CHAPTER 16

Globalization Theory

Chapter Outline

It is likely that no single topic has received as much popular and academic attention in recent years as globalization. The academic concern is motivated, in large part, by the extraordinary public importance of, interest in, and worry over globalization. However, reasons internal to the academic world (e.g., reactions against early and narrow approaches to what is now called globalization) also have led to a near-obsession with this topic. Social theorists, including many of those discussed in this chapter and elsewhere in this book, have been no exception to this trend toward a focal concern with globalization. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to offer anything like a complete overview of the voluminous work of social theorists on this topic, to say nothing of a review of the entire literature on globalization. What follows is a brief survey of some of the most important theoretical work on globalization.

Globalization is the spread of worldwide practices, relations, consciousness, and organization of social life. Nearly every nation and the lives of billions of people throughout the world are being transformed, often quite dramatically, by globalization. The degree and significance of its impact can be seen almost everywhere one looks, most visibly in the now common protests that accompany high-level meetings of global organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (G. Thomas, 2007). As both the magnitude of the issues before these organizations and the level of protest against these organizations make clear, people throughout the world feel strongly that they are confronting matters of great moment.

Globalization theory (Robinson, 2007) also emerged as a result of a series of developments internal to social theory, notably the reaction against earlier perspectives such as modernization theory. Among the defining characteristics of this theory were its Western bias, the preeminence accorded to developments in the West, and the idea that the rest of the world had little choice but to become increasingly like the West. Although there are many different versions of globalization theory, there

is a tendency in nearly all of them to shift away dramatically from a focus on the West (including and especially the United States) and to examine not only transnational processes that flow in many different directions but also those that are, at least to some degree, autonomous and independent of any single nation or area of the world (see the discussion of Appadurai's work below).

Globalization can be analyzed culturally, economically, politically, and institutionally. For each type of analysis, a key difference is whether one sees increasing homogeneity or heterogeneity. At the extremes, the globalization of culture can be seen either as the transnational expansion of common codes and practices (homogeneity) or as a process in which many global and local cultural inputs interact to create a kind of pastiche, or a blend, leading to a variety of cultural hybrids (heterogeneity). The trend toward homogeneity is often associated with *cultural imperialism,* the influence of a particular culture on a wide range of other cultures. There are many varieties of cultural imperialism, including those that emphasize the role played by American culture, the West, or core countries (de Grazia, 2005). Roland Robertson (1992, 2001), however, among many others, opposes the idea, although he doesn't use the term *cultural imperialism.* His famous concept of glocalization (see below) sees the global as interacting with the local to produce that which is distinctive: the glocal.

Theorists who focus on economic factors tend to emphasize their growing importance and homogenizing effect on the world. They generally see globalization as the spread of neoliberalism, capitalism, and the market economy (Antonio, 2007a) throughout many different regions of the world. For example, some have focused on globalization and the expansion of trade. Joseph E. Stiglitz (2002), a Nobel Prize–winning economist and former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, issued a stinging attack on the World Bank, the WTO, and especially the IMF for their roles in worsening, rather than resolving, global economic crises. Among other things, Stiglitz criticizes the IMF for its homogenizing, "one-size-fits-all" approach that fails to take into account national differences. The IMF in particular, and globalization in general, have worked to the advantage of the wealthy nations, especially the United States (which effectively has veto power over IMF decisions), and to the detriment of poor nations. The gap between rich and poor has actually *increased* as a result of globalization.

Although those who focus on economic issues tend to emphasize homogeneity, some differentiation (heterogeneity) is acknowledged to continue to exist at least at the margins of the global economy. Indeed, Stiglitz argues for the need for more differentiated policies by the IMF and other global economic organizations. Other forms of heterogeneity in the economic realm involve, for example, the commodification of local cultures and the existence of flexible specialization that permits the tailoring of many products to the needs of various local specifications. More generally, those who emphasize heterogenization (Tomlinson, 1999) argue that the interaction of the global market with local markets leads to the creation of unique "glocal" markets that integrate the demands of the global market with the realities of the local market.

Political/institutional orientations, too, tend to emphasize either homogeneity or heterogeneity. For example, some of those who operate with a homogenization perspective in this domain focus on the worldwide spread of models of the nation-state

and the emergence of similar forms of governance throughout the globe—in other words, the growth of a more-or-less single model of governance around the world (Meyer, Boli, and Ramirez, 1997). More broadly, there is a concern with increasing homogenization in a multiplicity of institutions (Boli and Lechner, 2005). As we will see, some see the growth of transnational institutions and organizations as greatly diminishing the power of both the nation-state and other, more local, social structures to make a difference in people's lives. One of the most extreme views of homogenization in the political realm is Benjamin Barber's (1995) thinking on "McWorld," or the growth of a single political[1] orientation that is increasingly pervasive throughout the world.

Interestingly, Barber also articulates, as an alternative perspective, the idea of "Jihad"—localized, ethnic, and reactionary political forces (including "rogue states") that involve an intensification of nationalism and that lead to greater political heterogeneity throughout the world. The interaction of McWorld and Jihad at the local level may produce unique, glocal political formations that integrate elements of both the former (e.g., use of the Internet to attract supporters) and the latter (e.g., use of traditional ideas and rhetoric).

The issue of homogenization/heterogenization cuts across a broad swath of globalization theory, but it is clearly not exhaustive. That will become clear in the following discussion of major theories of globalization, which certainly touches in various ways on homogenization/heterogenization but also highlights a number of other facets of globalization theory. This discussion is divided into four sections. First we look at the perspectives on globalization of some of the major contemporary theorists (Giddens, Beck, and Bauman) encountered earlier in this book. Then we turn to the aforementioned three broad categories of theorizing globalization: cultural, economic, and political/institutional.

Major Contemporary Theorists on Globalization

Anthony Giddens on the "Runaway World" of Globalization

Giddens's (2000) views on globalization are closely related to, and overlap with, his thinking on the juggernaut of modernity (see Chapter 15). Giddens also sees a close link between globalization and risk, especially the rise of what he calls manufactured risk. Much of the runaway world of globalization is beyond our control, but Giddens is not totally pessimistic. We can limit the problems created by the runaway world, but we can never control it completely. He holds out some hope for democracy, especially international and transnational forms of democracy such as the European Union.

Giddens is one of those who emphasizes the role of the West in general, and the United States in particular, in globalization. However, he also recognizes that globalization is a two-way process with America and the West being strongly

[1] Barber's view of McWorld is not restricted to politics. Barber sees many other domains following the model of McWorld.

influenced by it. Furthermore, he argues that globalization is becoming increasingly decentered as nations outside the West (e.g., China, India) play an increasingly large role in it. He also recognizes that globalization has both undermined local cultures *and* served to revive them. And he makes the innovative point that globalization "squeezes sideways," producing new areas that may cut across nations. He offers as an example an area around Barcelona in northern Spain that extends into France.

A key clash taking place at the global level today is that between fundamentalism and cosmopolitanism. In the end, Giddens sees the emergence of a "global cosmopolitan society." Yet even the main force in opposition to it—fundamentalism—is itself a product of globalization. Furthermore, fundamentalism uses global forces (e.g., the mass media) in order to further its ends. Fundamentalism can take various forms—religious, ethnic, nationalist, political—but whatever form it takes, Giddens thinks that fundamentalism is problematic, both because it is at odds with cosmopolitanism and because it is linked to violence (see the discussion of Huntington's work below).

Ulrich Beck, the Politics of Globalization, and Cosmopolitanism

We can get at the essence of Beck's (2000) thinking on this issue by discussing his distinction between globalism and globality. *Globalism* is the view that the world is dominated by economics and that we are witnessing the emergence of the hegemony of the capitalist world market and the neoliberal ideology that underpins it. To Beck, this view involves both monocausal and linear thinking. The multidimensionality of global developments—ecology, politics, culture, and civil society—is wrongly reduced to a single economic dimension. And that economic dimension is seen, again erroneously, as evolving in a linear direction of ever-increasing dependence on the world market. Clearly, Beck sees the world in much more multidimensional and multidirectional terms. In addition, he is very sensitive to the problems associated with the capitalist world market, including the fact that there are all sorts of barriers to free trade and that there are not only winners in this world market but also (many) losers.

Even though Beck is a critic of the viewpoint of globalism, he sees much merit in the idea of *globality,* in which closed spaces, especially those associated with nations, are seen as growing increasingly illusory. They are growing illusory because of globalization, which involves transnational actors, with varying degrees of power, identities, and the like, crisscrossing and undermining nation-states. These transnational processes are not simply economic but also involve ecology, culture, politics, and civil society. Such transnational processes traverse national borders, rendering them porous if not increasingly irrelevant. Nothing is any longer limited to the local. That which takes place locally, including both advances and catastrophes, affects the entire world.

Transnational processes have long existed; nevertheless, globality is new for at least three reasons. First, its influence over geographic space is far more extensive than ever before. Second, its influence over time is far more stable; it is of continuing

influence from one time to another. Third, there is far greater density to its various elements including transnational relationships and networks. Beck also lists a number of other things that are distinctive about globality in comparison to earlier manifestations of transnationality:

1. Everyday life and interaction across national borders are being profoundly affected.
2. There is a self-perception of this transnationality in such realms as the mass media, consumption, and tourism.
3. Community, labor, and capital are increasingly placeless.
4. There is a growing awareness of global ecological dangers and of actions to be taken to deal with them.
5. There is an increasing perception of transcultural others in our lives.
6. Global culture industries circulate at unprecedented levels.
7. There is an increase in the number and strength of transnational agreements, actors, and institutions.

This leads Beck to refine his previously discussed (see Chapter 15) thinking on modernity and to argue that globality, and the inability to reverse it, are associated with what he now calls "second modernity." Above all, however, what defines the latter is the decline of the power of the nations and the national borders that went to the heart of "first modernity." The central premise of first modernity is (was) that we live in self-enclosed nation-states. (Beck dismisses this notion as a "container theory" of society.) Thus globality, and second modernity, mean, denationalization and, Beck hopes, the rise of transnational organizations and perhaps a transnational state.

Much of Beck's recent work, including his thinking on globalization, is linked to the idea of *cosmopolitanism,* which among other things seeks to overcome the traditional sociological focus on the spatially fixed nation and to replace it with a more fluid transnational focus (Beck and Sznaider, 2005). More generally, it involves a transcendence of the local restraints on thought and action. Thus, in the era of globalization people are no longer rooted in a given cosmos (e.g., the United States) but instead are rooted in "different cities, territories, ethnicities, hierarchies, nations, religions, and so on at the same time" (Beck and Sznaider, 2005:159). This involves a moving-away from a traditional kind of either/or thinking associated, for example, with nation-based perspectives, and a moving-toward a more hybrid, "this-as-well-as-that" sense of the world. Clearly, such a cosmopolitan approach is derived from, and has a close linkage to, globalization.

Beck has been working on three books that further develop his ideas on globalization, and the first of those has recently been translated into English as *Power in the Global Age* (Beck, 2005b). Here, Beck (2005b:xi–xii) continues to adopt a cosmopolitan orientation that goes beyond national and international relations to global politics that involve a "meta-game whose outcome is completely open-ended. It is a game in which boundaries, basic rules and basic distinctions are being renegotiated—not only those between the 'national' and 'international' spheres, but also those between global business and the state, transnational civil society movements,

supranational organizations and national governments and societies." It is this reality that requires a change in vision from a national to a cosmopolitan perspective that is better able to comprehend and deal with this meta-game.

Zygmunt Bauman on the Human Consequences of Globalization

Bauman (1998) sees globalization in terms of a "space war." In his view, it is mobility that has become the most important and differentiating factor in social stratification in the world today. Thus, the winners of the space war are those who are mobile, able to move freely throughout the globe and in the process to create meaning for themselves. They can float relatively free of space, and when they must "land" somewhere, they isolate themselves in walled and policed spaces in which they are safe from those who are the losers in the space war. The losers not only lack mobility but are relegated and confined to territories denuded of meaning and even of the ability to offer meaning. Thus, while the elite are likely intoxicated by their mobility opportunities, the rest are more likely to feel imprisoned in their home territories, from which they have little prospect of moving. Furthermore, the latter are likely to feel humiliated by the lack of their own mobility and the sight of elites free to move about at will. As a result, territories become battlefields where the losers and winners of the space war face off in a very uneven conflict.

The winners can be said to live in time rather than space; they are able to virtually span every space quickly, if not instantaneously. In contrast, the losers can be seen as living in space. That space is beyond their control, heavy, resilient, resistant, untouchable, able to tie time down. However, it is important to distinguish among those who have at least some mobility. The *tourists* are those who are on the move because they want to be. They are attracted by something, find it irresistible, and move toward it. The *vagabonds* are those who are on the move because they find their environs unbearable, inhospitable for any number of reasons. The positive aspects of what we applaud as globalization are those that are associated with tourists, while an unavoidable side effect is that many others are transformed into vagabonds. Most people, however, exist between these two extremes. They are unsure exactly where they now stand, but wherever it is, they are not sure they will be in the same place tomorrow. Thus, globalization translates into uneasiness for most of us.

However, even the seeming winners in globalization—the tourists—have their problems. First, there is the burden associated with the impossibility of slowing down; it is hard to always be on the move and at high speed. Second, mobility means an unending string of choices, and each choice has a measure of uncertainty associated with it. Third, each choice also carries with it a series of risks and dangers. Endless mobility and continual choice eventually become troublesome if not burdensome.

It is worth noting that Bauman employs the idea of "liquidity" in a variety of books written in the early twenty-first century (for example, Bauman, 2005). Clearly, a global world is increasingly a liquid world characterized by innumerable "flows" of

all types. As a result, the global world is constantly changing its form, and it is becoming increasingly difficult either to control or to gain a solid understanding of it. The idea of liquidity has wide applicability to the process of globalization.

Given the globalization theories of some of today's major social theorists, we turn now to the major types of globalization theory, often with examples from other major social thinkers.

Cultural Theory

Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2004) has identified three major paradigms in theorizing the cultural aspects of globalization, specifically on the centrally important issue of whether cultures around the globe are eternally different, converging, or creating new "hybrid" forms out of the unique combination of global and local cultures. Let us look at each of these paradigms and a representative example (or examples) of each.

Cultural Differentialism

Those who adopt this paradigm argue that among and between cultures there are lasting differences that are largely unaffected by globalization or by any other bi-, inter-, multi-, or transcultural processes. This is not to say that culture is unaffected by any of these processes, especially globalization. But it is to say that at their core cultures are largely unaffected by them; they remain much as they always have been. In this perspective globalization occurs only on the surface, and the deep structure of cultures is largely, if not totally, unaffected by it. Cultures are seen as largely closed not only to globalization but also to the influences of other cultures. In one image, the world is envisioned as a mosaic of largely separate cultures. More menacing is a billiard-ball image, with billiard balls (representing cultures) seen as bouncing off other billiard balls (representing other cultures). This image is more menacing because it indicates the possibility of dangerous and potentially catastrophic collisions among and between world cultures.

The cultural differential paradigm has a long history, but it has attracted increasing attention and adherents (as well as critics) in recent years because of two sets of current events. One is the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Many people saw these events as the product of a clash between Western and Islamic cultures and the eternal cultural differences between them. The other set of current events is the increasing multiculturalism of both the United States (largely the growth of the Hispanic population) and of western European countries (largely the growing Muslim populations) and the vast differences, and enmity, between majority and minority populations.

The most famous and controversial example of this paradigm is Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996). Huntington traces the beginnings of the current world situation to the end of the Cold War and the reconfiguring of the world from one differentiated on a political-economic basis (democratic/capitalist versus totalitarian/communist) to one based on cultural differences. Such cultural differences are nothing new, but they were largely submerged

(as in the old Yugoslavia and the differences between, among others, Serbs and Croats) by the overwhelming political-economic differences of the Cold War era. What we have seen resurfacing in the last two decades are ancient identities, adversaries, and enemies. Huntington uses the term *civilization* to describe the broadest level of these cultures and cultural identities (indeed, to him civilization is culture "writ large"). What he sees is the emergence of fault lines among and between these civilizations, and he considers this a highly dangerous situation given the historic enmities among at least some of these civilizations.

Huntington differentiates between a number of world civilizations: Sinic (Chinese); Japan (sometimes combined with "Sinic" as "Far Eastern"); Hindu; Islamic; Orthodox (centered in Russia); Western Europe; North America (along with the closely aligned Australia, New Zealand); Latin America; and (possibly) Africa. He sees these civilizations as differing greatly on basic philosophical assumptions, underlying values, social relations, customs, and overall outlooks on life. To Huntington, human history is in effect the history of civilizations, especially these civilizations. Civilizations share a number of characteristics including the fact that there is great agreement on what they are (although they lack clear beginnings and there are no clear-cut boundaries between civilizations, which, nonetheless, are quite real). Civilizations

1. are among the most enduring of human associations (although they do change over time).
2. are the broadest level of cultural identity (short of humanity in its entirety).
3. are the broadest source of subjective self-identification.
4. usually span more than one state (although they do not perform state functions).
5. are a totality.
6. are closely aligned with both religion and race.

Huntington offers a modern grand narrative of the relationships among civilizations. For more than three thousand years (approximately 1500 BC to AD 1500) civilizations tended to be widely separated in terms of both time and space. As a result, contacts among them were likely to be nonexistent. When they occurred, they tended to be on a limited or intermittent basis, and they were likely quite intense.

The next phase, roughly from 1500 to the close of World War II, was characterized by the sustained, overpowering, and unidirectional impact of Western civilization on all other civilizations. Huntington attributes this impact to various structural characteristics of the West, including the rise there of cities, commerce, and state bureaucracy and an emerging sense of national consciousness. However, the most immediate cause was technological, especially in ocean navigation and the military, including superior military organization, discipline and training, and, of course, weaponry. In the end, the West excelled in organized violence, and although those in the West sometimes forget this, those in other parts of the world have not. Thus, by 1910, just before the First World War, the world came closer, in Huntington's view, than at any time in history to being one world, one civilization—Western civilization.

The third phase—the multicivilizational system—is traceable to the end of the expansion of the West and the beginning of the revolt against it. The period after World

War I and until about 1990 was characterized by a clash of ideas, especially capitalist and communist ideologies; but since the fall of communism the major clashes in the world now revolve around religion, culture, and ultimately civilizations. The West continues to be dominant, but Huntington foresees its decline. The decline will be slow, it will not occur in a straight line, and it will involve a waning (at least relatively) of the West's resources—population, economic product, and military capability. The decline in military capability will be traceable to such things as the decline of U.S. forces and to the globalization of the defense industries, which will make generally available many weapons formerly available only or largely in the West. Increasingly, other civilizations will reject the West, but they will embrace and utilize the advances of modernization, which can and should be distinguished from Westernization.

While the West declines, the resurgence of two other civilizations is of greatest importance. The first is the economic growth of Asian societies, especially Sinic civilization. Huntington foresees the continuing growth of Asian economies, which will soon surpass the economics of the West. Important in itself, this will translate into increasing power for the East and a corresponding decline in the ability of the West to impose its standards on the East. Huntington sees the economic ascendancy of the East as largely traceable to the superior aspects of its culture(s), especially its collectivism in contrast to the individuality that dominates the West. Also helpful to the economic rise of the East are various other commonalities among the nations of the region (e.g., religion, especially Confucianism). The successes of Asian economies will be important not only in themselves but also for the role they will play as models for other non-Western societies.

This first of Huntington's arguments is not that surprising or original. After all, we witnessed the dramatic growth of the post–World War II Japanese economy, and we are now witnessing the amazing economic transformation of China and India. Projecting present economic trends, few would disagree with the view that the economy of China will become the largest in the world in the not-too-distant future.

More controversial is Huntington's second major contention, which involves the resurgence of Islam. The Sinic emergence is rooted in the economy, but Islamic growth is rooted in dramatic population growth and the mobilization of the population. This growth of Islam has touched nearly every Muslim society, usually first culturally and then sociopolitically. It can be seen as part of the global revival of religion. It also can be seen both as a product of, and as an effort to come to grips with, modernization.

Huntington goes beyond pointing to this development to paint a dire portrait of the future of the relations between the West and these other two civilizations, especially Islam. The Cold War conflict between capitalism and communism has been replaced by conflict that is to be found at the "fault lines" among and between civilizations, especially the Western, Sinic, and Islamic civilizations. Thus, he foresees dangerous clashes between the West (and what he calls its "arrogance"), Islam (and its "intolerance"), and Sinic "assertiveness." Much of the conflict revolves around the West's view of itself as possessing "universal culture," its desire to export that culture to the rest of the world, and its declining ability to do so. Furthermore, what the West sees as universalism, the rest of the world, especially Islamic civilization, sees as

imperialism. More specifically, the West wants to limit weapons proliferation, whereas other civilizations want weapons, especially "weapons of mass destruction." The West also seeks to export democracy to, and even impose it on, other societies and civilizations, which often resist democracy as part of the West's idea of universal culture. And the West seeks to control and to limit immigration (especially from Islamic civilization), although many from those civilizations have found their way into the West or want to be there. As these processes increase, Huntington sees cleft societies developing *within* both Europe and the United States. In the latter, fault lines will develop not only between Westerners and Muslims but also between Anglos and Hispanics (Huntington, 2004).

What has earned Huntington numerous criticisms and the greatest enmity are his controversial statements about Islamic civilization and Muslims (Huntington, 1996). For example, he argues that wherever Muslims and non-Muslims live in close proximity to one another, violent conflict and intense antagonism are pervasive, and he puts much of the blame for this on Muslims and their propensity toward violent conflict. He argues that from the beginning, Islam has been a religion of the sword, it has glorified military values, and there is a history of Islamic conquest. The relationship between Islam and other civilizations has historically been one of mutual indigestibility. Of course, Western imperialism—often with Islam as a target—has played a key role in this. Islam also lacks a strong core state to exert control over the civilization. But of greatest importance to Huntington are the pressures created by the demographic explosion within Islam.

Huntington is concerned about the decline of the West, especially of the United States. He sees the United States, indeed all societies, as threatened by their increasing multicivilizational or multicultural character. For him, the demise of the United States effectively means the demise of Western civilization. Without a powerful, unicivilizational United States, the West is minuscule. For the West to survive and prosper, the United States must do two things. First, it must reaffirm its identity as a Western (rather than a multicivilizational) nation. Second, it must reaffirm and reassert its role as the leader of Western civilization around the globe. The reassertion and acceptance of Western civilization (which would also involve a renunciation of universalism), indeed all civilizations, is the surest way to prevent warfare between civilizations. The real danger, for Huntington, is multiculturalism within the West and all other civilizations. Thus, Huntington ultimately comes down on the side of cultural continuity and something approaching cultural purity within civilizations. For him, at least in some ideal sense, globalization becomes a process by which civilizations continue to exist and move in roughly parallel fashion in the coming years. This constitutes a reaffirmation of the importance of civilization—that is, culture—in the epoch of globalization.

Cultural Convergence

The preceding paradigm is rooted in the idea of lasting differences among and between cultures and civilizations as a result of, or in spite of, globalization. In contrast, the cultural convergence paradigm is based on the idea of globalization

leading to increasing sameness throughout the world. While thinkers like Huntington emphasize the persistence of cultures and civilizations in the face of globalization, those who support the convergence perspective see those cultures changing, sometimes radically, as a result of globalization. The cultures of the world are seen as growing increasingly similar, at least to some degree and in some ways. There is a tendency to see global assimilation in the direction of dominant groups and societies in the world. Those who operate from this perspective focus on such things as "cultural imperialism," global capitalism, Westernization, Americanization, "McDonaldization," and "world culture" (Boli and Lechner, 2005). At its extreme, globalization becomes Westernization, Americanization (de Grazia, 2005; Marling, 2006), and McDonaldization writ large.

In what follows I discuss two versions of this basic argument that are closely associated with my own work on this topic. However, a note of warning and clarification is needed. Although my work does focus on cultural convergence, it certainly does *not* argue that this is all that is happening in globalization, or that local cultures are disappearing completely or even necessarily being altered in some fundamental way. Rather, the argument is that global processes are bringing the same or similar phenomena (e.g., McDonald's restaurants in 120-plus countries in the world) to many parts of the world and, in that sense, there is cultural convergence. However, side-by-side with such global phenomena exist local phenomena (e.g., local open-air food markets or craft fairs) that continue to be vibrant and important. Furthermore, it may well be that the arrival of these global forms spurs the revival or development of new local forms. Although the last two points are certainly meritorious, in accepting them we must not lose sight of the fact that some, perhaps a great deal of, cultural convergence is also occurring (the spread of Wal-Mart into Mexico and other nations is another example).

"McDonaldization"

Although it is based on Max Weber's ideas about the rationalization of the West (see Chapter 4), the McDonaldization thesis (Ritzer, 2008b, 2006) adopts a different model: Weber focused on the bureaucracy; I concentrate on the fast-food restaurant. Also, the McDonaldization thesis brings the theory into the twenty-first century and views rationalization as extending its reach into more sectors of society and into more areas of the world than Weber ever imagined. Of greatest concern in the context of this section is the fact that McDonaldization is, as we will see, a force in globalization, especially increasing cultural homogenization.

McDonaldization 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 the rest of the world. The nature of the McDonaldization process may be delineated by outlining its five basic dimensions: efficiency, calculability, predictability, control through the substitution of technology for people, and, paradoxically, the irrationality of rationality.

Efficiency A McDonaldizing society emphasizes *efficiency,* the effort to discover the best possible means to achieve whatever end is desired. Workers in fast-food

restaurants clearly must work efficiently. For example, burgers are assembled, and sometimes even cooked, in an assembly-line fashion. Customers want, and are expected, to acquire and consume their meals efficiently. The drive-through window is a highly efficient means for customers to obtain, and for employees to dole out, meals. Overall, various norms, rules, regulations, procedures, and structures have been put in place in the fast-food restaurant to ensure that *both* employees and customers act in an efficient manner. Furthermore, the efficiency of one party helps to ensure that the other will behave in a similar manner.

Calculability Great importance is given to *calculability,* to an emphasis on quantity, often to the detriment of quality. Various aspects of the work of employees at fast-food restaurants are timed. This emphasis on speed often serves to adversely affect the quality of the work, from the point of view of the employee, resulting in dissatisfaction, alienation, and high turnover rates. Similarly, customers are expected to spend as little time as possible in the fast-food restaurant. The drive-through window reduces this time to zero, but if customers desire to eat in the restaurant, the chairs may be designed to impel them to leave after about 20 minutes. This emphasis on speed clearly has a negative effect on the quality of the dining experience at a fast-food restaurant. Furthermore, the emphasis on how fast the work is to be done means that customers cannot be served high-quality food that, almost by definition, would require a good deal of time to prepare.

Predictability Because McDonaldization involves an emphasis on predictability, things (products, settings, employee and customer behavior, and so on) are pretty much the same from one geographic setting to another and from one time to another. Employees are expected to perform their work in a predictable manner, and customers are expected to respond with similarly predictable behavior. Thus, when customers enter, employees ask, following scripts, what they wish to order. Customers are expected to know what they want, or where to look to find what they want, and they are expected to order, pay, and leave quickly. Employees (following another script) are expected to thank them when they do leave. A highly predictable ritual is played out in the fast-food restaurant—one that involves highly predictable foods that vary little from one time or place to another.

Control by Means of Technology Great control exists in McDonaldized systems, and a good deal of that control comes from technologies. These technologies currently dominate employees, but increasingly they will be replacing them. Employees are clearly controlled by such technologies as french-fry machines that ring when the fries are done and even automatically lift the fries out of the hot oil. For their part, customers are controlled by the employees who are constrained by such technologies as well as more directly by the technologies themselves. Thus, the automatic fry machine makes it impossible for a customer to request well-done, well-browned fries.

Irrationality of Rationality Both employees and customers suffer from the irrationality of rationality that seems inevitably to accompany McDonaldization. Paradoxically,

rationality seems often to lead to its exact opposite—irrationality. For example, the efficiency of the fast-food restaurant is often replaced by the inefficiencies associated with long lines of people at the counters or long lines of cars at the drive-through window. Although there are many other irrationalities, the ultimate irrationality is dehumanization. Employees are forced to work in dehumanizing jobs, and customers are forced to eat in dehumanizing settings and circumstances. The fast-food restaurant is a source of degradation for employees and customers alike.

McDonaldization, Expansionism, and Globalization

McDonald's has been a resounding success in the international arena. Over half of McDonald's restaurants are outside the United States (in the mid-1980s only 25 percent of McDonald's were outside the United States). The vast majority of new restaurants opened each year are overseas. Well over half of McDonald's profits come from its overseas operations. The highly McDonaldized Starbucks has become an increasingly global force and is now a presence in Latin America, Europe (it is particularly visible in London), the Middle East, and the Pacific Rim.

Many highly McDonaldized firms outside of the fast-food industry have also had success globally. In addition to its thousands of stores in the United States, Blockbuster now has just over 2,000 sites in 28 other countries. Wal-Mart opened its first international store (in Mexico) in 1991 and now operates over a thousand stores overseas (compared to over 3,000 in the United States, including supercenters and Sam's Club).

Another indicator of globalization is the fact that other nations have developed their own variants of this American institution. Canada has a chain of coffee shops, Tim Hortons (merged with Wendy's a few years ago), that has 2,200 outlets (160 in the United States). Paris, a city whose love for fine cuisine might lead you to think it would prove immune to fast food, has a large number of fast-food croissanteries; the revered French bread has also been McDonaldized. India has a chain of fast-food restaurants, Nirula's, that sells mutton burgers (about 80 percent of Indians are Hindus, who eat no beef) as well as local Indian cuisine. Mos Burger is a Japanese chain with over 1,500 restaurants that, in addition to the usual fare, sell teriyaki chicken burgers, rice burgers, and oshiruko with brown rice cake. Russkoye Bistro, a Russian chain, sells traditional Russian fare like pirogi (meat and vegetable pies), blini (thin pancakes), Cossack apricot curd tart, and, of course, vodka. Perhaps the most unlikely spot for an indigenous fast-food restaurant, war-ravaged Beirut of 1984, witnessed the opening of Juicy Burger, with a rainbow instead of golden arches and J.B. the Clown standing in for Ronald McDonald. Its owners hoped that it would become the McDonald's of the Arab world. After the 2003 invasion of Iraq, a number of clones of McDonald's ("Madonal," "Matbax") quickly opened.

Now McDonaldization is coming full circle. Other countries with their own McDonaldized institutions have begun to export them to the United States. The Body Shop, an ecologically sensitive British cosmetics chain, had over 1,900 shops in 50 nations in 2003, of which 300 were in the United States. Furthermore, American

firms are now opening copies of this British chain, such as Bath and Body Works. Pollo Campero, a Guatemalan chain specializing in chicken, is currently in six countries and is spreading rapidly throughout the United States.

McDonald's, as the model of the process of McDonaldization, has come to occupy a central position throughout the world. At the opening of McDonald's in Moscow, it was described as the ultimate American icon. When Pizza Hut opened in Moscow in 1990, customers saw it as a small piece of America. Reflecting on the growth of fast-food restaurants in Brazil, an executive associated with Pizza Hut of Brazil said that his nation is passionate about things American.

The "Globalization of Nothing"

The "globalization of nothing" (Ritzer, 2007c), like McDonaldization, implies increasing homogenization as more and more nations have an increasing number of the various forms of nothing. Note that I am *not* arguing that globalization is nothing; indeed it is clear that the process is of enormous significance. Rather, the argument is that there is an *elective affinity* (a term borrowed from Weber) between globalization and nothing: one does not cause the other, but they do tend to vary together.

What is central here is the idea of *grobalization* (a companion to the notion of glocalization), or the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations, and the like and their desire, indeed need, to impose themselves on various geographic areas (see J. M. Ryan, 2007). Their main interest is in seeing their power, influence, and in some cases profits *grow* (hence the term *gro*balization) throughout the world. Grobalization involves a variety of subprocesses. Three of them—capitalism, Americanization, and McDonaldization—are central driving forces in grobalization and are of great significance in the worldwide spread of nothingness.

By *nothing,* I mean (largely) empty forms, forms devoid of distinctive content. (Conversely, *something* would be defined as [largely] full forms, forms rich in distinctive content.) It is easier to export empty forms (nothing) throughout the globe than it is to export forms that are loaded with content (something). The latter are more likely to be rejected by at least some cultures and societies because the content conflicts, is at variance with, local content. In contrast, empty forms, largely devoid of distinctive content, are less likely to come into conflict with the local. In addition, empty forms have other advantages from the point of view of globalization. For example, they are easy to replicate over and over because they are so minimalist, and they have a cost advantage because they are relatively inexpensive to reproduce. A good example of nothing in these terms is the shopping mall (e.g., any of the malls owned by the Mills Corporation—Potomac Mills, Sawgrass Mills, etc.), which is an empty (largely) structure that is easily replicated around the world. These malls *could* be filled with an endless array of specific content (e.g., local shops, local foods, etc.—something!) that *could* vary enormously from one locale to another. However, increasingly, they are filled with chain stores carrying a wide range of various types of . . . nothing! Since more and more countries have these malls, this is an example of the grobalization of nothing and of increasing global homogenization.

There are four subtypes of nothing, and all of them are largely empty of distinctive content and are being globalized: (1) "nonplaces," or settings that are largely empty of content (e.g., the malls discussed above); (2) "nonthings," items such as credit cards in which there is little to distinguish one from the billions of others and all of them work in exactly the same way for all who use them anywhere in the world; (3) "nonpeople," or the kind of employees associated with nonplaces, for example, telemarketers, who may be nearly anywhere in the world and who interact with all customers in much the same way, relying heavily on scripts; and (4) "nonservices," services such as those provided by ATMs (the services provided are identical; the customer does all the work needed to obtain the services) as opposed to human bank tellers. The grobal proliferation of nonplaces, nonthings, nonpeople, and nonservices is another indication of increasing homogenization.

Cultural Hybridization

The third paradigm emphasizes the mixing of cultures as a result of globalization and the production, out of the integration of the global and the local, of new and unique hybrid cultures that are not reducible to either the local or the global culture. From this perspective, McDonaldization and the grobalization of nothing may be taking place, but they are largely superficial changes. Much more important is the integration of these and other global processes with various local realities to produce new and distinctive hybrid forms that indicate continued heterogenization rather than homogenization. Hybridization is a very positive, even romantic, view of globalization as a profoundly creative process out of which emerge new cultural realities and continuing if not increasing heterogeneity in many different locales.

The concept that gets to the heart of cultural hybridization, as well as to what many contemporary theorists interested in globalization think about the nature of transnational processes, is glocalization. *Glocalization* can be defined as the interpenetration of the global and the local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographic areas. While grobalization, as discussed above, tends to be associated with the proliferation of nothing, glocalization tends to be tied more to something and therefore stands opposed, at least partially (and along with the local itself), to the spread of nothing. Following Roland Robertson (2001; see also M. Smith, 2007), the following are the essential elements of the perspective on globalization adopted by those who emphasize glocalization:

1. The world is growing more pluralistic. Glocalization theory is exceptionally alert to differences within and between areas of the world.
2. Individuals and local groups have great power to adapt, innovate, and maneuver within a glocalized world. Glocalization theory sees local individuals and groups as important and creative agents.
3. Social processes are relational and contingent. Grobalization provokes a variety of reactions—ranging from nationalist entrenchment to cosmopolitan embrace—that feed back on and transform it, that produce glocalization.

4. Commodities and the media are seen *not* as (totally) coercive but rather as providing material to be used in individual and group creation throughout the glocalized areas of the world.

Those who emphasize glocalization tend to see it as militating against the grobalization of nothing and, in fact, view it as leading to the creation of a wide array of new, "glocal" forms of something. In contrast, those who emphasize grobalization see it as a powerful contributor to the spread of nothingness throughout the world.

A discussion of some closely related terms (and related examples) will be of considerable help in getting a better sense of glocalization, as well as the broader issue of cultural hybridization (Canclini, 1995; Pieterse, 2004). Of course, *hybridization* itself is one such term emphasizing increasing diversity associated with the unique mixtures of the global and the local as opposed to the *uniformity* associated with grobalization. A cultural hybrid would involve the combination of two or more elements from different cultures or parts of the world. Among the examples of hybridization (and heterogenization, glocalization) are Ugandan tourists visiting Amsterdam to watch two Moroccan women engage in Thai boxing, Argentinians watching Asian rap performed by a South American band at a London club owned by a Saudi Arabian, and the more mundane experiences of Americans eating such concoctions as Irish bagels, Chinese tacos, and kosher pizza. Obviously, the list of such hybrids is long and growing rapidly with increasing hybridization. The contrast of course would be such uniform experiences as eating hamburgers in the United States, quiche in France, or sushi in Japan.

Yet another concept that is closely related to glocalization is *creolization* (Hannerz, 1987). The term *creole* generally refers to people of mixed race, but it has been extended to the idea of the creolization of language and culture, involving a combination of languages and cultures that were previously unintelligible to one another.

All of the above—glocalization, hybridization, creolization—should give the reader a good feel for what is being discussed here under the heading "cultural hybridization."

Appadurai's "Landscapes"

In *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996), Arjun Appadurai emphasizes global flows and the disjunctures among them. These serve to produce unique cultural realities around the world; they tend to produce culture hybrids.

Appadurai discusses five global flows: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes. The use of the suffix *-scape* allows Appadurai to communicate the idea that these processes have fluid, irregular, and variable shapes and are therefore consistent with the idea of heterogenization and not homogenization. The fact that there are a number of these scapes and that they operate independently of one another to some degree, and perhaps are even in conflict with one another, makes this perspective also in tune with perspectives that emphasize cultural diversity and heterogeneity. Furthermore, these scapes are interpreted differently by different agents ranging all the way from individuals to face-to-face groups, subnational groups, multinational corporations, and even nation-states. And these scapes are ultimately navigated by individuals and groups on the basis of their own subjective interpretations

of them. In other words, these are imagined worlds, and those doing the imagining can range from those who control them to those who live in and traverse them. Although power obviously lies with those in control and their imaginings, this perspective gives to those who merely live in or pass through them the power to redefine and ultimately subvert them.

At the center of Appadurai's thinking are the five landscapes mentioned above:

1. *Ethnoscapes* involve the mobile groups and individuals (tourists, refugees, guest workers) who play such an important role in the ever-changing world in which we increasingly live. This involves actual movement as well as fantasies about moving. In an ever-changing world, people cannot afford to allow their imaginations to rest too long and thus must keep such fantasies alive.
2. *Technoscapes* are the ever-fluid, global configurations of high and low, mechanical and informational technology and the wide range of material (downloading files, e-mail) that now moves so freely and quickly around the globe and across borders that at one time were impervious to such movement (or at least thought to be).
3. *Financescapes* involve the processes by which huge sums of money move through nations and around the world at great speed through commodity speculations, currency markets, national stock exchanges, and the like.
4. *Mediascapes* involve both the electronic capability to produce and transmit information around the world and the images of the world that these media create and disseminate. Involved here are those who write "blogs" for the Internet, global filmmakers and film distributors, television stations (CNN and al-Jazeera are notable examples), and newspapers and magazines.
5. *Ideoscapes,* like mediascapes, are sets of images. However, they are largely restricted to political images produced by states and in line with their ideology, or to images and counterideologies produced by movements that seek to supplant those in power or at least to gain a piece of that power.

Three things are especially worth noting about Appadurai's landscapes. First, they can be seen as global process that are partly or wholly independent of any given nation-state. Second, global flows occur not only through the landscapes but also increasingly in and through the *disjunctures* among them. Thus, to give one example of such a disjuncture, the Japanese are open to ideas (ideoscapes, mediascapes) but notoriously closed to immigration (at least one of the ethnoscapes). More generally, the free movement of some landscapes may be at variance with blockages of others. Studies in this area must be attuned to such disjunctures and to their implications for globalization. Third, territories are going to be affected differently by the five landscapes and their disjunctures. This will lead to important differences among and between cultures. The focus on landscapes and their disjunctures points globalization studies in a set of unique directions. However, the focus on landscapes is in line with the idea that globalization is much more associated with heterogenization than homogenization, and globalization is much more associated with glocalization than grobalization.

Economic Theory

There are many theories about the economic aspects of globalization. The most important perspectives, at least in sociology, tend to be those associated with Marxian theory; they are neo-Marxian in nature. Two major examples are discussed in this section.

Transnational Capitalism

Leslie Sklair (2002) distinguishes between two systems of globalization. The first—the capitalist system of globalization—is the one that is now predominant. The other—the socialist system—is not yet in existence but is foreshadowed by current anti-globalization movements, especially those oriented toward greater human rights throughout the world. The antiglobalization movements, and the possibility of a socialist form, are made possible by the problems in the current system of globalization, especially class polarization and the increasing ecological unsustainability of capitalist globalization.

Although the nation-state remains important, Sklair focuses on transnational practices that are able to cut across boundaries—including those created by states—with the implication that territorial boundaries are of declining importance in capitalist globalization. As a Marxist, Sklair accords priority to economic transnational practices, and it is in this context that *transnational corporations*—one of the central aspects of his analysis—predominate. Underlying this emphasis on transnational corporations is the idea that capitalism has moved away from being an international system (because the nation[-state] is of declining significance) and toward becoming a globalizing system that is decoupled from any specific geographic territory or state.

The second transnational practice of great importance is political, and here the *transnational capitalist class* predominates. However, it is not made up of capitalists in the traditional Marxian sense of the term—that is, the transnational capitalist class does not necessarily own the means of production. Sklair differentiates among four "fractions" of the transnational capitalist class: (1) the *corporate fraction* made up of executives of transnational corporations and their local affiliates; (2) a *state fraction* composed of globalizing state and interstate bureaucrats and politicians; (3) a *technical fraction* made up of globalizing professionals; and (4) the *consumerist fraction* encompassing merchants and media executives. This is obviously a very different group than Marx thought of when conceptualizing the capitalist.

The transnational capitalist class may not be capitalist in a traditional sense of the term, but it is transnational in various ways. First, its "members" tend to share global (as well as local) interests. Second, they seek to exert various types of control across nations. That is, they exert economic control in the workplace, political control in both domestic and international politics, and culture-ideological control in everyday life across international borders. Third, they tend to share a global rather than a local perspective on a wide range of issues. Fourth, they come from many different countries, but increasingly they see themselves as citizens of the world and not just of their place of birth. Finally, wherever they may be at any given time, they share similar lifestyles, especially in terms of the goods and services they consume.

The third transnational practice is culture-ideology, and here Sklair accords great importance to the *culture-ideology of consumerism* in capitalist globalization. Although the focus is on culture and ideology, the emphasis on consumerism ultimately involves the economy by adding an interest in consumption to the traditional concern with production (and transnational corporations) in economic approaches in general and in Marxian theories in particular. In this realm the ability to exert ideological control over people scattered widely throughout the globe has increased dramatically, primarily through the greater reach and sophistication of advertising and the media and the bewildering array of consumer goods that are marketed by and through them. Ultimately, they all serve to create a global mood to consume that benefits transnational corporations, as well as advertising and media corporations, which are examples of such corporations and profit from them.

Ultimately, Sklair is interested in the relationship among the transnational practices and the institutions that dominate such practice, and he argues that transnational corporations utilize the transnational capitalist class to develop and solidify the consumerist culture and ideology that is increasingly necessary to feed the demands of the capitalist system of production. Indeed, it is this relationship that defines global capitalism today, and it is the most important force in ongoing changes in the world.

As a Marxist, Sklair is interested not only in critically analyzing capitalist globalization but in articulating an alternative to it and its abuses. He sees some promising signs in the protectionism of some countries that see themselves as exploited by transnational corporations. Also hopeful are new social movements such as the green movement seeking a more sustainable environment and the various antiglobalization groups that have sprung up in recent years. He is particularly interested in various human rights movements in which, he believes, can be found the seeds of the alternative to capitalist globalization—that is, socialist globalization. He predicts that these and other movements will gain momentum in the twenty-first century as they increasingly resist the ways in which globalization has been appropriated by transnational corporations. In fact, in good Marxian dialectical terms, he sees the success of capitalist globalization sowing the seeds of its own destruction as its expansion tends to provide its opponents with resources (derived from the economic success of transnational capitalism), organizational forms (copied from the successful organizations in global capitalism), and most obviously a clarity of purpose. As the transnational corporations grow more successful, their abuses will become more blatant, and the need to supplant them as the central players in the global system will intensify.

Empire

The most important and widely discussed and debated Marxian approach to globalization is Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire* (2000) and *Multitude* (2004). Although Hardt and Negri have reservations about postmodern social theory, they analyze the postmodernization of the global economy. They associate modernity with *imperialism,* the defining characteristic of which is one or more nations at the center that control and exploit, especially economically, a number of areas throughout the world. In a postmodern move, Hardt and Negri "decenter" this imperialism, thereby

defining empire as a postmodern reality in which such dominance exists but no single nation (or any other entity) is at its center. To put this another way, *modern* sovereignty can be traced to a *place,* but in its *postmodern* form as empire, sovereignty exists in a nonplace. The empire has no center; it is deterritorialized; it exists only in the realm of ideas communicated through the media. And as a result, the spectacle of the empire is everywhere; it is omnipresent.

Empire does not yet exist fully. It is in formation at the moment, but we can get a sense of its parameters. Empire governs the world with a single logic of rule, but there is no single power at the heart of empire. Instead of a single source of command, in empire power is dispersed throughout society and the globe. Even the United States, in spite of its seeming hegemony in the world today, is not an empire in these terms, nor does it lie at the heart of Hardt and Negri's sense of an empire. However, the sovereignty of the United States does constitute an important precursor to empire, and the United States continues to occupy a privileged position in the world. However, it is being supplanted by empire.

Empire is (or will be) lacking in geographic or territorial boundaries. It also can be seen as lacking temporal boundaries in the sense that it seeks (albeit unsuccessfully) to suspend history and to exist for all eternity. It also can be seen as lacking a lower boundary in that it seeks to expand down into the depths of the social world. This means that it seeks not only to control the basics of the social world (thought, action, interaction, groups), but to go even further in an effort to use biopower to control human nature and population—*both* people's brains and their bodies. In a way, empire is far more ambitious than imperialism in that it seeks to control the entirety of life down to its most basic levels.

The key to the global power of empire lies in the fact that it is (or seeks to be) a new juridical power. It is based on such things as the constitution of order, norms, ethical truths, and a common notion of what is right. This juridical formation is the source of power of empire. Thus, in the name of what is "right," it can intervene anywhere in the world in order to deal with what it considers humanitarian problems, to guarantee accords, and to impose peace on those who may not want peace or even see the empire's goal as peace. More specifically, it can engage in "just wars" in the name of this juridical formation; the latter legitimates the former. Such wars become a kind of sacred undertaking. The enemy is anyone or anything that the juridical formation sees as a threat to ethical order in the world. Thus the right to engage in just war is seen as boundless, encompassing the entire space of civilization. The right to engage in just war also is seen as boundless in time; it is permanent, eternal. In a just war, ethically grounded military action is legitimate, and its goal is to achieve the desired order and peace. Thus empire is based not on force per se but on the ability to project force in the service of that which is right (precursors of this notion can be seen in the two U.S. invasions of Iraq, as well as the incursion into Afghanistan).

Empire is based on a triple imperative. First, it seeks to incorporate all that it can. It appears to be magnanimous, and it operates with a liberal facade. However, in the process of inclusion, it creates a smooth world in which differences, resistance, and conflict are eliminated. Second, empire differentiates and affirms differences. Although those who are different are celebrated culturally, they are set aside juridically.

Third, once the differences are in place, empire seeks to hierarchize and to manage the hierarchy and the differences embedded in it. It is hierarchization and management that is the real power of empire.

Empire is, then, a postmodern Marxian perspective on globalization and on the exertion of power around the world. However, instead of capitalists or capitalist nations exerting that power, it is the much more nebulous empire that is in control. If there are no more capitalists in empire, what about the proletariat? To Hardt and Negri, the time of the proletariat is over. But if the proletariat no longer exists to oppose empire, where is the opposition to come from? Operating from a Marxian perspective, Hardt and Negri must come up with an oppositional force, and they do not disappoint on this score and label the oppositional group the "multitude." This is an interesting choice of terms. For one thing it is much more general and abstract than "proletariat" and also moves us away from a limited focus on the economy. Second, it makes clear that there are lots of at least potential opponents of the empire; indeed, those in control in the empire constitute only a small minority vis-à-vis the multitude.

Hardt and Negri's *multitude* is that collection of people throughout the world that sustains empire in various ways, including but *not* restricted to its labor (it is the real productive force in empire). Among other ways, it also sustains it by buying into the culture-ideology of consumption and, more important, in actually consuming a variety of its offerings. Like capitalism and its relationship to the proletariat, empire is a parasite on the multitude and on its creativity and productivity. Like Marx's proletariat (which all but disappears in this theory), the multitude is a force for creativity in empire. Also like the proletariat, the multitude is capable of overthrowing empire through the autonomous creation of a counter-empire. The counter-empire, like empire, is, or would be, a global phenomenon created out of, and becoming, global flows and exchanges. Globalization leads to deterritorialization (the multitude itself is a force in deterritorialization and is deterrirorialized), and deterritorialization is a prerequisite to the global liberation of the multitude. With deterritorialization, social revolution can, as Marx predicted, occur, perhaps for the first time, on a global level.

Hardt and Negri are certainly critics of globalization, whether it be modern capitalist imperialism or postmodern empire, but they also see a utopian potential in globalization. Thus, globalization per se is *not* the problem; instead, the problem is the form that has taken, or takes, in imperialism and empire. That utopian potential has always been present, but in the past it was smothered by modern sovereign powers through ideological control or military force. Empire now occupies, or soon will, that controlling position, but its need to suppress that potential is counterbalanced by the multitude's need to manifest and express it. Ultimately, there exists in globalization the potential for universal freedom and equality. Further, globalization prevents us from falling back into the particularism and isolationism that have characterized much of human history. Those processes, of course, would serve to impede the global change sought by the multitude. More positively, as globalization progresses, it serves to push us more and more in the direction of the creation of counter-empire. This focus on the global serves to distinguish Hardt and Negri from other postmodernists and post-Marxists, who tend to focus on the local and the problems and

potential that exist there. In contrast, in their view, a focus on the local serves to obscure the fact that the sources of both our major problems and our liberation exist at the global level, in empire.

While Hardt and Negri foresee counter-empire, they, like Marx in the case of communism, offer no blueprint for how to get there or what counter-empire might look like. Like communism to Marx, counter-empire will arise out of actual practice (*praxis*), especially that of the multitude. Counter-empire must be global, it must be everywhere, and it must be opposed to empire. Counter-empire is made increasingly likely because empire is losing its ability to control the multitude. Thus, empire must redouble its efforts (e.g., through police power), and this serves to mobilize the multitude and make counter-empire more likely. As postmodernists, Hardt and Negri reject a focus on the agent of the type found in Marxian theory, specifically the centrality accorded to the proletarian revolutionary agent who is increasingly conscious of exploitation by capitalism. Instead, they focus on such nonagential, collective actions by the multitude as desertion, migration, and nomadism. In accord with their postmodern orientation and its focus on the body, Hardt and Negri urge a new "barbarism" involving new bodily forms of the kind that are now appearing in the realm of gender, sexuality, and aesthetic mutations (such as tattooing and body piercing). Such bodies are less likely to submit to external control and more likely to create a new life—the basis of counter-empire. Thus, the revolutionary force is not a conscious agent but new bodily, corporeal forms.

Although Hardt and Negri retain a Marxian interest in production, they do recognize a new world of production and work in which immaterial, intellectual, and communicative types of labor are increasingly central. Thus, control over individuals engaged in such work—a key element and increasing proportion of the multitude—is of increasing importance. However, although they are controlled through global communication and ideology (especially via the media), it is also through communication and ideology that the revolutionary potential of the multitude will be expressed. The key thing about communication is that it flows easily and effectively across the globe. This makes it easier for empire to exert control, to organize production globally, and to make its justification of itself and its actions immanent within that communication. Conversely, of course, it is also the mechanism by which the multitude can ultimately create counter-empire.

Political Theory

Several theories, more deeply rooted in political science than in sociology, deal with globalization. *International relations* (IR) focuses on the relations among and between nation-states (Clark, 2007), which are viewed as distinct actors in the world, occupying well-defined territories, and as sovereign within their own borders. There is also an emphasis on a distinct and well-defined interstate system.

Within IR, *political realism* begins with the premise that international politics is based on power, organized violence, and ultimately war (Keohane and Nyes, 2000). It assumes that nation-states are the predominant actors on the global stage; that they act as coherent units in the global arena; that force is not only a usable but an effective

method by which nation-states wield power on the global stage; and that military issues are of utmost importance in world politics.

Complex interdependence sees nation-states as relating to one another through multiple channels, both formally and informally, and through normal channels and so-called back channels. Complex interdependence differs from realism in the importance accorded to these informal channels where, for example, entities other than the state, such as multinational corporations (MNCs), connect societies to one another. There is no clear hierarchy of interstate relationships, and it is certainly not the case that military issues always, or even often, predominate. Coalitions arise within and between nation-states on these issues. Conflict may or may not arise, and, if conflict arises, it varies greatly in degree of intensity. Complex interdependence tends to lead to the decline in, or even the disappearance of, the use of military force by one nation-state against other(s) within a given region or alliance, although military action may continue to occur outside that region or bloc. International organizations have only a minor role to play in the realist view of the world, but they play an expanded role from the perspective of complex interdependence. Such organizations bring together representatives from various countries, set agendas, serve as catalysts for the formation of coalitions, serve as arenas from which political initiatives arise, and are helpful to weak states in playing a larger role in the international arena. Thus the complex interdependence perspective continues to focus on relationships among nation-states, but it takes a much wider and broader view of the nature of those relationships.

A variety of positions at variance with IR and its derivatives offer fundamental challenges to it. Among these are a wide range of other scholars (e.g., Cerny, 1995, 2003) associated with IPE (international political economy). Among other things, they focus more on power and critique the state-centrism of IR, which ignores other entities with political and economic power, especially the corporation.

An overriding interest in the literature on globalization and politics is the fate of the nation-state in the age of globalization. Many see the nation-state as threatened by various global processes, especially global economic flows (Ohmae, 1996; Strange, 1996). Some argue that the state is now a minor player globally when compared to a huge and growing borderless global economy that nation-states are unable to control. Whereas nation-states once controlled markets, now markets often control nation-states.

A variety of other factors threaten the autonomy of the nation-state, including flows of information, illegal immigrants, new social movements, terrorists, criminals, drugs, money (including laundered money and other financial instruments), sex-trafficking, and much else. Many of these flows have been made possible by the development and continual refinement of technologies of all sorts. The nation-state also has been weakened by the growing power of global and transnational organizations (for example, the EU) that operate largely free of the control of nation-states. Another factor is the growth of global problems (AIDs, TB) that cannot be handled, or handled very well, by a nation-state operating on its own. A more specific historical factor is the end of the Cold War, which had been a powerful force in unifying, or at least holding together, some nation-states. One example is Yugoslavia and its dissolution with the end of the Cold War, but the main one, of course, is the dissolution of the Soviet Union into a number of independent nation-states (Russia, Ukraine,

Georgia, etc.). Then there are "failed states" (e.g., Somalia) in which there is, in effect, no functioning national government as well as states in the process of breaking down (Boas and Jennings, 2007). Clearly, failed states and disintegrating states are in no position to adequately maintain their borders.

One way of summarizing much of this is to say that the nation-state has become increasingly *porous.* Although this seems to be supported by a great deal of evidence, the fact is that no nation-state has *ever* been able to control its borders completely (Bauman, 1992). Thus, it is not the porosity of the nation-state that is new but rather the dramatic *increase* in that porosity and of the kinds of flows able to pass through national borders.

Some critics contest these conclusions, stating that rumors of the demise of the nation-state are greatly exaggerated (Wolf, 2005), that the nation-state continues to be *the* major player on the global stage (Gilpin, 2001), that it retains at least some power in the face of globalization (Conley and Weiner, 2002), and that nation-states vary greatly in their efficacy in the face of globalization (Mann, 2007).

Some scholars see the role of the state not only enduring but increasing in the world today (Beland, 2008) because of four major sources of collective insecurity: terrorism, economic globalization leading to problems such as outsourcing and pressures toward downsizing, threats to national identity due to immigration, and the spread of global diseases such as AIDs. Further, the state may actually find it in its interest to exaggerate or even create dangers and thereby make its citizens more insecure. Prior to the 2003 war with Iraq, the U.S. and British governments both argued that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) that posed a direct threat to them. The United States even claimed that Iraq could kill millions by using offshore ships to lob canisters containing lethal chemical or biological material into American cities. The collective insecurity created by such outrageous claims helped foster public opinion in favor of invading Iraq and overthrowing Saddam Hussein.

The other side of this argument in support of the nation-state is that global processes of various kinds just are not as powerful as many believe. For example, global business pales in comparison to business *within* many countries, including the United States. For another, some question the porosity of the nation-state by pointing, for example, to the fact that migration to the United States and other countries has *declined* substantially since its heights in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Gilpin, 2001).

A related point is that it would be a mistake to see globalization simply as a threat to or a constraint on the nation-state; it can also be an *opportunity* for the nation-state (Conley and Weiner, 2002). For example, the demands of globalization were used as a basis to make needed changes (at least from a neoliberal point of view) in Australian society, specifically enabling it to move away from protectionism and in the direction of (neo-)liberalization, to transform state enterprises into private enterprises, and to streamline social welfare. The rhetoric of globalization, especially an exaggeration of it and its effects, was useful to those politicians who desired such changes. In other words, Australian politicians used globalization as an ideology in order to reform Australian society.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is a theory particularly applicable to economics (especially to the market and to trade) and politics (especially to the need to limit the government's involvement in, and control over, the market and trade). It is an important theory in itself, but it also has strongly influenced other thinking and theorizing about both of those domains. This is especially the case with various neo-Marxian economic theories (see above) that are highly critical of neoliberalism.

A number of well-known scholars, especially economists (e.g., Milton Friedman), are associated with neoliberalism. We briefly examine some of the ideas of one neoliberal economist, William Easterly (2006a, 2006b), to provide a sense of this perspective from the point of view of one of its supporters.

Easterly is opposed to any form of collectivism and state planning, either as they were espoused and practiced in, for example, the Soviet Union or are today by the UN, other economists, and so on. Collectivism failed in the Soviet Union and, in Easterly's view, it will fail today. It will fail because it inhibits, if not destroys, freedom, and freedom, especially economic freedom, is highly correlated with economic success. This is the case because economic freedom allows for searches for success that are decentralized; such searches go the heart of the idea of a free market. Economic freedom and the free market are great favorites of neoliberal economists.

Easterly offers several advantages economic freedom provides that encourage economic success. First, it is extremely difficult to know in advance which economic actions will succeed and which will fail. Economic freedom permits a multitude of actions, and those that fail are weeded out. Over time, what remains, in the main, are the successful actions, and they serve to facilitate a higher standard of living. Central planners can never have nearly as much knowledge as myriad individuals seeking success and learning from their failures and from those of others. Second, markets offer continuous feedback on which actions are succeeding and failing; central planners lack such feedback. Third, economic freedom leads to the ruthless reallocation of resources to those actions that are succeeding; central planners often have vested interests that prevent such a reallocation. Fourth, economic freedom permits large and rapid increases in scale by financial markets and corporate organizations; central planners lack the flexibility to make large-scale changes rapidly. Finally, because of sophisticated contractual protections, individuals and corporations are willing to take great risks; central planners are risk averse because of their personal vulnerability if things go wrong.

Created by John Locke (1632–1704), Adam Smith (1723–1790), and others, classical *liberal theory* came to be termed neoliberalism, at least by some, as a result of developments in the 1930s (Fourcade-Gourinchas and Babb, 2002). The term *neoliberalism* involves a combination of the political commitment to individual liberty and *neo*classical economics, which is devoted to the free market and opposed to state intervention in that market (Harvey, 2005). Entrepreneurs are to be liberated, markets and trade are to be free, states are to be supportive of this and to keep interventions to a minimum, and there are to be strong property rights.

Neoliberalism emerged during the Depression era, at least in part in reaction to Keynesian economics and its impact on the larger society. Inspired by the

then-predominant theories of John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946), market, entrepreneurs, and corporations came to be limited by a number of constraints (social and political) and a strong regulative environment. Calls for a revitalization of liberal ideas also were spurred by the need to counter the collectivism (Marxian theory) that dominated much thinking and many political systems in the early twentieth century.

The intellectual leaders of this revitalization were economists, especially members of the Austrian school, including Friedrich van Hayek (1899–1992) and Ludwig von Mises (1881–1973). An organization devoted to liberal ideas—the Mont Pelerin Society (MPS)—was created in 1947. Its members were alarmed by the expansion of collectivist socialism (especially in, and sponsored by, the Soviet Union) and the aggressive intervention by liberal governments in the market (e.g., Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal"). Those associated with MPS, especially the famous and highly influential Chicago economist Milton Friedman (1912–2006), played a key role in efforts to protect traditional liberal ideas, to develop neoliberal theory, and to sponsor their utilization by countries throughout the world.

Neoliberalism comes in various forms, but all are undergirded by some or all of the following ideas (Antonio, 2007a):

- Great faith is placed in the *free market* and its rationality. The market needs to be allowed to operate free of any impediments, especially those imposed by the nation-state and other political entities. The free operation of the market will, in the "long run," advantage just about everyone and bring about both improved economic welfare and greater individual freedom (and a democratic political system). To achieve that end, it is important to champion, support, and expand a wide range of technological, legal, and institutional arrangements that support the market and its freedom. The free market is so important that neoliberals equate it with capitalism. Further, the principles of the free market are not restricted to the economy (and the polity); transactions in every sphere of life (family, education, culture) *should* also be free.
- The key, if not only, actor in the market is the *individual*; neoliberalism is radically individualistic.
- Related to the belief in the free market is a parallel belief in *free trade.*
- Where there are restraints on the free market and free trade, *deregulation* should be pursued to limit or eliminate such restraints. Free markets and free trade are linked to a *democratic political system.* Thus the political system, especially the freedom of democracy, is associated with economic well-being and with the freedom of individuals to amass great individual wealth.
- There is a commitment to *low taxes* and to *tax cuts* (especially for the wealthy whose taxes are deemed too high and too burdensome). Low taxes and tax cuts are believed to stimulate the economy by encouraging people to earn more and ultimately to invest and to spend more.
- *Tax cuts for business and industry* are encouraged with the idea that they would use the tax savings to invest more in their operations and infrastructure, thereby generating more business, income, and profits. This is

seen as benefiting not only business and industry but society as whole. Higher profits would "trickle down" and benefit most people in society.

- Spending on *welfare should be minimized* and the *safety net* for the poor should be *greatly reduced* because these policies hurt economic growth and even harm the poor. Cuts in welfare are designed to reduce government expenditures and allow government to cut taxes or to invest in more "productive" undertakings. Without the safety net, more poor people will be forced to find work, often at minimum wage or with low pay, which will enable companies to increase productivity and profits. Reduction of the safety net also creates a larger "reserve army" that business can draw on in good economic times to expand its workforce.
- There is a strong and generalized belief in *limited government* because no government or government agency can do things as well as the market (the failure of the Soviet Union is seen as proof of that). Among other things, this leaves government at least theoretically less able, or unable, to intervene in the market. It also presumably means a less expensive government, one that would need to collect less in taxes. This, in turn, puts more money in the hands of the public, especially the wealthier members of society who, in recent years, have benefited most from tax cuts. The state must be limited, and its job is to cooperate with open global markets.
- There is great belief in the need for the *global capitalist system to continue to expand.* It is presumed that such expansion would bring with it increased prosperity (but for which members of society?) and decreased poverty.

Most of these ideas focus on the neoliberal economy, but a few ideas apply to the closely linked neoliberal state (Harvey, 2006). More concretely and directly, the neoliberal state should:

- Provide a climate supportive of business and its ability to accumulate capital. This should be done even if certain actions (e.g., raising interest rates by the Federal Reserve) lead to higher unemployment for the larger population.
- Focus on furthering, facilitating, and stimulating (where necessary) the interests of business. This is done in the belief that business success will benefit everyone, but many believe that neoliberalism has benefited comparatively few people and areas of the world.
- Privatize sectors formerly run by the state (e.g., education, telecommunications, transportation) to open these areas for business and profit-making and ensure that those sectors that cannot be privatized are "cost effective" and "accountable."
- Work to allow the free movement of capital among and between economic sectors and geographic regions.
- Extol the virtues of free competition, although it is widely believed that the state actually works in support of the monopolization of markets by business interests.
- Work against groups (e.g., unions, social movements) that operate to restrain business interests and their efforts to accumulate capital.

- Reduce barriers to the free movement of capital across national borders and to the creation of new markets.
- Bail out financial institutions when they are in danger of collapse (for example, as was done in 2008–2009 for Bear Stearns, AIG, Citibank, and others).

Overall, critics argue that the neoliberal state favors elites but seeks to conceal that fact by seeming to be democratic; in fact, it is in the eyes of many deeply antidemocratic as the emphasis on freedom and liberty is largely restricted to the market.

Contrary to the established view, neoliberalism has not made the state irrelevant. Rather, the institutions and practices of the state have been transformed to better attune them to the needs and interests of the neoliberal market and economy.

However, the neoliberal state is riddled with internal contradictions. For one thing, its authoritarianism coexists uncomfortably with its supposed interest in individual freedom and democracy. For another, although committed to stability, its operations, especially in support of financial (and other) speculation, lead to increased instability. Although overtly committed to competition, it operates on behalf of monopolization. Most generally, there is the contradiction that its public support for the well-being of everyone is given the lie by its actions in support of economic elites.

Critiquing Neoliberalism

The Early Thinking of Karl Polanyi

Much of the contemporary critique of neoliberalism, especially as it relates to economics, can be traced to the work of Karl Polanyi (1886–1964), especially his 1944 book, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time.* He is the great critic of a limited focus on the economy, especially the focus of economic liberalism on the self-regulating or unregulated market, as well as on basing all on self-interest. In his view, these are not universal principles but rather were unprecedented developments associated with the advent of capitalism. Polanyi (1944) shows that the laissez-faire system came into existence with the help of the state, and it was able to continue to function as a result of state actions. Furthermore, if the laissez-faire system was left to itself, it threatened to destroy society. Indeed, it was such threats, as well as real dangers, that led to counterreactions by society and the state (e.g., socialism, communism, the New Deal) to protect themselves from the problems of a free market, especially protection of the products of, and those who labored in, it (Munck, 2002). Expansion of the laissez-faire market and the self-protective reaction against it by the state and society is called the *double movement* (D. Hall, 2007). Economic liberalism saw such counterreactions (including any form of protectionism) as "mistakes" that disrupted the operation of the markets, but Polanyi saw them as necessary and desirable reactions to the evils of the free market. Polanyi believed that the self-regulating market was an absurd idea. He derided the liberal idea that socialists, communists, New Dealers, and so on were involved in a conspiracy against liberalism and the free market. Rather than being a conspiracy, what took place was a natural, "spontaneous," collective reaction by society and its various elements that were threatened by the free market. In his time, Polanyi saw a reversal of the tendency for the economic system to dominate society. This promised to end the evils produced by the dominance of the

free market system, and also to produce *more*, rather than less, freedom. That is, Polanyi believed that collective planning and control would produce more freedom for all than was then available in the liberal economic system.

It is interesting to look back on Polanyi's ideas with the passage of more than sixty years and especially with the rise of a global economy dominated by the kind of free market system he so feared and despised. Polanyi's hope lay with society and the nation-state, but they have been rendered far less powerful with the rise of globalization, especially the global economy. Very telling here is Margaret Thatcher's (in)famous statement: "there is no such thing as society."[2] Without powerful social and political influences, the excesses of the market cannot be contained. Clearly, such planning and control are more inadequate than ever in the global age. Beyond that, one wonders whether truly global planning and control is either possible or desirable. Nevertheless, were he alive today, it is likely that the logic of Polanyi's position would lead him to favor global planning and control because of his great fears of a free market economy, now far more powerful and dangerous because it exists on a global scale.

The great global economic crisis of 2007–2008 underscores the importance of Polanyi's ideas. The market had experienced unprecedented freedom; restraints on it turned out to be limited or nonexistent. The result was a series of excesses (mortgage loans to those who should not have qualified for them; excessively risky undertakings by financial institutions; financial instruments that were opaque [e.g., "derivatives"] and that diffused responsibility for bad loans [mortgage-backed securities], etc.) that led to the collapse of the American housing market, the credit crunch, and eventually a global economic meltdown. Polanyi would have said that the cause of all of this was a lack of state control over the market. In fact, in the wake of the crisis we are witnessing a resurfacing of interest in regulating the market and the economy.

(More) Contemporary Criticisms of Neoliberalism

Among the problems with neoliberalism is the fact that it assumes that everyone in the world wants very narrow and specific types of economic well-being (to be well-off economically, if not rich) and political freedom (democracy). In fact, there are great cultural differences in the ways well-being (e.g., to not have to work very hard) and freedom (e.g., to be unfettered by the state even if it is not democratically chosen) are defined. Neoliberalism very often comes down to the United States and a few global organizations (e.g., International Monetary Fund) seeking to impose *their* definitions of well-being and freedom on peoples in other parts of the world.

In addition, neoliberalism conceals or obscures the social and material interests of those who push such an economic system with its associated technological, legal, and institutional systems. These ends are *not* being pursued because everyone in the world wants them or will benefit from them, but because *some*, usually in the north, are greatly advantaged by them and therefore push them.

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[2] For the full text of the speech, go to www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches.

Among the other criticisms of neoliberalism are the fact that it has produced financial crises in various countries throughout the world (e.g., Mexico, Argentina), its economic record has been dismal in that it has redistributed wealth (from poor to rich) rather than generating new wealth, it has sought to commodify *everything*, and it has helped to degrade the environment (Harvey, 2005). Furthermore, there are signs that it is failing (deficit financing in the United States and China), signs of more immediate crisis (burgeoning budget deficits, the bailout of financial institutions), and evidence that U.S. global hegemony is crumbling.

The Death of Neoliberalism?

It is arguable that the recent and ongoing economic crisis will spell the beginning of the end of neoliberalism. In a speech in late 2008, French President Sarkozy[3] said: "The idea of the absolute power of the markets that should not be constrained by any rule, by any political intervention, was a mad idea. The idea that markets are always right was a mad idea." Referring implicitly to the global economic system dominated to that point by neoliberalism, Sarkozy argued that "we need to rebuild the whole world financial and monetary system from scratch." In other words, we need to scuttle the remnants of the global neoliberal economic system, just as the Keynesian system was scuttled as neoliberalism gained ascendancy, and replace it with some as yet undefined alternative. Where and how far this goes remains to be seen, but believers in neoliberalism have not disappeared, and their ideas, perhaps in some new form, are likely to resurface when the dust of the recent economic crisis settles.

Other Theories

This chapter gives only a sense of a few of the types of theorizing about globalization. There are many other well-known theories of globalization—for example, ones that draw on network theory (Castells, 1996, 1997, 1998; see Chapter 15) and complexity theory (Urry, 2003), or that focus on religion, sport, or the city. However, the preceding conveys at least a sense of the most important broad types of theorizing on, and specific theories of, globalization. Of course, the process of globalization continues, is expanding, and is constantly changing. As a result, we can expect the continuing development of theorizing about globalization, including new and innovative approaches to the topic.

Summary

Globalization theory emerged as a result of developments and changes both in the world as a whole and in academia. Globalization can be analyzed culturally, economically, politically, and institutionally. A concern for homogenization/heterogenization cuts across work in all of these areas. Central to the work of Giddens on globalization

[3] For full text of President Sarkozy's speech, go to www.france24.com/en/20080926.

is losing control over the juggernaut of modernity and creating a runaway world. Beck sees hope in globality with the decline of the nation-state and the emergence of transnational organizations and possibly a transnational state. To Bauman, what defines the global world is a "space war" between those who have and those who do not have mobility. However, even those with mobility face grave problems.

Cultural theories of globalization may be divided into three paradigms: cultural differentialism, cultural convergence, and cultural hybridization. Cultural differentialism adopts the view that there are lasting differences among and between cultures and that those differences are largely unaffected by globalization. Huntington offers the best-known example of cultural differentialism with his focus on civilizations, the major civilizations of the world, and the likelihood of economic conflict between Sinic and Western civilization and warfare between Islamic and Western civilization. Cultural convergence takes the view that globalization is leading to increasing sameness around the world. Two examples of cultural convergence are the McDonaldization thesis and the idea that the world is increasingly dominated by the "grobalization" of nothing. Cultural hybridization adopts the perspective that globalization is bringing with it the mixing of cultures, producing new and unique cultures that are not reducible to either global or local. A number of theoretical ideas are associated with cultural hybridization, including glocalization, hybridization, and creolization. A major theory included under the "cultural hybridization" heading is Appadurai's thinking on landscapes and the disjunctures among and between them.

Economic theories of globalization are illustrated with two examples. Leslie Sklair develops a neo-Marxian economic theory of globalization that focuses on transnational capitalism, especially transnational corporations, the transnational capitalist class, and the culture-ideology of consumption. Sklair argues that transnational capitalism is providing the basis for the emergence of socialist globalization. According to Hardt and Negri, we are in the midst of a transition from capitalist imperialism to the dominance of empire. Empire lacks a center and is based on juridical power. The multitude sustains empire, but it also has, at least potentially, the power to overthrow empire and create counter-empire.

International relations theory encompasses various political approaches to globalization, including political realism, complex interdependence, and international political economy. Much of this discussion centers on the fate of the nation-state in the global age. The chapter closes with a detailed discussion of neoliberalism, which is important in both economic and political thinking on globalization. The fundamental tenets of neoliberalism are discussed, as are the major criticisms (including those of Karl Polanyi).