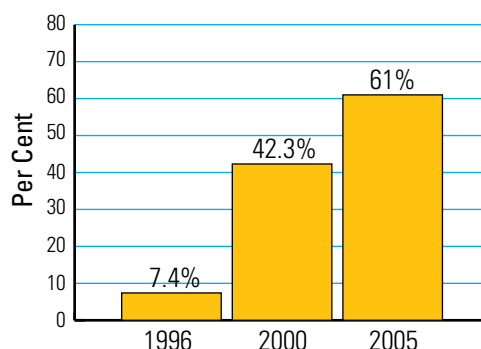
The Web is a system of Internet servers that support specially formatted documents that can be linked to other documents — and to graphic, audio, and video files. This new tool made accessing the Internet much easier, and more and more people started going online.

Because of the World Wide Web, a business can now go online to seek out a supplier, who might be anywhere in the world. The business can then remain online to view pictures of the product, request and compare prices, place an order, and receive notice of when to expect delivery. And the growing popularity of portable wireless devices, such as cellphones, laptop computers, and personal digital assistants, or PDAs, means that the people involved in the transaction could be sitting in an office — or they could be at home, in a coffee shop, or in a park kilometres away from the office.

Examine the bar graphs on this page. What trends do the statistics reveal? Do you think the trends shown on the graphs will change in the future?

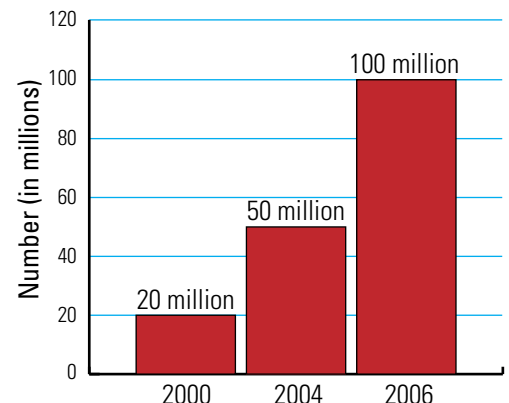
Check the Internet to see whether changes have already occurred. Does access to the Internet and the World Wide Web affect your understanding of the world today? How? How do you think the changes you predicted might affect your individual and collective identity in the future? Explain the reasons for your predictions.

Figure 2-6 Percentage of Canadian Households with Internet Access



Source: Statistics Canada

Figure 2-7 Growth in Number of Web Sites on the Internet



Source: Netcraft

CHECKFORWARD

You will read more about communication technology and globalization in Chapter 3.



FYI

Canadian James Gosling played an important role in the development of the World Wide Web. As a teenager in Calgary, Gosling was fascinated by computers and even wrote software for the University of Calgary's physics department. As an adult, he went to work for Sun Microsystems, a California company. There, he invented the Java programming language, which is used on the World Wide Web.

CHECKFORWARD

You will learn more about the media as a globalizing force that affects identity in Chapter 3.

The Media as a Globalizing Force

When the World Wide Web developed, individuals, businesses, governments, and organizations began to understand its potential as an interactive communication tool that could be used to broadcast — and gather — information. People now go online to do things like banking, shopping, taking courses, conducting research, playing games, blogging, communicating with friends and online acquaintances, listening to music, and watching videos.

Newspapers, for example, began to publish online editions that people could read on their home computers. If you want to read about the Chinese government's response to a world event, for example, you can check the online edition of the *People's Daily*, which publishes versions in Chinese, English, French, Arabic, and other languages. Readers can even e-mail comments that are published on the paper's web site. How might the ability to read about events in a newspaper from another country, as well as the comments of other readers, affect your understanding of an issue?

Ideas

How are the ideas expressed by the word "glocal" reflected in your identity?

The students responding to this question are Marie, a Francophone student from Medicine Hat; Deven, who was born in India but is now a Canadian who lives in Calgary; and Gord, a member of the Beaver First Nation near High Level.

My parents are always talking about how things were different when they were growing up — no French-language TV stations, and no Internet. Now, we have a satellite dish, so I can watch loads of things in French, and a lot of web sites are in French. I can do things in French that my parents never could. So I'd say that the "glocalizing" force of technology has made it easier for me, here in Medicine Hat, to be a Francophone.

Marie



I live "glocally" every day. In Calgary, immigrants like me and my parents have created a demand for Indian products that used to be quite hard to get — and stores have opened to meet this demand. So we can buy imported CDs of Indian music, DVDs of Indian movies, and the ingredients for just about any Indian food we want to make, plus lots of other stuff. This makes it much easier to maintain our identity.

Deven



Yeah, globalization shapes me — but I also try to shape globalization. I get this from my parents. They make a point of buying things from local stores, and so do I. Right now, this is pretty easy because not many transnationals operate on our reserve or in High Level. If they did, buying locally might be a harder choice. But I think we'd stick to our principles, because they're an important part of our identity.

Gord



Your Turn

How would you respond to the question Marie, Deven, and Gord are answering? Do you think globalization shapes you more — or less — than you shape globalization? Explain the reasons for your judgment.

Digital technology also allows signals to be sent to communication satellites in space, then bounced back to receivers on Earth. This is the technology that enabled people around the world to gather at the same time in front of TV sets to watch live satellite transmissions of the 2006 World Cup soccer games. It also enables news organizations such as the BBC, CNN, Al-Jazeera, and the CBC to broadcast their programs around the world. What news programs do you watch or listen to? Do these choices help shape an aspect of your identity? If so, how?



CHECKBACK

You read about satellite transmissions of World Cup games in Chapter 1.

Media concentration and convergence

Since the 1980s, two trends — **media concentration** and **media convergence** — have changed the way newspapers, television, and cable services operate. “Concentration” refers to a trend that concentrates ownership of newspapers and other media in the hands of a few large corporations. “Convergence” refers to the use of electronic technology to integrate media such as newspapers, books, TV, and the Internet. It enables print and broadcast media to work together to develop stories and create content for their web sites. These two trends, concentration and convergence, have become stronger since the Web became a force in communications.

In Canada, for example, CTVglobemedia now owns *The Globe and Mail*, Canada’s biggest national newspaper, as well as CTV, the country’s biggest privately owned TV network. Through these properties, CTVglobemedia also owns Report on Business Television, TSN, radio stations, and other media.

CanWest Global Communications, which owns the Global Television Network, also owns a chain of newspapers that include the *Edmonton Journal* and the *Calgary Herald*, as well as a controlling interest in Alliance Atlantis Communications, Canada’s biggest entertainment company. And Quebecor, a huge Québec-based printing company, added to its holdings by buying another newspaper chain that includes the *Edmonton Sun* and the *Calgary Sun*.

Critics of media concentration and convergence believe that these trends encourage the news media to reduce the number of reporters and other staff they employ. They also believe that concentration and convergence reduce the diversity of voices in Canada and around the world. How might a reduction in the diversity of media voices affect your identity? Would these effects be positive or negative? Why?



Thirty years ago, when I started working [in the media], 40 per cent of English and 50 per cent of French-language daily newspapers in Canada were independently owned. Today, 96 per cent of those papers are in chains; that means they are owned by corporations. CanWest Global owns 50 per cent [of those]. Only three daily newspapers in Canada — the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the *White Horse Star*, and Montréal’s *Le Devoir* — are privately owned.

— Dave McLaughlin, CBC Radio journalist, in 2003.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Create a T-chart like the one shown. In the first column, identify three globalizing forces and how they shape your identity. In the second column, briefly explain how your identity shapes each force. An example is filled in for you. When you finish, compare your chart with that of a partner. Work together to add two more items to your charts.

GLOBALIZING FORCES AND MY IDENTITY	
Shape My Identity	Are Shaped by My Identity
International trade means there is a wider selection of goods in local stores for me to choose from — and what I choose to buy is part of my identity.	What I buy in local stores affects demand for products, and this influences the products that are traded internationally.



How is identity affected by some economic, political, environmental, and social dimensions of globalization?

If you have peeled and eaten a banana this week, you are like many other Canadians. Canadians eat about three billion bananas a year — about 100 bananas a person. After apples, bananas are the most popular fruit in Canada. What factors do you think contribute to this popularity?

Unlike apples, bananas do not grow in Canada. Most bananas sold in Europe and North America are imported from developing countries in Central and South America, where they are a source of controversy for many reasons. Banana production is one example of the forces of globalization at work — and of how the economic, political, environmental, and social dimensions of these forces affect, and are affected by, people's identity.

Identity and Some Economic Dimensions of Globalization

For many Canadians, price is an important factor in buying decisions — and low prices help explain the popularity of bananas in Canada. Bananas are the cheapest fruit sold in Canadian supermarkets. A kilogram of apples, for example, can cost more than \$3, while a kilo of bananas can usually be purchased for less than \$1.50.

Many economic factors contribute to the price difference between apples, which are grown in Canada, and bananas, which grow in the tropics and must be shipped at least 5000 kilometres before they can be sold in Canadian supermarkets. The following factors help keep banana prices low for Canadian consumers:

- Most bananas sold in Canada are grown on huge plantations owned or controlled by transnational corporations. This enables the transnationals to take advantage of **economies of scale** — savings that come from producing, using, and buying things in large quantities.
- On plantations, banana yields are often high because of heavy use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. This means that the supply — the number of bananas grown — is often greater than the demand — the number of bananas customers order. This leads to reduced prices.
- The transnationals also reduce their costs by controlling many of the ships, containers, and warehouses that are part of the banana distribution network. Transnationals can give themselves a deal and keep the profits in the company.
- Labour in Central and South America is cheap, and few workers are protected by union agreements. This keeps wages low.

Figure 2-8 These bananas were marketed by Chiquita Brands, an American transnational corporation that is one of the biggest players in the international banana trade. Three American-based transnationals — Chiquita, Dole, and Del Monte — control most of the world's banana exports. How might this concentration of control in the hands of a few companies help or hurt Canadian consumers?

Figure 2-9 From Ecuador to Canada



Ecuador, bananas, and the economics of globalization

Ecuador exports more bananas than any other country — and is the leading exporter of the bananas that are sold in North American supermarkets. If you ate a banana today, chances are that it grew in Ecuador. This is because bananas from Ecuador are cheap.

Ecuadorean bananas are cheap because the cost of producing them is low. One reason costs are low is that Ecuadorean banana workers are the lowest-paid in Latin America. In 2002, male banana-plantation workers earned about \$6.40 Cdn a day. Women were paid even less, and children were sometimes not paid at all. There was no overtime pay, and few workers received benefits, such as paid vacations and sick leave.

Calculate how much a male Ecuadorean banana-plantation worker who spent six days a week on the job would make in a month. (Multiply his weekly earnings by 4.3, the number of weeks in a month.) The Ecuadorean government estimated that a family of four needed at least \$220 (Cdn.) a month to meet basic needs. How did the worker's monthly earnings compare with this minimum?

Although Ecuadorean laws are supposed to protect workers, these laws are often ignored. Workers who try to form a union to fight for better conditions are often fired, and their names are put on a blacklist. No one else in the banana industry will hire blacklisted workers, so they have an even harder time earning a living.

In the past few years, the situation has improved somewhat, but working conditions are still poor. To survive, many Ecuadorean families must put their children to work in the banana fields. As a result, children are either often absent from school or do not go to school at all. In 2002, Human Rights Watch, a non-profit organization that monitors human rights around the world, interviewed a group of 45 child banana workers. The children worked an average of 12 hours a day, and most had started working when they were between the ages of 8 and 13. Less than 40 per cent were still in school.

Does education help people define who they are as individuals and collectives? Does education help define aspects of your identity? How might a lack of schooling create a cycle that affects the individual and collective identity of child banana workers in Ecuador?

Figure 2-10 Ecuador



CHECKFORWARD

You will read more about child labour and globalization in Chapters 5 and 14.

Identity and Some Political Dimensions of Globalization

A continuing dispute over bananas shows how economic concerns often affect political decisions — and vice versa.

In many Central and South American countries, banana production is largely controlled by the big three American transnationals: Chiquita, Dole, and Del Monte. But bananas are also grown in Caribbean countries, such as Jamaica and St. Lucia. In these countries, farms are smaller and are often run as family businesses. These small farms cannot achieve the same economies of scale as huge banana plantations. As a result, their costs are higher. To make money, they must sell their bananas at higher prices than the transnationals.

The “banana wars”

During the 1990s, European governments agreed to continue extending an economic helping hand to former colonies, such as Jamaica and St. Lucia, by giving preferred treatment to bananas imported from these countries. No tariffs — taxes or duties — were placed on these bananas. At the same time, bananas from other countries were taxed and subjected to other strict import rules.

Few of the banana plantations controlled by the leading transnationals were in countries that received preferred treatment. As a result, most of the

bananas produced by the transnationals were taxed when they entered Europe. They also had to abide by other strict rules. How would the European policy have helped small banana farmers compete against cheaper bananas controlled by transnational corporations?

This situation sparked a trade conflict that has been called the “banana wars.” The transnationals protested the European policy, saying that it was unfair. An American company, Chiquita, persuaded the United States government to take the case to the World Trade Organization, or WTO — even though no bananas are grown in the continental United States.

About 150 countries, including Canada, the United States, Britain, and France, belong to the WTO, which governs how its members trade with one another. WTO rules say that member countries must treat one another equally. A country cannot, for example, impose a tariff on goods from one member country but not on those of another.

Web Connection

The “banana wars” were an international trade conflict that pitted governments against one another. To learn more about the economic and political dimensions of this conflict, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringGlobalization.ca

Figure 2-11 This worker is preparing for the harvest on a banana plantation in Costa Rica. What might his interest in the “banana wars” have been?



The WTO and the banana wars

In 1997, the WTO ruled that European countries must change some of the trade rules that helped banana farmers in their former colonies. But these changes did not go far enough to satisfy the American transnationals. To try to force even more changes, the American government imposed tariffs on many European exports to the United States. How might these tariffs have become weapons in the banana wars? Who would be hurt by these weapons? Why? How might these economic measures influence the political decisions made by European governments?

In response, European countries changed their banana-importing system again to make it easier to import bananas from all countries. Though these changes eased the conflict, they did not end the dispute.

CHECKFORWARD

You will read more about the WTO and its role in globalization in Chapter 9.

MAKING CHOICES

MAKING CHOICES

MAKING CHOICES

GUILLERMO TOUMA SPEAKING OUT ABOUT THE BANANA TRADE

When Ecuadorean Guillermo Touma was 14, he started working on a banana plantation during his summer holidays. By the time he was 18, he was a full-time banana worker. For the next 17 years, he worked long hours for low pay on a banana plantation.

This experience transformed Touma. He became convinced that banana workers must unite to seek better conditions, and he now leads Ecuador's very small banana workers' union. One of his strategies is to work with other unions and non-profit groups such as Banana Link, which is dedicated to raising global awareness of conditions in the banana trade.

"Sadly, everyone profits so much from bananas except the people who work in the fields," Touma told *The Guardian*, a British newspaper. "We suffer, yet the supermarkets and the companies are very rich. Consumers in Europe and elsewhere must find a way to help. We need a fairer system, one which benefits the employees. We are paying the price in Ecuador to bring you good fruit."



Figure 2-12 Guillermo Touma is general secretary of the Ecuadorean Confederation of Free Trade Union Organizations. A former banana plantation worker, Touma is trying to improve conditions for Ecuadoreans who help grow and harvest bananas. "Seeing all the exploitation there, I became convinced that only the setting up of a trade union could help improve the quality of life," he has said. "That is why I became a union leader in the 1970s."

Explorations

1. If you wished to take action to help banana workers, what might the most appropriate action be? What criteria might you use to decide this?

Some groups believe that boycotting — refusing to buy — bananas produced by transnationals with poor labour records will bring about change by reducing the profits of these corporations.

In a small group, plan steps you could take to lead a successful boycott in your community. Think

about how you will identify the product and the transnational you wish to target, and how you might persuade consumers to join the boycott.

How would you measure the success of your boycott?

2. What might be some unintended consequences of a boycott like this? Do you believe that a boycott is the best way of achieving the goal of improving conditions for workers?

Identity and Some Environmental Dimensions of Globalization

In 1992, a historic meeting took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Its full name was the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, but it was also known as the Earth Summit. At this meeting, representatives of governments and other organizations talked about how they could encourage economic development — while protecting the environment.

The Earth Summit marked a turning point in awareness of environmental issues. One area people began to focus on was large-scale agriculture, which is sometimes called agribusiness. Banana production controlled by transnationals is an example of agribusiness.

Banana production and the environment

To create large areas for growing bananas, tropical forests must be cut down. The loss of forests leads to soil erosion and flooding. It also destroys the natural habitat of plants and animals, reducing **biodiversity** — variety in plant and animal species. In Costa Rica, for example, about 60 per cent of the country's rainforests have been cut down to clear land for banana plantations and other agricultural uses. Some environmentalists estimate that, as a result, nearly 18 per cent of tree species in that country may disappear.

In addition, the large plantations controlled by transnationals produce just one variety of banana: the Cavendish. This variety is the most popular with North American and European consumers because of its taste and texture. But focusing on growing just one variety of banana means that pests and diseases can spread quickly and wipe out the crop.

Like many other agricultural producers, many banana plantations use synthetic fertilizers to keep crops healthy, maintain high production levels, and ensure that the bananas shipped to North American and European supermarkets appeal to consumers because they are similar in size and free of blemishes. Many banana plantations also apply large volumes of synthetic pesticides — chemicals that kill insects and other pests — and synthetic herbicides — chemicals that kill plants that can interfere with the growth of the bananas.

Many of these chemicals are considered hazardous to human health — and applying them puts the health of workers at risk. In addition, the fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides run off into rivers, lakes, and oceans, poisoning fish, birds, and other wildlife.

Some banana growers, especially those in Caribbean countries, have always grown their crops organically — without using synthetic chemicals. And some transnational corporations have taken steps to improve their environmental record. Dole, for example, has switched to producing organic bananas on some of its plantations.

Organic bananas are more environmentally friendly, but they are expensive to produce. As a result, they usually cost at least twice as much. Would you pay twice as much to buy organic bananas? What criteria would you use to help you make this decision? How would this decision affect your identity? The identity of banana workers?

FYI

Cavendish bananas, the most popular variety in North America and Europe, are sterile: they produce no seeds. New plants are created by planting shoots cut from plants that are already growing. This means that farmers have no seeds if the crop is destroyed by pests, disease, fungus, or a natural disaster such as flooding. Some biologists have warned that bananas could disappear from stores around the world as a result.

Web Connection

Various organizations are trying to improve conditions on banana plantations. To learn more, go to this website and follow the links.

www.ExploringGlobalization.ca

Identity and Some Social Dimensions of Globalization

Just as large-scale banana production illustrates some of the economic, political, and environmental dimensions of globalization, it also shows some of the social dimensions — and how all these dimensions are related.

Cheap bananas that are tasty, nutritious, uniform in size, and free of blemishes appeal to Canadian consumers. But to keep prices low, banana workers in many countries face challenges. Among them are low wages and unsafe working conditions.

For example, workers are rarely trained in how to safely handle the synthetic chemicals used to protect crops. In some cases, workers have been required to continue working while planes flew overhead spraying chemicals on the plants — and the workers. As a result, many workers have suffered long-term health problems. In addition, toilet facilities are rarely provided for workers. They must relieve themselves among the plants.

In countries such as Ecuador and Colombia, workers who try to do something about conditions often face firing and blacklisting. On occasion, they have even been attacked by armed thugs.

Displacing Indigenous peoples

The need for large tracts of land to create banana plantations has also meant that Indigenous peoples were often displaced — forced off their land. Unable to carry on their traditional way of life, some went to work on the plantations, while others were forced to move to cities, where they often live in poverty.

Even when Indigenous peoples managed to remain on their land, the environmental destruction caused by the widespread use of chemicals sometimes affected their way of life. People who relied on fishing, for example, found that the chemical-laced runoff from the plantations killed fish in rivers and lakes. When the fish disappeared, so did these people's ability to feed themselves and earn a living.



VOICES

I got a fever . . . I told my boss that I felt sick, and he didn't believe me [but] told me to go home. I went home, and my mother took me to the doctor . . . [The second time,] I became covered with red things. They itched. I had a cough. My bones hurt.

— *Fabiola Cardozo, Ecuadorean child worker, describing what happened when chemicals were sprayed on a banana plantation where she worked*

Figure 2-13 In 2002, the 14-year-old boy in the photograph, was living with his mother in this shanty outside San José, Costa Rica. About 18 per cent of Costa Ricans live in poverty — but this situation is improving as the country's economy grows. How might a strong economy affect the number of people living in poverty? How might poverty affect people's identity?

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Create a diagram (e.g., a flow chart or mind map) to show how conditions on banana plantations and the expectations of European and North American consumers are related economically, politically, environmentally, and socially.

Explain your diagram to a partner or a small group and discuss how it shows the effects of globalization on your identity — and vice versa.

DETECTING BIAS

FOCUS ON SKILLS

When you read or hear about globalization or any other issue, it is important to decide whether the point of view or perspective presented is valid. One test of validity is to decide whether the writer’s or speaker’s view is biased. The following steps can help you do this.

Steps to Detecting Bias

Step 1: Ask important questions

To detect bias, it is important to ask questions like those on the chart on this page. With a partner, examine the questions on the chart and discuss how each might help you identify bias.

Step 2: Consider one source of information

Read “Maude Barlow’s View.” With your partner, discuss the answer to this question:

- If Barlow’s words were your only source of information, what conclusion might you reach about globalization?

Step 3: Consider other sources of information

Read “Pascal Lamy’s View.” With your partner, discuss the answer to this question: Does reading

this excerpt cause you to question the conclusion you reached after reading the excerpt from Barlow’s speech? If so, why? If not, why not?

How much are your conclusions influenced by your own biases?

Note: To achieve a balanced understanding of an issue, you should use four or five sources that represent various points of view.

Step 4: Practise detecting bias

Create a chart like the one shown on this page. With your partner, examine both excerpts and record your answers on the chart. To help you get started, sample responses are shown. When you finish, talk about whether answering the questions caused you to change the conclusions you reached earlier.

Detecting Bias		
Question	One Point of View or Perspective	Another Point of View or Perspective
Who is the writer or speaker?	Maude Barlow, chair, Council of Canadians, and a director of the International Forum on Globalization	
What is the writer’s or speaker’s purpose?	To convince people that globalization has negative results	
Who is the intended audience?		
Does the writer or speaker support statements with evidence?		
Does the writer or speaker seem to favour one person, group, or point of view? Is any relevant person or group ignored or presented negatively?		
Does the writer or speaker use propaganda techniques, such as name calling, stereotyping, overgeneralizing, or appealing to fear or other emotions?		
How does the information fit with what you already know? Are there any contradictions? What other sources might you use to verify the account?		

VOCABULARY TIP

When thinking about bias, it helps to know two key words: **stereotyping** and **overgeneralizing**.

- **Stereotyping** — Placing people into categories according to preconceived beliefs about how members of a particular group think or behave. Saying that Canadians are polite is an example of stereotyping.
- **Overgeneralizing** — Drawing a conclusion based on too little information. Meeting a polite Canadian and concluding that all Canadians are polite is an example of overgeneralizing.

Maude Barlow's View



Maude Barlow is national chairperson of the Council of Canadians, a citizens' group, and a director of the International Forum on Globalization, an organization that monitors the effects of globalization. She made the following remarks in a 2004 speech to delegates at a conference on alternative economics.

[Globalization] was created by the few for the many. [It] was designed carefully and deliberately by powerful forces within business and politics to counter what one of them called the "excess of democracy" that had grown out of the great social movements in the 1960s. They form powerful business lobbies and "think tanks" to influence the political culture everywhere. They put themselves on the boards of universities to influence the next generation of thinkers. They bought the newspapers and the television studios and they created powerful global institutions like the World Bank and the World Trade Organization to bring a binding regulatory framework to cement their revolution. They knew it would take years to achieve and they knew they could not succeed if they directly challenged the rights that had been gained by women, minorities and workers in the industrialized North. However, they didn't need to worry, as they knew that the unregulated market capitalism that they were bringing to the world would do that for them.

The proof of their failure is everywhere for us to see. It's in the deepening rift between rich and poor, both between the Global South and the Global North, but also within countries. There is a Third World in the First World . . . Their failure is found in the startling decline of natural resources – fish, forests, fossil fuels, freshwater supplies – all of them are in crisis.

. . . And we see its failure in the startling rise in national violence: Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Rwanda, the Congo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Was this new system not supposed to replace politics and war with the discipline and stability of the market?

Pascal Lamy's View



Pascal Lamy, director general of the World Trade Organization, made the following remarks in a speech to Chilean politicians and business leaders on January 30, 2006.

Globalization has enabled individuals, corporations and nation-states to influence actions and events around the world – faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before – and equally to derive benefits for them. Globalization has led to the opening, the vanishing of many barriers and walls, and has the potential for expanding freedom, democracy, innovation, social and cultural exchanges while offering outstanding opportunities for dialogue and understanding.

But the global nature of an increasing number of some worrisome phenomena – the scarcity of energy resources, the deterioration of the environment and natural disasters (including, recently, hurricane Katrina and the Asian tsunami), the spread of pandemics (AIDS, bird flu), the growing interdependence of economies and financial markets and the ensuing complexity of analysis, forecasts and predictability (financial crisis), and the migratory movements provoked by insecurity, poverty or political instability are also a product of globalization.

Indeed it can be argued that in some instances, globalization has reinforced the strong ones and weakened those that were already weak.

It is this double face of globalization that we must seek ways of addressing if we want to "humanize globalization." To do this, we need to "reform globalization" with a clear view to enhancing the development of social, economic and ecological aspects of humanity.

Summing up

As you progress through this course, you will encounter many opinions about globalization. Returning to the questions on the chart will help you detect bias and assess the validity of the information.



HOW DO SOME FORCES OF GLOBALIZATION PRESENT CHALLENGES TO IDENTITY?

Many people believe that the connections and interdependence created by globalization will help individuals expand their individual and collective identity and promote understanding and co-operation. Others believe that globalization is reducing diversity — and leading to cultural **homogenization**. Homogenization erases the differences among peoples, and as a result, they become more and more similar.

When people from different cultures come into contact, **acculturation** often occurs. “Acculturation” refers to the cultural changes that occur when two cultures accommodate, or adapt to, each other’s worldview — the way they see the world. This **accommodation** involves accepting and creating space for one another. Accommodation may affect the customs, traditions, technologies, values, beliefs, and languages of both cultures.

Both acculturation and accommodation may lead to **assimilation**, which occurs when the culture of a minority group is absorbed by another culture. In this process, the cultural identity of the minority group disappears as its members take on the identity of the other culture.

Creation of a Nation: The Métis People

As the fur trade developed in Canada in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, some First Nations women married European fur traders. Their children were of mixed ancestry — and they laid the foundation for the creation of a distinct Aboriginal people: the Métis. “Métis” is the French word for “mixed.” According to the Métis National Council, the organization that represents Métis people in Canada, “Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples and is accepted by the Métis Nation.”

Métis people blended the cultures and spiritual values of their various origins. They also share music, other art forms, technologies, knowledge, and sometimes language. Michif — a mixed language made up of Cree and French words and grammatical structures — is spoken by some Métis people in northern Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and the Northwest Territories.

Think about your own heritage and cite examples that show how your identity has been affected by acculturation, accommodation, or assimilation.

Figure 2-14 Medina Mohammed sings on *Ethiopian Idols*. The Idol franchise, which started in Britain, has been picked up in 35 countries including the United States, Canada, Israel, and Ethiopia. Is the popularity of this TV program an example of a challenge to people’s identity — or is it an opportunity to promote identity? Or is it both?

CHECKFORWARD

You will read more about globalization and challenges to identity in Chapters 3 and 4.



Figure 2-15 During the opening ceremonies of the 2002 North American Indigenous Games, young people carried a huge Métis sash. The sash is a powerful symbol of unity. Its strands, patterns, and colours represent the various peoples who have come together to form the Métis Nation. Think of a symbol that is important to your individual or collective identity. If you were describing the significance of this symbol to someone who knew nothing about it, what would you say?

Economist and author Tyler Cowen believes that globalization supports cultural diversity and freedom of choice, while political theorist Benjamin Barber believes that globalization threatens cultural diversity. In March 2003, these two American thinkers met to debate the impact of globalization on world cultures. Here is some of what they said.

TYLER COWEN

Trade gives artists a greater opportunity to express their creative inspiration . . . When two cultures trade with each other they tend to expand the opportunities available to individual artists . . . Trade played an important role in . . . artistic revolutions [in developing countries].

So if we look, for instance, at Cuban music or reggae music, we find that Cuban music was produced largely for American tourists who went to nightclubs in Cuba in the 1950s. Persian carpets started being produced in large numbers again in the 19th century, largely to sell to European buyers who sold to North American buyers. The blossoming of world literature – writers from Mahfouz to Marquez – the bookstore, the printing press, the advent of cinema around the globe are all cases in which trade has made different countries, different regions, more creative, given us more diversity.

Countries do look more alike, but they look more alike in the sense of offering some commonly diverse choices. So today you can buy sushi [a Japanese delicacy] in either France or Germany. This makes France and Germany more alike, yet in my view this is closer to being an increase in diversity than a decline in diversity.

BENJAMIN BARBER

One of the problems of globalization and cultural borrowing and cultural mimicry is that they depend, not on isolated cultures, but on authentic cultures. And I quite agree that the “authentic culture” is itself a cultural product of earlier cultural interactions . . . We all know the difference between getting crêpes in Dijon and getting them in a New York place called Les Halles. Even though you do get something like the original product, there’s a real difference between those crêpes . . .

EuroDisney, outside Paris, now gets more visitors than Paris does every year. I’m sure that, among other things, people go to the French theme park at EuroDisney to sample French culture along with Danish and German and other cultures that are there. Some might think they’d do better to travel the 17 kilometres into Paris.

In effect, the “theme-parking” of culture, which is part of globalization and part of the theme-parking of our world, is, yes, a kind of diversity, but it is the diversity of the theme park. It is increasingly synthetic; it’s increasingly distanced from the authentic origin. Increasingly, it takes a toll on that authentic origin, as when an American crêpe maker ends up back in Paris selling the American version of crêpes to people in Paris who don’t make them anymore because there’s a much cheaper global product they can get in place of what they’ve had. Globalization has a tendency to move that process forward at alarmingly dispiriting rates.

Explorations

1. Think about what you learned earlier about detecting bias. Do you detect bias in the remarks of either Benjamin Barber or Tyler Cowen? Explain your response. Does your response affect your assessment of the validity of the arguments of either speaker? Why or why not?
2. Is bias always a negative thing? Explain your answer.
3. In one or two sentences, describe what you think Barber means by the “theme-parking” of culture. Create a drawing or collage that represents how your own culture or community might look in the world he envisions.

Language, Acculturation, and Accommodation

Just as Michif, the language spoken by some Métis, is an example of acculturation and accommodation, other languages also show what happens when acculturation occurs. Written Japanese, for example, is adapted from characters borrowed from Chinese. One of the earliest Japanese written works, *Kojiki*, dates from about 700 CE. It uses Chinese characters with small phonetic signs to help Japanese readers with pronunciation. When this borrowing occurred, the Chinese form of writing was already very old and was widely admired in Japan.

Inuktitut is the language of the Inuit. Although Inuktitut has a long history, it was an oral language until the mid-1800s. In some parts of Nunavut, the language is written using the English alphabet; in other parts, it is written in syllabics, symbols that represent entire syllables rather than individual letters. These symbols were developed by missionaries. Today, the Inuit people have created new Inuktitut words — both written and spoken — to represent certain legal, political, and scientific concepts like “representation by population” and “global climate change.”

Inuktitut in danger

Although Inuktitut is one of the official languages of Nunavut, some people, such as teachers Alexina Kublu and Mick Mallon, fear that it is in danger of disappearing. In an article titled “Our Language, Our Selves,” Kublu and Mallon highlighted “the overwhelming power of English” in today’s world. They noted that few children in western Nunavut now speak, or even understand, Inuktitut.

“And it is the children who count,” wrote Kublu and Mallon. “Visit a community and listen to the children playing. It doesn’t matter how much Inuktitut is spoken in the store by adults shopping, or in the kitchens among elders visiting. What language are the children using? The first sign of decay is when the children play in English. The second is when the parents speak in Inuktitut and the children reply in English. The third is when the language of the home is English, except for the elders in the corner, a generation cut off from their grandchildren.”



Figure 2-16 Susan Aglukark is an award-winning Inuk performer who composes and sings her songs in both Inuktitut and English. Do you think Aglukark’s choice to express her artistic vision in these two languages supports diversity and intercultural understanding or increases the risk that Inuktitut will disappear? Why?

CHECK FORWARD

You will read more about language and globalization in Chapter 4.

Figure 2-17 The *Nunatsiaq News* is a newspaper published in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Its masthead — the part of the front page that shows a newspaper’s title — displays its name in both English letters and Inuktitut syllabics.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

In *The Wall Street Journal*, American political commentator John J. Miller wrote: “The most important reason some languages are disappearing is that their native speakers don’t regard them as . . . precious. They view linguistic adaptation — especially for their kids — as a key to getting ahead. This is understandable when about half the world’s population speaks one of only 10 languages and when speaking English in particular is a profitable skill.”

Why might people consider learning English a “profitable skill”? Write a short paragraph explaining how this view reflects the forces of globalization at work — and how this might affect people’s identity. In your paragraph, use at least two of the following words:

acculturation accommodation
assimilation homogenization

HOW DO SOME FORCES OF GLOBALIZATION PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO AFFIRM AND PROMOTE IDENTITY?

The forces of globalization could be called a double-edged sword. Cutting one way, they can lead to assimilation and the homogenization of cultures; cutting the other way, they can also provide minority groups with opportunities to affirm and promote their cultural identity. The Métis people of Canada and the Indigenous people of Bolivia are examples of how globalization has provided tools that people can use to revitalize — breathe new life into — their culture.

Throughout much of the 20th century, Métis culture was threatened. The traditional Métis way of life had changed, and some Métis people suffered discrimination. In addition, Métis communities were scattered, and the number of people who spoke Michif was shrinking. The first language of most Métis people was English, French, Cree, or Ojibway — or a combination of an Aboriginal language and English or French. Some current estimates place the number of Michif speakers in Canada at between 500 and 1000 — out of a total Métis population of more than 290 000.

What is more, for most of the 20th century, no one knew for sure how many Métis people there were in Canada. Until 1996, Canadian census forms did not include a category that allowed people to identify themselves as Métis — which is one reason Métis sometimes call themselves “Canada’s forgotten people.”



Figure 2-18 In 2005, Métis people staged a journey to celebrate the settlement of Métis Crossing, one of the first permanent Métis communities in Alberta. This celebration is just one of many events Métis people organize to affirm and promote their identity. Have you ever attended a Métis celebration or a similar cultural event? How did the experience affect your identity?

The Métis and Cultural Revitalization

As Métis people and others became aware that the distinct Métis culture was in danger of disappearing, individuals and groups began to take steps to ensure that this did not happen.

The Métis Nation of Alberta, for example, was formed in the 1920s to affirm and promote the collective identity of Métis people. But the MNA remained a relatively small group for decades. Then a number of factors, including federal government policies that promoted multiculturalism and diversity, combined to change not only the way minority groups were viewed, but also the way they viewed themselves.

During the 1990s and into this century, more and more Métis people became interested in **cultural revitalization** — the process of affirming and promoting individual and collective cultural identity. As a result, membership in the MNA rose by 300 per cent. Today, more than 35 000 Métis people belong to this organization.

Affirming the Métis heritage

To promote interest in the Métis heritage, Métis groups began to stage events and celebrations that fostered a sense of community and encouraged Métis people — and others — to celebrate and find out more about Métis history and culture.

The World Wide Web was one of the tools that helped the Métis achieve these goals. Many Métis organizations set up web sites that included pages on Métis history, customs, and traditions, as well as discussions of issues that concern Métis people today. Online forums enabled Métis people in various parts of Canada to conduct research and communicate with one another. Magazines and newspapers geared to Métis audiences also became available online.

Figure 2-19 Métis organizations such as the Métis National Council and the Métis Nation of Alberta created web sites that people can access to find out more about Métis history and cultural traditions, as well as current issues.



Web Connection



To hear the Michif language and learn some phrases, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringGlobalization.ca

Keeping Michif vibrant

The Michif language is an important part of Métis identity, and many Métis believe that ensuring that this language survives will ensure that their culture remains vibrant. “The revitalization of the Michif language is a key element to a thriving culture and the well-being of Métis people,” wrote Norman E. Fleury, director of the Manitoba Métis Federation Michif Language Program and national co-chair of the Métis National Council’s Michif Language Revitalization Program. “Language is fused with our way of life, as it holds the stories of our people and the essence of our identity. My grandmother called Michif, now the official and historical language of the Métis, a God-given spiritual language born with the Michif people.”

The Web has played an important role in the revitalization of Michif. People who wish to learn Michif can go online to access lessons and hear the language spoken. Courses for teaching Michif have been developed, teachers have been trained, and Michif dictionaries have been published as books and online.

Have you ever gone online to find out more about your heritage? How did access to this information affect your identity?

Figure 2-20 How would publishing a dictionary like *The Canadian Michif Language Dictionary* help ensure the vitality of the Michif language?



Cultural Revitalization in Bolivia

The South American country of Bolivia has a turbulent history. In the 1500s, it was colonized by the Spanish, who were attracted by its rich silver mines. Many of Bolivia's Indigenous people — the Quechua and Aymara — were forced to work in these mines.

Although Bolivia gained independence in 1825, this did little to help the Quechua and Aymara. Spanish settlers continued to take over their land, and the country's Indigenous people continued to live in poverty. On many occasions, this sparked violence and revolutions.

Besides silver, Bolivia is rich in other natural resources, such as natural gas. Bolivia has some of the largest natural gas reserves in South America — and transnational corporations are very interested in these reserves. But many Bolivians do not want transnationals to be the only ones that benefit from the country's natural resources. They believe that all Bolivians should benefit from the international trade in natural gas and other resources.

Figure 2-21 Bolivia



PROFILE

EVO MORALES PEACE WITH SOCIAL JUSTICE

In early 2006, Evo Morales became president of Bolivia — the first Indigenous person to hold this office. During his election campaign, Morales promised Indigenous people, who make up about 55 per cent of the population, a greater say in governing and more control over the country's natural resources. Morales wants the wealth from Bolivia's resources to benefit Bolivians rather than transnational corporations.

At the same time, Bolivia is in debt and needs foreign money to become prosperous. For example, to sell its natural gas to other countries, Bolivia must build long, expensive pipelines. Doing this requires foreign investment, so Morales must balance the needs of Bolivians and those of foreign investors who want to be sure that their investments in projects like pipelines are safe — and profitable.

Before he was sworn in, Morales tried to build partnerships by visiting countries such as Cuba, Venezuela, Brazil, Spain, France, China, and South Africa. He said his visit to South Africa was the most important trip of his life.

"It was a meeting of the struggle of two people, of two continents, and a symbol of the courage of the rebellion against discrimination, inequality and against oppression . . ." he told reporters. "Together we look for peace with social justice. I am much more convinced after seeing the struggle of the South African people, our black brothers, in the power of the people."

Morales must find a way to attract investment to Bolivia while ensuring that the people benefit from the country's resources.



Figure 2-22 When Evo Morales (left) was elected president of Bolivia, he took part in a special ceremony at Tiahuanaco, site of an ancient civilization and a sacred place for Bolivia's Indigenous people. How might this ceremony have helped revitalize the culture of Indigenous people?

1. This page includes a short news report about the swearing in of Evo Morales as president of Bolivia. Rewrite this report from the point of view of someone who was passionately for — or against — his becoming president. You may add or delete sentences, or you may rewrite the story completely.

Whichever route you choose, use verbs and descriptive words that show the writer's bias. Someone who was against Morales, for example, might describe him as "a communist rabble rouser" rather than an "Indigenous president," while a supporter might say that he is "a friend of the people."

Share your news story with a partner. Compare the words you used to indicate the writer's bias.

2. Examine the map on page 63 and answer the following questions:

- How might the fact that Bolivia is landlocked — enclosed entirely by land — affect its international trade prospects?
- How might this geographic factor affect Evo Morales's decisions about his country's relations with the rest of the world?
- Are any Alberta industries similarly affected by geographic factors? Explain your answer.

President Evo Morales Pledges to End Injustice

LA PAZ, BOLIVIA: Jan. 23, 2006 — When Evo Morales was sworn in today as Bolivia's first Indigenous president, he pledged to end 500 years of injustice against his people.

"Enough is enough," Morales told a cheering audience that included thousands of Bolivians, as well as foreign dignitaries. "We are taking over now for the next 500 years."

At the colourful ceremony, which took place at the Congress in La Paz, Bolivia's capital, Morales also pledged to take control of the country's natural resources out of the hands of private corporations and return it to the people.

The 46-year-old former llama herder and coca leaf farmer said that the free-market model has not worked in Bolivia, and that the privatization of basic services and natural resources should be reversed.

Morales, who is a fierce critic of the United States, also acknowledged that he faces a huge task during his five-year term. Bolivia is the poorest country in South America.

3. To help reduce pollution and ensure that workers are treated fairly, some international organizations, as well as the governments of some developed countries, have suggested inserting special clauses in international trade agreements. These clauses would require companies in exporting countries to meet specific environmental standards and to agree to fair labour practices before their goods can be imported into countries that have signed the agreement.

In a small group, discuss the possible advantages and disadvantages of these special clauses.

- Why do you think some organizations and governments would support this idea?
- Why do you think others would oppose it? Try to achieve consensus — general agreement — on whether these clauses would help or hurt the stakeholders involved in international trade.
- Choose one group member to summarize your discussion and present the conclusions to the class.

RESEARCH TIP

When conducting Internet research, you can narrow down your search by entering specific search terms. If you are searching for information on T-shirt production, for example, you might enter “T-shirt” and “labour practices.” It sometimes helps to try alternative spellings, such as “tee-shirt” and “labor practices.”

4. You read about coltan mining in Chapter 1 and banana production in this chapter. These two products show the links between globalization and identity, both personal and collective.

With a partner, choose another important trade item (e.g., coffee, chocolate, jeans, T-shirts, an electronic device) and prepare a two-minute documentary in the form of a radio or video report, or a report using computer presentation software. Your purpose is to show how the item reflects the economic, political, environmental, and social dimensions of globalization.

As you conduct your research, think “glocally” — locally and globally. In your presentation, set out the process involved in bringing the item you chose to market. Indicate the stakeholders — the individuals or groups with an interest in the product — at each major stage of this process (e.g., farmers, factory workers, shippers, salespeople, consumers).

Your goal in preparing the documentary is twofold:

- to educate your classmates about how the economic, political, environmental, and social dimensions of producing the item link various aspects of the identity of the stakeholders
- to draw conclusions about whether the item shows positive or negative aspects of the forces of globalization

To help your audience respond to your presentation, prepare three discussion questions that will help you decide whether your documentary was persuasive (e.g., Which group of stakeholders deserves people’s support?).

Think about Your Challenge

Look back at the challenge for this related issue. It asks you to develop a presentation that explains your position on this issue: To what extent should globalization shape identity?

Review the material in this chapter and the activities you completed as you progressed through the chapter. Make notes about ideas that could be useful in completing the challenge. Begin developing the criteria and critical questions you will use to evaluate the data you will explore and use in your presentation.