6.1. What is globalization, and how has globalization impacted the Koragas?

The term ‘globalization’, first used in the mid-1980s, is now an established theory of anthropology. Global human impact indicators such as global warming as an environmental challenge, air and water pollution, pollution and over-fishing the ocean to the point of extinction are aspects of globalization. Human activity impact of businesses, workplace mechanics, socio-cultural resources and the natural environment are also part of the process of globalization. A November 2013 issue of The Times of India spoke about the most polluted cities of the world; the top ten were all in developing countries like India, Pakistan, Iran, Botswana and Mongolia. The same article said twenty-five percent of all deaths in the developing world are related to environmental factors. Water pollution causes 14,000 deaths a day. Fifty lakh people are poisoned by pollution in the developing world. These statistics are scary but true. Is this globalization at work, or is this industrialization at work? Industrialization is defined as a system where manufacturing industries hold sway in the economy. Pollution of air and water are the usual side effects of industrialization. And human Diaspora from rural areas to urban, and a buyout of raw material resources, cheapest of jobs and wage labor, have made significant contributions to human culture, to industry, and are affected by and affect the natural environment.

For Scheduled Tribes like the Koragas, the current development paradigm of globalization may include some exploitation by out of state groups, or MNCs or other parties, leading to tribal rights being trodden underfoot by different parties through land alienation and other unjust processes. More data is necessary to make a statement confirming or negating this issue.
6.2. Is the influence of globalization stronger than that of nationalization?

Nationalization includes the takeover of land, industry, banking, etc. into state ownership. Koraga history from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries shows a progressive path of nationalization. The dominant nation state of each era has influenced the state of the Koragas. Many scholars view ethnicity as a relationship of a power the essence of ethnicity can be correlated to unequal access to means of production and sharing of production returns. Therefore ethnicity can be a part of class struggle wherein a dominant class maintains power by subordinating the ethnic group. Koragas as an ethnic group have to work very hard to maintain their ethnicity in the face of overriding nationalism. Both ethnicity and nationalism are based on ideology. Globalization is not. In the case of the Koragas, nationalization is a stronger force than globalization, all though globalization in many parts of the world has triggered strong nationalism and ethnicities. Koragas should be congratulated for maintaining their ethnic identity without resorting to violent confrontation.

6.3. Globalization, how different is it from regionalization and localization?

Globalization has four levels according to the International Monetary Fund definition – trade and transactions, capital and investment strategies, Diaspora and people’s travels, and the increasing spread and use of information. No people on this planet have escaped the wind of change called globalization. Global human impact indicators such as global warming as an environmental challenge, plus air, water and soil pollution, pollution and over fishing the ocean to the point of extinction of species are also aspects of globalization. Globalization could be empirical fact, theory or ideology. One of the concerns about globalization is that it comes with “Americanization” of local culture. Globalization might have impacted Koragas in
ways that till now have not been completely documented, through regionalization and localization, from macro influence to micro.

6.4. From macro to micro

The anthropology of globalization also covers regionalization and localization. Going from the big picture to the minutiae, from the macro picture to the meso, and finally to the micro, there is a continuum from globalization, to regionalization and localization. Globalization includes, as the IMF has already specified, cross-national flows of goods, investment, production and technology. The economics of nations impact local communities, and tie them with powers and functions that are shifted to the international arena. Ongoing change in one of the four areas mentioned in the IMF definition, defines the process of globalization. The continuum of reach from the global to the local (the world stage to Udupi’s rural and urban Koraga) mirrors the macro to the micro. Going to health centers like hospitals and private nursing homes for deliveries, pursuing a Ph.D. – all these tiny signs are effects of the modern world showing its impact on the Koragas.

It is a misunderstood viewpoint that globalization comes with a wave of homogenization. Actual truth is that world over, the total repertoire of cultural forms has been shrinking for some time, and some of the forms are being replaced by hybrids.

6.5. Globalization as fact

Globalization can be considered as empirical fact (based on observation and experience), or a sort of theory, or an ideology (ideas that are the base of a theory). All definitions of globalization include some aspects of the economic sphere. Some
definitions even exclude the nation-state as the international arena takes over powers and functions of the state.

Globalization today, an economic and geographic fact... is the interaction between peoples, connectivity, places, trans-national flow of ideas, information, goods, capital, people, etc. Contemporary globalization, as Ted C. Lewellen so aptly describes (in *The Anthropology of Globalization*, p7) is ‘the increasing flow of trade, finance, culture, ideas and people brought about by the sophisticated technology of communications and travel and by the world wide spread of neo-liberal capitalism, and it is the local and regional adaptations to and resistance against these flows.’

Today, with the changing face of anthropology, with the increasing globalization of cultural groups, globalization studies could cover border zones, such as on the Indo-Bangladesh border, job-related and higher educated related migrations such as Indians to the US, Diasporas such as the Ashkenazi Jews to Israel, commodity chains, import and export of medical and armament goods in and out of countries, transnational and multinational corporations, foreign aid agencies, tourists, eco refugees (like many tribes in India), the influence of TV and other media.

6.6. ‘Think Global, Act Local.’

As can be seen, globalization and economics are tied to each other with an umbilical cord. Most definitions of globalization outside the social sciences are purely economic. In this context, globalization is actually the inflow and outflow of international trade and investment, and the extent to which this trade and investment become integrated in national economies. Most theories of globalization originate in the Western hemisphere, where multinational companies, with annual cash flows that exceed the economies of most underdeveloped nations, pump in money, goods,
technology and set up production lines, import and export lines, and profit margins that cut across continents. Finance scapes understood by the West, as part of globalization, are still distant for communities like the Koragas, even though this is 2014. But wage labor has changed the economic face of the community, as more and more Koragas go in for wage labor, and do some travelling for their jobs.

Here, globalization includes both regionalization and localization. One sure fact: The Koragas are famous as basket makers. In the twenty first century, thanks to a paucity of raw material, and an improved design culture due to exposure, the basket makers are also making hanging chairs, and other items than carry a premium price in the market. As one famous multinational company put it: ‘Think Global, Act Local’

Local knowledge and discourse, inherited over centuries, and may be even millennia, are local ecology constructs and have their tentacles in the community’s social stratification, religion, politics, and economics of the community. It involves ‘real’ people. In complete contrast, development experts bring a knowledge system from the outside.

6.7. History of globalization

The roots of globalization go back in history to sixteenth century Europe. Ocean exploration and the development of the nation state into empire went hand in hand. Empire building and the spread of capitalism were intrinsically tied to each other. Today’s globalization has its roots in the building of empires, and in the spread of capitalism. Prior to building nation-states, and empires, there was the evolution of capitalism, which is an economic system of private ownership of property, means of production, profit-based distribution, accompanied by a competitive market.
The first forms (of pre-capitalism) were pure mercantilism and were state-based. (*Mercantilism* refers to trade and trading) The state was the hub of business and economic exchange. The wealth of the state was protected by a sound legal system, which regulated the import and export of goods - minimizing imports not needed for manufacturing, and exporting finished goods that brought in foreign exchange. Colonization was crucial for the empire state, as cheap labor and raw material in the colonies, could only be used for the mother country that ruled the colonies. The mercantilist ‘*tributary mode of production*’ was compulsory in the colonized territories, and was imposed on colonies by European conquest. (Ted C. Lewellen, *The Anthropology of Globalization*, p12 & 13)

6.8. Wage labor as the defining quality of capitalism

Wolf, author of *Europe and the People Without History*, says that, ‘wage labor’ – which transformed services or work into a commodity that could be bought and sold like any other type of goods, is the defining quality of capitalism. Though land and resources were allowed to be locally owned by ethnic groups - probably a local, ethnic group, tribe or community - they were forced to use their labor and natural resources to enrich the coffers of the colonizers. Historically, this kind of trade was the starting point of joint stock companies, which were privately owned by rich investors and businesses, but were controlled by the state. Globalization has its roots in the evolution of capitalism. (In 1997, Maralusiddaiah noted the trend of changing occupations from traditional to non-traditional for better wages.)

6.9. The Indigo Revolt – the first Indian resistance to Western Capitalism

Without capitalism, which is an economic system of private ownership of property, production, distribution, competitive markets, wage labor does not come
into its own. Wage labor, which made service into a commodity like any other produce, is one of the defining legs of capitalism, and came into its true form after the Industrial Revolution in the mid-eighteenth century. The tributary mode of production led to a class of takers/consumers, and a class of producers; capitalism led to stratification along lines of wealth, race and ethnicity. Supply and demand determined price, as it does today too. Capitalism (and the exploitation that comes with it) had an even worse effect on native or indigenous groups. Native lands were either transferred to European hands through outright takeovers or legal cheating, or exploited. A well-known case from India is the Indigo Revolt, a farmers’ uprising that arose in Bengal in 1859. Its seeds go back a half century to the Indigo Act. There was a huge demand for the Blue Dye (indigo), and British Indigo planters pressured the farmers to grow indigo rather than food crops, and paid them a paltry 2.5% of the market price. Farmers were forced to take loans at high interest and once a farmer took such a loan he was in debt for the remainder of his life and passed the debt to the next generation. In February and March, 1859, Hindu and Muslim farmers refused to plant even a single seedling of Indigo. Farmer Haji Molla of Nischindipur said he would ‘rather beg than sow’, and this non-violent revolt spread and became violent when Bishnucharan Biswas and Digambar Biswas of Nadia took up arms against the planters. Indigo planters were tried and executed; indigo depots burnt. The revolt was ruthlessly suppressed with huge numbers of police and soldiers; zamindars mercilessly killed the farmers. The Indigo Revolt was the first example of passive resistance and it galvanized the British government to appoint the "Indigo Commission" in 1860; the English people were shocked at the brutality of their own government.
In the past, the Koragas were used for many activities, but were not always paid a regular wage. Today, they are. They have many different kinds of jobs, including in sanitation, skinning dead animals, etc. all of which are wage paid labor.

6.10. The East India Company as colonizer

Within India, this state of affairs held true for The East India Company (The EIC). Controlling the finances of the colonies also meant colonizing the new lands with Europeans, creating class barriers that left the colonized as marginalized people in their own lands, maintaining armies and navies to keep military control over the colonies, and also being involved in the administration affairs of the colonies. Being loyal to the mother country meant that they (The EIC) were kept under a leash by their government (Great Britain); however, thanks to the difficulties of distance and lack of proper communication in those times, The East India Company was also up to a point, free and unfettered, and in their need to keep control of the colonized, they also wrote some of the earliest testimonials on the colonized (Dr. Francis Buchanan, Gustav Oppert, the Sanskrit scholar, Edward Balfour, etc.) Some of our earliest records by Europeans on the Koragas were from East India officers, doing their job to keep an eye out on the ‘natives’.

6.11. ‘Kin-ordered’ mode of production predates capitalism

Wolf speaks of the ‘kin-ordered’ mode of production that predated mercantilism and capitalism. In ancient tribal societies in agrarian or forest areas, this was the usual practice. Kin-ordered refers to the family or clan that determined what kind of division of labor, and what would be produced, and how everything was settled. Wolf says there was no concept of private property in the kin-ordered type of production that predated capitalism. This belief (of there being no private property)
has its limitations when applied to India, because the notion of landholding was historically widespread within India. However, it has relevance for the tribal concept of ownership. When social groups underwent the change from kin-ordered to the tributary mode of production, native peoples (for example the Native American tribes in North America) underwent a seesaw… lineage breakup, leadership change, settlements in non-native locales. Whether this actually was true for the whole of India with its iron-strong, centuries-old, caste system, is debatable.

6.12. Trading to mercantilism, another step to today’s globalization

The tributary mode of production, imposed by a conquering Europe, shifted the profit making from the local to the global arena. Though property remained in the hands of indigenous people, both land and labor could only be used to make the conqueror wealthy. From mere trading to mercantilism was a logical progression. The economic philosophy of mercantilism has its basis in the notion that a state treasury built up with precious metals (especially gold) can also support itself militarily through the acquisition of armies and ships. The East India Company had already turned India into a mercantile hub. Joint stock companies were the next step in the evolution of mercantilism. And from there, it was a short step away to empire building.

But before these empires were built, we need to briefly review what went into the making of the nation state, what changes happened, etc. Marxist theory – which was all the rage during the Cold War between the former USSR and the current USA – views globalization as the latest stage in the evolution of capitalism. (Lewellen, p8)
6.13. Ideology and two divergent viewpoints on Neo-liberalism

‘Ideology adds a moral dimension to globalization theory.’ (Lewellen, p 9) Ideology refers to the ideas at the base of an economic theory, and in the context of globalization, refers to neo-liberalism. Neo-liberalism is the dominant motif of the United States government, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, as well as most university departments of economics. The neo-liberalism phase of globalization dates to 1990.

There are two viewpoints on Neo-liberalism. The first, which the IMF, the US and their cohort subscribe to is this: that the European/American system of global capitalism is the panacea for all economic ills – if all third world countries just followed a simple set of economic rules and policies, any and everybody would benefit. People would improve their standard of living, plus there would be better cohesion of economic processes, leading to world peace. The second, more gritty than the first, views globalization as a lost cause, one that increases inequality among people, and leading to an excessive marginalization of the poor, whether people or entire countries, and an economic pyramid, for concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a few – the few being in European origin countries, North America, Australia and Japan, and today including China, the current mass producer of the world.


Neo-liberal globalization, which became an American economic philosophy after the collapse of the USSR, took over many Third World countries, and has its basis in different factors. To convert an American philosophy into a global structure required two steps – the end of super power rivalry, with the collapse of the USSR,
and the acceptance of neo-liberalism by the Third World. Before accepting globalization, the Third World countries – all developing or underdeveloped – had import substitutions, or very high import duties or tariffs to protect indigenous industries, manufacturing and production from foreign competition, or complete bans of all imported products in that area. Foreign investment was tightly controlled and foreign ownership, prohibited to protect indigenous industries.

6.15. The IMF evolution from 1990

The International Monetary Fund, originally composed for free trade after World War II between different Western countries, offered loans with enough interest rates on the loan to stop the country from default. Ditto for the World Bank. Both organizations wield enough power today to order the economies of many developing countries since 1990. Of course, some processes of globalization like electronic gadgetry is so widespread that it predates neo-liberalism.

6.16. Neo-liberalism today

Neo-liberalism today stands for the concept of free trade uncontrolled by either government or legal regulations. The winning combination in such a state of affairs is bigness, cutting edge technology, and underpaid, cheapest labour. China, the world’s wholesaler today, is a good case in point.

Another point, distressing but prevalent, is that agricultural and mining giants extract more resources and profit than they invest in the country. Neo-liberalism shifts strategy from inward, national, government controls to outward, global and multinational. Neo-liberalism, today, only favours the rich. It undercuts domestic production prices, causing unemployment, or low paying jobs, ruining local culture,
utilizing child or women labour (as in the garment industry sweat shops of Bangladesh) and ruining the ecosystem.

6.17. Globalization and the world’s underclass

Different people experience globalization in different ways. The link between the theory of globalization and its effects on day-to-day life is very tenuous. One way to address this is to view globalization and modernity as context, a holistic context, which includes colonial history, ecological situation, cultural continuity and class structure. We cannot ignore the fact that global inputs form some part of the socio-cultural condition and must be taken note of.

6.18. From globalization to regionalization to localization

Macro to meso to micro… From the global, to the national, to the state, to the district, to the tribe, a whole lot of choices are made at each level. When tribes are being marginalized, when neighbourhood lands are taken over or compromised, or lost to moneylenders, when Diaspora makes a community leave the land of their forefathers, it is localization in distress. When big name mining outfits – usually representing MNCs or trans-nationals - come and overrun tribal lands, it is a victory for globalization. And to understand the process of change from a state-centred to a globalized mode, we need to examine the choices that people make. Choices show the shift in transformation from local, to state to national to the globalized situation.

Cause and effect… On the local level, there is marginalization of the tribes and bonded labour peasants. This is accompanied by entropic fragmentation of the original community. (Entropy, a word from physics, is the measure of disorganization or degradation of the universe, resulting in a decrease in available energy, which can be converted from thermal energy to mechanical work). Industrialization breaks down
farm culture, but in turn, farm culture in the past, broke down tribal culture. Taluk, district, tribal level, educational, government and NGO inputs change the community slowly.

This is true in the 21st century, about measures of change for the better for the tribals, like the Koraga. The 21st century comes hand in hand with the speedy spread of technology, especially communication and computer technology – aspects of globalization. Globalization impacts only real people in real time. Globalization comes with some kind of industrial input production, which fragments forest culture, farm labor culture, and makes a momentum for urban culture.

In the USA, Native American tribes, also called Indians, in the twenty-first century are not only as modern as mainstream Americans, but have managed to maintain cultural, linguistic and religious unity. So globalization is a two-way sword – it threatens as well as promotes a means of survival. Ease of travel, the lure of cities, TV and movie theatres, better wages, all contribute to a dilution of tribal culture, which is not a bad thing. Some things in old fashioned Koraga culture are best left by the roadside… Ajalu, manual scavenging, etc.

6.19. Globalization is not a passive process

When change happens, there is some type of protest or adaptation, assimilation or local ethnic community groupings, anger and fury on the one hand and peaceful acceptance of change on the other. To recognize and comprehend globalization, we must connect to real people - meet housewives in their kitchens, workers with modern implements, students in school, youngsters networking with the Internet or cell phones, people travelling to and fro on buses, rickshaws, bikes, etc.
Theory is all very well, but in practice globalization may be quite different. Globalization theory cannot predict the future of the communities it is applied to.

Attitudes about globalization range from doubting its existence, to the evolutionary, to the hyper-globalist. Long term migration – a key pointer to globalization – hardly impacts even 1% of the world population today, thanks to governments all over the world putting a cap to annual migrations to rich countries. On the one hand, there are political, economic and military alliances like NATO, EEC and ASEAN, representing regional groupings. On the other hand, there are NGOs like Amnesty, and Greenpeace, and World Wildlife Fund. Homogenization is supposed to be a feature of world wide globalization. But simultaneously, hand in hand, there is growth of on-the-ground fundamentalism that is loyal to doctrine, and, ethnic minority organizations. Short term migration for jobs occurs, but is still picking up slowly for communities like the Koragas, a few of who dream big to land up in the Middle East, which is happening to a few Koragas living in Kasargod, Kerala.

6.20. Globalization does not break with the past

The evolutionary aspects of globalization are that it has been present for some time, but is changing in intensity and type. Globalization has always been around, and there has been no sudden break with the past, or radical changes, or transforming the world as we know it, but carries with it change which always progresses with the forward arrow of time. Globalization processes have developed over centuries with no clean break with the past, and has not changed world infrastructure drastically in the present times. It is after 1980 that the real thrust for globalization began.
Today, globalization is a stand that challenges traditional concepts of culture. Culture contributes to the concept of ‘otherness’, which separates one group from another.

6.21. Consumerism enables globalization to become localization

We are surrounded by multi-continental companies. How far their reach is exactly is still debatable. Because, it is a fact, in many large countries, 80% of production is for domestic consumption. (Lewellen, p 9) Regionalization, according to businessdictionary.com is the process of dividing an area into smaller segments called regions. One of the more obvious examples of regionalization is the division of a nation into states or provinces. Businesses, even the trans-national giants, use regionalization as a management tool, and a method to make certain that needs unique to a particular area are met. Trans-national corporations are commonly thought to be the engines of globalization. But they use regionalization and localization to make the far reaches for their product or service to become ubiquitous (commonly encountered). One small example is the cell phone. Any part of India one travels, one encounters the cell phone. This is proof of the wide ranging and effective advertising and distribution networks of cell phone companies. Many local languages and different media reach out to the people. Good effective communication is the key. In this sense, there is a sense of increasing consumerism through movies, TV, radio, Internet, billboards, cell phones, SMSes. Whether these break down traditional cultural values of kinship, and community (or creates hybrids) needs to be observed. Yes, globalization is a reality, but so are regionalization and localization. Sometimes one can be confused for the other as they so seamlessly move into each other’s domains. But what is here to stay, always promoted for the profits, is consumerism.
So globalization is the play of free market forces, which people consider the primary vehicle for world betterment.

Consumerism is the most important trait for global profit, and therefore is the most promoted. One observation: no Koraga household is free of labour saving gadgets, especially in the kitchen… consumerism at work. Consumerism is an important part of identity. Consumerism is the dominant cultural form of globalization, and enculturation in global culture occurs to the greatest degree among those with sufficient funds to buy into the consumer ethic, namely the middle class and the elite.

6.22. However, let’s define localization

Localization is the process of adapting a product or service to a particular language or culture, with the desired local ‘look and feel’. The process of first enabling a product to be localized and localizing it for different national audiences is sometimes known as ‘globalization’. In localizing a product, in addition to idiomatic language translation, such details as time zones, money, national holidays, local colour sensitivities, product or service names, gender roles, and geographic examples must be considered. A successfully localized product or service is one that appears to have been developed within the local culture. Cell phone ads are example and proof, of both simultaneous localization and globalization. Most cell phone sets available in the market are imported, manufactured in one country, designed in another and sold by yet another… globalization at work. Koraga baskets are now so designed to be relevant in any part of India, tourists pick them up and travel back with them to different parts of India. So, would this be localization, in tandem with the rest of India… or modernization or an upgrade in design?
Global culture fragments in end-user pockets; it never totally replaces ethnic culture, in entirety, but only in interaction.

6.23. With globalization, did indigenous people stop being indigenous?

When globalization in its capitalism avatar intrudes into a locality, it becomes the dominant form for indigenous people, and may be followed by, in waves, transformation of culture, social structure, economy and politics. As mentioned before, there is no clean break with the past. The previous tributary systems had created large numbers of surplus takers and surplus producers; capitalism created class stratification in areas such as wealth, race, ethnicity. In the past, the state was the source of all property. But in a globalized world, the state protects all property as a source of revenue, encourages business, opens new territory for exploitation by multinational corporate ventures, and uses its military might to promote and expand private interests abroad. What Wolf says, is that with globalization, a large number of indigenous people stopped being indigenous a long time ago. (Lewellen, p 14)

6.24. Core, periphery and semi-periphery territories

The echoes of European expansion have affected every continent on the planet. Capitalism is now taken for granted all over the world, resulting in a division of labor leading to changes in core, periphery and semi-periphery territories. The periphery regions supplied underpaid labour and raw materials cheaply to the core countries – the trans-nationals a.k.a. the globalists; the semi-periphery countries do a bit of both. In the world market, bigness, and technology combined with the cheapest labour have the advantage. China can ‘dump’ its products all over the world precisely for these reasons. Widespread dumping leading to killing of local artisans’ work, low wages and hard to obtain raw materials – all these detrimental effects of globalization
that affect indigenous people has existed only since 1990. Of course some processes of current day globalization like the electronic media, gadgets that ease house work, access to and buying of products - aspects of consumerism have existed for a much longer time. Local artisans suffer when cheaper imports kill the market for their products. Both domestic capitalism and global capitalism are in conflict with each other. The signs of globalization include flows of capital, goods and people, but Appadurai says it is in the minds of people that their complete effects are understood. To save their own economies, some countries turned to socialism, or placed restraints on imports.

6.25. Globalization in the twenty-first century

Globalization in the twenty-first century opens new territories, challenging the old world of communities, localities, farm labourers, tribes, cultures, which anthropological research dealt with in the past. Globalization covers trans nationalism and global identity. In some places, globalization has triggered many statehoods and nationalisms, each playing a part in claiming a homeland. Much nationalism began as a backlash against colonial and post colonial states. Both ethnicity and nationalism often have common characteristics – common ancestry, emphasis on a sense of otherness, and the language of kinship like father land or motherland. But unlike ethnicity – where the local group is the focus of activity – nationalization involves the setting up of a state or distinct homeland. Only in times of calamity like war or a debilitating earthquake or flood do the ethnic distinctions fall away and people become nationalistic. Ethnonationalism is coterminous with ethnicity.

Globalization as one of anthropology’s latest avatars moved previous field studies from a single ethnic tribe that could be studied within a year or two – the ‘local’ to the wider sphere ‘out there’. The current study on the Koragas, is a classic
anthropological study, of one community, in one location, in the same time frame – 2010-2013. But its difference lies in the scope – of merging globalization (the big picture) with localization (the microscopic picture). What is the identity of the Koragas – does it percolate from the center to the tribe, or is it from the tribe to the whole state? Koraga culture – or any other culture – is a key component of globalization narrative, and the real problem is how to see the chain of connects from the macro to the micro. No culture is completely secluded from the influences of globalization. With the spread of globalization, there is also a spread of ethno-nationalism. Tribes, communities, neighbourhoods – there are many groups that now want their unique identity to be preserved. But is it possible, when there are the same development schemes all over the place? The same kind of education systems in place, with the same kind of school board exams, the same tri-language school syllabus all over India?

6.26. Development covers both local and multi-nation effects of globalization

Development has its own definitions. The first definition is shared by other fields like political science and economics – the impact of industrialization, modern communication, and GNP (gross national product). And it also shares space with modernization. It also includes concepts like better health and nutrition, the participation in democratic institutions (being part of a political party, voting, working on self governance, etc.) Progress and development, according to modern belief systems and schemes, only happen with the forward arrow of time, with all encompassing science, technology and betterment schemes. Traditional occupations like basket making have embraced the tourist culture, and evolved designs that consumers accept better and pay more for. Is it all sunshine and roses here? Here comes a dose of reality.
The second definition sees all development as destructive; that development actually destroys local culture and marginalizes people by divorcing them from their ancestral lands and livelihoods. Poor women especially have borne the brunt of policies that are dictated by the IMF. From contributors to small farms to losing the lands to larger farms, which in turn makes farming into a male-dominated work. If the women work for the husband, they are not paid. If the land is lost, sold or pledged, the men migrate outside for wages. Women may then be compelled to seek wage labor outside, and slog at home cleaning, raising children, cooking and searching further and further away for firewood. Migrations, today more common because of the high tech, cheaper modes of transport than in the past, allows a global labor market. The past gets left behind, and the future is embraced. The percentage of Koragas working outside the country (all headed for the Middle East) sending home monthly remunerations is very less (and all from Kasargod, Kerala), but has increased over the past couple of years.

6.27. The Global Local

The global local can be represented by studies of tribal communities – all influences, information, and effects flow into each other, into the tribe and outwards. So where does global end, and local begin? Does local end when Koraga tribal children go to the local government school, or when their parents abandon traditional occupations to go to work in non-traditional occupations, or when the children are given scholarships by both government and foreign NGOs, or some men travel for employment outside their ancestral lands? Globalization has dissolved many boundaries, but not as much as nationalization. It is impossible to discuss tribal identity without also bringing into the picture the level of development and progress. Is it a sign of localization when today’s tribal mothers would rather go to the
government hospital for delivery than choose their local midwives or *dais*? Or is this modernization and development at work? What about the commonness of the TV? Surely, there is a sort of mind numbing sameness of marketing messages that enter all homes via the TV.

One prominent example of globalization that has become a form of localization is the beauty pageant culture, which swept through India in 1991. Shortly after, in 1994, Aishwarya Rai won Ms. World, and Sushmita Sen won Ms. Universe. Beauty pageant culture was coterminous with multinational cosmetic giants entering the country with a bang. Money flowed like water in ad campaigns, fashion shows, TV exposure, and beauty pageants. Both Ash and Sush visited with the PM and the President of India, and were considered India’s cultural ambassadors, for that year.

6.28. The Koraga and the multiple processes of globalization

Globalization has multiple processes like increased travel, the uprooting of tribal culture through population growth, land exploitation by agro businesses, mass media, increased consumerism, the trans nationalism of labor, and onward ‘progress’ from the traditional to the modern. Global interdependence affects communities in a multitude of ways – jobs, travel, Diaspora, entertainment on TV or the movies, relationships and attitude.

Johnathan Friedman (1994) suggests a continuum of global integration … one extreme is the traditional non-modern… who still retain kinship as a basic social structure, who, in each generation kowtows to the old structural hierarchy, who, if they deeply connected to globalized social structures, might get dissolved and disappear as a culture. The culture which has to give up its key relationships might go extinct very soon. The household for example… a household is not always a
homogenous harmonious entity. A household can be racked with conflict due to family tensions from alcoholism, poverty, low income and literacy. Does globalization impact show itself within the average Koraga household? It does in the form of mass media, ease of travel, wage labor. Some of the Koragas live away from their ancestral lands, they carry the local ethnic Koraga culture within them wherever they are, in the form of food, rituals, religion, etc.

It is also a fact that the old style tribal is disappearing because world over, because the government is exerting controls to bring these communities into the mainstream. In the case of the Koragas, it includes outlawing Ajalu, scaling back on manual scavenging, forced drumming for upper class functions, etc.

Next affected in the continuum are subsistence farming communities. Internal migration characterizes these communities from rural to urban areas.