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Homogeneous Heterogeneity: Rationalization, Cities, and the Impacts of Global Middle Class Mobility

Verfasser / Author

Erik Schau

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V.-Prof. Dr. Rick B. Duque

Abstract

The focus of this thesis is the impact that the movement of the global middle class has on the structural and societal makeup of cities around the world. The rationalization theories of Weber, Mannheim, and Durkheim; the competing globalization frameworks of George Ritzer's McDonaldization and Jan Pieterse's Global M lange; and Zhongxin Sun's concepts of city "hardware" and "software" standards are used to build a framework of analysis for answering the research question: whether the demands for the efficient, predictable, and calculable movement of people, money, goods, and ideas between cities is causing the homogenization of cities' infrastructure; while, at the same time, their socio-cultural makeup is becoming homogeneously heterogeneous due to these same flows. It is believed that the increased movement of people from the newly-minted middle classes of emerging economies and the high level of global connectivity allowed by modern information technologies are causing ideas and customs to spread in such a way that cities, the lightning rods of globalization, are becoming uniformly diverse, or homogeneously heterogeneous, across the globe. Vienna, Austria is the site for a case study, which includes personal observations and qualitative interviews with members of the global middle class living in the city. Findings from the case study agree with the idea of city structural uniformity, but results regarding the uniformity of heterogeneous social space are less definitive – however, this is likely attributed to Vienna's non-status as one of the world's major cities.

Keywords: global middle class, middle class, mobility, global cities, world cities, hardware, software, rationalization, McDonaldization, global m lange, homogenization, heterogeneity, homogeneous heterogeneity, hybridization.

Inhaltsangabe

Diese Masterarbeit behandelt den Einfluss, den die Bewegung der globalen Mittelschicht auf die strukturelle und soziale Zusammensetzung von Städten weltweit hat. Hierbei bilden die Rationalisierungstheorien von Weber, Mannheim und Durkheim, die konkurrierenden Globalisierungstheorien der McDonaldisierung von George Ritzer und der Global Melange von Jan Pieterse, sowie Zhongxin Suns Konzepte von städtischen „Hardware“ und „Software“ Standards die theoretische Grundlage, anhand derer folgendes Forschungsproblem beantwortet wird: Verursacht die Forderung nach einem effizienten, vorhersehbaren, und kalkulierbaren Bewegungsfluss von Menschen, Geld, Waren, und Ideen zwischen Städten eine Homogenisierung von städtischer Infrastruktur, während deren soziokulturelle Zusammensetzung gleichzeitig aufgrund derselben Flüsse auf homogene Weise heterogen wird? Es wird angenommen, dass der gesteigerte Bewegungsfluss von Menschen der neuen Mittelschicht der neu entstehenden Volkswirtschaften, sowie das hohe Level an globaler Konnektivität, das aufgrund moderner Informationstechnologien möglich ist, dazu führen, dass Ideen und Gewohnheiten sich auf solche Weise verbreiten, dass Städte, als Blitzableiter der Globalisierung, auf uniforme Weise divers werden, oder auf homogene Weise heterogen, und dies auf der ganzen Welt. Wien, Österreich, dient als Schauplatz einer Fallstudie, welche die vorher genannten Fragen anhand persönlicher Beobachtungen und qualitativer Interviews von Mitgliedern der globalen Mittelschicht beantwortet. Die Erkenntnisse, die aus der Fallstudie gezogen werden, stimmen mit der Theorie der strukturellen Einheit der Städte überein. Die Ergebnisse, die sich auf die Uniformität von heterogenem sozialen Raum beziehen, sind hingegen nicht so konkret. Dies ist jedoch wahrscheinlich dem Status, oder eher Nicht-Status, den Wien als eine der globalen Städte dieser Welt einnimmt, zuzuschreiben.

Stichwörter: globale Mittelschicht, Mittelschicht, Mobilität, globale Städte, Weltstädte, Hardware, Software, Rationalisierung, McDonaldisierung, globale Melange, Homogenisierung, Heterogenität, homogene Heterogenität, Hybridisierung.

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List of Abbreviations

GaWC – Global and World Cities (Think tank)

ICT – Information and Communication Technologies

S-Bahn – Schnellbahn (fast train)

U-Bahn – Unterbahn (underground/subway)

VIC – Vienna International Centre

WG – Wohngemeinschaft (shared apartment)

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Prologue

My first experience as an expat was in the fall of 2007 when I spent a semester abroad in Budapest. The experience left me wanting, and while looking for out-of-country options in the final year of my bachelor studies, a friend told me about a two-year, joint university master's degree program in Europe. So, I applied for, and was accepted into, the Erasmus Mundus Global Masters Program. The first year of my studies in 2009 was spent at the University of Leipzig in Germany, while the second – this past year – I was enrolled at the University of Vienna. This thesis is the culmination of these past two years.

My interest in the debate on globalization and culture was sparked by the experiences I had in those few months spent in Budapest, but has come to fully blossom over the last two years that I have lived in Europe. This time, I have been able to assimilate much more into the local culture, learn the customs, and, most importantly, the language. Both years were spent in German-speaking countries (Germany and Austria) and so I have been able to practice my German language skills continuously.

Having surmounted the superficial difficulties of being an expat, I realized that living in Europe is very similar to living in the United States where I grew up (especially in Germany which, in my opinion, is a more efficient and punctual version of the United States). Of course it is easy to say that life in the U.S. and life in Europe are similar; after all, the U.S. is the offspring of Europe. But, through conversations with friends from other, very diverse locations around the world, it seems that I am not the only one – they too think that the life they lead in Europe is very much the same as the life they led back home. The cities we lived in (Leipzig, Vienna) admittedly had differences with the cities we came from, but they also had noticeable structural and cultural similarities. This got me to thinking: what is it about life in Europe that causes not only myself but also my friends from countries around the world to feel at home? What is it about the lives we lead today, in general, that makes us feel comfortable anywhere, regardless of where we come from originally? Why is it that people, when they move between cities around the world, can feel as though they never left home? This thesis is an attempt to answer these questions.

1. Introduction

In fact, of course, it is possible to have *both* things to be true. That is, we can have the greater homogenization of some aspects of our lives along with the greater heterogenization of other aspects.

George Ritzer, *The McDonaldization Thesis*

Have you ever arrived in a new city, walked around its streets, enjoyed its architecture, sampled the cuisine, then gone back to your hotel room thinking, “hmm...something about all that seemed so familiar. Have I seen that someplace else before?” You may not realize it at first but yes, you have. The truth is that all these features, aspects, and services were the same in the city that you came from.

Cities around the world are more connected to each other today than ever before. People, money, goods, and ideas are moving faster and between more cities than ever before, so cities have had to become standardized in their functional structure and connectivity to support the fluid and unceasing movement of passengers, finance, and products within and between them. People, money, goods, and ideas are also moving in greater numbers now than in any other time in history ever before and also starting off their journeys from more diverse locations (Osterhammel & Petersson, 2005). The rise of the global middle class has allowed once underrepresented populations to take part as active players in globalization, changing it from a process defined by the West to more of a patchwork collage of cultural exchange. Now, instead of seeing only the roots of Euro-North American culture reaching into major cities around the world, new seedlings of Latin American, Asian, Oceanic, and African heritage have found fertile soil in which to grow. At the same time as cities are becoming functionally standardized, they are becoming culturally hybrid.

Rationalization is the foundation upon which this process is occurring, yet we see that the opposing forces of homogeneity and heterogeneity have bifurcated its framework: on the one hand, we see increasing homogenization of the structure and connectivity within and between cities; on the other, the increasing heterogenization of the cultural space of cities, into which this newly defined, diversely influenced hybrid global culture is flowing. The spread of rationalization is resulting in both increased homogenization and hybridity. Paradoxically, then, we are becoming homogeneously heterogeneous. The research and analysis of this paradox is what makes up the following pages.

The work will begin with a literature review discussing rationalization theory. The theorists are broken into two groups: those who believe that rationalization leads to standardization and those who believe

that it leads to differentiation. The works of Max Weber and Karl Mannheim will be the main focus of the standardization group, and Emile Durkheim's views on the increasing division of labor will represent the differentiation group. To follow, the two major themes of modern globalization theory underlined by these two threads of rationalization theory will be described - one exploring the concept of unification (e.g., Ritzer's "McDonaldization") and the other, hybridity (e.g., Pieterse's "Global M lange"). This is done to show the relationship between early rationalization theories and current theories of globalization.

Between these two sets of theories, there will be a brief discussion on globalization and its relationship to the local, or glocalization. This is an important theme in this thesis, and this section will help to introduce the topic of globalization and the globalization theories of Ritzer and Pieterse.

After building this rationalization and globalization foundation, the discussion will delve into what globalization is *not* – homogenization or westernization (and, within that, Americanization) – thereby establishing the groundwork for what I find globalization to be; a macro-universalizing process defined by hybridity/heterogeneity. I intend to show that the McDonaldization process of globalization is indeed a universalizing force, but that, as mentioned above, this universalization is not leading to an increased *homogenization* of the world that is based on a Western/American culture. Because the universal is itself a hybrid, this process of universalization is increasingly leading to greater *heterogeneity*. The global is defined by its hybridity; as globalization leads to universalization, it does so to the greater benefit of multiculturalism and heterogeneity.

With the groundwork for the global, the glocal, and the spread of the universal-hybrid fully established, I will move into a description of where this process of universal hybridization is taking place and how it is spread around the globe. Specifically, it is within and between major world cities, acting as (to borrow from Manuel Castells) the nodes of our network society (Castells, 2000a). As to how this homogeneous heterogeneity is taking place, it will be attributed to the impact McDonaldization processes are having on cities' functional structure and social spaces – turning cities into rationalized, increasingly uniform places throughout the world undergirded by hybrid flows. It is at this point that Ritzer's concept of "McDonaldized islands of the living dead" becomes useful for the analysis, and will be used as a starting point for describing these processes.

Finally, those people who live in and move between these rationalized city-islands will be discussed, defined here as the global middle class. It is these people who demand the rationalization process – in their home locales and in their business, tourist, study, and resettlement destinations – and who cause the spread of homogeneous heterogeneity in

cities across the globe. It is also this group that is redefining the McDonaldization process outside of the Western/American paradigm. The middle classes of the emerging economies are, for the first time in history, large enough to be able to influence globalization and the spread of McDonaldization in their favor. This new global middle class furthers both the hybridity of the global and the homogeneity of the local.

An analysis of the globalization process, represented here as the further rationalization of global consumer markets to appeal to an emerging global middle class that is constantly moving between cities, paves the way for my study of the expatriate community living, studying, and working in Vienna. Through the qualitative research (interviews, conversations) I conducted with foreigners residing in this city, I believe the new paradigm of the McDonaldized city “filled” with the hybrid-global will be revealed. Hybridity is becoming an increasingly normal sight across the globe, demanded by both the locals and foreigners of middle class means who want to feel “comfortable”, “at home”, and not notice a change in their lifestyle when they move from their city of origin. Interestingly, fieldwork on middle class movements between cities is only just beginning to emerge, and fieldwork specifically on the movement of a global middle class is currently, to my knowledge, non-existent. Therefore, this case study will provide a necessary and useful springboard into further original research on the multifaceted and exciting topic of global middle class mobility.

2. Rationalization to Globalization

The following literature review will first be an historical discussion about the rationalization process of modern society. This treatment sets the stage for a more comprehensive overview of the contemporary globalization process and its rationalistic undertones, which I will argue has spurred the growth of an emerging global middle class across a select and growing number of major cities. In turn, this new mobile population is further supporting and expanding the global processes that spawned them through their consumption of everyday cosmopolitan products and services that are being produced and delivered to them in an increasingly rationalized manner.

Discussions on rationalization coincide with the beginnings of the social sciences; in fact, it was one of the first major threads of debate in modern sociological literature (Kim, 2007). It is to these fundamentals, then, that we must turn to fully understand the divergent views of the homogenization (George Ritzer's "McDonaldization") and hybridization (Jan Pieterse's "Global M lange") of globalization.

There are essentially two main camps in the academic literature on rationalization: (1) those that theorize this process as causing increased similarity within and between those groups that introduce the principles of rationalization into social, cultural, political, and economic life; and (2) those that theorize this process as causing increased uniqueness and individuality to manifest within and between those groups that introduce the principles of rationalization into social, cultural, political, and economic life. This section will briefly outline these two divergent discourses from the most influential authors in the field. From the homogenization camp, Max Weber and Karl Mannheim will be discussed, and within the hybridization camp the analysis will center on Emile Durkheim. This will then lead into a discussion on globalization and its relationship to these rationalist thinkers.

Similarity through Rationalization

Born 21 April, 1864, Max Weber was raised in what was then known as Prussia. During his life, Weber witnessed firsthand the introduction and expansion of the Prussian governmental bureaucracy, the original modern bureaucratic system. Weber's writings, therefore, are all the more important due to his unique personal experiences within such an impressively rationalized organizational instrument.

Weber separates rationality into two categories, *Zweckrational* (instrumental or means-end rationality) and *Wertrational* (value rationality). These are further broken into four types, with two in each category: practical and formal within *Zweckrational*, and theoretical and substantive within *Wertrational*. For the purposes of this study, it is important only to discuss substantive and formal rationality, as these are the two

types examined by Ritzer in the development of his McDonaldization theory.

Substantive rationality refers to “the degree to which the provisioning of given groups of persons...with goods is shaped by economically oriented social action under some criterion (past, present, or potential) of ultimate value (weriende Postulate), regardless of the nature of these ends” (Weber, 1968: 85). This implies the more human aspects of rationality, or those aspects of society which are not able to be rationally quantified and which are affected by the terrain of social history. Formal rationality describes the inhuman or economically determined rules applied to society: in Weber’s words, “the extent of quantitative calculation or accounting which is technically possible and which is actually applied” (Weber, 1968: 85).

There is the possibility that formal and substantive rationality will compete against one another, though formal and substantive rationalization are not necessarily opponents. Substantive rationality monitors thought through what Weber labels as “value constellations”; formal rationality, because it monitors physical action through the enforcement of calculated organizational rules, does not intrinsically have this attached value mechanism (Kalberg, 1980). A social environment dominated by formal rationality, though, can have an associated substantive rationality with a value constellation defined by the rules set forth within formal rationalization. An example would be any employee who works within a large bureaucracy. The extent of his duties is predetermined and his actions monitored through formally rationalized rules and codes of conduct that govern the bureaucracy. Because he is physically surrounded by formal rationality for most of his day, his mental processes are very likely to mold to fit those of the organization in which he works - he still maintains a substantively rationalized value constellation, but it has been altered due to constant exposure to formal rationality. Due to this constant physical exposure to formal rationalization, the employee’s social and mental life within and outside of the bureaucracy will also change to be along the same formally rational lines as the organization itself.

Weber sees this process as the takeover of substantive rationality’s value constellation by formally rationalized processes, whereby “...formal rationalization processes in the scientific arena as well as in the economic and the legal spheres and in the bureaucratic form of domination coalesced to give birth to a network of patterns of action, all of which pointed in the same direction: suppression of value-oriented action” (Kalberg, 1980: 1174). In his view, valueless formal rationality has replaced value-laden substantive rationality in providing a system of beliefs with which to make sense of reality. The substantive worldview attributed to formal rationality – that of organizing reality along secular, scientific lines – has taken the place of other important substantive rationalities, such as religion (Kalberg, 1980). The substantive rationality

and associated value constellation – the substantive worldview – of formally rationalized institutions are coming to dominate over all other forms of substantive rationality.¹

This may help to explain the spread of formal rationality. As formally rationalized institutions expand, the substantive rationality of more and more people has a value constellation at its core dominated by the values of the formally rationalized institution. People become more accepting of, and perhaps even start demanding, the greater introduction of formal rationality into new spheres of life outside of the institution – into social, cultural, political, and legal spheres. Every aspect of daily life starts becoming the same – predictable, efficient, repeatable, and calculable.

Though Weber established the groundwork for the discussion of similarity through rationalization, it was Karl Mannheim who synthesized the concept for clear and concise usage. Mannheim believed rationality to be “consisting of settled and routinized procedures in dealing with situations that recur in an orderly fashion” (Mannheim, 1929/1936: 113). Although used largely in relation to economic affairs, this definition can also cover situations in our social environment, such as: entering or exiting public transportation; predictable back-and-forths with the cashier at the market; purchasing tickets at a movie theater or sporting event; or queuing at a McDonald’s and, once it’s your turn at the counter, knowing what to say, how, and when to say it.² Without some modicum of rationalization as covered by Mannheim’s definition, society would not function – at least not very efficiently.

Mannheim divides rationality along lines similar to Weber. While Weber describes rationality as being either substantive or formal, Mannheim divides his categories into substantial and functional.³ Mannheim defines substantial rationality as “an act of thought which reveals intelligent insight into the inter-relations of events in a given situation” and functional rationality as “a series of actions...organized in such a way that it leads to a previously defined goal, every element in this series of actions receiving a functional position and role” (Mannheim, 1929/1936: 53).

¹ Useful to argue my point, from Steven Kalberg, “...with the definition of science...as a mode of knowledge analytically distinct from values, values could be no longer defined as the legitimate subject matter of the 20th century’s major theoretical rationalization processes. This holds true even though *the scientific world view as a whole is itself a substantive rationality*.” (My italics.)

² Understanding rationalized social situations is also a great way to begin learning a foreign language! What to say, when, and how to say it are largely what one covers during the first lessons of a language course. This pattern of formally rationalized social action is also a useful way to understand other cultures – traditions are little more than socially accepted routinized modes of procedure that have been passed down through generational teaching.

³Conversely, though, Mannheim also divides irrationality in the same way.

Mannheim saw the two as mutually exclusive opponents, with substantive rationality allowing for unique intellectual thought and personal development and functional rationality as turning people into generic automatons. Due to rapid industrialization, increasing demand, and the greater ease of mass-production of predictable replicas, Mannheim saw functional rationality as overtaking substantial rationality. Like Weber, Mannheim felt that rationality could support both uniformity and uniqueness, but that formally rationalized organizations did not allow for the spread of individuality. Rather, they required its surrender.

In his writings, Mannheim dooms those on the lower rungs of the bureaucratic ladder – the lower class or proletariat – to complete functional rationality, the total absence of the development of individuality and unique thought, with their lives predictably prescribed to them through mind-numbing industrial work. The results of this, he feared, would have “disastrous consequences.” Regarding a person in this position, “He becomes increasingly accustomed to being led by others and gradually gives up his own interpretation of events for those others give him” (Mannheim, 1929/1936: 59). He becomes, in effect, no longer an individual but rather another addition to the collective mass. Substantial rationality – personal, individual thought and unique development – is only for those with sufficient income, education, and status – the middle and upper-middle classes.

Difference through Rationalization

While Weber and Mannheim make important inroads into the spread of uniformity through rationalization, there are other great thinkers who see these same rationalization processes as leading to greater heterogeneity and individuality. One such person is Emile Durkheim, a Frenchman writing in the 1920s. Durkheim did not write about rationalization within these same opposing formal/functional and substantive/substantial structures. Instead, he focused on the impact that the spread of the rationalized division of labor had on the thought and action of the individual. If it had to be categorized, though, Durkheim’s description of the increasing division of labor throughout society - with its rational nature affecting not only economic spheres but also social, cultural, and political ones – would best fit into the functional or formal rationality encampment. That is, he says professions are becoming more predictable through standardization and men are no longer required to become “whole”, but rather must specialize at a specific task (Durkheim, 2000). What separates his beliefs from those of Weber and Mannheim, however, is that while they see this as causing increased uniformity in the habits of social and cultural life, Durkheim believes that, through the further application of the division of labor, people become increasingly more unique. Rather than making automatons out of humans, rationalization makes us

more human by making us more individual: “Because the collective consciousness becomes more rational, it therefore becomes less categorical and...is less irksome to the free development of individual variations” (Durkheim, 2000: 57).

Further departing from the ideas put forth by Mannheim and Weber, Durkheim sees increased bureaucratization (functional or formal rationality within the workplace) as actually allowing for *greater* development of the individual. To quote Durkheim once more,

...the same causes that in general lighten the collective yoke produce their liberating effect within the corporation as they do outside it...Thus not only does professional regulation, by its very nature, hinder less than any other form of regulation the free development of individual variation, but moreover it hinders it less and less (Durkheim, 2000: 60).

Perhaps this could be considered one of the “irrationalities of rationality” (Ritzer, 1993). Through the increasing rationalization of professional, public, and private life, structures of such a large dimension are created so as to limit the initial intention of the structure’s introduction – the exercising of control. Because it is so large, control on the micro level is lost and we become increasingly unique individuals in the process. Durkheim essentially turns Weber and Mannheim on their heads. As rationalization spreads and the structures of rationalization grow, it allows the individual to become more unique; it is only in the small, easily-manageable systems of rationalized action and behavior (such as in a small town) that individuality, unique thought and personal growth are stunted.

Globalization: Rationalization Revisited

Although Weber-Mannheim and Durkheim may have different views on the effects of rationalization, one thing they all agreed on was that these processes were occurring on an international scale. Though the term globalization had not yet been coined at the time of their writing, what they were nevertheless describing was the globalization of rationalization. This section, therefore, will deal with what exactly we are referring to when we say the word “globalization” and how it relates to these rationalization theories.

The study of globalization implies a macro-sociological view, one that looks beyond conceived borders of states, societies, and cultures. It embodies a shift from looking at social, economic, and political processes within the confines of a myriad of boundaries to instead focusing on one single, greater boundary – the globe. This is “seen as leading to a shift in the main focus of sociology” (Ritzer, 1998:82) to a new “primary unit of analysis” moving from “subunits”, “such as the nation, the state, or the region”, to the whole of the global system. As stated by Beyer (in Ritzer,

1998), “Globalization means, for instance, that we cannot conceive the whole [sic] in terms of one of its parts, say the First or Third Worlds, or as a composite system of logically prior nation states” (p. 82). Within this framework, the primary unit of analysis for globalization theorists is the world.

Still, we cannot ignore the role of the object of study within this global system. If one is to make any sort of meaningful sociological research or comparative analysis, one must identify boundaries to isolate subjects within the global whole. While it is true that once-identifiable boundaries are now increasingly permeable and we are all infused with a multitude of interplaying cultures and ideas, to assume that the material – the house, the town, the city, the person – are of a secondary status to the global makes any sort of sociological study impossible. Although the global should – and at this point, it seems, must – be discussed within studies on local topics, we cannot lose sight of what is primarily important. What we are looking at is how the global transforms the local as well as how the local transforms the global.

Importantly, many global theorists, while espousing the end of the local as the unit of analysis, still use this demarcation as their primary unit of research. Wallerstein’s World-Systems Theory is a prime example of this. Although he describes a system operating on a global scale, professing it to be beyond the scope of nation-states, the primary unit in his analysis is the nation-state (Wallerstein, 2011). To have true legitimacy, global trends, although important on their own, must be described within the boundaries of a physical or material thing or place, be it the region, the state, the city, the town, or the individual. If we are really referring to the end of local boundaries, what is there left to study? Comparative sociology would not exist if the global were really considered to be the new “primary unit of analysis.” The global has to be rooted in local points, even if they are disparate and geographically disconnected.

There is a word for this concept of expressing global trends within local boundaries – glocalization. As explained by Roland Robertson, who coined the term in English academic language (he originally translated it from Japanese), glocalization is not a contrasting term to macro-level globalization, but rather a concept that “has involved the simultaneity and the interpenetration of what are conventionally called the global and the local, or – in more abstract vein – the universal and the particular” (Robertson, 1995: 30). Globalization is itself a process of localizing the global – a local that is itself produced in global terms (Robertson, 1995: 31). This does not mean a homogenization of the local; in fact, Robertson himself largely downplays this conclusion, saying that, “we should be careful *not to equate the communicative and interactional connecting of such [local] cultures...with the notion of homogenization of all cultures* (Robertson, 1995: 31). Although we may be seeing cultural interactions between the universal (the global) and the particular (the local), this does not mean

that the universal is itself homogenous, nor that the local is indeed heterogeneous. Globalization is not a universalizing force intent on the increasing homogenization of all locales because the universal (read: global) is itself not homogenous. It is in this interplay between the global and the local that the glocal emerges. As stated by Robertson (1995), "...we should consider the local as a 'micro' manifestation of the global – in opposition, *inter alia*, to the implication that the local indicates enclaves of cultural, ethnic, or racial homogeneity" (p. 39).

In his claims regarding glocalization, Ritzer describes the global spread of capitalism as bringing with it increased homogenization – fuelled largely by the processes of McDonaldization. Due to economies of scale and ease of production, it is far more efficient and cost-effective to produce thousands of the same thing and ship them worldwide to glocal markets than it is to produce custom and unique items for one specific local market. A standard template is created that is distributed across the globe and that is (if chosen) adapted, albeit slightly, to glocal circumstances (Ritzer, 2007). Capitalism (and capitalists looking to make the most profit from the least amount of input and time) pushes increased homogeneity of product demand – as well as products supplied – around the world.

McDonaldization – Globalization of Uniformity

Ritzer's thoughts on glocalization fall in line with his theories on the globalization of rationalization that it is leading to increased homogeneity and cultural uniformity. McDonaldization, as Ritzer (1993) calls it, is "the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as of the rest of the world" (p. 1).⁴ McDonaldization is characterized by four main components:

1. Efficiency, or "the search for maximum efficiency in increasingly numerous and diverse social settings" (p. 35);
2. Calculability, or "an emphasis on things that can be calculated, counted, quantified. It means a tendency to use quantity as a measure of quality" (p. 62);
3. Predictability, or "the increasing effort to ensure predictability from one time or place to another. In a rational society people prefer to know what to expect in *all* setting and at *all* times" (*italics added*) (p. 83); and lastly,

⁴ Ritzer's McDonaldization thesis has spawned a number of "copycat" theories, the most closely related being "disneyization", as developed by Alan Bryman. His theory, based on the processes and physical environment of the Disneyland theme park, is that "the processes by which the principles of the Disney theme parks are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world" (Bryman, 1999).

4. Control, or “the search for the means to exert increasing control over both employees and customers” (p. 100), often through the use of what Appadurai calls “mechanical and informational” technologies (Appadurai, 1996: 34). Ritzer would put this down to “not only machines and tools, but also materials, skills, knowledge, rules, regulations, and techniques” (Ritzer, 1993: 100).

Essentially, society is adopting, on a global scale, both the formal and the substantive rationalities associated with McDonald’s restaurant chain outlets. Because McDonald’s restaurants are highly formally rationalized, this view of globalization sees all aspects of society as being organized along formally rational lines – both in terms of formal rationality itself, and in the substantive rationality associated with formal rationality. Highly contested and equally controversial, Ritzer’s McDonaldization thesis is the first established attempt at defining rationalization as a process connected to globalization. It is the quintessential concept for those in globalization research who see the world as becoming the same everywhere. Although he is often criticized for over-simplifying his concept and for creating entertainment rather than sociology, he is an important player nonetheless in the globalization debate. His McDonaldization theory is a key working concept for discussions on universalization, westernization, Americanization, and global uniformity.

Global M lange – Globalization as Hybridization

Pieterse’s hybridization theory is a counter-balance to Ritzer’s McDonaldization theory. As stated by Pieterse (2009),

At a general level, hybridity concerns the mixture of phenomena that are held to be different, separate; hybridization then refers to a *cross-category* process... Hybridity functions, next, as part of a power relationship between center and margin, hegemony and minority, and indicates a blurring, destabilization or subversion of that hierarchical relationship (p. 72).

Hybridization theory – or global m lange, as Pieterse also calls it – is the other end of the spectrum of rationalization in globalization theories. Following Durkheim’s idea of increased individuality through the division of labor, Pieterse’s hybridization-through-globalization reinvigorates this concept. Not only has globalization allowed us to *all* become individuals, it has morphed us *all* into our own unique hybrid of ethnic backgrounds and cultures – our very selves are the epitome of the global.

Defining hybridity is a challenging test and it should be noted how Pieterse skirts around the issue of defining his argument. In his attempts to escape defining hybridity, Pieterse claims that because hybridi-

zation is such a “messy” reality, demarcating boundaries would debunk the whole purpose of theorizing hybridization. As he writes,

A theory of hybridity would be attractive. We are so used to theories that are concerned with establishing boundaries and demarcations among phenomena – units or processes that are as neatly as possible set apart from other units or processes – that a theory that instead would focus on fuzziness and *mélange*, cut’n’mix, crisscross and crossover, might well be a relief in itself. Yet, ironically, of course, it would have to prove itself by giving as neat as possible a version of messiness, or an unhybrid categorization of hybridities (Pieterse, 2009: 72).

Although I agree with Pieterse when he suggests that boundaries and demarcations today cannot be so easily established and that we may indeed be becoming a global *mélange* or hybrid world, to not provide any defining boundaries for this idea does not allow for personal identification as being hybrid. If we have no frame of reference to describe what being hybrid means, how can we claim to be hybrid at all?

But that is beside the point. If we are to agree that the world is defined by hybridity, *mélange*, or *mestizaje* (Pieterse, 2009: 55), then hybridization itself becomes the standard: to be hybrid is to be the same as everyone else. If we are all hybrid, we are all Western, Eastern, North, and South. Hybrid becomes the universal norm. Westernization/Americanization and orientalizing/easternization become meaningless constructs and hybridization itself becomes universalization. To claim that we are all one hybrid does not refute universalization (as Pieterse attempts to do in his critique of McDonaldization); rather, it is the process of universalization that spreads Pieterse’s hybrid.

The one problem with Pieterse’s hybridization thesis, though, is that it fails to take into account what Arjun Appadurai describes as “global flows” (Appadurai, 1996). That is, Pieterse recognizes the hybridity of the local, but he does not go into detail as to how this local became hybridized. He does not describe how the global has helped to shape and form the hybrid local. According to Arjun Appadurai, global culture cannot be seen as a homogenous entity, nor one that is predominantly Western – specifically, American – in scope. “The new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models... Nor is it susceptible to simple models of push and pull (in terms of migration theory), or of consumers and producers (as in most neo-Marxist theories of development [this would include McDonaldization])” (Appadurai, 1996: 32).⁵

⁵ Continuing, Appadurai writes that “Even the most complex and flexible theories of global development that have come out of the Marxist tradition are inadequately quirky...” (p. 32-33).

To account for the lack of interdisciplinary theoretical frameworks on the subject of globalization and globality, Appadurai proposes his (now famous) theory of scapes, of which there are five: (1) Ethnoscapes, (2) Mediascapes, (3) Technoscapes, (4) Financescapes, and (5) Ideoscapes (Appadurai, 1996: 33-36).⁶ These five scapes operate within the context of today's global flows, which "occur in and through the growing disjunctures among ethnoscapes, technoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes" (Appadurai, 1996: 37). When these global flows manifest in physical space, they have been altered, manipulated, restructured and reformulated so strongly from their interaction with these scapes that what originates in one location may have only some, if any, resemblance to its own future manifestations elsewhere. Thus we see examples like Filipinos singing American folk music, with "Philippine renditions of American popular songs... both more widespread in the Philippines, and more disturbingly faithful to their originals, than they are in the United States today" (Appadurai, 1996: 29), and also young adults from Germany having a better understanding of American disco music than their U.S. peers.⁷

In the end, if it is the case that globalization is causing one substantive rationality to dominate over all others and if this substantive rationality celebrates difference and the acceptance of others, espouses tolerance and cultural awareness, and promotes acceptance – if it is the global citizen, the cosmopolitan, who thinks outside of him/herself and his/her local situation and onto the greater project of humankind – then is this really so bad? Can we not instead appreciate the spread of a global mindset? Although this discussion is based in the realm of theory, a burgeoning literature on the importance of the "global mindset" suggests that this is being applied in practice. The literature shows that not only does the adoption of this mindset of *mélange* have positive effects on cultural awareness and mutual understanding but is actually a profitable endeavor for companies to promote among employees. As stated by Levy, et. al. (2007), "As global competition continues to intensify, global mindset has emerged as a key source of long-term competitive advantage in the global marketplace" requiring "a shift in focus from structural and administrative mechanisms to mindset-based capabilities" (231). Multinational corporations – the largest bureaucracies in existence, operating on a global scale – are advancing the adoption of a global mindset by their

⁶ To Appadurai, "the critical point is that the global relationship among ethnoscapes, technoscapes, and financescapes is deeply disjunctive and profoundly unpredictable because each of these landscapes is subject to its own constraints and incentives...at the same time as each acts as a constraint and a parameter for movements in the others." (p. 35) Thus, we see that these three scapes – ethno, techno, and finance – as with media and ideoscapes share a common relationship; theirs, however, is more of contention than cooptation.

⁷ This was a personal experience of mine with a former roommate in Germany.

employees because of its proven record of increasing profits. The substantive rationality (and the related value constellation and way of life) coterminous with formally rationalized systems is changing – the mindset of formal rationalization is being transformed into one that is focused on cognitive global awareness, which requires not only changes in the value constellation of formally rationalized systems, but also demands increased individual comprehension and greater awareness of other cultures. Bureaucracy (formal rationalization) is creating unique individuals with global consciousness not out of social concern but out of economic interest.

To sum up, the substantive rationality that has come to be associated with formal rationalization is shifting; the mindset of the corporation, as well as the individuals within it, has taken on a less-standardized character, which demands increased individuality and global awareness. Although the existence and proliferation of the structures of bureaucracy have not changed, the associated mindset has; the same organizational system has encouraged new outcomes. This is why today we see the spread of formal rational institutions leading to an increase in heterogeneity and uniqueness; this is why there exists homogenous-heterogeneity in the nodes of globally connected networks – global cities – and a global mindset found in the population residing in, and moving between, these nodes – the global middle class. This entire process has been defined by, and would not have occurred without, globalization.

3. Homogeneous Heterogeneity, Rationalization on a Global Scale

McDonaldization – not Homogenization or Westernization

“Who has not had the uncanny sensation of déjà vu when entering a McDonald’s restaurant in a foreign country? ‘It’s just like home’” (Watson, 1997: 22). If entering a McDonald’s in a foreign country creates this feeling of home for Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Taiwanese, Brazilians, and Germans, as well as U.S. Americans, then to whom does McDonald’s belong? Where is McDonaldization rooted? Who is McDonaldizing whom? The spread of formally rationalized institutions – and with it, the spread of the value constellation of formal rationality – has had the effect of standardizing physical places and structural functions throughout much of the world, creating a standardized daily life for millions of people. This does not mean, though, that minds are as equally standardized. Watson (2004) notes that,

For hundreds of millions of (primarily urban) people the experience of everyday life has become increasingly standardized since the 1960s. Western-style toilets, utilities, and transportation facilities are nearly universal...It would be a mistake, however, to assume that these innovations have an identical, homogenizing effect wherever they appear (p. 166).

In accordance with my beliefs, Watson sees the increased introduction of formally rationalized institutions across the globe as creating structural similarity. He also feels, though, that structural similarity does not equate to uniform social adaptations at the local level, that “The sameness hypothesis is sustainable only if one ignores the internal meanings that people assign to cultural innovations” (Watson, 2004: 167). Sameness exists in structures, but not in minds. Although Western-style objects can be found and formal structures with Western origins are in place in most urban areas of the world, one homogeneous or Western mindset is not dominating the rest. Rather, a global mindset is spreading that adapts to and mutates after contact with local conditions. Since internal meanings are influenced by social effects such as splashback (to be discussed shortly), not to mention global ideo- and mediascapes, what is individually internalized is a local adaptation of global processes, thereby creating the glocal. Thus, we see, in tandem with increasing sameness in place or hardware (the structural aspects of everyday life), hybrid and heterogeneous individual identities being created against the backdrop of the global. Following this logic, “It is difficult to argue... that the globalization of technologies is making the world everywhere the same” (Watson, 2004:

167).⁸ The “global mindset” discussed earlier is not stifled by McDonaldization; rather, it is expanded and reinforced through the spread of McDonaldized processes of formal-rational organization.

The recognition of the rising influence of the new middle classes on the globalization process is having enormous consequences for the way people organize their perceptions of global control. Which is the dominant country to follow? There are no more superpowers. The U.S. is no longer the dominant player in the control and creation of global trends – global political priorities, market movements, fads. These are more frequently coming out of the rising middle- to upper-middle-income countries, most notably India and China. Many products are now first released in “Eastern” markets and are later adapted to U.S. tastes, whereas before it was typically the other way around. A perfect example – and one that hits close to home, so to speak – is that of Levi’s Jeans, which has been coming out with new styles first in Japan and China and then later in the U.S. and Europe. Even though this is an American company, the state of the global economy today commands no allegiances: new goods are first introduced where the purchasing power lies. The middle class has the power to sway global markets in its favor and with countries like India and China both having middle classes the *same size as, if not larger than* that of the United States – perhaps even the United States and Europe combined – their massive demand ensures that they will get what they want (The Economist, 2011).

Although the U.S. might have been the architect behind today’s global system, most of the rest of the world is now involved and strong enough to parlay influence on the global stage. The rationalization process and its McDonaldization retrofitting may have Western origins, but what it entails today is no longer particularly Western. As Watson claims, “In the realm of popular culture, it is no longer possible to distinguish between what is ‘local’ and what is ‘foreign.’ Who is to say that Mickey Mouse is not Japanese, or that Ronald McDonald is not Chinese?” (Watson, 1997: 10). Ironically, foreign businesses that have adopted the formal-rational structures of McDonaldization are succeeding over U.S. businesses not only in their own domesticities, but in the United States as well. It seems that, “by inspiring non-Western companies to ‘go global’, American pop culture and industries (music, fashion, food, film) may be creating the conditions of their own demise” (Watson, 2004: 168). What was Western is now Eastern, what is Eastern is reflecting back on the West, and both are a part of the global whole and articulate equally the rules of the McDonaldization process. While it is true that the world’s

⁸ I am using Ritzer’s (1993) definition of technology here, that is, not only electrical-based technological equipment but also systems of organization, people, and goods management.

spaces and places are becoming increasingly McDonaldized, it is no longer under the specific banner of westernization.

Globalization – not Homogenization or Westernization

In conjunction with McDonaldization, globalization cannot be defined solely by the expansion of western influence. As Pieterse (2009) recognizes, “Cultural experiences, past or present, have not been simply moving in the direction of cultural uniformity and standardization” (p. 69). If anything, globalization is a homogenization of heterogeneity. Just because the world is now looked upon “as a whole, as a single space” (Robertson, 1995: 32) does not mean that it should be defined as a single homogenous entity. Through cosmopolitanism and the continuous availability of contact with new people and ideas via vast ICT networks, there may be a greater “global cultural awareness” coming into existence, perhaps even leading to “global citizens.” Nonetheless, these greater representations of affiliation do not have to be, and indeed are not, predicated on the existence of one distinct, homogenous, universal, single “globe.” Globalization “is not a question of *either* homogenization or heterogenization, but rather of the ways in which both of these two tendencies have become features of life across much of the late-twentieth-century [and now early twenty-first-century] world” (Robertson, 1995: 27).

The purported homogenization of the world through the process of globalization is based on the premise that this homogenizing force is rooted in the West – specifically in the United States – a popularized notion in academia and popular media that has come to be a caveat for the expression of localized anger and oppression due to the relative economic and political strength of western countries. While it is true that the West – and, in particular, the United States – does have a greater propensity for social and cultural influence due to its pan-global political, military, and economic reach, to say that all cultures become “westernized” is to ignore the realities of local interpretation, absorption, and co-optation that occur on the ground (Robertson, 1995: 39). This also casts the entirety of Western culture in a negative light, forgetting that many people around the world openly welcome and are desirous of Western goods and services. Finally, to say that globalization is defined by the expansion of Western/American ideals, culture, and lifestyle only and thereby is creating a homogeneous culture around the world through this single lens is to seriously render every other definable socio-cultural group influentially impotent. As affirmed by Robertson (1995), “clearly many have seriously underestimated the flow of ideas and practices from the so-called Third World to the seemingly dominant societies and regions of the world” (pp. 39-40).

There is also a degree of historical amnesia to this claim. To quote Pieterse (2009), this mode of thinking,

...overlooks the countercurrents—the impact nonwestern cultures have been making on the West. It downplays the ambivalence of the globalizing momentum and ignores the role of local reception of western culture—for example, the indigenization of western elements. It fails to see the influence nonwestern cultures have been exercising on one another. It has no room for crossover culture, as in the development of “third cultures” such as world music. It overrates the homogeneity of western culture and overlooks the fact that many of the standards exported by the West and its cultural industries themselves turn out to be of culturally mixed character if we examine their cultural lineages. Centuries of South-North cultural osmosis have resulted in intercontinental crossover culture. European and western culture are *part* of this global mélange. This is an obvious case if we reckon that Europe until the fourteenth century was invariably the recipient of cultural influences from the ‘Orient.’ The hegemony of the West dates only from very recent time, from 1800 and, arguably, from industrialization (p. 75-76).

The best way to describe these currents and counter-currents of influence in our globalized world is with the idea of the “splashback effect”, “a key feature of contemporary globalization.” As J.L. Watson (2004) states, the splashback effect involves “cultural forms that were exported to other societies, transformed beyond recognition, and then reintroduced into the society of origin” (p. 167). Thus, we see examples like those in the quote above – not to mention other major fads such as Pokémon and the *Mighty Morphin’ Power Rangers* – as global reinterpretations of once culturally specific ideas, items, and actions. Pokémon and Power Rangers, for example, were major fads in the United States, yet both are Japanese manifestations of early twentieth century American cartoons, adapted to the Japanese market and then reintroduced into the United States during the 1990s. The loop, it seems, came full circle.

If we allow the global to be characterized by the solitary force of westernization or Americanization, how would we end up with a hybridized local? The “glocal” would be only a breed of two, the west and the locale in question, their offspring being of a dual nature, not a kaleidoscope of culture as hybridization implies. It would be something like a Western-local (perhaps westal, or locest?), not the hybrid glocal. In fact, most often those who attempt to defend local cultures are simply afraid of being subsumed by a larger, influential neighboring culture, not an abstract Western one. External influence from an outside force is considered ipso facto to be Western, but in reality there are a multitude of forces acting with and against one another. Described by Arjun Appadurai (1996),

The central problem of today’s global interactions is the tensions between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization... Most often, the homogenization argument subspecies into either an argument about Americanization or an argument about commoditiza-

tion, and very often the two arguments are closely linked. What these arguments fail to consider is that at least as rapidly as forces from various metropolises are brought into new societies they tend to become indigenized in one or another way: this is true of music and housing styles as much as it is true of science and terrorism, spectacles and constitutions...But it is worth noting that for the people of Irian Jaya, Indonesianization may be more worrisome than Americanization, as Japanization may be for Koreans, Indianization for Sri Lankans, Vietnamization for the Cambodians, and Russianization for the people of Soviet Armenia and the Baltic republics...for polities of smaller scale, there is always a fear of cultural absorption by polities of larger scale, especially those that are nearby (p. 32).

One cannot assume, therefore, that globalization is itself westernization. While it is true that “certain institutional features and cultural traits that originated in the west were put in place in many other geographical regions lock stock and barrel under the framework of global interconnectedness and diffusion or forced implantation under [the] colonial age,” “over time these institutions and practices mutated and assumed new meanings” (Khondker, 2004: 6) The social, political, and economic constructs found around the world today may have Western roots, but they have been reinterpreted, reconstituted, and sent back out onto the global stage, intermingling with the West, East, and everything in between to create a new hybrid form of globalization. Thus, while westernization may, “be seen as the beginning of the process” of globalization (Khondker, 2004: 6), what globalization is “filled” with today is of a hybrid nature.

With the rise of the East Asian Tigers and China, the spread of Eastern tastes, styles and cultural attitudes across the globe is becoming ever more common. It seems, though, that what is coming out of the east is an easternized version of a process that what was once specifically considered Western. We see, for example, situations where Japanese little-leaguers coming to California and, seeing McDonald’s, are amazed that Americans have “Japanese” food (Watson, 2000: 131). Westernization is becoming easternized, and easternization has roots in the process of westernization. As discussed by Pieterse (2009), there are no longer any clear-cut boundaries.

Further, to say that globalization is westernization/Americanization is to say that “Western” is a static, codified, and bounded culture that is subsuming the rest of the other static, codified, bounded cultures around the globe (this could also mean that what “Western” culture signifies is primarily defined by American culture, which I’m sure many Europeans would have a problem with recognizing). If we agree that this unchanging nature of culture is indeed the case, then there have to be other codified cultures that American culture is in the process of overthrowing - at least one (the “East”, the “Orient”, the “South”) or several others that can be defined separately (i.e., Asian,

North/South American, European, Oceanic). Although not discussing globalization per se, these are the demarcations used by Huntington in his “clash of civilizations” thesis (Huntington, 1993): are we to say that these civilizations represent distinctive cultures that are able to be, have been, and will continue to be, in conflict with – and eventually subsumed by – Western/American culture? Although no one seems to want to be in Huntington’s camp, if we are to discuss this matter in terms of distinct and separate cultures, the relationship to his work has to be recognized.

To say the West is unified is to ignore reality, and to say that it is actively controlling the processes of globalization is to give too much credit to only one influencing historical factor, particularly for a region that is in decline in power and status. It is not plausible to assume that globalization, or McDonaldization for that matter, is able to be defined by the people, customs, and culture of only one single part of the entire world. What is being McDonaldized, globalized, or “glocalized”, is global culture in a hybrid form. Thus, we see examples like “Thai boxing by Moroccan girls in Amsterdam, Asian rap in London, Irish bagels, Chinese tacos, and Mardi Gras Indians in the United States” (Pieterse, 2009: 69). Hybridity, not westernization/Americanization, is the new universal propagated by McDonaldization. Globalization is no longer defined only by the influence of the United States or the West, but is a *mélange* of cultures that has combined to form a hybrid of kaleidoscopic influence. We are witnessing not just universalization, but a universalization of hybridity.

4. Cities, and what Makes them Worldly

Toward the end of the Cold War and through the beginning of the 1990s, with the advent and rapid implementation of ICT networks, there began a debate on whether cities would lose their important role as financial, social, and cultural hubs. It was posited that, because these technologies allow one to work from virtually (and also virtually work) anywhere, business and economic functions would evaporate from cities (Sassen, 1991; 1994). Headquarters and offices could exist anywhere and individual labor could be performed from any location so long as there existed a stable internet connection, thereby making obsolete the role of cities as economic hubs. They would turn into cement wastelands, acting as old museums of an industrial past.

Time has proved, however, that this is most certainly not the case. Cities, now more than ever, are thriving and expanding, integral to the functioning of the global economy as well as to socio-cultural activities, the arts, and tourism. The emerging reality is quite the opposite of predictions: the city has become a center for the agglomeration of multinational corporations and large local businesses looking to expand outward, as well as the “producer services complex” required for the functioning of both (Sassen, 1994: 67). The major change that has taken place is the type of work that is being performed within cities. Industrial manufacturing, factories, and metal works have all been relegated to the periphery – both in terms of national peripheries and peripheral countries – relocated by rising costs and the post-industrial needs of cities. Major cities – especially those of a global character – are now defined by their involvement in the production of tertiary sector goods (technology and information services) (Sassen, 1994: 61).

Large cities also remain important because their population density supports the increased division of labor and specialization of tasks which, as proposed by Durkheim (2000), allows for further individuality and personal uniqueness. “...As society spreads out and becomes denser, it envelops the individual less tightly, and in consequence can restrain less efficiently the diverging tendencies that appear” (p. 57). Durkheim sees the density of the city as allowing for the individual to escape the chokehold of collective consciousness. In small towns, where public opinion more narrowly monitors our activities, we are required to conform to the rules and traditions that govern the collective consciousness of the town’s inhabitants. We must be and act like everyone else; if we do not do so, we are not accepted.

In Durkheim’s view, however, cities allow for the individual to be “much more liberated from the yoke of the collectivity; this is indisputably a fact of experience” (Durkheim, 2000: 57). Cities grant the individual more freedom, and,

...the greater freedom each individual has to follow his own bent, the easier it is for him to escape surveillance...wherever the density of the conurbation is proportionate to its volume, personal ties are few and weak. We lose sight of others more easily....And to the same extent we lose interest in them. Since this mutual indifference has the effect of relaxing the supervision of the collectivity, the range of freedom of individual action is enlarged *de facto*, and gradually this situation of fact becomes one *de jure* (Durkheim, 2000: 57-58).

As population density increases, so too does individuality. Further, denser cities allow for the support of more culturally diverse foods and services through the support of and demands for diversity from the city's population. Economist correspondent Ryan Avent (2011) asks

What is it exactly that dense cities are doing? Consider a simple example. Suppose that within a population one person in 100 develops a taste for Vietnamese cuisine, and suppose that a Vietnamese restaurant needs a customer base of 1,000 people to operate profitably. In a city of 10,000 residents, there aren't enough people to support a Vietnamese restaurant. A city of one million, by contrast, can support multiple Vietnamese restaurants. Not only will this larger city enjoy a specialty cuisine unavailable in less populous places, but its ability to support multiple producers of this cuisine allows for competition...Because there may be multiple Vietnamese restaurants competing for patrons, mastery of that specific style is necessary to maintain an edge against the competition. Hence, the larger marketplace pushes for, rather than against, specialization (p. 6).

So we see that large cities support not only increased individuality but also increased cultural diversity. More people from different places can establish themselves in cities around the world because the social and cultural wealth of the city allows for them to be accepted without resistance, instead of being forced into a stereotyped role by the collective consciousness (which is more likely to occur in small towns). Moreover, as the demand in the number of diverse foods and services increases due to the city's multicultural populace of unique individuals, specialization in heterogeneous niche markets occurs. Such factors give the city a more global or worldly character, so these cities can be referred to as global or world cities.⁹

World Cities

Pioneered by Peter Taylor, the concept of the world city was created as a way to compare the vast number of cities in the world and to determine

⁹ To take the definition of global cities from one of the founders of the field of study, Saskia Sassen, they are "(1) command points in the organization of the world economy; (2) key locations and marketplaces for organization of the world economy; [and] (3) major sites of production for these industries, including the production of new innovations" (Sassen, 1994: 4).

which were the most influential. Along with Jon Beaverstock and Richard G. Smith, Taylor established the Globalization and World Cities Research Network (GaWC), a think-tank located at Loughborough University.¹⁰ The GaWC uses a wide range of indicators to rank cities in a world cities hierarchy, from Alpha ++ (London and New York) to Gamma – (Detroit, Manchester, St. Petersburg, Tallinn, San Diego, Islamabad).¹¹

As ICT networks advance and money, goods, people, and ideas travel faster and more frequently between the world's cities, these urban areas start to become deterritorialized places that share common social, cultural, and economic ties with one another, divorced from the states in which they reside. As stated by Sassen (1991), "...cities that are strategic sites in the global economy tend, in part, to disconnect from their region", their "economic fortunes...increasingly disconnected from their broader hinterlands or even their national economies" (p. xxi). Major cities become connected through a "strengthening of cross-border city-to-city transactions and networks" (p. xxi), thereby creating a "transnational urban system" (p. 52) of cities separate from the countries in which they reside (Hamnett, 1994: 402). It is these interconnected urban "islands", or – as will be extrapolated in the following discussion – global economic, social, and cultural "nodes" of the "network society", that are the focal points of culturally hybrid global flows.

During the 1990s, Manuel Castells developed many groundbreaking ideas for interpreting the current state of our world. One of the most well-known topics of his work is the transformation of connectedness from an idea based on the "space of places" to the "space of flows", whereby networks "constitute the new social morphology of our societies" (Castells, 2000a: 500). "A network", he writes,

...is a set of interconnected nodes...What a node is, concretely speaking, depends on the kind of concrete networks of which we speak. They are stock exchange markets, and their ancillary advanced service centers, in the network of global financial flows...They are cocoa fields and poppy fields, clandestine laboratories, secret landing strips, and money-laundering financial institutions in the network of drug traffic that penetrates economies, societies, and states throughout the world. They are television systems, entertainment studios, computer graphics milieux, news teams, and mobile devices generating, transmitting, and receiving signals in the global network of the new media at the roots of cultural expression and public opinion in the Information Age (Castells, 2000a: 501).

¹⁰Manuel Castells and Saskia Sassen, two prominent and founding scholars of the global city debate, are honorary founders of the GaWC.

¹¹ For an entire list of world cities as designated by the GaWC, please see appendix. Or, go to this link: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/world2008t.html>

They are the mobile middle class professionals, students, and travelers around the globe; the agglomeration of service-based economic activities in urban areas; the city government ministers and “sister-cities” programs; and the homogeneous-hybridity that characterizes globalization today and defines the “concrete” network of major cities. In the words of Castells (2000a), “...the global city phenomenon cannot be reduced to a few urban cores at the top of the hierarchy. It is a process that connects advanced services, producer centers, and markets in a global network...” (p. 411).

To be connected in a global network means that one may share more in common and have more frequent contact with someone hundreds of miles away than with the person living next door. As again described by Castells (2000a), “the distance (or intensity and frequency of interaction) between two points (or social positions) is shorter (or more frequent, or more intense) if both points are nodes in a network than if they do not belong to the same network” (p. 501). Therefore, because cities are so closely connected in the same network (fuelled largely by their interconnectedness within the information economy), their “distance” – spatially, as well as culturally, economically, socially, and politically – is next to nothing. This has immense consequences for the physical “place” of the city. Because they are so tightly connected, similar goods, services, and ideas move between and are prevalent within them. However, because they are the pinnacle representations of the “space of flows”, cities are not definable in terms of one group, culture, or society. Cities are becoming uniformly hybrid nodes – they are structurally similar places able to meet the demands of people, information, and goods traveling between them. At the same time, they are influenced by continuous, unstoppable, de-territorialized global flows that reflect back on the people, information, and goods that exist within them. “The global city is not a place, but a process” (Castells, 2000a: 417).¹²

The “Hardware” and “Software” of the City – The Push for Global Standards

The concept of the “hardware” and “software” of a city, introduced by Zhongxin Sun, is a useful way of framing the elements of a city that can be globalized and localized. Hardware refers to infrastructure, buildings, bridges, public transportation systems; in short, everything that makes the

¹² Continuing, “A process by which centers of production and consumption of advanced services, and their ancillary local societies, are connected in a global network, while simultaneously downplaying the linkages with their hinterlands, on the basis of information flows” (p. 417). Cities connected within a network of global cities will have more in common with each other than with the countries in which they physically reside.

city run (Sun, 2007: 307).¹³ Software, on the other hand, “is all the human factors” involved in the maintenance of the hospitability of the city, “including the legal systems, management and service levels, and people’s quality of life...” (Sun, 2007: 307). These both lead to the creation of universal and homogenous hardware and software structures in cities around the world.

As an example, Sun discusses Shanghai – in its efforts to become a global city, it is attempting to alter its hardware and software to be in accordance with “international rules and practices” so that it will “fit the standards of [a] global city” (p. 307). Thus, we see in Shanghai the construction of the Grand Theatre, the Oriental Pearl TV Tower, an expanded and improved metro and railway system, and the Pudong business area alongside attempts to improve the city’s spirit. Questions like, “What do you feel about the city when you are pushed in and out when taking the metro in Shanghai? What do you feel about the city when you hear loud noises in a concert? What impression will you have of Shanghai if a man or woman spits while riding his or her bicycle past you on the street?” (Sun, 2007: 308) are being used as benchmarks to transform Shanghai so that it meets the standards of global city social software.

The updating and improvement of cities to fit “global standards” is causing the homogenization of both the “hardware” and “software”, or functional structure and socio-cultural environment, of cities around the world. What the required standards are for the “hardware” and the “software”, though, are completely different. Whereas hardware is expected to be homogeneously uniform, software is expected to be homogeneously heterogeneous. The hardware sets the stage, so to speak, for the software - or human factors – to create an environment for the positive manifestation of global flows. A well-established, globally uniform hardware allows for the flourishing of the “elements of a city’s spirit” (Sun, 2007: 308), or the hybrid global to take root.

The standards that cities must meet if they are to be considered more global or worldly have become formalized through city-ranking indexes. These indexes compare how high or advanced a city’s “hardware” and “software” are in relation to other cities. Granted that terms like “high” or “advanced” are rather obscure and can mean many things, there is always a base-city used as a control against which other cities are ranked as being either higher or lower in comparison. City-ranking systems serve to establish international standards of structural uniformity and socio-cultural heterogeneity wherein people, money, goods, and in-

¹³ Regarding hardware, it is not as if cities did not have roads and infrastructure or buildings and bridges beforehand. What occurs is a change in this hardware (remodeling of buildings, widening of roads and development of more highways, improvements in safety standards) to meet the global standards of style and quality. It is not the installation of a whole new operating system, but rather an upgrade.

formation are able to move fast and efficiently between cities without any major snafus.

Mercer's "Quality of Living Worldwide City Rankings" is a perfect example of one such city-ranking index. It is global in scope, internationally recognized and accepted by most city governments and businesses (at least those cities who are ranked high on the list), and the data compiled for its reports is also used by other research groups in their city-ranking indices (most notably *The Economist*). It ranks cities around the world – its most recent surveys in 2010 and 2011 ranked a total of 221 cities – with New York City as its basis of comparison. Using "39 factors, grouped in 10 categories" (Mercer, 2010), cities are judged as having a quality of life greater than, equal to, or less than that of New York's.¹⁴¹⁵

Although it is interesting to look at for its own sake ("where is my city on the list?"), it is important to discuss why this survey of cities was created in the first place. It was conceived in order "...to help governments and multi-national companies compensate employees fairly when placing them on international assignments" (Mercer, 2010). It was created to suit the realities of our time, meaning the recompense of highly mobile (middle to upper class) professionals who might be moving to a city that does not meet supposed international standards of city life.¹⁶ City governments use this ranking (along with those from *The Economist*, *Monocle*, and others) to plan policy and growth strategies so as to gain a higher ranking on this list in the next survey; that is, to become more like (or even better than) the world's standard city, New York.¹⁷

What this creates is a standardization of the "hardware" of the city – transportation, urban structures, green spaces, segregated residential, business, and market/shopping districts, the touristification of major buildings, monuments, and cultural artifacts – so that cities will get higher rankings on the next survey and will then be recognized as a city capable of meeting the demands of today's business, population, and cultural movements. What we are witnessing because of these rankings systems is a worldwide uniformity in the design and functioning of cities. The

¹⁴ The 10 categories are as follows: political and social environment, economic environment, socio-cultural environment, health and sanitation, schools and education, public services and transportation, recreation, consumer goods, housing, and natural environment.

¹⁵ For example, New York's score equals to 100. Vienna, the highest-ranked city in the 2010 survey, stood at 108.6; Baghdad, the lowest-ranked, was at 14.7.

¹⁶ I do wonder, though, if employees are sent to a city that has a quality of life ranking *higher* than the city from which they came, are they given no compensation or perhaps even *less* pay than they would have received in the home city?

¹⁷ I suppose using New York makes sense as the base city, seeing as it is one of the original global cities and one of the only two alpha ++ cities in the world (the other being London, see list in Appendix).

“software” of the city is also becoming homogenized through these standards, but this homogenization entails increasing heterogenization and hybridity within the city’s socio-cultural space. We can see this in those indicators used to define the more “human” side of international quality of life standards in cities – for example, the level of diversity, tolerance, openness, acceptance, and the number of foreigners residing in the city and where they’re from; the level of arts and alternative music, culture, and lifestyle choices; and the acceptance of different foods and lifestyles. These “software” standardization requirements represent the demand for a globally-minded urban population and a socio-cultural environment in cities that is diverse enough for people from a variety of different social, cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, etc., walks of life to feel comfortable and thereby want to reside long-term.

Interestingly, we see that these indices do *not* compare the livability, or the quality of life, of the countries surrounding these cities. Multinational corporations and their mobile employees are not concerned with the overall livability of the country in which a city resides, only with the city itself. They will likely have little to no contact with life as it exists outside the boundaries of the city to which they move, and so have no need for further information on livability besides that for the city. These indexes only further show that cities are becoming (some already being) detached from their countries and tied into an interconnected network of urban places, acting as global nodes between which people, goods, money, and information constantly flow.

The McDonaldization of Cities – Cities as McDonaldized “Islands”

This uniformity of architecture, social life, work life, and shopping choices within cities today is best characterized by a reinterpretation of Ritzer’s (2003) “islands of the living dead” concept, whereby McDonaldized “islands” of culturally “dead” space are inhabited by the “living.” “Although they are vibrant and full of life, these McDonaldized islands are simultaneously ‘dead’ in many senses of the term” (p. 124). By dead, Ritzer here is referring to an artificial reality that is created within the McDonaldized island, which lacks any semblance of cultural uniqueness and removes the potential risks involved in living. This artificial reality created within these islands, he believes, leads to a “dull, boring, routine form of existence”, which turns those who live within these islands into more or less the walking dead – culturally indistinct, socially similar zombies.

However pessimistic he may be, he does admit that these “islands” – and the process of McDonaldization in general – are considered by many to be positive, even desirable. In the case of the islands, one example is the elimination of risk, and therefore the threat of bodily harm, from life. In addition, these islands, due to their being highly

McDonaldized places, are defined by the same processes of predictability, calculability, efficiency, and being quantifiable (Ritzer, 1993). Although they may, in Ritzer's regard, be "dead" spaces, they are spaces with which one can easily become familiar. Additionally, because of their uniformity, people are able to easily and comfortably move between them. Due to their highly-rationalized, sans-unique nature, people do not feel lost or confused when entering a new "island", as it is just like – or, at least, incredibly similar to – the island from which they just left (Ritzer, 2003: 130).

Ritzer (2003) also points out that people residing within these islands "create life" within them. "Although the islands are constraining – even deadening – in the end they can, at least potentially, become whatever people make of them" (p. 131). Thus, McDonaldized islands are not actually dead (if they ever were, it was in their stage of implantation), but are transformed by those living within them into areas full of life. In conjunction with the previously discussed universalization of the hybrid, if we are to say that these islands are becoming a global phenomenon, then what "fills" these islands of hyperrationality is the global; that is, a universal culture based on hybridity. To reiterate Watson (2004), although the daily lives and living spaces of people are becoming standardized throughout the world, "It would be a mistake...to assume that these innovations have an identical, homogenizing effect wherever they appear (p.166).

We are seeing an increase in the uniformity of structures in cities, but what the rationalization process is imposing culturally is not of a uniformly Western/American nature, but rather that of the global hybrid. When we move from one city to another, we move between McDonaldized "islands" and feel familiar and comfortable in the new place – perhaps not exactly as we did on our "home island", but the organizational and cultural structures are almost the same, modified slightly for this "island's" circumstances due to the efforts of those living within it to make it their own. While Ritzer and I agree in that we feel comfortable in our move because of the comparative homogeneity between islands, where we differ is in the fact that, while he sees this as making them "dead", I see this as showing that they are very much alive.

To put this rationalization of cities debate into the context of glocalization, the uniformity and homogeneity brought on by the globalization process *is* the manifestation of the global at the local level – the glocal. Since the global is defined by heterogeneity and diversity, when the local stops being just the local and becomes the glocal, it means that the local has become more heterogeneous. Because this is happening similarly at all impacted locals around the world, the glocals that result are homogeneously heterogeneous. They are all similarly defined by their relationship to the global. With regard to Ritzer's "islands", then, we see this glocalization occurring, at least for those "islands" most-connected to the

global, i.e. major cities. The cities most influenced by the global are the most island-like of the world, connected in a global network outside of the confines of the state. These cities are becoming increasingly homogeneous and uniform structurally, but at the same time are filled with unprecedented heterogeneity.

A personal example would be my move from San Francisco to Vienna. It has brought about little noticeable change in my lifestyle. Although I have had to adapt to some local differences, on the whole I have to say that nothing much has changed. There was no “culture shock.” The rationalized “island” of Vienna is much like that of San Francisco: similar organizational structure, tourist spots, parks, business districts, global chain stores and restaurants. The culture is also very much the same: I can go to bikram yoga; tae kwon do or karate classes; watch independent Iranian, Chinese, and European films at the local cinemas; go to a club and listen to pop and rap music; eat cheeseburgers at a barbecue; drink wines and sodas produced and distributed around the world; and so on. If none of these things sounds particularly San Franciscan, that is the point: I feel comfortable here because it is as uniformly hybrid as where I came from. I moved from one “island” (San Francisco) to another (Vienna), both of which are connected to the global as homogeneously heterogeneous globals.

Cities and the Middle Classes

In terms of the profession and wage level of the population of cities, the standard argument is that what is occurring is a polarization of work. There are increased positions in the upper wage level, increased positions at lower wage levels (which are increasing in quantity more rapidly than upper wage jobs), and a “squeeze” or shrinking of positions available to middle wage laborers. The reason for this is relegated to the new makeup of the global economy, whereby the financial and technological service sector has come to replace the industrial and manufacturing industries in major cities. Because the service sector does not require so many “middle” jobs, these tertiary services have created an increased demand of both high and low wage work, “directly through the organization of work and occupational structure of major growth sectors and...indirectly through the jobs needed to service the new-high-income workers... as well as the needs of the expanded low-wage work force” (Sassen, 1991: 13). Because the tertiarization of the economy does not allow for the creation of middle wage jobs, the replacement of the industry that harbored said jobs – manufacturing and heavy industry (Hamnett, 1994: 404) – with financial and technological services has caused the “egg” (Marcuse, 1989: 699) shape of the aggregate income of urban populations (small number of high, large number of middle, and medium-sized number of

low wage jobs) to change into the shape of an hourglass (Marcuse, 1989: 699).

While this may have been the case when the transition from the industrial to the information economy was underway within major Western cities, this no longer holds true today. As with the foundation of the industrial economy, when wealth was unequally split between the capitalist and the worker, or those who owned the means of production and those who did not – in effect, between high and low income workers – there did not exist a very large middle class (save the remnants of the petty bourgeoisie). As the industrial economy took hold in Western countries, however, there came into existence an incredibly large middle class, which itself was created from the very same mode of production that had initially hampered its creation. We have witnessed this same process occur over the past 30 years with the implementation and eventual takeover of the information economy.

From the mid-1990s to today, there has been a dramatic increase in middle wage labor supported by the information economy's modes of production. The major difference we see today is that while previously, the middle classes within the Western world formed around geographically stable industrial production sites, the middle class formed by the informational economy is global in scope, due to the fact that its defining mode of production is not territorially-bounded. The dominant modes of production today are transferable via cable and satellite rather than by train or ship, and do not require major building and development (sunk-en) costs for their establishment as did factories in the industrial age. Because of the information economy – connected via ICTs – we are witnessing in our time the rise of the *global* middle class. Just as the “golden age” (Marglin & Schor, 1992) of the Western world saw the creation of its middle classes as a result of the dominant mode of production at that time, industrial manufacturing, so too is the global middle class today formed by the dominant mode of production of our time – information and technology services. What we are witnessing is the beginning of a golden age for the entire world.

Economic power is moving away from the most advanced countries to those of middle income status with their now large and ever increasing middle classes. What will follow is a shift of influence from a strictly Western concept of middle class to a middle class on a *global* scale. This will have, and already has had, important ramifications for cities. While much research in the 1990s describes the role of transnational elites, the transnational capitalist class, and/or the upper middle classes in cities and their ability to arrange the city “to cater to their life styles and occupational necessities” (Boschken, 2003; Chimni, 2004: 4; Friedmann & Wolff, 1982: 322), this subject has now been broadened to include the great number of increasingly mobile, newly middle class people that already live in, or are moving to, cities. The city is now being adapted and

arranged to meet their needs. Because of their massive aggregate demands on the city, this will create more connected and similar “islands”, as more people will need to move between cities faster and more efficiently, requiring cities to be more predictably maneuverable than ever before. As this middle class is increasingly mobile and its members come from different and diverse local backgrounds, the demands placed on cities’ “software” will lead to increased diversification and hybridization.

5. The Global Middle Class

Through many discussions with colleagues as to the nature of the global middle class, I was met with a great deal of skepticism as to its existence. Perhaps it is because old frames of knowledge have not been redefined to meet current realities or because this global middle class has not, as of yet, come into a unified consciousness of class membership. But the reality is that yes, at least economically, there exists a global middle class (O'Neil, 2008). The argument now is not whether or not it exists, but its actual size. Because there is no consensus on the boundaries of the middle class (Das, 2009: 89), the numbers vary widely from 7.6% of the world population (roughly 532 million people) to around 37.14% (or 2.6 billion people) (Das, 2009: 90-91).

Most methods of measuring the global middle class first assess the “local” middle class; that is, the size and density of middle classes within regional or, more traditionally, state boundaries. These bounding-methods come mainly in two forms: economic and socio-cultural. First, those methods pertaining to economic aspects (income, spending, and saving) will be discussed, broken into those with relative and absolute approaches. Next, those methods that measure socio-cultural membership in the middle class (class association, education, social ties) will be described.

The most basic relative method of measuring global middle class membership is income level – how much is my or my combined family income in relation to the global average? In this description, if we use the widely regarded 75% - 125% income interval (Thurow, 1987; Birdsall, Graham, & Pettinato, 2000), then one is a part of the global middle class if his annual income in 2009 fell between \$6,549.15 and \$10,915.25 (GWI – Gross World Income – per capita in current US\$ was \$8,732.2 in 2009) (World Bank, 2011)¹⁸. Another, more realistic, relative method is to determine which proportion of the population falls between the top 20 percent and the bottom 20 percent of the total population in their home country in terms of income level. In this way, the middle class is defined as those “between the 20th and 80th percentile of the consumption distribution” (Kharas & Geertz, 2010: 3) within a country.¹⁹

As discussed by Jennifer Wheary (2009/10) in her article “The Global Middle Class is Here: Now What?”, the defining feature she uses for global middle class membership is that it is a group of people “having an option to spend money and time on something other than survival”

¹⁸ This is an absolute approach using a relative concept; typically one looks at the country level or below when using the 75%-125% interval in determining middle class so as to relativize it for use in comparison, for example, of one country against another.

¹⁹ Another range, used by Andrés Solimano, says that those who fall within the income deciles of 3 and 9 correspond to the broad middle class, with deciles 3-6 being the lower middle and deciles 7-9 being the upper middle (Solimano, 2009).

(p. 2). In reference to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, once the basics are covered (food, shelter, and clothing) and there is enough time and money left for other activities` "from trivial diversions to new purchases, from business ventures to political engagement" (Wheary, 2009/10: 2), then one is regarded as middle class.²⁰ "The result is a ripple effect that is felt around the world" (Wheary, 2009/10: 2).²¹

Along a similar vein is the argument that those people who are able to divide their income into somewhat equal thirds – one-third for living, one-third for social activities and "luxuries" (goods beyond necessities), and one-third for saving – are those who should be included in the global middle class. Using this method, "a global category of middle class can be defined as households with an income level between that of an average Brazilian household and that from Italy" (Milanovic & Yitzhaki, 2002). This technique is useful because it allows the global middle class to be "logically defined on the basis of the living standards in developing economies as well as by taking income levels and identifying them as middle class for a given level of economic development" (Das, 2009: 90). Since middle class income levels vary from country to country, this relative method of calculation allows for local circumstances and definitions of wealth and poverty to be taken into account.

Absolute measurements for the global middle class use a global standard of annual income or a range of daily expenditures as the method of establishing the size and scope of the global, the regional, or the local (state, city, village) middle class. Because the amount that, say, one Dollar or Rupee (or Euro, or Peso, or RMB) can buy varies widely from country to country, these measurements are typically done in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP). A good example is taken from the work of Kharas and Geertz (2010), who define the global middle class as comprising those making between \$10 and \$100 a day in PPP terms. Using this method, Kharas and Geertz have established that 1.8 billion people (or

²⁰ An interesting survey to test for a relationship between trivial diversions and the middle class would be to see how many people are logged onto the web at a particular time, what the websites are that they are visiting, from where they are logging on, and what the level of the middle class in that country/area is as a proportion of the overall population there. My hypothesis would be that the greater the number of middle class people within a cross-section of logged-on people, the greater the number of people engaging in trivial diversions (facebook, gchat, myspace, twitter, pornography, online games). More middle class people with an internet connection and free time means more people online to whittle the time away.

²¹ Although this way of thinking might lead to the assumption that only those people who are a part of the "global" upper class – described by many scholars as the "transnational capitalist class" or "transnational elite" (Friedmann & Wolff, 1982: 320) – will have time and money enough to reach self-actualization, the logic for Wheary's description of the global middle class is clear and succinct: it is those people who have time and money available *beyond* that which is required for survival, but still have to work to make a living, who are members of the global middle class.

28% of the world's population) are a part of the global middle class today (pp. 3 and 5, respectively).

As for socio-cultural methods of middle class identification, these refer mainly to one having social or cultural “capital” deemed important and/or necessary by the middle class group for continued existence or entry into the middle class, which reinforce middle class ideologies and lifestyle choices.²² Although using cultural and social capital as indicators for middle class inclusion provides a useful and necessary supplement to methods that define economic capital (those being absolute or relative measures of income), to rely solely on the former does not provide a realistic description of middle class size. In a recent survey in China, for example, 46.8% of the entire population was “self-approved” or self-anointed middle class – that is, due to social and cultural factors, they considered themselves to be a part of the middle class. In economic terms, however, the number of people in China who can actually afford a middle class existence is – according to the most generous estimates – half this number (Jaffrelot & van der Veer, 2008: 111, 115).

Because classes are constructed through both social and economic mores, one must examine both types of data (qualitative and quantitative) when determining the size and scope of the global middle class. As was previously stated, self-recognition as being middle class is a useful and important accoutrement to economic figures, but to use it as the sole basis for a discussion on the size and scope of the middle class has no practical application. Conversely, only using economic data does not pay credence to middle class identification – just because one can afford a middle class lifestyle does not mean one considers themselves a part of the middle class. Additionally, one may not have the requisite “social” and/or “cultural” capital necessary to understand the rituals, traditions and customs of a country's middle class, and therefore will not be accepted as a member.²³

²² Quoting Robson and Butler (2001) (who in turn, reference Bourdieu), “Cultural capital exists in various forms, expressing the embodied dispositions and resources of the *habitus*. This form of capital has two analytically distinguishable strains, *incorporated*, in the form of education and knowledge, and *symbolic*, being the capacity to define and legitimize cultural, moral, and aesthetic values, standards and styles. Social capital is a relational concept, referring to the sum of actual and potential resources that can be mobilized through membership in social networks of actors and organizations” (p. 71).

²³ Regardless of which method is used – economic or socio-cultural – or subsequent calculation within that method-group, it is the countries of East Asia that have had the highest number of people enter the ranks of the middle class, “while those that were slow gainers included Africa, South Asia and Latin America” (Das, 2010: 23). Middle class growth rates have been particularly striking for India and China. During 15 years from 1990-2005, India saw a doubling and China a five-fold increase in middle class membership. The entirety of the membership in the East Asian middle classes was predicted in 2005 to be at 1.117 billion (Das, 2010).

Although an exact number of the global middle class is not determinable, the fact of the matter is that even conservative estimates from both economic and social indicators show that it is a group that is large enough, for the first time in history, to be recognized as existing. It is these people who represent the dual-rationalizing process of homogeneity and heterogeneity in cities. They are the ones who articulate, embody, and are affected by this process. In short, the global middle class is here. Now what do they demand?

The Middle Class and the Demand for Rationalization

If people in the new middle classes around the globe are demanding a more “Western” lifestyle, and a Western lifestyle is characterized by its being highly rationalized, then middle class people around the globe are, at least implicitly, demanding an increased rationalization of their lives. Whether it is consciously recognized is another matter. Still, as McDonaldization is becoming characteristic of societies around the world, the greatly expanding global middle class will place increasing demands on the locales in which they reside to become more like the aforementioned rationalized “islands.”

McDonaldization has been cited as having a middle class bias (Ritzer, 1998: 186). As Ritzer (2007) states, it is “not the enormous concentration of wealth in a relative few but the great democratization of wealth that allows large and growing numbers of people to afford the proliferating and comparatively inexpensive forms of nothing” (p. 137) (by nothing, Ritzer is referring to rationalized goods and services). Because of the ever-increasing demand for goods and services around the world to be both predictable and diverse, what we are witnessing is the replacement of specifically local, traditional products (what Ritzer calls “something”) with globalized “nothing” – rationalized product frameworks that are easily adaptable to any and all local conditions. It is a homogeneous form that is easily malleable to the heterogeneous needs of today’s world.

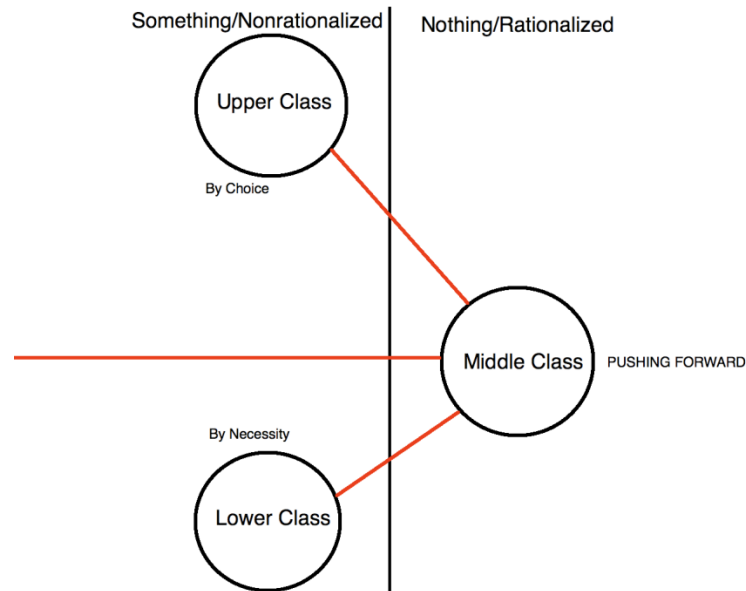


Figure 1 - The Middle Class Push for Increased Rationalization

The introduction of massive economies of scale (as production is now on a global level) allow for prices to be reduced to such a level where these products are accessible for a vast number of people with extraneous income – i.e., members of the middle classes around the world. Since there are so many people in the world today that can be considered middle class, the ability of people to purchase commercial goods has never been greater. And because these middle class people are from diverse locales around the world, the production of goods and services through the “nothing” framework allows this heterogeneity to be taken into account without serious rises in production costs or setbacks in production time. Rationalizing goods and services has created a win-win situation for global producers: more commodities are able to be purchased at the same time as productivity is increased, thereby keeping prices low enough to sustain sufficient middle class demand.²⁴

²⁴ Further, those who are above this middle class threshold (upper class) are able to purchase expensive alternatives while those who have no ability to purchase said “nothing” goods (lower class), because of a lack of extraneous income, are forced to consume that which is only found locally (Ritzer, 2007). Both of these groups consume goods, products, and services that are outside of the realm of the global middle class; the first group, because they can consume something else by choice, and the second group, ironically, because they cannot.

Global Middle Class Mobility and the Rationalization of Cities

Because the places and spaces of cities – their “hardware” and “software” – are becoming more uniform around the globe through the rationalizing process of McDonaldization, it is easier today for people in the middle class to travel around the world than it ever was before. The first reason is because a decline in airfares is occurring at the same time as a rise in the number of people with more discretionary income. The second is because middle classes around the world demand similarly rationalized goods and services, which is having a worldwide homogenizing effect on lifestyle and urban structure. Not only are cities becoming the same everywhere, but there are also more people alive today with the financial ability to travel internationally and live abroad than ever before in history (Watson, 2004). So, more people are moving, but they are moving between increasingly uniform and rationalized “nodes” within the global network of cities. As the expectations these people have for certain amenities, foodstuffs, and lifestyle choices move abroad with the people themselves, cities the world over are becoming more uniformly rational in their structure, functioning, and socio-cultural environments.

The Great “Middling”

As Favell, Feldblum, and Smith (2007) note, “one of the effects of globalization has, in fact, been a downward ‘massification,’ through the middle classes, of international migration opportunities linked to careers and education, such that it is by no means only those who might be thought of as ‘elites’ who are able to move” (p. 17). With rising middle class membership around the world, unprecedented opportunities for both short- and long-term movement are opening for people not only in the Western world but the world over. A perfect example is the current mass migration of young, educated businesspeople from all over the world to Brazil, looking to make their fortune in one of the region’s (and the world’s) fastest growing economies.

Although skeptics of mass movements today argue that the number of migrants at the turn of the 19th century was on a greater scale, there are two aspects that are frequently not taken into account in the comparison: first, the number of educational and short-term employment opportunities abroad, and therefore the number of students and employees living in different countries, is on a vastly larger scale than it ever was before; second, with the rise of the global middle class, the number of people able to afford vacations to international travel destinations has rapidly increased. Both the time it takes to travel and the lengths of stay abroad have declined because mobile global middle class people are not migrating but rather visiting, studying, or working abroad for shorter periods of days, weeks, months, or at most a few years. Also, if they do choose to stay, people traveling today typically have the monetary ability,

as well as the familial support, to do so. Batniztky, McDowell, and Dyer (2008) developed three main criteria for Indian migrants to London to determine their membership in the middle class back in India: (1) a private education paid for by parents and/or family; (2) once abroad, they do not have to send back remittances, but instead can save their money to support their own future when they return or if they stay abroad; and (3) they have sufficient capital to pay the required agency and visa fees to both legally travel and stay abroad (p. 58). Although describing a specific case, these criteria can be used to test any person living abroad as to their membership in the global middle class because it shows that the economic situation they came from allowed for the saving and spending of sufficient sums of money to comfortably live abroad.

Similarly, the new mobility of the global middle class has altered the ways in which familial life is organized. As Watson (2004) describes, new family structures in the 21st century are,

...appearing faster than anthropologists can record them... Multi-domiciled families were certainly evident before the advent of cheap air travel and cellular phones but new technologies have changed the quality of life (much for the better) in diasporic communities. Thus, the globalization of family life is no longer confined to migrants from developing economies who work for low wages in advanced capitalist societies. The transnational family is increasingly a mark of high social status and affluence (p. 166).

Although there have been transnational family structures throughout history, the advances in communication and mobility ICT technologies (email, social networking sites, Skype, VoIP and Internet phones; high-speed rail) mean that families can be separated across continents but can still instantaneously connect with the click of a mouse or the press of a button. They can also physically connect again in mere hours; if on separate continents, it takes typically one-half to one-full day to rejoin – compare that with weeks to months a century ago.²⁵

Why do members of the global middle class choose to temporarily move overseas? A stint abroad is seen by most global middle class migrants as a rite of passage, a learning experience, an adventure, a way to increase familial status and to build “bragging rights”, a résumé booster to be more competitive back home or perhaps even abroad, or a combination of all of these. These are all important factors and each plays into the desires, expectations, results and outcomes of the middle class migrant’s journey abroad. Depending on how well these factors are met may determine how much more the person plans on going abroad, if he

²⁵ Flying from Vienna to San Francisco (the international airport closest to where I grew up), for example, takes roughly 15-17 hours with one layover and without flight delays; that is as long as it takes to drive from Redding to San Diego, both of which are in California.

or she will stay abroad, and, provided there are no visa issues, for how long. Additionally, these factors determine how intensively the person will attempt to interact with, and become involved in, the local culture. If one never leaves the city, he or she may feel as if s/he has essentially never left home (according to my city-islands argumentation). If s/he chooses to go out into the countryside, though, s/he may indeed experience non-globalized local culture. How do these issues hold up against real-life evidence? That is the topic of discussion in the case study.

Introduction to the Case Study

As of this writing, there exists a small but increasing amount of literature on the subject of middle class migration – what David Conradson and Alan Latham refer to as the “middling” of transnational migration (Conradson & Latham, 2005a: 229; 2005b: 290). While I agree with these authors in that studying middle class migration patterns is an important step in forwarding the body of knowledge of migration and global studies, what is noticeably lacking in the work done so far is anything that is particularly global in scope. The literature is indeed transnational, but its focus is limited to only “North-North” middle class migration or middle class migrants within the old British empire/still existing Commonwealth (Scott, 2006; Conradson & Latham, 2005; Werbner, 1999).

For example, Outside of middle class migrants from former British colonies to London (from New Zealand, Australia, India, and Pakistan), there is as of yet nothing on the role of transnational middle class mobility as a part of middle class life in the newly emerging middle classes. Middle class migration is discussed in terms of global movement, global networks, and global flows, but it has so far been reserved mainly for the Western world. It is assumed that this type of mobility exists as an option only for middle classes in the “post-industrial” economies (Scott, 2006: 1106) and it is taken for granted that this must somehow only be a Western phenomenon. The idea of Chinese or Brazilian middle class mobility as taking a similar shape to that which is occurring in the West is assumed not to exist, has been ignored, or has simply not been researched yet. It is the intent of the case study to try and partially fill this void. After all, if we are discussing the mobility of the middle class globally, should we not be discussing this in terms of the *global* middle class? What will be discussed and shown through the following case study is *global* middle class mobility, the daily life of the global middle class migrant, and the impact these people have on the transformation of the city.

6. Methodology

Outside of the extensive literature review above establishing the fundamental aspects of the concept of homogeneous heterogeneity, the methodology comprises of a qualitatively based case study. As discussed in Creswell (2006), a case study requires that the researcher 1) identifies a case, 2) puts well defined boundaries around that case, 3) “use extensive, multiple sources of information in data collection” for the case, and 4) describe the “setting or context for the case” (p. 93). As such, interviews are used in conjunction with personal observations to develop a rapport to the questions established in the preceding pages of literature review and theoretical argumentation (thus satisfying requirement 3); some quantitative analysis is also undertaken. To reiterate, the main question the case study attempts to answer is whether or not, through the spread of formal and substantive rational processes, the functional and socio-cultural characteristics of major cities around the globe are becoming homogeneous. Homogeneity is broken into two categories: functional standardization to discuss similarities in infrastructure and the undertakings of daily life, and homogeneous heterogeneity to describe the increasing socio-cultural heterogeneity of cities, which is becoming the global standard. This dual-homogenizing process of functional standardization and homogeneous heterogeneity is fuelled by the increasing movement and mobility of the global middle class, through their wants of goods and services from back home, and their expectations of available amenities upon arrival. Where it should hold true is in the largest, most connected cities across the globe, cities to which people and their thoughts, ideas and money want to move.

The case chosen was the global middle class population living in Vienna, Austria (thereby establishing a basis for both the first and second case study requirements). The case begins with an extension of the conversation begun in the methodology, describing Vienna’s global presence and its pull for global middle class expatriates (and so fulfilling Creswell’s (2006) fourth case study requirement). Vienna was chosen as the site of the case study for three reasons. Firstly, Vienna has a large population of foreign residents, both legal and illegal. The United Nations and UN-related agencies at the VIC (Vienna International Centre) alone employ some 4,000 people from over 100 different countries (United Nations, 2011). In one conversation, I was told an estimate that there are up to 50% foreign residents in some neighborhoods, with 25% foreign composition of others being common. Although this is most likely an exaggerated number, it shows that the perception of the presence of a non-native Austrian population is highly felt in Vienna. Second, while it is true that Vienna is not a global economic or technological powerhouse, Vienna is certainly in the top five globally important political cities with its high number of international governmental institutions, INGOs, embassies,

UN organizations and permanent UN-country missions (this will be discussed in further detail in the body of the case study). Lastly, it was easily available to me as I have been living, working, and studying in Vienna for the past 15 months. This way, I was able to include extensive first-hand experience alongside the interviews that I conducted.

I primarily performed semi-structured interviews due to their ability to provide “reliable, comparative qualitative data”, as well as allowing interviewees “to express their views in their own terms” (Cohen, D., & Crabtree, B., 2006). I had main points that I wished to cover, but most of my goals were met by simply letting the interviewees speak freely, guided by some paradigmatic questions. Because it is my belief that the aforementioned homogenizing process is caused by the movement of the global middle class, interviewees were chosen from students and professionals within the international community in Vienna. The people interviewed had come to Vienna by choice – they are not refugees or asylum-seekers; they intended to stay for at least one year or had already been here longer; and they had a definite, immediately realizable purpose for coming to live here – to study or work. I was privileged in having easy and available access to the global middle class population in Vienna, myself being a part of it.

In total, 12 interviews were conducted. To accomplish the interviews I followed a mix of purposeful sampling strategies, namely random purposeful, opportunistic, and convenience (Creswell, 1994: 125; Miles & Huberman, 1994: 28). A few interviews are the results of discussions with close friends, others with acquaintances, and the rest from recommendations and meetings arranged by contacts in the international community. Two group interviews were also conducted and one questionnaire was completed via email. A few trends in the research to spark interest: unknown to me beforehand, five of the 12 people interviewed came from families with at least one parent who had immigrated to their home country – this was often cited as a major reason for their interest in living abroad; every person interviewed had previous travel experience outside of their home country; and six had lived in a city outside of their home country at least once before. All self-identified as being either middle class or upper-middle class in their home country.

As for limitations to the study, the most pressing that I see with my interview population are twofold: firstly, I am young (24), so the majority of the people I know in the international community are in their early 30s or below. As stated, I assembled my sample population from personal contacts and recommendations from friends, so all those interviewed are in the aforementioned age range. While this does not allow me a complete picture of the global middle class community living in Vienna, it does provide a solid overview of its most mobile members. There are a great number of young interns, trainees, and consultants at the United Nations and UN-related organizations in Vienna who stay for

short periods of time in Vienna.²⁶ Additionally, because young people have no child or marital commitments, it is much easier for them to be globally mobile.

Secondly, I did not interview any locals, meaning Viennese-born Austrians or non-Viennese Austrians living in Vienna. This would have provided me with a control group to determine how global the Austrian population thought Vienna to be. Although it does not detract from the original intent of the interviews – to see if the members of the expatriated global middle class population notice any changes in their daily life or in access to the same goods and services that they enjoyed at home – it would have provided a different perspective through which to view my analysis. Both of these missing interview areas, though, provide ample opportunities for further research on the subject.

As for using Vienna as the site of the case study, the one limitation I see is that it is not one of the “worldliest” of world cities. This, though, more than anything, will help to show the validity of my work. If I were to use New York or London, for example, testing for heterogeneity and socio-cultural diversity would be fairly simple, considering they are ranked as the two most global cities. Testing a less agreed upon worldly or global city like Vienna is a challenge to both the city and my research.

²⁶ The typical age of this entry-level employment group is between 24 and 30; having interned for a time at the UN, I was not aware of a consultant over 35 years of age.

7. Case Study

Vienna is the largest city in Central Europe and so acts as an essential link between the continent's eastern and western parts. It is ranked in the top rung of the Globalization and World Cities Research Network's (GaWC's) world cities, the alphas – albeit within the lowest subcategory of this highest category, alpha-minus (Globalization and World Cities Think tank, 2011). According to *Foreign Policy's* "Global Cities Index", Vienna ranks 18th in global city-status (Foreign Policy, 2010), the Japanese "Global Power City Index" sees Vienna as 7th on its 2009 ranking (The Mori Memorial Foundation, 2009), and Mercer's "Quality of Living" ranking has proclaimed Vienna to be the best city to live in the world for the past two years running (Mercer, 2010; 2011). Each of these rankings has a particular focus. The world cities index looks at a city's level of four major tertiary services (accounting, advertising, banking and finance, and law). The global cities index considers cities that are "engines of growth for their countries and the gateways to the resources of their regions" to be the most global cities. Finally, the global power city index takes into account social and cultural factors as well as the standard economic measures for its ranking. Since this case study examines changes in the functional structure and socio-cultural environment of the city, it is important to discuss if and how these indicators are affecting the makeup of the city. For the case study, these indicators are discussed as categories under either the "hardware" or "software" headings under which they were outlined in the literature review.

To recapitulate the meaning of these headings, hardware is referring to all the functional, structural, and non-human aspects of the city, such as connectivity, infrastructure, the transaction of business, housing, and the ease of daily life (errands, transport, etc.). Software takes into account all of the social and cultural aspects of the city, or its more human parts: population diversity and the availability of alternative social environments; how easy it is to feel comfortable or at home in a city; its similarities and differences as compared to one's home city; culture shock, or lack thereof; the availability of global products and goods from outside the home country or region; the level of assimilation/integration of foreigners into the city's social environment; and, perhaps most importantly, language barrier issues and the ability to enter into friendships with the local population.

The topics described under both of these headings will be used as the basis for organizing the results of the case study. Testing the hardware will primarily involve personal observations from over a year of living, working, and studying in the city, while the software test will be elicited from interviews completed with non-Austrian members of the global middle class living in Vienna. Through my personal experiences and the results of many qualitative interviews, I hope to develop a clear

response to my research question: if, through the spread of formally rational institutions (i.e., McDonaldization), Vienna's hardware is structurally homogenous with other global cities; and, through the movement of the global middle class, the software is homogeneously heterogeneous in the socio-cultural makeup of its inhabitants in comparison to interviewees' cities of origin.

Test of the “Hardware” – Rationalization of Place (Structures, Institutions, Businesses)

Established by Weber (1968) and Mannheim (1929/36), and further emphasized by Ritzer (1993, 1998, 2003, 2007), formal rationality is considered to be transforming more and more aspects of our lives into predictable, calculable forms to be used as efficiently as possible. Because cities are connected in a global network (Castells, 2000a), there is a push for their structural aspects – or “hardware” – to become increasingly similar to one another so as to accommodate the unceasing flows of goods, money, ideas, and people that move within and between them. This formal rationalization of functional structures leads to the homogenization of cities' hardware across the globe. In my view of homogenous heterogeneity, cities that are key “nodes” (Castells, 2000a) in the worldwide city network should be the most formally rationalized because they have to move the greatest volume of information, goods, money, and people through them and then on to the next city. Because they are largely disconnected from their respective countries (Sassen, 1991; 1994), these cities share a common structural bond and should, therefore, look and operate almost exactly alike.

To examine the hardware of Vienna, then, it is important to look at not only how easily operable the city's infrastructure and functional organization is for its residents, but also its accommodation to global flows that move through the city and onto the next node in the global network. Regarding financial connectivity, business flows, and economic importance, Vienna does have some business parks and a financial center near the Danube. There are two areas of skyscrapers within the city, each with no more than five of such buildings. It is not – in comparison to Frankfurt or Paris on the mainland, or London in Europe proper – a European financial hub. While it is true that, when opening a regional office, many multinational corporations in the past chose to base their operations in Vienna, today more and more businesses are looking to setup shop in Central-Eastern European countries outside of the Euro zone. There is a strong movement both north (to Prague, Warsaw, Wrocław) and farther east (Bratislava, Sofia, Budapest). This is due to several factors, but some of the most important are that the cost of labor is much higher in Vienna than it is in these other locations; that Austria uses the euro, while other countries in the area do not – a benefit to U.S.

businesses looking to expand into the European market; and because of the free movement (of people, goods, and money) allowed within EU Schengen-member countries, it is just as easy to establish a regional office in one of the already-established financial centers and then sell to the Viennese/greater Austrian market than to set up in Vienna directly (this last point is more regarding Western European financial hubs).

What Vienna lacks in private industry enterprise it makes up for in international organizations. As written in a letter from the Vienna Bürgermeister (Mayor), Dr. Michael Häupl,

Today, Vienna is considered a metropolis with an international outlook in the heart of Central Europe; this reputation is not least due to its being one of the four headquarters of the United Nations – the only one within the EU – as well as to the great number of international organizations, INGOs and institutions based in the Austrian capital (City of Vienna, 2002).

In total, Vienna is home to 95 international organization and INGO regional offices and headquarters, as well as the embassies of 64 countries. If it is possible to break cities into categories of political, social, and economic “globalness”, with its agglomeration of international organizations, INGOs, and national embassies, Vienna certainly qualifies as one of the major global political cities. In relation to Sassen’s (1991; 1994) concept of agglomeration in cities, while Vienna is by no means a site for the agglomeration of financial headquarters, it certainly is one of the world’s main destinations for international-political agglomeration. If one wishes to have a career in international politics or meet with influential world leaders, chances are high that s/he will end up in Vienna.

Also important to consider is the level of the city’s physical connectivity, or the infrastructure allowing for travel to, from, and within the city. For moving within the city of Vienna, public transportation is rather incredible. The ease of travel on the city’s Verkehrsmittel (public transport) is fantastic, featuring bus, tram, train, and underground options, each having a great number of lines (save the U-Bahn, with four, albeit well-connected, lines) within the city. The ease of finding a public transport stop – largely bus and tram within the city center, and the U-Bahn providing convenient access on longer trips – is impressive (in fact, there are almost too many stops; on some of the main inner city tram lines, it is occasionally faster to walk between stations than it is to wait for the tram to stop, load, wait at the light, and continue on its journey). The farther one goes out of the downtown areas, the more sparse stops become, with buses typically making the longer treks to the city’s outskirts. Unless delayed, the modes of public transportation (bus, tram, U-Bahn, S-Bahn) typically come in 3-6 minute intervals during the working day and 7-15 minute intervals at night and in the early morning (usually after 7pm and from approximately 5-7am).

One major facet of Vienna's public transportation system is its U-Bahn which, although not a very large system, is open 24-hours on weekends (Friday and Saturday nights) and holidays. This makes Vienna the 2nd city in Europe to have a 24-hour underground; not even London can boast this claim. While Vienna does have a night bus system, most everything runs through one station (Votivplatz). If you're nearby, it's great; if you're not, well, it's not.

Vienna is incredibly bike-friendly, although many Viennese will tell you that it is not enough (compared to many major U.S. cities, however, it is a biker's paradise). It is often the case that one can arrive to a destination faster by bike than by public transport or car. Three interviewees mentioned the novelty of not having to have a car and drive everywhere, that "being able to not have a car is amazing" (D. N., 2011). Most everyone interviewed praised the public transportation in Vienna, saying that the public transport system makes it so that "It's really easy to get around everywhere, and it makes...an enormous difference in terms of the amount of time it takes to get around places" (L. L., 2011). Two respondents mentioned that walking was even better for them than taking public transport. Because he lived in the inner city and everything he needed was close by, one respondent asked "Why do you even take public transport?" (D. N., 2011). The availability and efficiency of the city's public transport system was also cited as a reason that people in Vienna are, "are more assailable, more comfortable, you know more easy-going, less stressed-out..." (F. F., 2011).

In relation to the city-ranking indices, comments like these would rank high on positive factors relating to city-usage and ease of mobility using public transportation, as well as for more subjective factors such as the local population's acceptance of foreigners and the level of personal comfort and safety one feels while conducting their daily business in the city. Vienna's public transportation system, moreover, is a telling example of Ritzer's (1993) concept of McDonaldization. The system is controlled by formally rationalized procedures (routes) which allow for one to move efficiently through the city within calculable distances and be picked up at predictable times (schedules) at predetermined locations (stops). These times and locations are also rarely subject to change. The same reasons as to why people dine at McDonald's in a foreign country can be applied to the use of Vienna's public transportation system; those who patron it know exactly what they are getting themselves into.

Because most of Vienna's streets were constructed during times when cars were not the kings of the road, it's a miracle that traffic flows as well as it does within the city. Every morning and evening on workdays, however, most every major street in the city experiences heavy traffic. Additionally, the streets in Vienna are somewhat confusing, in that there are so many one-way streets, with bikes typically being allotted a

lane in the opposite direction. Like many European cities, Vienna is built in concentric circles – driving is made easier by the inner- and outer-rings (the Gürtel) connecting to most main city streets, as well as the highways that take one outside and around the city. The Autobahn (freeway) in Austria is well-maintained and modern. Although there are only four highways in the country, there are not many places one needs to get to that cannot be reached by using one of them. Each freeway also connects to a conjoining freeway in a neighboring country, allowing for easy personal mobility between them and, therefore, their major cities (save the Czech Republic, which does not yet have a freeway system).

Further, regarding outbound connective infrastructure, it depends greatly on which mode of transport is chosen and how far one has to travel. Vienna is a hub for Central and Eastern Europe and is very well-connected to neighboring cities (both within Austria and neighboring countries, save Croatia) via buses and trains. Inter-city bus tickets are surprisingly inexpensive, with travels to Budapest and Prague costing roughly 10-13 Euros each way. Train travel, however, costs exceedingly more; although there are a great many deals to ride the regional trains, faster trains, direct connections, and trains leaving the country typically cost between 40-110 Euros, depending on the distance. Having said that, though, there are three main train stations in Vienna and two more regional stations, making train travel convenient and easy, with destinations across the European continent. Discounts are offered, but – as with Verkehrsmittel discounts – are typically only realizable for Austrian citizens (the welfare system in Austria is set up so that Austrians are very good at taking care of their own, but very poor at taking care of others. Citizenship is extremely important.). As a member of Schengen, free movement is allowed between Germany, Slovakia, and Slovenia, while traveling into the Czech Republic and Hungary requires that most foreign citizens and expatriates have a visa to enter these countries for long periods of time.

Vienna's airport is well-connected on the European continent, but international flights almost always require a transfer in one of the major European hubs (Frankfurt, London, Paris, Amsterdam); this is biased toward the Americas, however, as there are several non-stop flights from Vienna to major Middle Eastern and Asian cities. This shows a major bifurcation between Vienna and other world cities in Europe; in terms of airline travel, Vienna is largely a Central and Eastern European hub, but not a global hub. As it is with its strategic importance, so too is it with its airline traffic.

Writing about freeways and airports may at first seem a bit off topic, but connectedness is essential in determining how embedded something is into its related global network. If Vienna is to be considered a “node” in the network of global cities (Castells, 2000a), then it must be that the global flows associated with this network – the movement of

goods, ideas, money, and people, not to mention their related “scapes” (Appadurai, 1996) – are able to pass through the city and onto the next “node” with minimal interruption. Because the technological aspects of Vienna’s ability to handle global flows were discussed in relation to its importance as an economic and political hub, I felt it necessary to describe how the city is able to support the movement of the flows that are physical in nature, meaning goods and people, between cities.

With the description above of the ease of movement between Vienna and other cities by bus, rail, car, and airplane, it seems that its conduciveness to the needs of physical global flows is first-rate; what may actually be holding it back from becoming a more global city is the fact that the connectivity infrastructure of its neighbors for physical flows is not on par with its own. While financial flows and ideas are able to move irrespective of country borders, people and goods cannot. As long as Austria’s largest neighbors (Hungary and the Czech Republic) do not have Schengen free movement access, then Vienna will indirectly suffer the consequences.

The ease of movement within Vienna, though, has immense dividends for performing the daily transactions of business predictably and efficiently. By daily transaction of business, I am referring to the locations in which business is undertaken – stores, restaurants, cafes, business parks/districts, shopping areas, etc.²⁷ The level of McDonaldization (formal rationalization of the structures of daily life) that has taken place in Vienna is moderately high – a perfect example being the number of McDonaldized multinational food franchises, and glocal adaptations to the McDonald’s model that have taken root in the city.²⁸

Table 1 – Number of McDonaldized Food and Drink Establishments in Vienna

McDonaldized Food and Drink Franchises in Vienna	
Global Chains	
McDonald’s	45
Starbucks	11
KFC	10
Burger King	4

²⁷ What exactly is being sold, processed, built, or consumed will be discussed under separate headings, mostly in the discussion on “software.”

²⁸ The opening of a McDonald’s in a new city is often considered a sign by the local population that their city is now accepted as being a worldly city – it’s almost like an initiation rite into the club of world cities. As Bosnian TV personality Dejana Rosuljaš said in Biber magazine of the recent opening of Sarajevo’s first McDonald’s outlet, “Every city in the world has more and more McDonald’s and we don’t have a single one. Finally that’s changed and Sarajevo no longer stands apart from other cities” (Aljović & Vekić, 2011). (This quotation is translated from German into English; for the original text, please see the link in the full citation in the works cited.)

<i>Total:</i>	70
Local Chains	
Schnitzelhaus	15
Ströck	71
Der Mann	68
Anker	133
Aida	27
Geier	12
Backwerk	9
<i>Total:</i>	335
<i>Total Number of Chain Outlets (Global and Local):</i>	406

Above is a table showing a rough approximation of the number of food chains in Vienna that are both global and glocal in nature (I say roughly because there may be others that I have yet to see and so have not included in the table). Although there is a presence of global McDonaldized food chains – the largest being McDonald’s itself – it is clear that glocal Austrian chains are dominant in Vienna. A strong explanation is that, traditionally, Vienna is a café and bakery culture: all the chains except for Schnitzelhaus (which, as the name suggests, is a schnitzel fast-food restaurant) are bakeries and/or coffeehouses. Vienna does not have much in the way of lunch, so one typically goes to a bakery for a small sandwich (a “snack”) and a coffee, and then goes back on his or her way.

Because of this preference toward café culture, McDonald’s has opened a great number of McCafé’s in Vienna to compete; of all 45 McDonald’s in Vienna, 28 either have a McCafé as a part of the McDonald’s restaurant, or are themselves stand-alone cafes (this number beats out the entirety of the famous local Viennese café chain, Aida). Because of the great number of local chains, Starbucks seems also to have had difficulties making inroads into the local market. Although largely sticking to their globally standard fare, there is one thing that both Starbucks and McDonald’s – through McCafé – do serve, that is traditionally Viennese – the *mélange*. A milk and coffee drink much like a cappuccino, the name is perfectly suited to the processes of glocalization we are witnessing firsthand: the global franchise adapting to local conditions, and local bakeries and cafes adopting the McDonald’s fast, efficient, chain-store model and reinterpreting it into the local Viennese context, in this case with breads, pastries, sandwiches, and coffee. It is quintessential glocalization.

As for instead buying groceries and preparing meals at home, interviewees to whom this question was posited said that they did the majority of their grocery shopping at the supermarkets within the city. Supermarkets were generally considered to be similar to those found in their home cities, and the foods they stocked were largely the same. For specialty items, one respondent, who had lived for two years in the Middle East before moving to Vienna, said that Turkish shops were available to find the foods that he had gotten used to eating there (B. A., 2011).

Turkish shops were also mentioned as places to go in the evenings and on Sundays since most other major supermarkets in Vienna are closed during these times (supermarkets in Vienna typically close between 7:30-8pm on weekdays, at 6pm on Saturday, and are not open on Sunday or holidays). As stated by one interviewee, “in case of lack of food supplies you can seek relief going to the Turkish shops” (B. A., 2011). All respondents mentioned the opening hours of supermarkets in Vienna as constituting a major difference in their daily lives compared to their home cities, as shopping schedules had to be adjusted accordingly. The number of holidays taken in Vienna was also mentioned as sometimes making daily life more difficult. “It’s not bad, but if you wake up in the morning and you want to buy some things from the market, you go and it’s closed. What’s wrong? It’s [a] holiday? But it was [a] holiday yesterday!” (I. I., 2011)²⁹ Interestingly, while global chains like McDonald’s have learned to adapt to the local clientele, Viennese businesses have not necessarily warmed up to the needs of an international population.

Shopping for fruits and vegetables at the farmer’s markets in Vienna was mentioned by one interviewee, who said that the price asked for produce at these markets made it prohibitively expensive for them to be a regular shopping choice. “They have the little stores and I bought, for example, two chilies and, I don’t know, three lemons, and it was seven – ten Euros or something. I really, I bought some I don’t know, leaves and lemon and chili. I was, ‘ok, probably they’re really nice, grown with a lot of love, but...’ (M. D., 2011). Instead, she chose to do her shopping at BILLA and Hofer, two Austrian supermarket chains with a large presence in the city. All other interviewees who mentioned supermarkets also said they shop at these two chains, with their competitor Spar mentioned once as being too expensive (D. N., 2011). Shopping for other products, though, namely electronics, was deemed by one interviewee to be exactly the same as back home. “[Here] you’ve got your Saturn, whereas at home you’d have your PC World or your Curry’s. You basically just have different companies supplying a lot of similar products. Like I said earlier, it’s a European country, the culture is quite similar. It’s not culturally very different” (M. B., 2011).

²⁹ Austria has 15 federal holidays over the course of one year.

The buildings in which the shops and cafes are located, though, were often considered very different than what was found in respondents' home cities. Architecture was referred to several times by those interviewed, usually to comment on the beauty of the buildings in Vienna. Of those respondents who mentioned architecture, all said that it was different than in comparison to their home city. To quote one interviewee from Dublin, "...it [Vienna] has wonderful architecture, great imperial buildings, you know, it has a real imperial feel about it. Dublin has got some nice Georgian architecture, but it's a very modest city, it feels like a small city" (M. B., 2011). One Canadian interviewed believed the differences in architecture between Vienna and her home city of Halifax boiled down to the age of the two cities and the much greater historical lineage that Vienna has in comparison to North American cities. "I mean, to just walk in a place where the history is so long and varied and so rich - compared to the really, pitifully hundred-and-some-year-white-person history in North America - it changes the character of a place so completely" (L. L., 2011). This person was interviewed in a group; jokingly, someone followed with, "What's the difference between North America and Europe? In Europe 100km is a long distance. In North America 100 years is a long time" (B. An., 2011).

Vienna champions its unique European architectural history. Having been the imperial seat of one of the largest modern European empires (the Austro-Hungarian Empire), the city's buildings reflect the grandeur and splendor of the wealth that was once located within its walls. Walking through the inner city is like going back two centuries in time, except instead of feces and the bodies of disease-ridden peasants lining the streets, one sees stands selling coca-cola and ice cream, souvenir shops, and tourists wolfing down *Wienerschnitzel* in expensive, Austrian-themed restaurants (which set of sights is worse is up to personal interpretation).

Traveling away from the old *Innenstadt* (inner city), however, one begins to see a city that has been built and rebuilt and then pushed east across the Danube, its architecture becoming less ornate and unique and more modern and static along the way. Most of the building facades in the districts located within the old city walls (inside the *Gürtel*) have been around for hundreds of years; although they have been renovated several times over the years, the intricacy of their design and the sturdiness of the build are impressive. Once in the Southern, Eastern, or Western districts of the city, though, one sees that the buildings here - newer, built rapidly to keep up with the growth of the city in response to housing demands after the destruction of WWII - are rather flat, bland structures intended for functional housing. Not only is it that these facades have become less unique, but the interiors of the apartments have undergone a dramatic transformation as well.

City living is defined by apartments, and Vienna is no exception. On the outskirts of town and on the less-developed Donauinsel (Danube island), there are single-family homes and townhouses, but the vast majority of residents in Vienna live in apartments. Unless one is able to afford to live in the downtown area or up on the hills near the embassies, one is consigned to living in an apartment that largely resembles every other in its layout: entryway with kitchen, toilet and shower (separate) off its sides which then leads into a main living room/dining room combination, with a “Schlafkabinett” (sleeping nook) off to the left or right. The design gives everyone living in an apartment building the coverage of their personal needs while maximizing the number of apartments able to be constructed within one building. Standardized layouts, however, are not a Vienna-specific phenomenon, as all middle to low income apartment buildings in all cities have roughly similar designs. It may not be the most unique living, but it is certainly not the most difficult, either.

Outside of apartments, alternative housing options in home cities were mentioned by several interviewees. One, from China, mentioned that living in Vienna was much more comfortable than in Beijing, where she studied. In Beijing, “...there are student dorms. It’s quite cheap actually; it’s like 150 Euros half year. But there are 4-6 people living in one room” (B. J. 2011). When asked to compare apartment living in Beijing and Vienna, though, she said that it is basically the same; rooms in Beijing are smaller, but the monthly rent is about half as much as in Vienna (B. J. 2011). One mentioned that living in shared apartments (WG’s or a *Wohngemeinschaft*), a common undertaking for young people and students in Vienna, is uncommon in the city that he came from (Cape Town) – he himself did, however, live in a WG in Cape Town before coming to Vienna (F. F., 2011). A respondent from the United States said that the emphasis on apartment living in Vienna was much different than in the city he came from. In Kansas City, his home city, most everyone lives in houses with yards, while in Vienna apartments are by and large the only choice available (H. D., 2011). This was also cited as a difference by one South African interviewee (D. N., 2011).

While the above-mentioned differences in housing are noticeable, they are outliers to the general trend of apartment living in cities. This is due mainly to the fact that the cities which these last respondents are from (Kansas City in the United States and Stellenbosch, South Africa) are either sprawling land masses (Kansas City) or small but sparsely populated (Stellenbosch) and so single-family homes with yards are viable housing options; there is no need to build apartments for the maximization of living space in these cities. On the whole, apartments were the dominant housing option mentioned by interviewees. Coming to Vienna, every respondent but these two said that the style of living was no different than what they had experienced in their home city.

This demand for affordable apartments within Vienna is directly linked to the rationalization of housing in cities, and can be attributed to the global middle classes “push for increased rationalization” (see Figure 1, “The Middle Class Push for Increased Rationalization” in the subsection “The Middle Class and the Push for Rationalization”, p. 36). There are a great number of people in Vienna – or in any large city for that matter – who desire to purchase the same thing, a place to live. In order to maximize output (number of dwellings) and minimize costs of production (building these dwellings) in relation to consumption (monthly rent), large apartment complexes which contain identical apartments and look fairly similar to one another, save for the occasional façade work, are built throughout the city. In Vienna’s case, these types of apartments are located mainly outside of the Gürtel, which demarcates the old and new sections of the city. Admittedly, Vienna’s apartments are reasonably priced and provide a sizable amount of living space. As such, the city is an attractive relocation destination for members of the global middle class; no matter his or her job, one can find a decent place to live in the city.

Taking this structural uniformity of living space into account, along with the similarities that interviewees described between Vienna and their home cities in the transaction of business and the functioning of daily life, as well as the adoption of local purveyors (cafes and schnitzel restaurants) of the highly rationalized McDonald’s model, the conclusion reached is that Vienna has, at least structurally, become one of Ritzer’s (2003) McDonaldized “islands of the living dead.” The artificial reality that is defining of and created within the interconnected global chain of highly rationalized city-islands is well displayed through the interviews. With the similarities in markets, foods, and housing described, interviewees were able to move comfortably and with relative ease between Vienna and their home cities because of the fact that they are equally structurally “dead.” This means that most every aspect of living within these cities that once was not quantified or was susceptible to unpredictability, inefficiency, and/or incalculability has been removed. Ritzer would say that this has turned life in these city-islands into a “dull, boring, routine form of existence” (p. 124). While he and I would disagree as to the extent of socio-cultural “death” that has occurred within cities (this will be discussed later on in the “software” section of the case study), we are in agreement that the functional and structural aspects of cities have become formally rationalized and so are in effect uniform with one another. In this case, Vienna is certainly no exception.

The rationalization of Vienna’s structural aspects also follows the parameters set forth in the early rationalization theories of Weber (1968) and Mannheim (1929/1936). These theories were used in the literature review as support for the process of homogeneous heterogeneity – the simultaneous homogenization and heterogenization of cities’ structural

and socio-cultural aspects – which I argue, through the literature, is the current defining mode of understanding for the constant, physically interpreted interaction of global and local forces. Through the above hardware test we can say with surety that Vienna's structural aspects (infrastructure including public transportation, connectivity to other cities in the global cities network, type and design of stores, markets, and apartments) have become predictable, repeatable, and efficient; in other words, they clearly exhibit characteristics of high levels of formal rationality (Weber, 1968; Mannheim, 1929/36; Ritzer, 1993, 1998, 2007).

To sum up, it seems fair to say that Vienna's hardware fits the standards of a worldly city. The findings show that those who have come to Vienna from other large cities around the world find its structural functions to be equal to or better than that which was available in their home city. Vienna was often described as a very livable and user-friendly city with the availability and frequency of public transportation options regularly mentioned as a major reason. The daily transaction of business and the performance of the functions of daily life proved problem-free (save for issues with the operating hours of supermarkets), with most shopping and consumption being undertaken in formally rationalized market settings. The proliferation of McDonaldized café-style food and drink chains in Vienna – not to mention the great number of McCafes – equates to a localization of the global institutional phenomenon of McDonaldization, the result being a Vienna-specific glocalization.

This observed uniformity of living within cities fits in line with the previously discussed standardization of daily life and living situations in cities (see Watson, 2004) and suggests that in most major metropolises, the structural functions of the city are more or less the same. As outlined in the literature review, large cities attract greater numbers of people so, to stay relevant, they must meet global hardware standards of structure, efficiency, and predictability. That way, people are able to easily move through them and will be more willing to do so again in the future. In these regards, Vienna fits in line well with the findings in the literature and can be said to have a hardware system that is on par with global standards of structural uniformity.

Test of the “Software” – Rationalization Leading to Heterogeneous Space

Durkheim (2000) describes the process of rationalization in the city as allowing one escaping the “yoke” of social pressure in the small town. He theorized that the ability of a group to ascribe homogeneous social mores is inversely related to the size and density of the population within a geographical space; as the latter two become larger, the former is no longer able to control everyone and so its influence dwindles. Thus, as the city becomes larger, maintaining a homogenous socio-cultural environment

becomes increasingly difficult and eventually gives way to the diverse demands of the city's residents, thereby establishing a heterogeneous socio-cultural space (Durkheim, 2000) – or “software” as I have taken and revamped the term in the literature (for the author's original usage, see Sun, 2007). Additionally, because of the processes associated with unceasing global flows (Appadurai, 1996), the populations of large, interconnected cities have become what Pieterse (2009) refers to as a “global mélange”, or unique socio-cultural hybrids. Therefore, in a densely populated, highly rationalized city we should witness a high level of socio-cultural heterogenization.

In determining whether or not a city is of a worldly nature, it is important first and foremost for its inhabitants and visitors to consider it as such. If no one thought of the city as culturally, ethnically, and socially diverse, then how could it claim to be so? Seven of the twelve people interviewed said that they felt Vienna was a multicultural city. One correspondent went as far as to say that to him, Vienna is a *Weltstadt*, or World City. One mentioned that walking around, he could hear, “people speaking different languages” (I. I., 2011), and three non-native English speakers said it was possible to communicate with people in Vienna using their native tongue (Azeri-Turkish, Mandarin Chinese, and Czech).

Also, both native and non-native English speakers said that it was easy to get by in the city using the English language: “everybody, so many people in the city speak so much English that it's not that hard to get around” (L. L., 2011). One interviewee mentioned being able to speak English in Vienna as a reason for him feeling at home in the city: “...that's one of the things that really makes me feel at home, because most of the people you might [meet], they speak actually English....So the first thing, you know, you can just go up to them and start speaking English...” (A. B., 2011). One native English speaker mentioned that he felt no worry about speaking English in Vienna because, “English is the global language, you know” (F. F., 2011).

One interviewee, however, said that she felt it difficult to use English in the city and that she believed the presence of her and her international colleagues was a boon to the local population, making the city more “global”,

Vienna is supposed to be a huge European city but at the same time they're always surprised if you're speaking English, and everything is closed. The people are not as global as they actually claim or, you know, they should be. So I think we're doing something good for them because they interact with us at some point and they realize, 'ah, some fun.' (M. D., 2011)

Along this same vein, two people attributed the level of multiculturalism in Vienna to there being a United Nations headquarters located in the city. “I think the international aspect of it is simply the fact that the UN

was placed here. I think if it wasn't for that, you probably wouldn't see as many Irish bars, and you definitely wouldn't see as many English-speaking people around or international people around" (M. B., 2011).

For diverse social locations, pubs and cafes were mentioned by several interviewees; pubs, though, were said to be frequented largely by expatriates, and one Canadian interviewed said she avoids most cafes due to patrons being allowed to smoke inside (L. L., 2011). Two concert-goers said they are able to consume a wide variety of music within the city, with both local bands and world-renowned acts as available options, attesting to the simultaneous global and local aspects of Vienna. The arts were also mentioned by one as being noticeably supported in the city,

[The] social scene is awesome here, people are constantly doing things. I think people are creative here, maybe it's because they don't, artists and musicians don't need to get by taking other jobs because they get money from the state. But I think people are always doing something creative, there's a lot of artists, loads of street art, there's lots of music, there's lots of parties going down, there's lot of creativity, and there's a lot of multiculturalism here... Something that has enticed my brains, how creative people are here, and how people don't create really for money, they just create for the sake of creation. (D. N., 2011)

However, some respondents felt that Vienna was not near the same level of diversity and worldliness as other cities. "I mean things happen here, it's a big enough city, it's a reasonably important European city. I'm sure if you look at the scale of global cities, they're probably tier 4 or 5, they're reasonably high up. But they're not anywhere near the same scale as Madrid or Paris or London, it's a completely different ballgame than this" (M. B., 2011).

Following along this city-comparison subject, a great number of similarities and differences were discussed between Vienna and interviewees' home cities. Says one interviewee, "it's funny because it's, I mean....it's very similar but it's very different at the same time" (L. L., 2011). On the whole, similarities outweighed differences. It was a general consensus that once "the kind of tourist excitement of being in a new place wears off and you realize 'oh shit, I'm actually living here'...the experience of being in a place that's new starts to get old, and then you get into the routine of daily life" (L. L., 2011). As said by one interviewee, after this newness wears off,

...it starts to become kind of a scramble to find places that you feel comfortable, and to know about places, but mostly to find places that you feel at home. Where am I going to do my grocery shopping, what is the soy milk that I'm going to buy? What's the good type of yoghurt? Where's the café that I want to go to and buy my coffee every day? Who am I going to be friends with? You know, that kind of, the grind. (L. L., 2011)

Differences with home cities that people described were more to do with factors that they felt came with age and money than in regard to the city itself. The place was secondary to where they were in their lives and how much money they had available for conspicuous consumption. Asked about whether he would feel the same if he were to have stayed in his home city and not have moved to Vienna, one respondent replied, “I mean it’s, in my circumstances I say it would have been fairly similar. I mean if I had been in the same financial situations all whole way through. I think that’s been a much bigger determinant of how I live, the quality of my life as opposed to the people that are around” (M. B., 2011). Regarding her financial situation, one interview mentioned her lifestyle in Vienna is different than her life in her home city (Santiago), simply because she now has more money,

Yeah, I think I consume, as I always have consumed...well now I have a little bit of more money, like I have a scholarship, so actually I could consume more things that I like. But, it’s the same kind of things...And what I was telling you, now if I have a concert I don’t even doubt it. Before it was more money restriction but still it’s the same things that I like. I go to museums, art exhibitions, movies not so often, going out to dinner not so often either. (M. D., 2011)

One interviewee who moved to Vienna to study admitted he has difficulty recognizing which differences he could attribute to being in a foreign city and which differences were from his living on his own for the first time,

...for me it’s especially difficult because I went to school in the [United] States and I went to college here. I go to college here. And if you ask someone in the states who goes away to school to just another city, their lives are completely different, too. So, I don’t know how much of that difference... life is just structurally so different because I don’t, I’m not living at home, I have to look at what I buy and, it’s not that I earn all my money but it’s, I’m in charge of my finances, I have to go grocery shopping, I have to manage my time...so in that sense, my life is so different in so many respects, that it’s difficult to separate what of that is the different culture and the country and what of that is the different stage of my life. (H. D., 2011)

One respondent said that it was not the place that mattered, so long as he could create a space around him that resembled what he was used to. To “gradually create your home, you almost reenact certain things that you like to do, within a space” (D. N., 2011).

However, there were some definite similarities and differences that interviewees described. Regarding similarities, a few general comments were as follows: one respondent from South Africa mentioned that the “general lifestyle [in Vienna] is quite a lot the same as in Stellen-

bosch actually” (Stellenbosch was the last city he lived in in South Africa) (D. N., 2011). Another (also South African) said that, outside of the language, life in Vienna was largely the same as back home. “I don’t see much threat moving to a different, you know, one, a culture that didn’t really resemble South Africa. But I mean it does actually quite resemble it, just the language is different” (F. F., 2011). One Chilean woman, when asked if she felt she had to change her way of life after moving to Vienna, she responded, “No, I don’t feel it like that” (M. D., 2011).

Specifically, one interviewee said that the governmental system of the city was very similar to what she experienced back home. As in her home city (Tainan),

...in each district, there is a Meldeamt [city-district government building], main insurance company, or something like Wiener Energie [Vienna Energy Department] that I can deal with stuff for living in Vienna. I have to say, most of the things I experience now so far are not really different from home... living in Vienna is almost like living at home. This means the access to consumption, administration and official and legal stuff in general (K. J., 2011).

Regarding the population of the city, one interviewee stated that, compared to Dublin (the first city he lived in in his home country of Ireland), “when I first moved there in 2003 it was, demographics-wise it was quite similar” (M. B., 2011). Another respondent said he found the emphasis placed on the arts in Vienna similar to that of his home city (Montreal) (B. An., 2011).

Differences were given in much more specific examples. One major difference cited (and discussed under the heading of “daily transaction of business”, see hardware test) was that of shops closing earlier and being closed on Sundays and holidays. Additionally, one interviewee from the U.S. said that in Vienna the distance to the market was shorter and the frequency of going was much greater as compared to what he was familiar with back home,

In the states it’s, yeah, there’s a few grocery stores around my house, but it may be a 10 minute drive. But here it’s a 10 minute walk and I go by four different ones. And, so there’s that, and there’s also, you know, you go to the grocery store and you go a lot more often here... The things don’t last as long here – there’s not the preservatives and conservatives and everything else – but they’re fresher and they’re probably healthier, I would assume. (H. D., 2011)

Further regarding diet, one woman from China responded that her eating patterns were much different back home. “For example, before I may have a really good breakfast, lunch, and dinner in the evening, but here I just see the people, they just have some hard bread for lunch, I feel ‘aww it’s so pathetic’, but after one year I start to do it as well” (B. J. 2011). One Canadian commented on breakfast in Vienna, saying that

“the one thing I want to say is North America, hands down, we know how to do breakfast much better than Europe. Breakfast is a big deal at home, and here it seems like an afterthought or, I don’t know, you have some yoghurt or muesli...” (B. An., 2011). Two respondents mentioned Vienna’s café culture as being distinctly different from their home cities: one said that his home city instead had an emphasis on clubs and bars, and the other attributed it to his home city as having a culture of hosting at private residences instead of at public venues.

Safety was cited as a major difference between Vienna and the cities of the two South African respondents. Said one, “here you don’t have to look over your shoulder, which is a very new thing to me. It’s like your spider senses are off” (D. N., 2011). Vienna was considered by many to be a very clean city, but three interviewees did mention the amount of littering that they witnessed as being a major difference in comparison to their home city. Within a group discussion, one said, “it’s pretty clean, people litter a lot but like it’s relatively clean” (D. N., 2011). Another responded with, “yeah people litter a huge amount, I can’t believe it actually. But it’s insane that people walk around and they just, like in the park, you can’t sit anywhere without sitting on a cigarette butt, you know?” (L. L., 2011)

One interviewee from Lagos, Nigeria, said that the pace of life was much different in Vienna. “Because when you come from the city of Lagos, even normally on the street people don’t walk slowly. It’s just like moving across the street in New York, people running...So Lagos is more like that, you see people running for no reason” (A. B., 2011). Beyond that, though, he claimed that the size difference between Vienna and Lagos made it impossible to compare. “It’s complete opposites actually, because the population of Lagos is more than twice the population of the whole of Austria. Austria is like 8 million, Lagos is 20 million...So I don’t compare, actually, because it’s too out, exceptional...” (A. B., 2011).

If comparing cities as a whole was out of the question for some, describing cultural “shocks” – the level of cultural difference between one’s home city and his or her current city of residence – was not. Of the twelve interviews conducted, none said that they had experienced something like a culture shock when they moved to Vienna. Even one interviewee from Nigeria, who had never been to Europe before or lived in a city outside of Nigeria, did not experience a shock when he came here,

No in the sense that, even before leaving Africa, so to say, for the first time, I’m very much aware of how Europe is or how Europe looks like, because my aunt traveled a lot and I know a lot of people that traveled and live in Europe, and I had so many stories from them. And, I watched and read lot of documentaries and materials for studying in Europe, and I know the geography of Europe, kind of, I know the geography of Europe, so to say, very much, because

when I was in high school, geography was my best subject. I was the best geography student in my school, so that helps a lot. (A. B., 2011)

What was more of a shock for him was moving from densely-populated Lagos to the comparatively less-populated Vienna. It was the number of people – or lack thereof – not the culture. One woman from China did mention that the lifestyle in Beijing was different than that in Vienna, but not akin to a shock (B. J., 2011).

The rest of the interviewees maintained that what they experienced upon arrival were “minor things really” that took some getting used to, “no real like structural differences or big cultural differences” (F. F., 2011). Says one, “I mean, there’s things you have to get used to, like there’s the grocery store and the products that you can’t find, and like...getting used to things is different than culture shock” (L. L., 2011). As stated by one respondent, “Vienna seemed very easy to slide into. So I don’t think much of it” (B. An., 2011). “Like being in any new place,” said one, “I think there’s things that you have to get used to...Not a shock” (D. N., 2011). One respondent from the United States said it was stranger for him to go back to Kansas City (his home city) after having lived in Vienna than it was when he first moved from Kansas City to Vienna, “like reverse culture-shock. Going to the grocery store [in Kansas City], it was just completely bizarre” (H. D., 2011).

In terms of goods at these stores, there was a common consensus that what is on sale is largely the same, just labeled under different brand names. “There are definitely...different brands, though there are a few of the same brands, but the kind of, they’re selling the same thing, it’s just under different names. You know, generic products but branded different” (F. F., 2011). As to global products, every person who came from a large city said that the brands available at home were available here. “Brands are pretty international, in this sense you can really feel the globalization...And Vienna is one of those fashion cities. It’s not surprising to have all those brands here. They draw a picture of globalization, a global market” (I. I., 2011). Clothing brands were discussed by five interviewees as being the same as in their home cities. One interviewee from Taiwan, who has an interest in fashion, said “for clothing, except for very specific Asian designers, here [Vienna] is more or less like home” (K. J., 2011). Interestingly, the clothing chain H&M was mentioned by four of the twelve people interviewed as being in their home city, all four of which were from different countries. One other said that H&M had stores in larger cities in his country (the United States), but not in the city that he had lived in. Says one respondent, “I mean the goods are mostly the same, the brands...it’s mostly the same” (B. A., 2011).

A noted difficulty was in finding some specialty items. Again, Turkish shops were cited as a source for finding Middle Eastern products. For other “exotic” foods and products, there exist in Vienna three

“American-UK” shops, as well as one large international supermarket, which all carry sodas, chips, candy, and other foods common in countries outside of continental Europe. There is one specifically Latin American market and a restaurant that also sells imported Latin American packaged foods. If one has the proper work clearance, there is a commissary in the VIC (Vienna International Centre, UN Vienna headquarters) that stocks foods and products from all over the world. In short, specialty products are available but there are limitations on the number of items, and the markup in price is sometimes extreme; because of high demand, specialty shop owners are able to charge a large premium on the products they stock. Unless one is rather wealthy, this makes the purchasing of specialty items for general consumption prohibitively expensive (one example, a box of Froot Loops costs 8.90 Euro at the one of the American-UK shops). On the whole, though, most everything that was available in the home city was available in Vienna; some things were the same but under a different brand, while others were exactly the same brand in Vienna as they were back in respondents’ home cities.

With these results we can make some definite comparisons to the literature, particularly relating to Pieterse’s (2009) concept of the hybrid. The fact that none of the respondents reported having a culture shock after coming to Vienna is a testament to Pieterse’s global *mélange* thesis. The reasons behind culture shock are many, but suffice it to say for now that “culture shock is precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse” (Oberg, 1954). For someone not to experience a culture shock after moving to a foreign city, recognizable social and cultural “signs and symbols” from home must be present within that city. The only way it is possible for 12 young people from different geographical locations, each with its own particular socio-cultural and ethnic background, to not feel a culture shock coming to Vienna is because the socio-cultural environment in the city is similar enough to the one found back home.

But how is this possible? It is in one of two ways: either Vienna’s socio-cultural environment, or software, is sufficiently hybrid to allow for people from all geographic regions to feel comfortable within its boundaries; or, the socio-cultural environment in the cities from which each of the interviewees came are equally as hybrid as Vienna’s, thereby making the move from one socially hybrid city-island to another a relatively easy one. The arguments put forth in the literature review (see “cities as McDonaldized islands” subsection in Cities section) attest to the fact that today’s city-network of “islands of the living dead” (Ritzer, 2003) are defined by the universal hybridity of their socio-cultural environments – meaning that their software is of a hybrid nature with geographically-specific glocalised tendencies – and so we must conclude that it is the latter that is taking place; all cities are becoming socio-culturally hybrid places. People from other major cities who moved to Vienna do not feel

a culture shock because they are simply moving from one hybrid “island” to another; that all the respondents were able to find commodities in Vienna that are also on offer back home only further attests to this fact.

One related question that received mixed responses, though, was whether or not the interviewees could or do consider Vienna as their home. One interviewee responded, “the first time I felt that [Vienna was home] was a very scary moment. I came from Prague back here, [and] I was like ‘oh my God, it’s good to be home’” (D. N., 2011). Another said, “Yeah I think you can definitely, I think that I definitely can call Vienna a home of sorts. I mean when I go traveling, when I’ve been traveling places outside of Vienna and then come back here, I feel like I’m coming home” (L. L., 2011). One respondent went so far as to call Vienna “a second home.” He went on to say,

I feel really at home here, really really, because I’m opportune to travel to those other cities across Europe, other countries, but I never felt home like here in Austria, in Vienna...I feel more at home because I know my ways, I understand the people, I understand the culture, and yeah. I tend to kind of find whatever I want. I can get it easily because I know my way. I know how to do things. I have a couple of friends, you know. So it’s really home, I feel really at home. I don’t feel as if I’m an alien, kind of a stranger here or a passerby. I feel home, really home here. (A. B., 2011)³⁰

The rest of the responses were less concrete. When asked if he felt at home, one interviewee replied, “Yeah I do. Well I don’t feel like being abroad. People are friendly, welcoming...you can face some bureaucratic stuff, it’s very the same, everything’s in presentation. But the society, the daily life is pretty comfortable...[but] I cannot say that I can fully feel myself home” (I. I., 2011). Most other responses were similar to his, including the following:

I don’t think I would ever consider Vienna home, but I think it’s definitely a city that I will, it’ll hold a special place in my heart and I think, as cheesy as that is, I think I’ll be very happy to come back if ever there’s the opportunity to come back. I’ll have very fond memories of it, and I’ll probably be excited when people happen to mention Austria or Vienna in my future and I could contribute somehow. I would probably jump at any remote opportunity to come back, too. But I wouldn’t go as far as home. (B. An., 2011)

As to feeling assimilated and/or integrated into the population of Vienna, the results were mixed with the majority saying that they did not feel integrated. Those who felt most assimilated said they did not feel foreign, but they also did not feel as if they were locals. There is an inter-

³⁰ Worth mentioning is that this is the same interviewee who felt that Lagos (his home city) and Vienna were incomparably different.

esting relationship here between this discussion on assimilation and feeling home with the previous topic of culture shock that is worth exploring. Although the respondents did not feel a culture shock after coming to Vienna, most did not see themselves as being assimilated or as though Vienna could be considered a home. One main reason for this was the language barrier,

It's easy for an English person to get around here, but to enter into deeper understandings, to create friendships here, you need to understand, start to understand German. When I went to more parties and so on, where people actually from Austria go to, you really need to, you feel out if you don't understand what people are saying. (D. N., 2011)

One interviewee also mentioned that although he has Austrian friends, communication in the friendship is done through English (M. B., 2011). These two seemingly contradictory aspects of Vienna's software – no culture shock but also no assimilation – relate back to Vienna's status as a worldly, but not global, city. Because of the UN offices housed at the VIC and the multitude of other international organizations with offices in Vienna, there are a high number of foreigners living in the city. This has been a major cause of the creation of a hybrid socio-cultural environment in Vienna, in which people do not feel out of place (meaning no culture shock). Having a decent population of people from one's home country or familiar with one's cultural history is also paramount to this lack of a shock. The glocal (Robertson, 1995) that has formed in Vienna, though, is biased more toward the local than the global (for a full treatment of glocalization, see pp. 9-10). Austrian culture weighs heavily in the city due to the historical pride of the Viennese. The intense care the locals take in preserving the palaces, theaters, and apartment buildings which hearken back to the city's once-imperial grandeur does not go unnoticed by foreigners living in the city. While expatriates have had a large influence on bringing the global hybrid into Vienna, it is apparent that there remains a dominant Viennese mindset.

Sadly, this local culture does not seem to be incredibly welcoming of foreigners, especially those who do not know much German; this is a major contributing factor to expatriates not feeling assimilated or at home in Vienna. The language barrier was cited as leading to occasional misunderstandings, particularly in regard to tastes in humor, and for one respondent it even led to a serious provocation. An old woman came up to his and his girlfriend's flat, complaining about noise. Neither of them spoke very good German and when they could not understand her, the old woman replied, "Scheisse Ausländer! Sie müssen Deutsch lernen!" (Shitty foreigners, you must learn German!) (M. B., 2011). Along a similar vein, one interviewee said he found that once he was able to speak some German, the locals were much friendlier.

Most speak a bit of German now but did not speak any before they arrived. And, for a few, their level of German is such that “even here [when] you want to speak German, they switch to English because it’s like that” (B. A., 2011). Six interviewees mentioned that most local Viennese speak English – with two in this group saying that the Viennese speak it very well – which makes it easy to get around but more difficult to become deeply enmeshed into Austrian culture. One interviewee who is studying in Vienna put it well, saying,

I think where it becomes an issue is if anyone of us decided to stay here independently of this [study] program, then you get into a situation where the language barrier does become an issue because...If you’re the only person there who can’t speak German or can’t speak enough to follow the conversation, then that’s when you start to feel like an outsider. (L. L., 2011)

Regarding his low understanding of German, one interviewee places the blame on the English ability of the Viennese. Because they are so good, living in Vienna is not conducive to learning the language,

People that I speak to, the more German people I meet...They all say that by now I should have learned German to speak, to have a conversation. I don’t think the timeframe has got to do with it, I think it’s the fact that people speak English here, quite freely and quite well, even though they’re a bit pensive. So you don’t, you’re not put into a situation that you have to learn and become lazy. (D. N., 2011)

Also, the expected length of stay was identified as another key reason for not taking great lengths to understand the culture and not making a greater attempt to learn the language. From one respondent, who has since left Vienna,

Whenever I go to someplace I always try to go for 5-6 months, one year would be great. Then you have time to develop, to probe the culture, to make relationships, to really observe daily life, how people cope with certain troubles. Also important is language, it’s a kind of key. Also that’s a reason why I suffer in Austria. Our assumptions are to some extent limited and shallow. How can we know, how can we judge when we don’t understand them, because we don’t know very good German language... When I came here I was trying really to learn German, but later on it was no opportunity to develop. It’s a pity but, yeah. (B. A., 2011)

The one exception is the interviewee from Kansas City in the United States. His mother is Austrian and so he also has Austrian citizenship. When he first arrived three years ago, he “didn’t really speak German...my mom had spoken a couple German words with me as a child, just for the fun of it” (H. D., 2011). He made great efforts to integrate

himself into the Viennese population, actively avoiding friendships with English speakers because “I wanted to really get into my German.” Now life for him here is much different, as most of his friends are Austrian or German. “I speak more than 90% in German. My social life is almost exclusively in German” (H. D., 2011).

Further on friendships, nine of the 12 said that their friends and primary social networks were with other foreign nationals in the expatriate community living in Vienna. Of the three others, one said his friendships were relatively split among expatriates and Austrians, and another said that he had mainly local friends. As to why she was largely involved in the expat community, one interviewee said, “I think that even if we did speak German, expats tend to congregate. I think that’s always a factor” (L. L., 2011). Speaking on behalf of the English-speaking expat community, one man said that they choose to stick to themselves:

The expat community is basically Irish bars, international bar staff and a selection of regular customers. And between all the bars, you end up knowing everyone...they’re not integrated at all. They do their own thing and, they don’t stay clear of it, but they don’t make an effort to try and integrate into the community. But they’re self sufficient and don’t see a need to, or a desire to. (M. B., 2011)

This man’s observations also held true for the non-native English-speakers that were interviewed. One man from Poland, for example, said that he was mostly friends with foreigners. “There is no problem with communication between foreigners here in Vienna,” he said (B. A., 2011). With locals, though, it was a different matter. Additionally, the Azeri man interviewed said that he was friends with “a couple of guys from Vienna, but I’m not that much frequently in touch with them. Mostly internationals” (I. I., 2011).

The international community is large in Vienna, so there is no reason for foreigners staying a short amount of time to befriend Austrians living in the city. Because of the language barrier that a lot of expatriates face in the city, the time it takes for many to first learn the language and then become friends with Austrians (Viennese and other Austrians living in the city) is not worth the effort. Again, although there does not appear to be a culture shock for foreigners in Vienna, the local population and their culture does not appear welcoming or permeable enough to allow for a complete hybridization of the city’s socio-cultural environment. Interestingly, this unfriendliness is so severe that it has actually been the case of an academic study. As recognized by Christian Karner (2007), Austria’s complex history has created a highly nationalistic mentality within the country, which has created a dichotomy that “delineates ‘real Austrians’ from ‘foreigners and asylum seekers’ who find themselves discursively reified and institutionally excluded” (p. 109). Because of this conscious inward separation by the local population, it is more the case

that expatriates establish pockets of familiarity throughout the city (English and Irish pubs, clubs geared toward specific nationalities or even the expatriate community as-a-whole, one example being Inter Nations), rather than the entire city being welcoming to foreigners. It appears that, in the end, Vienna still holds strongly to its local Austrian roots.

As compared to the results of the hardware test, what can be said of Vienna's software is not so clear-cut. Vienna's socio-cultural aspects are noticeably diverse and with the great number of instances of multiculturalism described by respondents (use of multiple languages outside of English and German, a diverse music and arts scene), it can be said that Vienna contains elements of the diverse and hybrid global within it. Most everyone interviewed mentioned that they were able to find similar goods and services as they had enjoyed back home, if not from the exact same brand or company as in their home city. Importantly, no one mentioned there being a culture shock when coming to Vienna - either they could almost exactly "reenact certain things" that they liked to do and that were available back home, or they were able to find stores, restaurants, and social circles that were similar to what existed back in their home cities. Even for one Nigerian interviewee, who had never been to Europe before moving to Austria, the socio-cultural environment in Vienna was not a shock for him. Because of stories from friends and family who had traveled to Europe before, as well as his being able to see and learn about Austria in school, he was not taken by surprise upon arrival and does not feel out of place living in Vienna. This shows that the city's social software is strongly hybridized, even to the point where someone who came from a distinctly different cultural environment and had never before lived in or visited the "western" world would not feel out of place when s/he arrived in the city.

That being said, it cannot not be denied that Vienna still maintains a strong Austrian character, evidenced by the great number of respondents mentioning their frequent contact with fellow mobile people and migrants but relative disconnect with the local Austrian or Viennese population. To take from Emile Durkheim (2000), it has yet to completely throw off the "yoke" - or social pressure - associated with a traditional, homogeneous local culture. The indigenous Viennese still largely ascribe to Austrian socio-cultural mores; while foreigners are somewhat able to assimilate, it is under pressure to adhere to Austrian traditions and customs (Karner, 2007). Calling Vienna "home" for most expatriates living in the city, particularly for those coming from more "global" cities, was difficult considering their refusal to alter their lifestyles to fit within the social parameters as designated by the indigenous Viennese population. Establishing friendships with locals - which would thereby create strong ties to the local culture - were sometimes discussed, but most of these relationships were conducted in English, not German. If so many young Austrians did not speak English as well as they do, perhaps this

would not have been a topic of discussion at all; if there was no chance of communication between locals and expatriates, then it is likely that connections between the two groups would not actively be sought. It appears that, at least in Vienna's case, not all aspects of the global become localized, particularly in regard to language.

In general, most interviewees said that they associated largely with other foreigners living in the city. Most interviewees also felt that the same was true for Austrians, in that they largely associated only with themselves or other German language speakers. As suggested by one respondent, perhaps this is because of easily accessible common bonds – foreigners understand each other better than locals might and so become bound through their commonness of being foreign; Austrians understand each other better than foreigners might, so they too attract to one another out of common heritage. If the Austrians are to be blamed for a lack of openness and acceptance of people from other socio-cultural backgrounds or if this is the fault of the international community voluntarily separating itself from the indigenous population in Austria, it is difficult to say; it is likely that both of these factors play equally important roles in the assimilation process in Vienna. What can be drawn from this, though, is that there exists a noticeable demarcation between these two populations (foreign and Austrian/Viennese) in the city. It appears that Vienna is connected to the global, but local forces are too strong to allow for the complete hybridization of the city's software.

Concluding Remarks

In answering the research question, the results of the case study show that Vienna demonstrates homogenizing structural uniformity and is leaning towards the direction of homogenous heterogeneity with regard to its social space – although this second process is not yet complete. Vienna is well-connected technologically and in its inter-city infrastructure, and what it lacks in economic importance it makes up for in international-political significance. The organizational makeup of the city – living areas, commercial areas, touristic areas – rates equal to other cities to which it was compared by respondents. Additionally, the organization of the city's infrastructure was said to be fantastic and user-friendly by all those interviewees who commented on it – one went as far as say that he had never seen anything like it in the world (A. B., 2011). Conducting daily business and other processes of daily life were seen by interviewees as being similar to the way they were done back home, with markets closing early and on Sundays and holidays as the major discrepancy. All other differences were minor and acknowledged by the interviewees as such.

It is clear that the local Viennese population and the city's government have played an active role in managing the desired level of global socio-cultural connectedness. This has allowed Vienna to successfully

absorb global flows and has forced the reinterpretation of the global into a Viennese-local context, the surge in McCafes being a prime example. The rise of McDonaldized, Vienna-specific bakery chains can also be seen as an example of glocalization in action. Although it has adapted to the needs of the 21st century, Vienna has been able to protect its cultural uniqueness – most notably in its café culture – which makes it the distinctive city that tourists continue to visit, students to flock to, and political interests to concentrate on.

Determining the answer to the second part of the research question – are cities homogeneously heterogeneous in their social and cultural atmosphere – was a much more difficult question to answer, and rightly so considering the questions robust nature. On the whole, it seems that Vienna is a culturally and ethnically diverse city, but there are major country-specific constraints that bar it from becoming a full-fledged global city. It seems that the expatriate community in Vienna is just large enough to sustain a separate, cosmopolitan culture, but just small enough to not have an impact on the entirety of the city. Most interviewees enjoyed living in Vienna and found little disagreeable with the lifestyle here, as they were able to find most of the same goods and services as were available back in their home cities. Not many, though, thought of Vienna as a potential long-term home. It was considered to be nice for a short while – clean, safe, well-organized – but a long-term stay was not an attractive option. This was not because they did not feel comfortable in the city, or that it was too foreign in comparison to their home cities; the main deterrent cited was the language barrier.

Both native and non-native English speakers said that it was easy to get around the city speaking English, but to become fully assimilated would require taking the time to learn German. Although this may sound like an obvious point to make, it is an important one: people who move frequently between cities around the globe do not have the time to learn the dominant language of every city that they go through or briefly reside in. The easier it is for them to either speak in their native language or in English, the more likely it is that they will choose to stay. If it is not possible to create deeper relationships with the local Viennese population because of this language issue, then members of the global middle class will not voluntarily stay long-term (I say voluntarily because work may require a lengthy stay without regard to personal choice).

Outside of language, Vienna was accepted by all interviewees as having equally diverse social and cultural possibilities as back home and did not pose a “culture shock” to most of the respondents. Of those that felt a shock, one attributed it to the smaller population size of Vienna and not to the social or cultural atmosphere of the city; the other considered it as merely different (these two came from what would be the most culturally separate locations from all those interviewed, southern Nigeria and northeastern China).

In sum, although it meets the structural and connectivity standards for major cities of the world, it would appear that Vienna is not able to entirely claim itself as yet being a city with a homogeneously heterogeneous socio-cultural environment. For Vienna and those other cities of similar ranking, it seems that while the hardware fits global specifications, the software is not quite up-to-date. However, in the Viennese case this could likely be due to the strong ties the city retains to local Austrian culture, most importantly the historical-nationalist establishment of the local “good”, foreigner “bad” mentality that pervades in the country (Karner, 2007: 109). The foundations for achieving a higher level of worldliness in Vienna are currently in place, however, the keystone being the diverse population attracted to Vienna by the UN headquarters housed in the city. Alone, this is not enough to transform Vienna into a multicultural, global metropolis, but with so many international organizations here, there is great potential for this to occur in the future through the further attraction of global political interests. It seems that Vienna is a standardized world city with a hint of the global, but not a global city. The question is, though, do the locals actually want Vienna to be such a worldly city? Then again, maybe the choice is not theirs to make.

8. Conclusion

The preceding pages were an attempt to understand present-day global processes and their impact on the structural and socio-cultural makeup of cities around the world. It was posited that, because of their being in an interconnected network (Castells, 2000a; 2000b) that exists outside of nation-state boundaries (Sassen, 1991; 1994), cities are becoming more and more alike one another and increasingly detached from the traditions, customs, and culture of the countries that surround them. Because goods, money, ideas, and people are moving within and between cities in greater numbers and to-and-from more diverse locations than ever before, it was suggested that these global flows (Appadurai, 1996) are causing cities to become, paradoxically, both homogenous and heterogeneous to one another. On the one hand, they are becoming structurally similar to allow for ease of movement and the accommodation of global flows while, on the other hand, these same flows are physically represented in the creation of uniformly hybrid (Pieterse, 2009) socio-cultural environments.

An extensive literature review was undertaken to establish a strong theoretical foundation and allow for the concept to be completely enmeshed into an academic context. The discussion began with a treatment of the rationalization theories of Max Weber and Karl Mannheim, who believed rationalization to be leading to increased uniformity (Weber, 1968; Mannheim, 1929/1936), followed by a counterargument from Emile Durkheim, who saw rationalization as allowing for increased diversity (Durkheim, 2000). The theories of these early rationalist thinkers were used as a launching point into contemporary debates on globalization, as to it being either a process of McDonaldization (Ritzer, 1993; 1998) or hybridization (Pieterse, 2009). These two streams of thought (homogeneity versus heterogeneity through the process of rationalization) were carried through an examination of current global trends to determine whether the concepts of westernization/Americanization continue to retain their validity in the face of increasing hybridization pressures from members of the rising middle classes in the emerging economies. It was proposed that, due to the simultaneous decline of U.S./Western cultural strength, the rising demands of new and diverse global players, and the more pressing fears of neighborly cultural domination (Appadurai, 1996), it is no longer possible to consider either globalization or McDonaldization strictly through the lens of U.S. or Western socio-cultural influence (Watson, 2004). Therefore, because global cultural influence is no longer defined by one world region alone, it was posited that the glocalization (Robertson, 1995) process has taken on a new, hy-

brid form (Pieterse, 2009; Watson, 2004). To fully realize this shift, a new reference point for understanding was put forward, that being the concept of homogeneous heterogeneity.

It was determined that the constructs of homogeneous heterogeneity would be most prevalent in cities, as they are in constant contact with global flows (Castells, 2000a), they are geographically-disjointed agglomeration points (Sassen, 1991; 1994), and they are the most likely relocation points of global middle class expatriates. Further, through the standardization of structural and socio-cultural expectations of people living, working, and traveling within and between cities, it was shown that the greater global importance of a city, the greater its level of homogeneous heterogeneity. This is reflected in the copious number of city-ranking tables and guides (Mercer, 2010, 2011; Global and World Cities Think Tank, 2011; Foreign Policy, 2010; The Mori Memorial Foundation, 2009), and is embodied in a modified version of Ritzer's concept of cities as McDonaldized "islands" (Ritzer, 2003). Combined, these concepts provided a framework for the extension and reinterpretation of Zhongxin Sun's ideas of the "hardware" and "software" of a city (Sun, 2007), which were adopted for use as analytical categories for the case study.

For a relevant proof of the theory of homogeneous heterogeneity, the literature was then tested against a particular case – the city of Vienna, Austria – to determine its validity. Theoretically, a city exhibiting total homogeneous heterogeneity should be both uniform in its internal infrastructure and in its connectivity to other global cities, as well as having its social atmosphere defined by heterogeneity and hybridity – the global – a common feature among the most global cities. The conclusion reached was that Vienna met the structural uniformity requirements, but fell short in regard to population diversity and socio-cultural heterogeneity. Because it is a worldly city, it contains aspects of the heterogeneous global; since it is not a global city, though, local forces are still strong enough to prohibit its social aspects from being completely defined by hybridity and heterogeneity.

This result does not debunk the concept of homogeneous heterogeneity in any way; rather, it shows concretely that for the ranking of world city at which Vienna stands, it is not possible to meet both of these conditions. Cities of this rank do not have to have the infrastructure available to move the vast amounts of money, goods, information, and people as do more global cities. Further, these cities do not have the same capacity for global middle class attraction as do more globally prominent cities, thereby limiting the level of social heterogeneity attainable. If the opportunity were presented to perform this same study in those worldliest of cities (New York, London, Tokyo), it should prove to be the case that these two "hardware" and "software" conditions are met. If they are indeed the most global cities, they should be the most well-

connected and diverse in relation to other cities (especially New York, which is used as the standard of diversity and connectivity in most global city rankings). Additionally, further research on cities of the same worldly ranking as Vienna (following the GaWC scale) would be useful to confirm or reject not only my beliefs espoused above – that all cities of the same ranking exhibit similar tendencies of homogeneous heterogeneity – but it would also attest to the applicability and usefulness of city-ranking systems. We see here, then, a definite opportunity for further research on the subject.

The concept of homogeneous heterogeneity is the outcome of an assemblage of knowledge from a diverse set of fields; as is the case in global studies, connections are found which oftentimes either were not known before or did not previously exist. As such, the concept extends the literature of each of these separate bodies of work in different ways, as well as the overarching subject of global studies in general. For the topic of rationalization it shows that, as was stated in the quotation at the beginning of the thesis, increased rationalization of our lives can and likely will have diverse and unique outcomes. Homogeneous heterogeneity combines two seemingly opposite sides of the debate in rationalization literature – rationalization as leading to either increased homogeneity or heterogeneity – into one synthesized concept where both sides are necessary truths.

For cultural studies, homogeneous heterogeneity allows underrepresented peoples to claim greater strength in influencing global culture, thereby also demanding greater responsibility from them. It removes the discussion of global cultural influence from an “U.S.” vs. “them” perspective and into a more equal environment, where once-neglected underlying push-pull and splashback factors (Watson, 2004) can be recognized and treated to a greater level of analysis. As to global cities, it reinforces the concepts laid forth by previous authors on the subject (Sassen 1991, 1994; Castells, 2000a, 2000b; Ritzer, 2003; Watson, 2004) and combines them in a novel way to provide a new theoretical construct for the field. It allows for an improved description of the impacts that unceasing and diverse global flows have on cities that other, more static ideas – such as glocalization – do not provide.

Finally, in relation to the global middle class and middle class mobility, this thesis is intended to improve the condition of this new and exciting field of study by adding a substantial theoretical framework around which this topic can be discussed. Because it is such a new field, this thesis is meant to provide greater legitimacy for and appreciation of the global middle class and middle class migration as objects of study, and act as a strong basis for further research.

In the end, what does the process of homogeneous heterogeneity mean for the future of cities in our globalized world? Will increasing rationalization cause every city to become a London, a New York, a To-

kyo? What if these processes continued on into lower geographic levels, eventually reaching into the smallest of villages, connecting every single culture, person, and idea into one global, unceasing flow? While I argue that this is already occurring between major cities, imagine if everywhere was as connected. This might seem desirable at first, but what would it be like if every inch of earth was so globally-connected, so formally rationalized, so culturally hybridized? Nothing would ever be special because it would be just like everything else. There would be no reason for exploration or travel, because everyplace one goes would be exactly the same as where s/he came from. There would never again be the possibility to get away from technology, to ever “unplug” from the system and enjoy how unique and special our local cultures really are. The whole world would become one gigantic McDonaldized “island of the living dead.”

So long as the global middle class grows in size, however, there will be more and more people taking part in these flows, demanding ever-greater rationalization so as to decrease price and increase ease of operation. But this increased global demand for travel, more advanced goods and services, and other aspects of middle class lifestyle will require greater and greater inputs of raw materials and will cause greater and greater output of harmful pollutants – not to mention their being consumed and exhumed, respectively, at rates never before witnessed in history. In the end, is the rise of the global middle class sustainable?

We are at an unprecedented moment in human history, where it is possible that, in the foreseeable future, every person in the entire world will be able to enjoy a middle class existence. What impacts this will have socially, culturally, politically, and environmentally – not on only the future of humanity but also of the world we inhabit – it is, at the moment, impossible to say. All we can do is pray that the path we are heading down does not have a dead-end. As I started with a quotation, so too shall I end with one: “You're waiting for a train, a train that will take you far away. You know where you hope this train will take you, but you don't know for sure” (Nolan, 2010). Let us hope we know where our train is taking us.

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Appendix – List of World Cities as Ranked by the Global and World Cities Think Tank (GaWC)

Alpha	Beta	Gamma	High Sufficiency	Sufficiency
<i>Alpha ++</i>	<i>Beta +</i>	<i>Gamma +</i>	Adelaide	Lausanne
London	Washington	Montreal	Colombo	Medellin
New York	Melbourne	Nairobi	Lahore	Sacramento
	Johannesburg	Bratislava	Tegucigalpa	Milwaukee
<i>Alpha +</i>	Atlanta	Panama City	Vilnius	San Jose (CA)
Hong Kong	Barcelona	Chennai	Phoenix	Richmond
Paris	San Francisco	Brisbane	Hyderabad (India)	Las Vegas
Singapore	Manila	Casablanca	Cleveland	Christchurch
Tokyo	Bogota	Denver	Glasgow	Memphis
Sydney	Tel Aviv	Quito	Dhaka	Hamilton (BER)
Milan	New Delhi	Stuttgart	Monterrey	Jerusalem
Shanghai	Dubai	Vancouver	Tampa	Belfast
Beijing	Bucharest	Zagreb	San Juan	Chengdu
		Manama	Hanoi	Krakow
<i>Alpha</i>	<i>Beta</i>	Guatemala City	Tunis	Hartford
Madrid	Oslo	Cape Town	Lyon	Porto Alegre
Moscow	Berlin	San Jose (CR)	Leeds	Pune
Seoul	Helsinki	Minneapolis	La Paz	Nashville
Toronto	Geneva	Santo Domingo	Kansas City	Basel
Brussels	Copenhagen	Seattle	Pittsburgh	Honolulu
Buenos Aires	Riyadh		Orlando	Dar Es Salaam
Mumbai	Hamburg	<i>Gamma</i>	Belgrade	Omaha
Kuala Lumpur	Cairo	Ljubljana	Charlotte	Raleigh
Chicago	Luxembourg	Shenzhen	Osaka	Newcastle
	Bangalore	Perth	Asuncion	Lusaka
<i>Alpha -</i>	Dallas	Calcutta	Indianapolis	Reykjavik
Warsaw	Kuwait	Guadalajara	Canberra	Macao
Sao Paulo	Boston	Antwerp	Georgetown (CI)	Durban
Zurich		Philadelphia	Accra	Valencia
Amsterdam	<i>Beta -</i>	Rotterdam	Managua	Curitiba
Mexico City	Munich	Amman	Bristol	Leipzig
Jakarta	Jeddah	Portland	Bologna	Aberdeen
Dublin	Miami	Lagos	Baltimore	Dresden
Bangkok	Lima		Nassau	Marseille
Taipei	Kiev	<i>Gamma -</i>	St Louis	Cali
Istanbul	Houston	Detroit	Ottawa	Baku
Rome	Guangzhou	Manchester	Cologne	Liverpool
Lisbon	Beirut	Wellington		Ankara
Frankfurt	Karachi	Riga		Tianjin

Stockholm	Dusseldorf	Guayaquil	Penang
Prague	Sofia	Edinburgh	Salt Lake City
Vienna	Montevideo	Porto	Gaborone
Budapest	Nicosia	San Salvador	Muscat
Athens	Rio de Janeiro	St Petersburg	Nagoya
Caracas	Ho Chi Minh City	Tallinn	Austin
Los Angeles		Port Louis	Harare
Auckland		San Diego	Winnipeg
Santiago		Islamabad	Puebla
		Birmingham (UK)	Nanjing
		Doha	Kaohsiung City
		Calgary	Tashkent
		Almaty	Dalian
		Columbus	Southampton
			Tijuana
			Tulsa
			Seville
			Edmonton
			Rochester
			Skopje
			Strasbourg
			Kingston (JAM)
			Halifax
			Labuan
			Genoa
			Utrecht
			Birmingham (USA)
			Bremen
			Cincinnati
			Johor Baharu
			Tbilisi
			Nantes
			Cardiff
			Hannover
			Arhus
			Abu Dhabi
			New Orleans
			Turin
			Libreville
			Chihuahua
			Quebec

ERIK W. SCHAU

Current Address: Semperstraße 37/1/21, 1180 Vienna, Austria *Permanent Address:* 106 Dawn Place, Petaluma, CA 94952, USA

Phone: +43 (0)680 32 05 167; +1 (707) 765 - 1496 *Email:* ewalterschau@gmail.com

Date of birth: 21 March 1987 *Gender:* Male *Marital Status:* Single *Citizenship:* USA

EXPERIENCE

Foreign Commercial Service, International Trade Administration, US Dept. of Commerce 08/2011 – 11/2011, Vienna, Austria
Intern

Assisted in the planning of the US Industry Program at the 55th Annual IAEA General Conference, held to introduce high-ranking officers of US energy companies to diplomats of IAEA member countries and IAEA staff; Completed market research and industry analysis for US companies looking to expand into Austria; Assisted in writing market briefs (concise market overviews) for commercial guides published by the International Trade Administration

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) 08/2010 – 12/2010, Vienna, Austria
Research Associate

Preparing economic data and background for working papers on energy conservation and efficiency in industrial and manufacturing processes; Assisted in the preparation of the 2010/11 Industrial Development Report (IDR)

Santa Barbara Eco-Office/Document Systems 02/2009 – 06/2009, Santa Barbara, CA, USA
Marketing/Public Relations Manager

Founding member of Eco-Office, an environmental consulting firm focused on the sustainability of daily business activities

Harmer-Schau Auction Galleries, Inc. 06/2006-8 – 08/2006-8, Petaluma, CA, USA
Floor Manager

Customer service contact for international clients; Phone-bidder for international clients

UC Santa Barbara Alumni Association 02/2008-9 – 05/2008-9, Santa Barbara, CA, USA
Media, Marketing, and Event-Planning Intern

Planned the UCSB Class of 1983 25-Year Reunion, 2008; Planned the UCSB 10th Annual Alumni Golf Tournament, 2009

Summer Inn Santa Barbara 06/2007 – 08/2007, Santa Barbara, CA, USA
Hotel Manager

56-room on-campus hotel; managed staff, check-in/out, reservations, daily bookkeeping, administration

EDUCATION

University of California at Santa Barbara 09/2005 – 06/2009, Santa Barbara, CA, USA
Bachelor of Arts in Global Studies with an Emphasis in Economics; Minor in Music;

Graduated with High Honors, 3.6 Cumulative GPA

Eötvös Loránd University Fall 2007, Budapest, Hungary
Education Abroad Program

University of California at Berkeley Summer 2008, Berkeley, CA, USA
HAAS Business School BASE summer intensive business program

University of Leipzig 10/2009 – 08/2010, Leipzig, Germany

University of Vienna 10/2010 – 11/2011, Vienna, Austria

Double Master of Arts in Global Studies in the Erasmus Mundus Global Masters Programme (European Master in Global Studies, or EMGS); Awarded a scholarship, which included a monthly living stipend and full tuition, by the European Commission, 1 of 16 students in the program to receive this; Acceptance rate to the EMGS program is 8%; Thesis title, “Global Middle Class Mobility and its Impact on the Uniformity of Cities: A Case Study of Vienna.”

COMPUTER SKILLS/MISCELLANEOUS

Advanced proficiency in the Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe Acrobat, HEROLD, Conference Programmer, Google Sketchup; Basic knowledge of Adobe Photoshop, AutoCAD; Daimler AG research project assistant, made future scenarios for South Africa’s social, political, and economic environment over the next decade; Princeton University’s Business Today Midwest Regional Conference, one of top 5 new business ideas; Phi Sigma Kappa Fraternity; UC Santa Barbara Crew; Member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars; 5-time Dean’s Honor Roll Student at UC Santa Barbara; Leipzig Opera 2009 People’s Choice Award in Music

LANGUAGES

Mother tongue English; Business Proficiency in German; Basic knowledge of Spanish