



A review of the article globalization and culture: Four paradigmatic views by Kavous Ardalan

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ABSTRACT

This essay offers a thorough analytical assessment of Kavous Ardalan's paradigmatic framework on the relationship between globalization and culture. From universalist interpretations of global uniformity to context-specific studies of cultural adaptation and critical evaluations of ideological and structural domination, each paradigm presents a unique worldview. The review points out that the interpretive paradigm emphasises local agency, meaning-making, and the cultural distinctiveness of globalisation, whereas the functionalist paradigm stresses technical determinism and systemic order. The radical structuralist and radical humanist viewpoints, on the other hand, show how globalisation exacerbates class struggle and ideological control. The paper argues that no single view can fully convey the complexity of the cultural effects of globalization by combining several paradigms. Instead, it moves from universalist interpretations of global uniformity to context-specific studies of cultural adaptation and critical assessments of ideological and structural domination. Each paradigm presents a unique worldview. The review points out that the interpretive paradigm emphasises local agency, meaning-making, and the cultural distinctiveness of globalisation, whereas the functionalist paradigm stresses technical determinism and systemic order.

Keywords: globalization culture, paradigmatic analysis, interpretive approach, ideological domination, structural inequality, interdisciplinary integration.

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Abstrak

Esai ini memberikan penilaian analitis yang komprehensif terhadap kerangka paradigma Kavous Ardalan mengenai hubungan antara globalisasi dan budaya. Mulai dari interpretasi universal tentang keseragaman global hingga studi kontekstual tentang adaptasi budaya dan evaluasi kritis terhadap dominasi ideologis dan struktural, setiap paradigma menawarkan perspektif dunia yang unik. Ulasan ini menyoroti bahwa paradigma interpretatif menekankan agen lokal, pembentukan makna, dan keunikan budaya dalam globalisasi, sementara paradigma fungsionalis menonjolkan determinisme teknis dan tatanan sistemik. Pandangan strukturalis radikal dan humanis radikal, di sisi lain, menunjukkan bagaimana globalisasi memperparah perjuangan kelas dan kontrol ideologis. Esai ini berargumen bahwa tidak ada satu pandangan pun yang dapat sepenuhnya menggambarkan kompleksitas dampak budaya globalisasi dengan menggabungkan beberapa paradigma. Sebaliknya, esai ini berpindah dari interpretasi universal tentang keseragaman global ke studi kontekstual tentang adaptasi budaya dan evaluasi kritis terhadap dominasi ideologis dan struktural. Setiap paradigma menawarkan pandangan dunia yang unik. Ulasan ini menyoroti bahwa paradigma interpretatif menekankan agen lokal, pembentukan makna, dan keunikan budaya globalisasi, sedangkan paradigma fungsionalis menekankan determinisme teknis dan tatanan sistemik.

Kata Kunci: *budaya globalisasi, analisis paradigmatis, pendekatan interpretatif, dominasi ideologis, ketidaksetaraan struktural, integrasi interdisipliner.*

1. Introduction

The researcher argues that different worldviews are reflected in the examination of four broad perspectives on the relationship between globalization and culture. Every paradigm is regarded as an educational and scientific method that offers a distinct viewpoint on the characteristics and functions of globalization and culture (Ardalan, 2011). The author emphasizes the importance of examining things from multiple angles, as each one highlights different facets of the problem at hand. Such a collaboration of perspectives is likely to stimulate a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the topic being studied. As their integration can provide a thorough understanding of globalization and culture, it is inferred that the cohabitation and recognition of multiple paradigms can be advantageous to both parties (Lim, 2023). Furthermore, given that people from different backgrounds offer distinct perspectives, the author emphasizes the importance of intellectual openness in the era of globalization. Re-examined as an example of the advantages of paradigmatic plurality, the story of the six blind scholars and the elephant teaches that understanding a phenomenon's broader context is essential to preserving social peace (Ardalan, 2009). It is widely accepted that understanding paradigms is essential for academics in order to identify the shortcomings of the methods they have chosen for scientific research (Omodan, 2024). The author illustrates how each paradigm makes unique contributions in the form of theories, conceptions, and analytical tools by providing detailed explanations of its underlying assumptions.

2. Findings

By dividing them into four main groups—functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist, and radical structuralist—the researcher provides frameworks for understanding the connection between globalization and culture. Every paradigm offers a distinct perspective on the relationship between culture and globalization. Globalization and culture are seen as universal

phenomena by the functionalist paradigm, as particular and context-specific by the interpretive paradigm, as tools of ideological dominance by the radical humanist paradigm, and as the source of class conflict by the radical structuralist paradigm.

Kavous Ardalan introduces four paradigms to explore the complex relationship between culture and globalization. He emphasizes that no single paradigm can fully capture this interaction. Each paradigm highlights a different aspect of globalization's cultural effects, including conflict, domination, particularity, and universality. Together, they offer a diverse theoretical framework for analyzing these dynamics.

The functionalist paradigm

Functionalists view globalization and culture as universal, identifying broad trends regardless of regional differences. Their primary focus is on how globalization impacts culture, aligning with the idea that the rationality of functionalist science explains societal structure. They liken the social world to the natural world, using natural science methods to explain social dynamics, often favoring biological and mechanical comparisons. As the original text states:

"Functionalists believe that the positivist methods that have been successful in the natural sciences should also apply to the social sciences. Moreover, the functionalist paradigm has become dominant in academic sociology and in other major academic fields. The social world is treated as a place of concrete reality, characterized by uniformity and regularity, which can be understood and explained in terms of cause-and-effect relationships. With these assumptions, individuals are regarded as playing passive roles; the economic environment determines their behavior" (Ardalan, 2009).

The essay also emphasizes how functionalists take a pragmatic stance, seeking to comprehend society so that the information generated can be used to address real-world societal issues. This approach to problem-solving reflects the functionalist goal of offering workable answers to pressing problems (Ardalan, 2009). The functionalist paradigm of globalization emphasizes technology as the primary driver. Advancements in data processing, communication, and transportation have facilitated supra-territoriality, allowing for rapid international exchange of money and ideas. Key developments like the telegraph, airplanes, and digital computers have accelerated economic globalization, boosting international trade and manufacturing. Thus, technology forms the essential framework for cross-border interactions (Ardalan, 2017).

The Interpretive Paradigm

The interpretive paradigm, on the other hand, emphasizes how globalization impacts culture in unique and localized situations, viewing globalization and culture as particular and distinct. Interpretivists closely examine how people and communities perceive and react to globalization. This stance is reinforced by the author's statement in the original article:

"The interpretive paradigm assumes that social reality is the outcome of subjective interpretation by individuals. It regards the social world as a process continually created by individuals. Social reality, to the extent that it exists beyond individual consciousness, is understood as a web of intersubjectively shared assumptions and meanings. This assumption leads to the belief that there is a shared reality that is continuously evolving and enduring" (Ardalan, 2009).

The functionalist approach faces critiques from an interpretive perspective for two main reasons (Omari & Paull, 2015). First, the researcher's frame of reference influences knowledge

generation, indicating that scientific procedures are not value-free because human values impact scientific inquiry (Tacconi, 2017). Second, cultural sciences are inherently spiritual, making natural scientific approaches, which aim for universal rules, unsuitable for studying people (Wildman, 2016). The interpretive paradigm also highlights the crucial role of institutional frameworks and state policies in driving globalization. As the original text affirms:

"States have played a key role in the internationalization of relations. State policies have encouraged and accelerated the development of international relations. International relations and states have become highly interdependent, and the growth of international relations has significantly transformed the nature of the state" (Ardalan, 2009).

Lastly, the researcher points out that the interpretive perspective provides a helpful substitute when phenomena cannot be sufficiently examined using the four paradigms. The interpretive method provides a more profound and contextually aware understanding of the cultural effects of globalization by prioritizing local interpretations and reactions to it.

The functionalist paradigm

According to functionalists, who see globalization and culture as universal, they can spot broad trends at work everywhere. Without necessarily taking into consideration regional variances or cultural peculiarities, their focus is on how globalization affects culture. This stance is consistent with the argument that the rationality of functionalist science explains the rationality of society. According to this perspective, science serves as the basis for the social world's structure and organization, much like the natural world's orderliness. The methods of the natural sciences are applied to generate explanations of the social world, with mechanical and biological analogies being favored. As the original text states:

"Functionalists believe that the positivist methods that have been successful in the natural sciences should also apply to the social sciences. Moreover, the functionalist paradigm has become dominant in academic sociology and in other major academic fields. The social world is treated as a place of concrete reality, characterized by uniformity and regularity, which can be understood and explained in terms of cause-and-effect relationships. With these assumptions, individuals are regarded as playing passive roles; the economic environment determines their behavior" (Ardalan, 2009).

The essay highlights the functionalist perspective on globalization, noting its pragmatic approach to solving societal issues. It asserts that technology is the key driver of globalization, facilitated by advancements in data processing, communication, and transportation. Technologies such as the telegraph, airplanes, and digital computers have interconnected global financial and information markets, enabling rapid cross-border exchanges. As a result, global communication networks and improved transportation have significantly accelerated economic globalization, reinforcing the role of technology as a foundational element in cross-border interactions (Ardalan, 2009; 2017).

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The functionalist approach's shortcomings are further criticized by the researcher from an interpretive perspective. This paradigm claims that functionalism falls short for two main reasons. First, since the researcher's frame of reference determines the way knowledge is generated, scientific procedures are not value-free since human values impact the process of scientific inquiry. Second, the topic of cultural sciences is intrinsically spiritual, suggesting that human beings cannot be investigated using natural science techniques that seek to discover universal rules. Humans are viewed as independent, free beings in cultural spheres. Furthermore, the interpretive paradigm emphasizes the significant role that institutional frameworks and rules play in driving globalization within the discussion of its drivers. The primary factors considered responsible for the internationalization of interactions are state policies and governance frameworks. As the original text affirms:

"States have played a key role in the internationalization of relations. State policies have encouraged and accelerated the development of international relations. International relations and states have become highly interdependent, and the growth of international relations has significantly transformed the nature of the state" (Ardalan, 2009).

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3. Discussion

This conversation critically examines four paradigms—functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist, and radical structuralist—highlighting their insights into the relationship between globalization and culture. The interpretive method uncovers localized meanings and cultural adaptations, while the functionalist paradigm underscores global uniformity. In contrast, the critical paradigms reveal structural inequalities and ideological domination. The section argues that the interpretive paradigm is essential for understanding context-specific experiences within global processes and emphasizes the need for a multifaceted synthesis of paradigms to capture the fluidity and hybridity defining cultural change in globalization (Paudel, 2024; Mohiuddin, 2023).

Author's analytical overview of the relationship between globalization and culture

Every paradigm provides a unique perspective on the relationship between culture and globalization. The functionalist view sees globalization and culture as universal phenomena, often neglecting regional differences and cultural uniqueness while focusing on broad impacts. In contrast, the interpretive paradigm views these processes as context-specific, emphasizing how globalization affects culture in local settings and how individuals respond to it. This argument aligns with studies showing that interactions with the outside world vary among subcultures, such as youth activities that promote cultural values and intergroup interactions

(Shereuzheva et al., 2022). The radical humanism perspective considers globalization a threat to cultural diversity and local identities, while the radical structuralist view highlights how it can exacerbate class conflict and social inequalities.

The importance of the interpretive approach in addressing difficult-to-explain aspects

Recognizing the unique perspectives of the four paradigms is essential when exploring the connection between globalization and culture. The author advocates for an interpretive approach for cases where these paradigms fall short, allowing for a deeper understanding of local responses to globalization. Scholars suggest that human development in this context varies culturally, leading to diverse outcomes in response to social and environmental pressures. Human adaptability showcases resilience, while developmental processes are influenced by fluidity, creativity, and new ideas (Moran, 2022; Lucić, 2016). The impact of globalization on human development has intensified, especially after COVID-19, which has enhanced global interconnectedness. Risks include cultural homogenization and tensions between sameness and diversity, which could threaten sustainability and life's diversity (Maynard & Chaudhary, 2020). The authors also highlight opportunities for developmental psychology through promoting inclusive localism and rejecting neo-colonialism.

Limitations and recommendations for paradigm integration

The functionalist paradigm typically ignores regional variations and cultural diversity, while the interpretive paradigm may miss the broader effects of globalization. Radical structuralist and radical humanist perspectives can be overly critical, neglecting globalization's potential benefits. Future research should integrate multiple paradigms—such as structural analysis with the interpretive approach—to better understand the complex interactions between globalization and culture.

4. Conclusion

This essay examines four key paradigmatic viewpoints on the nature and function of globalization and culture. The interpretive paradigm sees ideology as context-specific, while the functionalist paradigm considers globalization and culture as universal. In contrast, the radical structuralist paradigm views them as causes of class conflict, and the radical humanist paradigm sees them as tools of dominance. Social researchers must weigh the benefits and drawbacks of each paradigm to choose an appropriate methodological approach, as each offers unique insights. Integrating perspectives from multiple paradigms can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between globalization and culture. While each paradigm provides only partial perspectives, considering their characteristics can enhance research strategies.

This paper emphasizes that a researcher's engagement with complex phenomena generates knowledge, making this pursuit not just technical but also an ethical and ideological endeavor. Incorporating diverse perspectives fosters a nuanced understanding of globalization and culture. Abreu Pederzini (2016) suggests that although developmental studies have a long history, globalization has only recently gained explicit attention in this field. Scholars face challenges in examining cultural change within dynamic global contexts while recognizing the impact on community life. The strength of this study lies in its analytical framework, which offers

four paradigms that enhance the understanding of the interaction between culture and globalization, illuminating specific aspects of the complex cultural landscape.

Limitations and weaknesses

Every paradigm has limitations in describing culture and globalization, as the four explored paradigms cannot fully capture their complexity. These limitations arise from unique perspectives, making it difficult to address every facet adequately. Cultural changes should be examined in light of historical upheavals, which can lead to a broader public consensus and highlight the connections between regional interests and universal principles. Klüppel et al. (2018) contend that historical events contribute to understanding institutional and cultural variations, which in turn influence organizational behaviors following trauma. This highlights the importance of adapting to local cultures while pursuing global integration for businesses that operate internationally. Some scholars question the need for fresh perspectives on culture and globalization; however, a renewed emphasis on diversity as an intrinsic human trait is crucial. Maynard and Chaudhary (2020) propose that focusing on globalization can create new opportunities in developmental psychology, encouraging collaboration with other social sciences and embracing an “inclusive localism” strategy. This advocates for rethinking theoretical models to incorporate contextual elements and challenge universal beliefs in human development research (Shereuzheva et al., 2022).

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