

# GLOBALIZATION II

## SOME BASIC ISSUES, DEBATES, AND CONTROVERSIES<sup>1</sup>

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### Is There Such a Thing as Globalization?

#### Is it Globalization or Transnationalization?

#### If There Is Such a Thing as Globalization, When Did It Begin?

- Hardwired ■ Cycles ■ Phases ■ Events
- Broader, more recent changes

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#### If There Is Such a Thing as Globalization, Is It Inexorable?

#### Does *Globophilia* or *Globophobia* Have the Upper Hand?

- Globophilia ■ Globophobia ■ Finding a middle ground

#### What, if Anything, Can Be Done About Globalization?

- Nothing! ■ Everything! ■ Necessary actions are already underway
- More, perhaps much more, needs to be done

#### Chapter Summary

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Chapter 1 presented an overarching and integrated perspective on globalization as well as at least some details on a *few* of its (innumerable) elements. However, we have proceeded to a large extent as if globalization in general, as well as the particular perspective on it offered here with its focus on flows and barriers, processes and structures, is not in dispute. Indeed, the entire field of globalization studies is riddled with differences of opinion and great debates (Dean and Ritzer 2012; Guillen 2001; Ritzer and Atalay 2010). In this chapter we present some of these differences. The goal is to offer a more nuanced sense of globalization.

We begin with an issue that, from the tenor of the discussion in the first chapter, would appear to be a non-issue. That is the question of whether or not there is some set of developments that can legitimately be called globalization. While the prior discussion, as well as the reality of this book and its title, indicates that the answer to that question will, in the end, be in the affirmative, it is worth reviewing the debate over the very existence of globalization.



## IS THERE SUCH A THING AS GLOBALIZATION?

The “great globalization debate” is between those who are skeptical about the process (the “skeptics”) and those who accept it as a reality (the “globalists”) (Held and McGrew 2000).

**Globalists** take the position that there *is such a thing* as globalization and it encompasses virtually the entirety of the globe. The **skeptics** contend that there *is no such thing* as globalization because vast portions of the globe, and a significant portion of the world’s population, are wholly, or in significant part, outside of, and even actively excluded, from the processes generally associated with it. It is argued that since the term globalization implies a truly global phenomenon, the exclusion of such a large proportion of the globe serves to deny the existence of globalization. Furthermore, to the skeptics, there are various barriers, especially those created by the nation-state and regional groups of such states, that greatly restrict, if not prevent, global flows.

Globalists respond that just because some parts of the world are relatively uninvolved does not mean that the vast majority of them are not enmeshed, often deeply, in a series of relationships that meet the definition of globalization. The globalists further argue that it is impossible, or at least nearly so, to find any part of the world totally unaffected by globalization.

The globalists tend to see a broad process of globalization, but to the skeptics there is no one process of globalization, but rather many globalizations (Therborn 2000) (there is a scholarly journal entitled *Globalizations*). In fact, there are even several different ways of thinking about globalizations including multiple general processes (e.g. economic, political, etc.), as well as differences between globalization as experienced by the haves and have-nots (de Souza Santos 2006). Thus, to the skeptics the term globalization is an oversimplification and obscures a wide array of processes that are affecting the world in many different ways.

The globalists respond by agreeing that there is much to support the argument of multiple globalization processes and hence the use of the term globalizations has much merit. However, in their view, this is simply a terminological difference and both concepts (globalization and globalizations) acknowledge the importance of globalization. Indeed, the use of the term globalization in this book generally covers both a general process as well as a multitude of sub-processes that are encompassed by it (see below).

**Globalists:**  
Believe that there is such a thing as globalization and that it encompasses virtually the entire globe.

**Skeptics:**  
Contend that there is no such thing as globalization.

The globalists see globalization as not only in existence today, but as growing ever more powerful and pervasive. In this view, globalization involves a set of processes that led, among many other things, to the supplanting of the nation-state as the preeminent actor in the world. In Yergin and Stanislaw's terms, the nation-state lost (primarily to the market) the "commanding heights" it had, until recently, occupied; that loss "marks a great divide between the twentieth and twenty-first centuries" (Yergin and Stanislaw 1998: xiii). Thus, for example, once a structure able to control its borders, the nation-state has been supplanted in importance, at least in this realm, by global flows of all sorts. It is those flows that are of key importance and the nation-state has grown unable (or unwilling) to stop them. While the nation-state has declined in importance in the global age, "this era is not the end of the nation-state, even less the end of government" (Yergin and Stanislaw 1998: 396).

To the skeptics, at one time there may have been a process that could have been called globalization, but it is now coming to an end (Rugman 2012). They argue that in recent years the nation-state has reasserted itself and has regained, or is regaining, its historic role as the key world player. This is reflected, for example, in current US actions involving its Mexican border with increased border patrols, back-up by National Guard units, use of more high-tech surveillance equipment (including drones), and the border fence. The globalists tend to see globalization as a relatively new phenomenon, but to the skeptics globalization is simply a new term for an old, even ancient, process through which various parts of the world relate to one another.

Economically, the globalists emphasize such structures as multinational corporations (MNCs [Bonanno and Antonio 2012]), the transnational economy, and the emergence of a new global division of labor. The skeptics argue that within the economy, there are few genuine MNCs – most continue to be based in their original national locations (e.g. Daimler in Germany and Toyota in Japan). Further, as mentioned above, the skeptics retain a focus on the nation-state and national economies. It is regional blocs of nations as well as specific nations – not MNCs – that engage in new forms of economic imperialism. In addition, the nation-state, especially powerful conglomerations of them (G-8, etc.; see Chapter 6 for a discussion of this organization and others), continue to regulate and exert great control over the global economy.

The response of the globalists is that while it is true that most MNCs retain their associations with the nation-states from which they emanated originally, that association has grown less important over time. For example, while General Motors' vehicles were once produced exclusively in the US, its parts now come from all over the world and are assembled in markets across several continents.

The globalists also argue that the power or the weakness of the nation-state has nothing to do with the reality of globalization. Indeed, the nation-state, powerful or weak, is a key part of globalization. For example, the ability of the nation-state to control global flows of migrants – as well as drugs or human trafficking – ebbs and flows, but that has no bearing on the continued existence and reality of globalization or the fact that the nation-state is a player of note in it. The globalists also contend that while the continuing power of nation-states, singly and collectively, is undeniable, their ability to control economic markets is steadily declining and in some markets (e.g. financial markets) their control is already minimal.

Politically, the globalists emphasize multilateralism whereas the skeptics continue to focus on intergovernmentalism. That is, the globalists see all sorts of relationships possible in a global world, many of which do not involve governments, while the skeptics argue that the world continues to be dominated by relations among and between national governments.

In terms of global order, the skeptics continue to emphasize the role of the international order of nation-states and international governance, while the globalists see a multi-layered global governance involving much more than simply nation-states (e.g. NGOs and INGOs). Further, the globalists see the increasing importance in this domain of the growth of global civil society, a global polity, and a cosmopolitan orientation to the world. All of these, as we will see, serve to reduce the role of nation-states and international governance.

Culturally, the globalists give great importance to the rise of a global popular culture, a culture that is common to large numbers of people and most, if not all, areas of the world. Skeptics reject the idea of a common global popular culture, including and especially one dominated by the US. To them, the whole idea of such a culture has been exaggerated. To whatever extent a common global popular culture existed, it has declined in recent years with the reassertion of national and regional cultural independence, and culture in general has grown increasingly varied and is shaped by many different sources with many different effects. For example, the Internet has been nationalized to a large degree and one could speak of a German or a Japanese Internet.

In a related point, the globalists emphasize the decline of people who rigidly adhere to fixed political identities. Such a decline leaves people much more open to global popular culture. In contrast, the skeptics point, once again, to the more recent resurgence of nationalism and national identities. This is not only important in itself from the point of view of globalization, but strong national identities would serve to restrict the influence of a global popular culture.

We will have occasion to return to many of the issues debated by the globalists and the skeptics in the course of this book. However, it is important to state unequivocally at this point that, in the end, and in spite of the merit of some of the positions and criticisms of the skeptics, we conclude, unsurprisingly, that there *is* a set of processes and structures that can legitimately be labeled globalization. In that sense, this book, as mentioned in Chapter 1, adopts a globalist position on globalization, albeit one that is not insensitive to at least some of the arguments of the skeptics.

**Transnationalism:**  
Processes that interconnect individuals and social groups across specific geo-political borders.

**Transnationality:**  
Rise of new communities and formation of new social identities and relations that cannot be defined as nation-states.

## IS IT GLOBALIZATION OR TRANSNATIONALIZATION?

In a related debate, some scholars argue that rather than globalization, we have **transnationalism** (Morawska 2007), or “processes that interconnect individuals and social groups across specific geo-political borders” (Giulianotti and Robertson 2007: 62). A related concept is **transnationality**, or “the rise of new communities and formation of new social identities and relations that cannot be defined through the traditional reference point of nation-states” (William Robinson 2007: 1199–201).

Globalization and transnationalism are often used interchangeably, but transnationalism is clearly a more delimited process than globalization. Transnationalism is limited to interconnections that cross geo-political borders, especially those associated with two, or more, nation-states.<sup>2</sup> An example is Mexican immigrants in the US sending remittances home to family members in Mexico. Globalization includes such connections, but is not restricted to them and encompasses a far wider range of transplanetary processes (e.g. direct relationships between people in many places in the world networking via the Internet).<sup>3</sup> Further, geo-political borders are only one of the barriers encountered, and often overcome, by globalization.<sup>4</sup> Some phenomena, labor unions for example, are better thought of as transnational than as global. That is, the relationship between labor unions in, for example, the US and Sweden is more important than are moves toward a global labor

movement (see Chapter 15). Transnationalism is most often used in thinking about, and research on, immigrants who move from one country to another, but who continue to be involved in various ways with the country from which they came (Portes 2001b).

The case of baseball is useful in clarifying the distinction between globalization and transnationalism (Kelly 2007: 79–93). Baseball is a transnational sport because many of its fundamentals – techniques, strategies, etc. – and players have circulated across the borders of a small number of nations, especially Japan, Taiwan, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and, of course, the US. However, it is *not* global because it has not flowed on a transplanetary basis to a large portion of the world.

In contrast, football (soccer) would be much more clearly a global sport because it exists in virtually every area of the world. For example, over 200 of the world's nations are members of a global organization, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). Another example of globalization in the realm of sports is the summer (and winter) Olympics sponsored by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in which about the same number of nations participate (for more on this see Chapter 8).

From the perspective of this book, the reality is that both transnationalism and globalization are present in the world today. Some phenomena can be considered transnational while others are truly global; the nuances are subtle but the distinction helps clarify the ubiquitous nature of globalization.



## IF THERE IS SUCH A THING AS GLOBALIZATION, WHEN DID IT BEGIN?

We will offer in this section five different ways of thinking about what turns out to be a very complex issue – the origin of globalization.

### HARDWIRED

Nayan Chanda (2007: xiv) argues that “globalization stems, among other things, from a basic human urge to seek a better and more fulfilling life”. This leads him to trace “the initial globalization of the human species, [to] when in the late Ice Age, a tiny group of our ancestors walked out of Africa in search of better food and security. In fifty thousand years of wandering along ocean coasts and chasing game across Central Asia, they finally settled on all the continents.” Chanda’s view that globalization is hardwired into humans is not the one accepted here since we argue that we are now living in a distinctive global age.

Chanda focuses on four specific aspects of globalization that relate to a basic “urge”<sup>5</sup> for a better life – trade (or commerce), missionary work (religion), adventures and conquest (politics and warfare). All of these are key aspects of globalization, all can be traced to early human history, and all, as well as much else, will be dealt with in this volume.

### CYCLES

The second perspective is that globalization is a long-term cyclical process. It is not only difficult in this view to find a single point of origin, but the effort is largely irrelevant since there long have been cycles of globalization and it is those cycles that are of utmost

importance, not any particular phase or point of origin (Scholte 2005). This view, like Chanda's, tends to contradict the idea that we live today in a new "global age." Rather, this suggests that there have been *other* global ages in the past and that what now appears to be a new global age, or the high point of such an age, is destined to contract and disappear in the future. Eventually, it, too, will be replaced by a new cycle in the globalization process.

## PHASES

In an example of the third approach to the beginnings of globalization, Nederveen Pieterse (2012) sees eight great epochs, or "phases," of globalization, that have occurred sequentially, each with its own point of origin:

1. Eurasian Phase (starting 3000 BCE). Agricultural and urban revolutions, migrations, increased trade, and ancient empires grew out of Eurasia.
2. Afro-Eurasian Phase (starting 1000 BCE). Commercial revolutions commenced in the Greco-Roman world, West Asia, and East Africa.
3. Oriental Phase I (starting 500 CE). The world economy emerged alongside the caravan trade in the Middle East.
4. Oriental Phase II (starting 1100). Improvements in productivity and technology emerged throughout East and South Asia, with increased urbanization and development of the Silk Routes.
5. Multicentric Phase (starting 1500). Trade expanded across the Atlantic Ocean and into the Americas.
6. Euro-Atlantic Phase (starting 1800). The Euro-Atlantic economy developed through industrialization and the colonial division of labor.
7. 20C Phase (starting 1950). MNCs and global value chains emerged throughout the US, Europe, and Japan, and the Cold War ended.
8. 21C Phase (starting 2000). A new geography of trade encompasses East Asia and emerging economies, with a global rebalancing of power and economic flows.

From this, Nederveen Pieterse concludes that globalization is *not* unique to today's world. However, his historical or phase-based view also rejects the cyclical view of globalization. Past epochs are not returning, at least in their earlier form, at some point in the future. Instead, globalization functions as growing connectivity, which develops and accelerates around various centers across time.

Robertson (1990: 15–30) offers a very different, and far more recent, set of epochs (or phases). He traces the beginnings of globalization to the early fifteenth century, but he does not see it really taking off until the late 1800s:

1. Germinal Phase in Europe (early fifteenth to mid-eighteenth century). Important developments during this period were the sun-centered view of the universe, the beginnings of modern geography, and the spread of the Gregorian calendar.
2. Incipient Phase mainly in Europe (mid-1700s to the 1870s). Among the key developments in this period were the "crystallization of conceptions of formalized international relations," a "more concrete conception of humankind," and "[s]harp increases in

conventions and agencies concerned with international and transnational regulation and communication” (1990: 26).

3. Take-Off Phase (1870s to the mid-1920s). Among the key developments in this period were the “[v]ery sharp increase in number and speed of global forms of communication. Rise of ecumenical movement. Development of global competitions – e.g. Olympics, Nobel Prizes. Implementation of World Time and near-global adoption of Gregorian calendar. First *World* war. League of Nations” (1990: 27).
4. Struggle-for-hegemony phase (1920s to the mid-1960s). This period was characterized by war (WW II) and disputes (Cold War) over the still fragile globalization process. The UN was formed during this period.
5. Uncertainty Phase (1960s to the early 1990s<sup>6</sup>). Many global developments occurred during this period including inclusion of the Third World in the global system, end of the Cold War (and bipolarity), spread of nuclear weapons, world civil society, world citizenship, and global media system consolidation. Robertson saw “crisis tendencies” in the global system in the early 1990s, but, if anything, globalization has accelerated since then (although it may still contain such crisis tendencies).

Were Robertson to address this issue again, he might find that yet another epoch began at the turn of the twenty-first century. These epochal views tend to contrast with the focus here on the current global age since they do not see it as particularly unique.

## EVENTS

A fourth view is that instead of cycles or great epochs, one can point to much more specific events that can be seen as the origin of globalization.<sup>7</sup> In fact, there are *many* such possible points of origin of globalization, some of which are:

- the Romans and their far-ranging conquests in the centuries before Christ (Gibbon 1998);
- the rise and spread of Christianity in the centuries after the fall of the Roman Empire;
- the spread of Islam in the seventh century and beyond;
- the travels of the Vikings from Europe to Iceland, Greenland, and briefly to North America in the ninth through the eleventh centuries as examples of, and landmarks, in globalization;
- trade in the Middle Ages throughout the Mediterranean;
- the activities of the banks of the twelfth-century Italian city-states;
- the rampage of the armies of Ghengis Khan into Eastern Europe in the thirteenth century (*Economist* 2006: January 12);
- European traders like Marco Polo and his travels later in the thirteenth century along the Silk Road to China. (Interestingly, there is now discussion of the development of an “iron silk road” involving a linked railroad network through a variety of Asian countries that at least evokes the image of the lure of Marco Polo’s Silk Road.<sup>8</sup>);
- the “discovery of America” by Christopher Columbus in 1492. Other important voyages of discovery during this time involved Vasco Da Gama rounding the Cape of Good Hope in 1498 and the circumnavigation of the globe completed in 1522 by one of Ferdinand Magellan’s ships (Joel Rosenthal 2007);

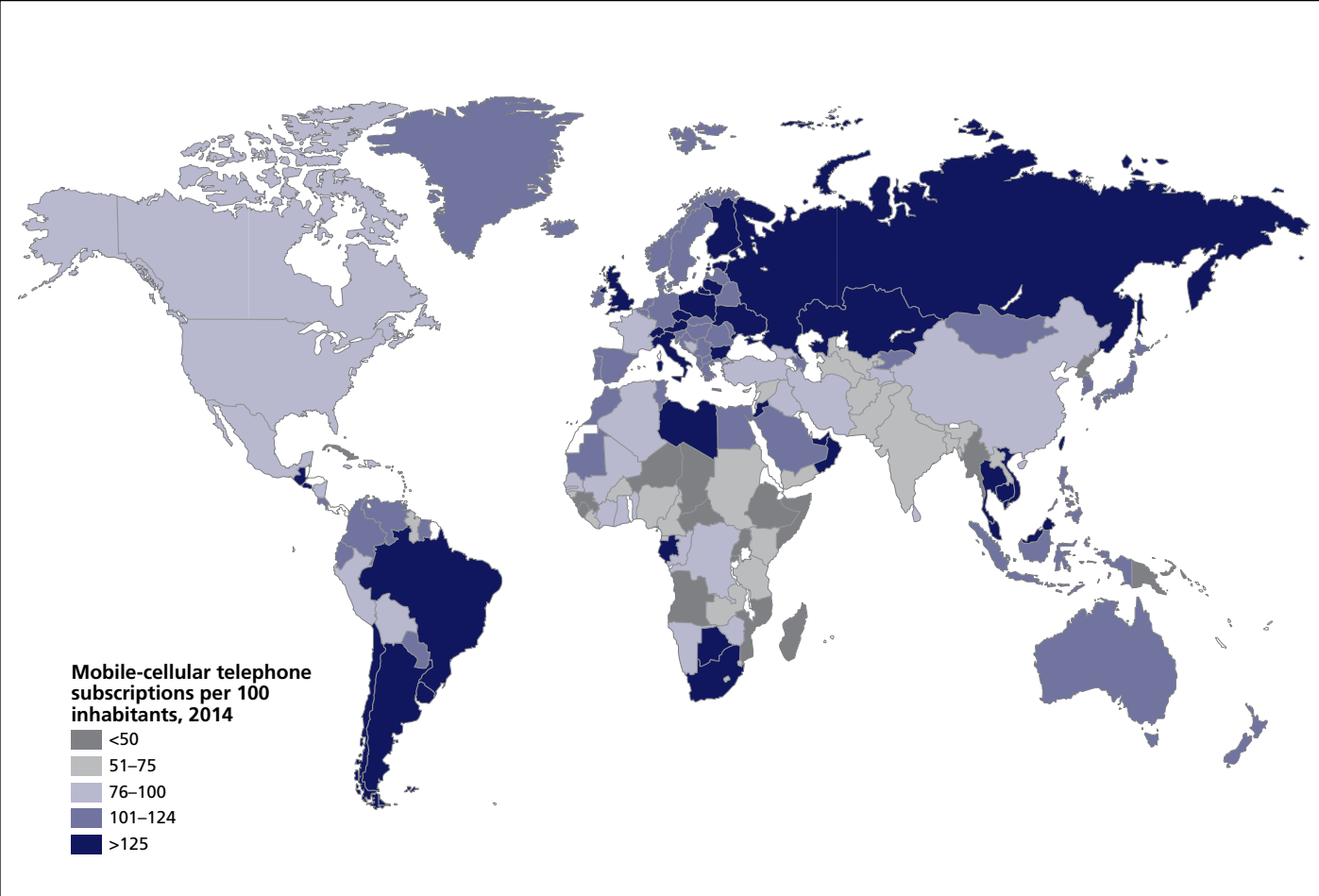
- European colonialism, especially in the nineteenth century;
- the early twentieth-century global Spanish flu pandemic;
- the two world wars in the first half of the twentieth century.

It is also possible to get even more specific about the origin of globalization, especially in recent years. A few rather eclectic recent examples include:

- 1956 – the first transatlantic telephone cable;
- 1958 – while it was possible to fly across the Atlantic in the 1930s on seaplanes that made several stops along the way, the big revolution in this area was the arrival of transatlantic passenger jet travel with the first being Pan Am’s flight from New York to London (with a stopover for refueling required in Newfoundland);
- 1962 – the launch of the satellite Telstar and soon thereafter the first transatlantic television broadcasts;
- 1966 – the transmission from a satellite of the picture of the earth as single location leading not only to a greater sense of the world as one place (increased global consciousness [Robertson and Inglis 2004]), but also of great importance to the development of the global environmental movement;
- 1970 – the creation of Clearing House Interbank Payment System (CHIPS) making possible global electronic (wire) transfers of funds (now \$1.5 trillion a day in 2012) among financial institutions;
- 1977 – the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT) came into being making possible more global transfers of funds by individuals;
- 1988 – the founding of the modern Internet based on Arpanet (which was created in 1969). While it took the Internet several years to take off, this was a turning point in global interconnection for billions of people;
- 2001 – the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in New York and on the Pentagon in Washington, as well as later terrorist attacks on trains in Madrid (March 11, 2004) and London (July 7, 2005), among others. The following is a specific example in support of the idea that 9/11 can be taken as a point of origin for globalization (at least of higher education): “Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, internationalization has moved high on the agenda at most universities, to prepare students for a globalized world, and to help faculty members stay up-to-date in their disciplines” (Lewin 2008: 8).
- 2009 – due to the highly interconnected global economy, the Great Recession sent shockwaves throughout the world. Some of its many effects included changes to global migration patterns, declines in global remittances, and explosions in unemployment and debt, and it led to many battles over austerity measures – effects that are likely to continue shaping globalization.
- 2014 – mobile-cellular phone subscriptions reach approximately 7 billion, which is almost the human population on Earth (International Telecommunication Union 2014). This suggests that humans are now more interconnected than ever before, even though many parts of the world still have limited access (see Figure 2.1 for the number of mobile-cellular subscriptions in countries around the world).

This focus on specific historical events is less general than the approach taken in this book that focuses on the current global age.





**Figure 2.1** Mobile-cellular subscriptions. The world is more connected now than ever before with 7 billion mobile-cellular phone subscriptions. Nonetheless, the number of subscriptions per country is uneven. Source: data from ITU, Mobile-Cellular Subscriptions (<http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>).

## BROADER, MORE RECENT CHANGES

The fifth view focuses on broader, but still recent, changes. There is a sense in this view that a sea change occurred in the last half of the twentieth century. Three of these momentous changes have been identified by scholars as the point of origin of globalization as it exists today:

1. The emergence of the United States as *the* global power in the years following WW II. The US not only projected its military power throughout the world (Korea in the early 1950s; disastrously in Vietnam in the 1960s and early 1970s), it extended its reach in the economic realm as it became the dominant industrial power when the war decimated most of its competitors militarily (Germany, Japan) and/or economically (the Axis powers as well as Allies such as France and Great Britain). Many other aspects of America's global reach either accompanied these changes or soon followed. Among them was the diplomatic clout of the US government, the reach of the US media, the power of Hollywood, and so on. Such a view closely aligns globalization with the idea of Americanization (see Chapter 3).
2. The emergence of multinational corporations (MNCs). While the world's great corporations can be traced back to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in, for example, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, they were initially largely associated with their nations of origin and did the vast majority of their business within those countries (Bonanno and Antonio 2012). However, over time, those corporations did more and more business internationally. In so doing, they were following Marx's dictum that because of stagnant or declining profits capitalism had to expand into international markets or die. As Marx and Engels (1848/2000: 248–9) put it:

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere. The bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world market, given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country... . All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries ... that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw materials drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations.

For example, the once-great American automobile companies – Ford and General Motors – not only originated in the US, but focused, at least initially, on selling into the American market and most, if not all, of the component parts were produced by them or sub-contractors in the US. Of course, they did import raw materials of various kinds (and they did sell their automobiles overseas, especially in Europe), but in the main, the bulk of their business was done in the US. Furthermore, the vast majority of top executives, employees, and investors were American. However, that began to change over the course of the twentieth century as these corporations exported more of their automobiles to

other parts of the world, opened factories in other countries to sell cars under their brand names (or others), targeted their products to the distinctive needs (e.g. for smaller, more fuel-efficient cars) of those countries, and more recently began to move more and more of their automobile production aimed at the US market to other countries, either in factories of their own or in the factories of sub-contractors in those countries.

In these and other ways, Ford and General Motors have become multinational corporations and MNCs are, because of their very nature, inherently part of globalization. Indeed, MNCs are not only involved in globalization but this process is internalized into the organization as all sorts of global flows (parts, people, money) occur *within* the corporation.

The case of the other of the one-time “Big Three” American automobile companies – Chrysler – is even more striking in this regard. Initially, Chrysler followed the same course as Ford and GM and became increasingly multinational. However, Chrysler has long been the most marginal of the Big Three and, famously, had to be bailed out in 1979 by a controversial loan from the US government. However, that was only of short-term help and in 1998 Chrysler was taken over by the German manufacturer of Mercedes Benz automobiles which changed its name to Daimler-Chrysler AG. This clearly represented the formation of a MNC, although Daimler-Benz itself (as well as Chrysler) was a multinational corporation before that since, among other things, it actively sold its automobiles in the US as well as in many other parts of the world. However, this marriage was short-lived and Daimler sold off its interest in Chrysler in 2007. After filing for bankruptcy in 2009, Chrysler was again bailed out (as was GM) by the US government during the Great Recession. Today, Chrysler is owned by Fiat, a MNC headquartered in Italy.

### 3. The demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

It could be argued that globalization is even more recent and did not truly begin until the fall of the “Iron Curtain” and the Soviet Union in 1991. With those events, the division of the world into mainly “capitalist” and “communist” spheres rapidly eroded as did all sorts of barriers that existed between them. Major parts of the world were opened for the first time since the early twentieth century to all sorts of global flows – immigration, tourism, media, diplomacy, and especially the capitalistic economic transactions of MNCs and other businesses. The global processes that had spread throughout most of the “free” world before 1991 flooded into the now independent states of the old Soviet Union, especially Russia, and most of its allies.

Vestiges of communism exist as of this writing, especially in Cuba, North Korea and, at least nominally, in China (Larry Ray 2012). Cuba remains, in the main, outside of global capitalism, largely because of the US embargo against trading with Cuba, in force since 1962 and expanded and codified several times since then. However, the embargo itself is a manifestation of globalization – the US setting up barriers in order to limit or halt the flow of trade with Cuba and to inhibit or prevent other nations from around the world from trading with Cuba. China, of course, is becoming a, if not soon, *the* major force in global capitalism even though the government remains communist, at least in name (Panitch et al. 2013). In any case, China is actively involved in globalization not only economically, but in many other realms as well (e.g. the Chinese Ministry of Culture participated actively in the prestigious Venice Biennale art exhibition [Platt 2013]).

The perspective adopted in this book on the current global age is most in accord with this focus on broader changes in the last half of the twentieth century. While all of the other perspectives deal with global processes, they were far more limited in geographic scope and far less extensive and intensive than the global processes that took off in the late twentieth century. Thus the perspective adopted here is that globalization is a relatively recent development with its major points of origin occurring after the close of WW II.



## GLOBALIZATION OR GLOBALIZATIONS?

While we can discuss globalization in general terms, such a discussion obscures the important fact that there are, as pointed out earlier, various types of globalization – various globalizations – that need to be identified and the relationships among and between them teased out (Hoffman 2002). The following are *some* of the major types<sup>9</sup> of globalization that will be dealt with in this book.

### ECONOMIC

As we've seen, to many observers, economic globalization is globalization.<sup>10</sup> While economic globalization is certainly of great importance, perhaps of greatest importance, there are other important types of globalization (see below).

### POLITICAL

While heavily influenced by economic globalization, political globalization cannot be reduced to economics alone. For example, US wars against Iraq in 1991 and 2003 certainly had an economic motivation (for example, protecting the supply of Middle East oil, perhaps even gaining more control over Iraq's oil), but there were many other factors (misguided fears of "weapons of mass destruction" and of al-Qaeda in Iraq, demonization of Islam in general and of Saddam Hussein in particular, and so on).

Those who study **political globalization** tend to think in terms of inter-national relations. However, the key contribution of globalization studies in this domain is to encompass, but look beyond, inter-national relations to other kinds of political relations that exist at a global level (So 2012). Examples include those involving global organizations, especially the United Nations (UN), relations between regions and cities that bypass the nation-states in which they exist, and more specific phenomena such as terrorist organizations (e.g. al-Qaeda) that are not based in, or associated with, any particular nation-state; they are "state-less." Indeed, statelessness and the increasing problems associated with it (e.g. in the tribal territories of Pakistan, Syria, in several countries in Africa [e.g. Somalia, Congo] which seem to have a government in name only) are of increasing global interest and concern.

**Political globalization:** Political relations that exist at a global level, including inter-national relations.

### CULTURAL

There is a wide variety of cultural flows that exist, at least in part, independently of the other major forms of globalization (Tomlinson 2012). Examples include food (Italian, Chinese, Indian, etc.), television offerings (BBC and al-Hurra), movies (from Hollywood

and Bollywood), museum shows, touring rock and classical music performances, and so on. Of course, these forms of **cultural globalization** cannot be divorced totally from the other major forms of globalization. They often have roots in particular nation-states (e.g. India's Bollywood) and their global movement may lead to political outcries in various countries (the hostility to American-style fast food among at least some in France, Italy, and elsewhere). More importantly, all of these forms of cultural globalization are affected by economic considerations (e.g. whether or not they can at least earn back their expenses, if not show a profit, in other geographic locales) and have economic consequences (the continued production of new cultural offerings depends upon previous ones showing a profit, or at least not losing money).

**Cultural globalization:** Cultural influences that exist at a global level, between and among various nations.

## RELIGION

Most of the world's religions (Christianity, Islam, Judaism, etc.) are global in scope and often seek to extend their global influence (Abrutyn 2012). For example, Catholicism, with about a billion adherents, is a global operation run from the Vatican. There are Catholics, Catholic churches, and Catholic priests in most parts of the world and all sorts of information flows to and from them and the Vatican. Many other religions, both large and small, are, or seek to be, global in scope and work toward that through proselytizing throughout the world, sending missionaries, and opening religious centers (churches, mosques, synagogues, and so on). Great attention these days is devoted to the global spread of Islam, especially Islamic fundamentalism, although it has been a globalizing religion since its creation in the seventh century (it spread through the Middle East, northern Africa, and as far as Spain) (Vertigans and Sutton 2002).

## SCIENCE

Science today is inherently a global enterprise as its knowledge base is formed by inputs from many parts of the world and that knowledge is disseminated virtually everywhere (Drori 2012a). This has been true for quite some time (e.g. work on atomic and sub-atomic theory in the first half of the twentieth century), but has been made much easier by various technological advances. The advent of the Internet was of particular importance in enhancing the global character and reach of science. Many scientific journals are now online and can be accessed by scientists in most parts of the world. Furthermore, many scientists no longer wait for journals to accept and publish their articles; they now publish their work online. Such work, often in its early stages, can be read by scientists everywhere. It can affect their own work almost instantaneously, or they can offer rapid feedback or corrections to the original author(s) who can quickly revise a work and publish the revised paper online. To take one other example, large if not massive collaborations among scientists around the world are now much more likely because of the Internet and video conferencing.

## HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Health and medicine have been increasingly globalized in many different ways (Linn and Wilson 2012). Diseases can and do proliferate globally. There is also the global spread of medical knowledge and expertise as well as technologies useful in diagnosing and treating

various diseases. As with scientific knowledge, much medical knowledge is available online and disseminated rapidly around the world.

## SPORT

Sport, too, has been globalized in various ways (Andrews and Mower 2012). We have already touched on a few of the major organizations involved in the globalization of sport; other sports that are quite global in reach are professional tennis and golf. The global media, especially television, have played a key role in the globalization of sport and creating global interest in, and an audience for, sport.

## EDUCATION

Higher education has spread through increasing areas of the world and the systems of higher education have grown increasingly similar (Mitchell and Nielsen 2012; Ramirez 2012). This is even truer of schools of business administration, especially those that offer MBA programs (Clegg and Carter 2007). Recently, American universities have, in effect, been opening “franchises” in various countries, especially the oil-rich Persian Gulf area (Lewin 2008: 8). Universities are now even graded on the World Reputation Rankings (Gutterplan 2013).

However, primary and secondary schools have not done as well in keeping up with globalization. Three key failures have been associated with today’s primary and secondary schools as they relate to globalization:

1. Schools are generally not engaging young people in learning with the result that when asked, most students say that school is “boring.” The various facets of globalization – economic, sociocultural, demographic – are everyday realities for young people, but the schools offer little that is relevant to those realities.
2. Schools, especially in the North, are not responding adequately to the needs of the large numbers of immigrant youth from the South. They often “quickly become marginalized as racially, ethnically, religiously, and linguistically marked minority groups... . The results of these general trends are painfully obvious in multiple measurable ways: from the high dropout rates among immigrant, ethnic and racial minorities in many wealthy countries, to stark differences in achievement patterns between native and racialized minorities” (Suarez-Orozco and Smith 2007: 3).
3. Arguably the most alarming problem is associated with the failures of schools in the South and the fact that 61 million children of primary school age and 71 million children of lower secondary school age in the South are not enrolled in schools (UNICEF and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2012). As a result, they fall ever-further behind children in the North. In addition, these failures contribute to the enormous problem of illiteracy which is concentrated in the South and growing illiteracy there can only serve to widen the gap between North and South.

Primary and secondary schools need to change in order to adapt to the realities of the new global world.

The above gives at least a sense of the range of globalizations, but, in fact, even this iteration touches only on a small number of the globalizations to be dealt with in this volume.

One important point about the idea that there are multiple globalizations is the fact that it further complicates the whole idea of finding a point of origin for globalization. Clearly, there are different points of origin depending on whether one is focusing on globalization in the economy, or politics, or science, or higher education, and so on. It clearly makes far more sense in the search for origins (assuming one wants to search for them) to specify different origins for each of the many forms of globalization than to seek out a single point of origin for globalization as a whole. Furthermore, even within each of the forms, there are sub-areas each of which is likely to have a different point of origin for the beginning of globalization (for example, malaria has been spreading globally for centuries while Avian flu has yet to [and may never] affect large numbers of humans throughout the world).



## WHAT DRIVES GLOBALIZATION?

This is another highly complex question with no easy answers. For example, if we accept the fact that there are multiple globalizations, then it is clear that it would be illusory to think that we could find a single driver, or even a small number of drivers. Yet, to seek out the drivers of each and every form of globalization would be a long and tedious process. At this point, at least, we need to restrict ourselves to a search for the drivers of globalization at the most general level. While we will focus on globalization in general, many of these same factors apply to at least some of the more specific globalizations.

One way to approach this is through one of the classic divisions in the social sciences – the distinction between material and ideal explanations. A *material*, or materialist, explanation would tend to focus on objective factors and forces. While there can be other material forces (e.g. the nation-state in the political realm), this generally comes down, as it did for Karl Marx (who was a materialist), to a focus on economic factors such as “forces” and “relations” of production, technology, and so on. It is this kind of thinking that leads many to the view that it is capitalism in general, or the contemporary MNC, that is the most important driving force in contemporary globalization.

The polar view, as it was for Marx, is that it is not material factors, but rather *ideal* factors, that are the main drivers of globalization. The emphasis on ideal factors was characteristic of the philosopher G. W. F. Hegel and his followers, the “young Hegelians.” Marx came of age in this intellectual context, but famously planted Hegel on his feet by focusing on material rather than ideal factors. However, Marx retained a secondary interest in such idea systems as ideology (for more on ideology, at least as it relates to the neoliberal view of globalization, see Chapter 4). Today, the idealist position on globalization is that the main drivers of the process are changes in thinking and ideas, as well as in information and knowledge. We have come increasingly to think in global, rather than in local, or even in national, terms. And, our knowledge base has followed suit so that it, too, is increasingly global in scope. A good example of the latter involves the issue of global climate change. In some ways (because, for example, of movies and books like Al Gore’s [2006] *An Inconvenient Truth*) we have come to know a great deal about global climate and climate change, perhaps a lot more than we know about our local climate (Brulle et al. 2012). And this greater knowledge about global climate change is leading at long last to more serious global efforts to deal with its causes and consequences. Thus, in this view, globalization is driven not by material changes, but by changes in ideas and knowledge.

Of course, there is a middle ground on this which sees *both* material and ideal factors as being of great importance. In terms of the history of social theory, Max Weber was the most famous social theorist to adopt such a view. While he set out, in contrast to Marx and the Marxists, to show the importance of ideal factors (e.g. the role of the ethos of Protestantism in the rise of capitalism in the West [Weber 1904–1905/1958]), this was in the context of a larger view that recognized the importance of *both* ideal and material factors (Weber 1927/1981). Actually, in the end, Weber saw material factors as the main drivers, but what is of greatest importance from our point of view is that he accorded importance to *both*. Thus, from this perspective, we can see globalization as being driven by a range of both material *and* ideal drivers. This is clear today in the global green movement which is driven by both ideas (e.g. those of Al Gore) and material realities (high gasoline prices or the drive for greater profit).



## DOES GLOBALIZATION HOP RATHER THAN FLOW?

To the degree that globalization exists, does it flow or hop? In spite of occasional conflicts, it can be comforting to conceive of globalization in terms of flows. That is, it seems to suggest a kind of global equality with all parts of the globe being penetrated, at least theoretically, by these flows to more or less the same degree. However, as we all know, the world is characterized by great inequality (see Chapters 13 and 14). Therefore, all flows do not go everywhere in the world and, even when they do, they affect various areas to varying degrees and in very different ways. However, it is also possible that the idea of flows communicates the wrong, or at least a distorted, sense of globalization and that another metaphor might be more appropriate, at least for some parts of the world.

This is exactly what James Ferguson suggests in his work on Africa. He argues, rather, that at least in the case of Africa (and this idea applies elsewhere, as well), globalization “hops” from place to place rather than flowing evenly through the entire continent:

We have grown accustomed to a language of global “flows” in thinking about “globalization,” but flow is a particularly poor metaphor for the point-to-point connectivity and networking of enclaves . . . as the contemporary African material shows so vividly, the “global” does not “flow,” thereby connecting and watering contiguous spaces; *it hops instead*, efficiently connecting the enclaved points in the network while excluding (with equal efficiency) the spaces that lie between the points. (Ferguson 2006: 47, italics added)

The idea that globalization hops, rather than flows, at least in some parts of the world (such as Africa), implies that while some areas are strongly, often positively, affected by it, others are not.

This relates to the “enclaves” discussed by Ferguson. While some areas – enclaves in Africa (and elsewhere) – are deeply implicated in global processes, those processes simply hop over most other areas of that continent. Among those enclaves are the national parks that are such highly desirable destinations for well-heeled tourists from the North. (Note: throughout this book the terms “North” and “South” will be used to refer the two major parts of world – the highly developed North [especially the US and the EU] and the less developed South [especially Africa, South America, and some parts of Southeast Asia]<sup>11</sup>). Highly desirable locales have been partitioned off so that Northern tourists can “hop” into them, experience a highly



sanitized bit of Africa, and then hop out. In doing so, the areas may be cordoned off (perhaps with barbed wire) and patrolled by the military or private guards who may operate with “shoot-to-kill” orders if any “poachers” are found in the enclaves. The problem is that many of the so-called “poachers” are, in fact, locals who have been excluded from areas that may be, for example, their traditional hunting grounds. The more general point here is that globalization hops into these enclaves (in the form of tourists and their money) but it jumps over most other areas in Africa, including those in which the “poachers” now live. Not only are the latter not helped by global flows, but they are adversely affected by the barriers that exclude them from areas that were once part of their domain.

This all points to a very different image of globalization than the one we are accustomed to:

The “global” we see ... in Africa has sharp, jagged edges; rich and dangerous traffic amid zones of generalized abjection; razor-wired enclaves next to abandoned hinterlands. It features entire countries with estimated life expectancies in the mid-thirties and dropping; warfare seemingly without end; and the steepest economic inequalities seen in human history to date. It is a global where capital flows are at once lightning fast and patchy and incomplete; where the globally networked enclave sits right beside the ungovernable humanitarian disaster zone. It is a global not of planetary communion, but of disconnection, segmentation and segregation – not a seamless world without borders, but a patchwork of discontinuous and hierarchically ranked spaces, whose edges are carefully delimited, guarded, and enforced. (Ferguson 2006: 48–9)

It may well be that we need to think of globalization both in terms of flows *and* in terms of processes that hop from place to place. As a general rule, globalization flows more easily through the developed world (although even there it flows around many areas inhabited by the poor), whereas it bypasses many locales in the less developed world, or even skirts them completely. The metaphors of “flows” and “hops” obviously exist uncomfortably with one another; it is difficult to think of flows as hopping. Rather, to be consistent with the idea of flows, we need to think in terms of some of the “heavy structures,” that block those flows, especially in less developed parts of the world. That is, because of those barriers many positive flows are forced to bypass less developed areas.



## IF THERE IS SUCH A THING AS GLOBALIZATION, IS IT INEXORABLE?

Assuming there is such a thing as globalization, is its further development and expansion inevitable? The inevitability of globalization is a view that is widespread both in academic work and especially in more popular sources. It is, for example, the view of Thomas Friedman (1999, 2005, 2012) who, in *The World is Flat*,<sup>12</sup> argues that globalization is expanding in various ways and directions. Daniel Altman (2007: x) contends that “the forces often labeled ‘globalization’ ... are here to stay.” Nayan Chanda (2007: 320) argues that “[c]alls to shut down globalization are pointless.”

Globalization does seem inexorable as it encompasses more and more areas of the social world. However, ideas like inexorability and inevitability are always problematic from the point of view of the social sciences. It is certainly the case that there are quite strong social trends here and a very strong likelihood that they will continue, and even accelerate, in the

years to come. Yet, that is not the same as saying that such changes are inevitable. Indeed, the social sciences in general point to the view that there are *never* any inevitabilities and this applies in particular to such a wide-ranging and globe-straddling process as globalization. For example, the current counter-reactions in, especially, the US, Europe, and South Africa to widespread immigration, especially unauthorized immigration from less developed nations (in South Africa's case, Zimbabwe), is leading, or at least could lead, to less rather than more globalization, at least in terms of flows of these types of people. Thus, the counter-reactions (e.g. violence against Zimbabweans in South Africa) against globalization constitute an important check on its seemingly inevitable expansion.

Furthermore, thinking in terms of such inevitabilities serves to reduce people to the status of “judgmental dopes” (Ritzer 2008c: 387) who can do nothing but blindly accept such changes. While it is true that people may often be overwhelmed by such large-scale changes, they *always* retain the ability to act singly and collectively to modify, if not prevent, such changes. While people may at times seem like judgmental dopes, at other times they are much more likely to act as powerful agents (Giddens 1984) and even “dangerous giants.”<sup>13</sup>

This relates to the distinction between “globalization from above” and “globalization from below” (Kellner 2002; Langman 2012). We can define **globalization from above** as a process that is created and controlled by centralized and powerful groups, such as the wealthy elites or MNCs (especially those associated with the North), and imposed on less powerful groups. Globalization from above is associated with neoliberalism (see Chapter 4) and popular writers like Thomas Friedman. When looked at in this way, globalization is to a large degree imposed on individual actors in *both* the North and the South, and the greatest benefits go to a minority of powerful states, MNCs, and wealthy individuals.

While much of globalization is certainly from above, social scientists are particularly attuned to globalization from below that serves, at least to some degree, to counteract it and shape its outcomes via more democratic processes. **Globalization from below** can take the form of marginalized groups and social movements, which struggle to make globalization benefit more people and to make global processes more democratic. In addition, globalization from below can also involve whole nations (largely in the less developed world). From the perspective of globalization from below, people are agents, even “dangerous giants.” Through grassroots activism, strikes, boycotts, and social movement mobilization, they fight against the inequities produced through globalization from above.

Globalization from below generally relates to the counter-reactions to globalization from above. As a result, it is often called the “anti-globalization” movement, but this would be a misnomer because the movement is generally not against globalization per se, but rather specific forms of that process, especially globalization from above. (Terms like *alter-globalization* or *global justice movement* are also often affixed to it – for more on this, see Chapter 15.) Thus the various groups and organizations associated with that movement (most generally the World Social Forum) oppose impositions by, for example, the US, Wal-Mart, and the IMF. These organizations and groups cannot be seen as being anti-globalization because in many cases they are global themselves and their ambition is to create and sustain global processes and movements that stand in opposition to globalization from above.

Alter-globalization is generally seen to have come of age in protests against the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle in 1999 (although there were precursors such as protests in Madrid in 1994). In Seattle, the protestors forced the postponement of the opening session of the WTO meeting and violent protests occurred for days. The media attention to

**Globalization from above:** Process that is created and controlled by centralized and powerful actors, such as wealthy elites or MNCs (especially in the North), and imposed on broader society.

**Globalization from below:** Marginalized groups and social movements that struggle to make globalization benefit more people and for global processes to be more democratic.

these activities gave important visibility and momentum to the alter-globalization movement. This movement took a more collective form with the creation of the World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2001. That organization has met every year since, usually in January because that is the month that the group that represents much of what it is opposed to, the World Economic Forum (WEF) (composed mainly of business and political leaders, although others – journalists, intellectuals – may also be invited), meets annually in Davos, Switzerland. Both the WEF and, more importantly in this context, the WSF (as well as the organizations and groups that are involved in it) are global in nature and therefore WSF cannot be considered as being anti-globalization. Rather, it is an example of globalization from below.

A particularly good example of this is the Italian-based Slow Food Movement. Founded in 1989 and getting its spark from protests against the opening of a McDonald's at the foot of the Spanish Steps in Rome, Slow Food has become a social movement involving over 100,000 members in about 150 countries around the world (Galli and Degliesposti 2012). Thus, Slow Food is global in character and involved in various ways in globalization. It is clearly not anti-globalization, but it is opposed to various types of globalization from above, most obviously the global proliferation of McDonald's and other fast-food chains that offer industrialized fast food. More positively, Slow Food is in favor of the support and even global distribution of local foods that are produced by traditional methods and that have not come to be controlled by agro-industries. Slow Food has expanded in various directions and is involved in various activities, many of which are global in scope and opposed to globalization from above. For example, since 2004 it has sponsored a meeting, Terra Madre, that involves representatives from many countries around the world brought together to discuss such issues as organic foods, small-scale farming and fishing, and above all the sustainable production of food. At the same time, it opposes such forms of globalization from above as the global exportation and proliferation of genetically modified foods.

The most general point here is that globalization is not restricted to the actions of those on “top” (e.g. nation-state and MNC leaders), but also comes from the “bottom” in the actions of people and groups that have a different, often conflicting, vision of globalization. Of course, there are also many other people and groups that are anti-globalization. Such anti-globalization groups struggle against any form of globalization and reinforce separation and isolation. These groups reject, rather than seek to change, global institutions (e.g. United Nations) and connections. Perhaps the most important point in this context is to recognize that globalization, or at least any specific type of globalization, is not inexorable because of the actions of the groups associated with alter-globalization (and in some instances, anti-globalization).



## DOES GLOBAPHILIA OR GLOBAPHOBIA HAVE THE UPPER HAND?

The preceding is related to the chasm that exists between those who are fans of, and favor, globalization (**globophilia**) and those who fear it and are opposed to it (**globophobia**). Those who are globophiliacs see much to celebrate about globalization. They tend to emphasize its positive, and to deemphasize its negative, sides. Those associated with globophobia tend to see people as “victims” of globalization and its largely negative consequences. Then there are middle-ground positions on this: “neither *globophobia* nor *globophilia* seem

**Globophilia:** Emphasis on the positive aspects of globalization, especially greater economic success and the spread of democracy.

**Globophobia:** Emphasis on the negative aspects of globalization, especially for the less well-off parts of the globe.

Buchanan argues that the US should kick the UN out of its New York headquarters and that it should cease involving itself in any “new world order” that limits the United States’ ability to manage its own affairs. He is highly conservative in the sense that he wants to protect Americans, especially American jobs, from competition from both cheap imports and immigrants.

Buchanan is especially critical of immigrants generally and undocumented immigrants in particular, which in his view pose a threat to American culture and the American way of life. For example, his book titles include *The Death of the West: How Dying Populations and Immigrant Invasions Imperil Our Country and Civilization*, and *State of Emergency: The Third World Invasion and Conquest of America*. In his view this, too, poses a threat to American culture and economic strength. He believes we should reduce the number of immigrants permitted to enter the US and that we should not allow entry for those immigrants reluctant to adopt US and Western culture. Once again, Buchanan’s position is essentially a conservative one because he wants to conserve the jobs and lifestyles of Americans (his most recent book is titled *Suicide of a Superpower: Will America Survive to 2025?*). Here, as in the case of international trade, Buchanan has little or no interest in the well-being of immigrants to the US (again, especially undocumented immigrants), to say nothing of the Native Americans present before European Americans, or workers in India and in other less developed parts of the world who are the recipients of work outsourced from the US.

When we turn to criticisms from the left, there is no shortage of them either, including from such notable political figures as Venezuela’s late president, Hugo Chávez. The latter, in a speech to the United Nations in 2006, lambasted the US as an imperialistic nation endeavoring to create a world empire through globalization. In the process, Chávez called President George W. Bush a “devil.” At several points during his speech he held aloft a book authored by the noted American linguist, turned left-wing political analyst, Noam Chomsky (2003, 2013).

Noam Chomsky is not opposed to globalization per se. Rather, his target is neoliberal globalization dominated by the US and its economic interests (2003, 2013). To put it another way, he is opposed to corporate globalization, a process aimed at opening markets in order to maximize profits and the interests and economic well-being of investors. However, he favors globalization as it is represented by, for example, the labor movement and by the World Social Forum. In other words, Chomsky favors globalization from below rather than from above; he favors alter-globalization. Most generally, he argues that no one really opposes globalization as an overall process; it is the specific ways in which it is presently operating that he and other left-wing critics oppose.

Chomsky is critical of neoliberal economic globalization on several grounds. For one thing, such globalization is largely sponsored by the US and is designed to further its interests as well as those of American corporations and the “haves” within the US. More generally, it works to the benefit of the North in general, and the elites there, as well. Related to this is the fact that globalization of this type benefits the few in the world, but does not benefit the masses, the “people.” Chomsky obviously favors a globalization that works to the benefit of the vast majority of people in the world, not just a select few.

Chomsky also argues that neoliberal globalization does not enhance, but rather operates to the detriment of, democracy. That is, it enhances the power of the inter-linked corporate and state leaders who exert control over the economy, and much else, without being answerable, accountable to the people. Privatization, which he sees as one element of neoliberalism, “reduces the arena of potential democratic choice” (2003: 138). Furthermore, with truly

important matters usurped by those in power, the people are left to decide democratically upon relatively trivial matters: “What remains of democracy is largely the right to choose among commodities” (2003: 139).

As an American, and as a world-famous scholar, Chomsky’s stinging attacks on the US are particularly notable. He is critical of not only America in general, and of its economic actions, but also of its political and military undertakings. He was particularly critical of American actions throughout the world during the presidency of George W. Bush. He sees these as part of an American effort to achieve hegemony in the world. It is the vehemence of his critique of the US, and the fact that it is offered by a notable American, that led Chávez to hold Chomsky’s book aloft at that UN meeting.

Moving beyond specific arguments such as those offered from the right (Buchanan) and the left (Chomsky), what are the more general criticisms of the globaphobics? As is clear from the above, a major criticism is that globalization has *not* had the positive effects that globaphiliacs like Friedman assume and assert. The critics tend to emphasize globalization’s negative effects on the less well-off, especially in the South. The latter are seen as losing more than they gain from globalization. Indeed, what is often emphasized is that instead of catching up as a result of globalization, many of those in the less developed world fall farther behind those in the developed world; the gap grows wider rather than narrower as a result of globalization. Thus, global capitalism, like capitalism in general, serves to benefit the “haves” while disadvantaging the “have nots”; it makes the latter’s economic situation worse rather than better, at least relatively. To put this another way, the globaphobic view is that globalization leads to greater global inequality (although this is a hotly debated issue in sociology; see Chapter 13). This is in stark contrast to at least one of the implications of Friedman’s “flat world” thesis that globalization is leading to greater global equality.

Needless to say, the globaphiliacs have little use for the globaphobics (and vice versa). For example, Martin Wolf, a prominent neoliberal, often argues that the criticisms of globalization are “wrong,” “almost entirely mistaken,” “largely, though not entirely, groundless,” and so on. Wolf calls one of the most important recent critical works in globalization, Hardt and Negri’s *Empire* (see Chapter 4), an “absurdity” (Wolf 2005: 57). His most general judgment of the critics is the following:

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed the collapse of the Soviet communist tyranny, an unprecedentedly rapid spread of democracy and nigh on universal economic liberalization. East and South Asia, home to 55 per cent of humanity, enjoyed a leap towards prosperity. Yet critics of globalization talk of this period of hope and achievement as if it were a catastrophe. Some do so out of a genuine and understandable dismay over the extent of poverty and misery in a world of plenty, but then reach the *wrong* conclusion on the causes and cures. Others do so because they lament the death of the revolutionary tradition that held sway over the imaginations of so many for two centuries. Most of these critics compare the imperfect world in which we live with a perfect one of their imagining. It is in their way of viewing what has happened in the world, rather than the details of their critique, that those hostile to global economic integration are *most in error*. (Wolf 2005: 308, italics added)

## FINDING A MIDDLE GROUND

Some scholars have sought to find some sort of middle ground position between the two extremes discussed above. One example is *In Defense of Globalization* by the well-known economist, Jagdish Bhagwati (2004). However, the title indicates the problems involved in

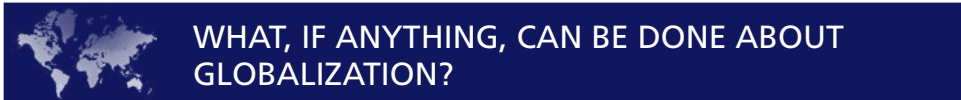
finding such a compromise position since the book is mainly a defense of globalization,<sup>14</sup> especially the economics of it, in the face of a raft of criticisms. Bhagwati uses hard data, subjective impressions, and personal experiences to argue that, in the main, economic globalization has been a good thing. However, he admits that left to itself globalization will produce good results, but not necessarily the best results. Thus, he grudgingly acknowledges that there are not only benefits, but also problems, in globalization today: “Everything does not necessarily improve every time! There are occasional downsides” (2004: 228). His solution to the problems, his suggestion on how to make globalization better, is to manage the process by coming up with more appropriate social policies. Managing globalization is heresy to most economists (especially neoliberals) who believe in a market free of outside interference, but Bhagwati is willing to deviate from established economic dogma. In the process, he offers a comparatively balanced position, but nonetheless his work is most strongly associated with globophilia.

Another middle-ground position is taken by de la Dehesa who argues that globalization, “although positive overall, entails certain unavoidable, but mainly temporary, negative economic, social, political, and cultural consequences that must be urgently addressed” (2007: 2). De la Dehesa closes his analysis with a long list of the criticisms of globalization and his views on each.

- While “globalization has been accused of increasing the world’s poverty level,” de la Dehesa concludes that the data and evidence “tend to demonstrate how the world’s absolute and relative poverty has been reduced significantly since the 1980s, while globalization has gathered momentum” (2007: 294).
- Globalization “has been accused of significantly increasing the world’s inequality,” but while measurement is problematic, “there is a considerable amount of empirical evidence demonstrating that inequality among the citizens of the world has been reduced, albeit quite modestly” (2007: 295).
- “[I]t is argued that globalization has enabled multinationals to acquire more power than states and governments and that they have become bigger than most countries.” However, “[n]either of these two arguments is substantiated by available empirical evidence” (2007: 295–6).
- He accepts the accusation that “developed countries have been accused of maintaining high levels of protectionism on the goods and services exported by developing countries, such as agricultural and food products, textiles, footwear and clothing,” but there is “much evidence that, on average, developing countries protect their production much more than developed countries, even though their protection is much less widespread” (2007: 298).
- He is outraged by the “stinginess” of the developed countries and their reduction of, rather than increase in, aid to developing countries.
- It is “partly true” that international financial organizations (e.g. IMF, World Bank) act in the interests of the developed countries.
- The World Bank does not always work well as far as developing countries are concerned.
- Financial crises have always existed, but it is surprising that the financial markets have not become better than they have in dealing with them.
- He agrees with, and is most concerned about, the fact that “the huge demographic imbalance between wealthy and poor countries could spark a very severe and unsustainable situation in the long run” (2007: 305).

While de la Dehesa presents a reasonably balanced picture, it must be remembered that it is from an economist, reviewing work in economics, who, when all is said and done, finds globalization to be positive.

One final middle-ground position is Kellner's (2002) view that globalization is full of contradictions and includes both winners and losers. He rejects any deterministic view that suggests globalization is all good or all bad, and asserts that it is highly complex and contradictory. Whether globalization is directed from above or from below, Kellner urges us to consider who wins and who loses from globalization in its many different forms in evaluating whether globalization processes are positive or negative.



## WHAT, IF ANYTHING, CAN BE DONE ABOUT GLOBALIZATION?

There are clearly large groups of people who are disadvantaged, if not oppressed and exploited, by various aspects of, and by some groups and organizations involved in, globalization. What can they do about the problems as they perceive them?

### NOTHING!

In this view, globalization is an inexorable process and there is nothing that can be done to stop it – it is a “runaway world.” While there is clearly great economic and political power involved in and behind globalization, the idea that nothing can be done about it only serves to *reify* the process. **Reification** is the idea, derived from Marxian theory, that people come to accord social processes a reality of their own and come to feel that even though they created, and in fact *are* in many ways, those processes, there is nothing they can do about them (Ritzer 2008c: 278–9). As a result, these processes come to have a life of their own and instead of being controlled by people, they come to control people. While reification certainly occurs, it is not inevitable. Those who see globalization as inevitable and beyond their control are guilty of reifying the process and if they persist in doing so, it *will* be beyond their control; there *will* be nothing to be done about it. However, reification, like globalization, is a social process and this means that people are involved in, create, and regularly re-create both reified and globalized structures and processes through their involvement (or lack of involvement) in them (Berger and Luckmann 1967). Thus, just as people create these realities, they can certainly change them by altering the nature of their involvement in them. Of course, this is no easy matter, but in principle no social process, including one as all-encompassing as globalization, is inexorable; all social processes are open to change by those who create them and are involved in them.

**Reification:**  
People come to accord social processes a reality of their own and come to feel that there is nothing they can do about them.

### EVERYTHING!

The antithetical point of view takes seriously the idea that people construct their social realities, including globalization, and therefore makes it clear that globalization can be affected by their actions. Indeed, it is possible, in this view, not only to slow or alter globalization, but also to stop the process completely. This extreme view seems as unrealistic as its polar opposite. For one thing, globalization has been going on for some time, in some eyes for centuries, if not millennia. For another, there are many different people, groups, organizations, and

nation-states involved in globalization and while some may want to dismantle the process, there are many others deeply involved in, and highly committed to, it. And they will fight hard to resist any efforts to alter the process in any significant way. Furthermore, the latter are often the most powerful of the agents involved in globalization (again, MNCs and nation-states, among others, that benefit greatly from it) and they likely constitute powerful opposition to any effort to change the process, let alone dismantle it. It would seem that those who wish to put an end to globalization would need to deal also with far wider political (e.g. democracy) and economic systems (e.g. capitalism), as well as other systems (e.g. cultural) that are key components of globalization and have deep and vested interests in it and its continuation.

## NECESSARY ACTIONS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY

This is the view that whatever problems exist in globalization are already being addressed not only by major players like the UN, IGOs (e.g. the IMF), nation-states, and MNCs, but also by a variety of INGOs that seem to be growing in importance and power in a global world. It is hard to take the actions of the UN, IGOs, nation-states, and MNCs too seriously in this context because they have such vested interests in globalization that they are only likely to undertake and support changes on the margins of the process. In 2013, widespread uprisings in Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and elsewhere sought to shape their countries in reaction to impending global forces and unpopular regimes. There are also social movements and INGOs that are trying to address problematic aspects of globalization (e.g. Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, Slow Food). However, while such INGOs are important, they often pale in comparison to the strength of nation-states and MNCs that oppose them, to say nothing of such IGOs as the World Bank, the IMF, and so on, that are devoted to the continuation, if not expansion, of globalization.

## MORE, PERHAPS MUCH MORE, NEEDS TO BE DONE

Many activists, even those involved in INGOs opposed to globalization in its current form, feel that not enough is being done, that much more needs to be done, to deal with at least the most problematic aspects of globalization (e.g. global climate change), if not the process as a whole. Given the great problems associated with globalization already mentioned to this point and to be discussed much more throughout this volume, it is clear that this is the view that is closest to the one taken here. Much can be done and needs to be done to address the ills associated with globalization. In terms of specifics, what needs to be done is defined by the various problems associated with globalization. All of those that can be addressed need to be addressed and they should be addressed in the order of their negative effects on the largest number of people in the largest areas of the globe. Clearly, that means that what needs to be addressed first is the wide range of problems traceable to globalization as they are experienced in, especially, the South, as well as in the impoverished and marginalized areas in the North.



## CHAPTER SUMMARY

The study of globalization is home to significant debates and controversies. The major split is between globalists and skeptics. The “great globalization debate” engages with the question of the very existence of globalization. Globalists argue that globalization exists and



it encompasses the entire globe. Skeptics contend that there is no such thing as globalization since a significant portion of the world's population is excluded from the processes associated with it. While globalists observe one broad process of globalization, skeptics point to not one, but many globalizations.

Globalists consider globalization an increasingly powerful phenomenon, which, among other things, has led to the decline of the nation-state. Skeptics respond by pointing out that, in recent years, the nation-state has reasserted itself and regained its role as a key world player. Globalists view globalization as a new process while the skeptics argue that it is simply a new term for an old, even ancient, process.

Economically, globalists emphasize structures such as the multinational corporations (MNCs), the transnational economy, and the emergence of a new global division of labor. Skeptics retain a focus on national economies and nation-state-based regional conglomerations, arguing that there are few genuine MNCs today. Globalists maintain that while the continuing power of nation-states is undeniable, their ability to control economic markets is steadily declining.

In terms of the global order, globalists observe the development of various relationships in the global world which do not involve the government. On the other hand, skeptics contend that the world continues to be dominated by relations among and between national governments.

Culturally, globalists tend to accept the idea of a culture common to most areas of the world. Skeptics generally reject the idea of a common global popular culture and argue that culture is becoming increasingly varied.

Some critics argue that we have transnationalism, rather than globalization. Transnationalism is a more limited process which refers largely to interconnections across two, or more, national borders. It may be more accurate to say that transnationalism and globalization both exist today, depending on which phenomena we are analyzing.

The origin of globalization can be analyzed through five perspectives. First, globalization can be seen as being hardwired into humans, in the form of a basic urge for a better life. This instinct results in the spread of globalization through commerce, religion, politics, and warfare. Second, globalization may be perceived as a long-term cyclical process. In this view, there have been other global ages prior to the present one, and each age is destined to contract and disappear, after attaining a peak. Third, globalization can be viewed as a series of historical phases or waves, each with its own point of origin. A fourth perspective argues that the multiple points of origin of globalization are located in seminal historical events. A fifth view focuses on broader, more recent changes in the twentieth century. It argues that the global processes in motion prior to WW II were more limited in geographic scope and less intensive than the global processes of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

There exist various types of globalizations. Some major categories include economic globalization, political globalization, cultural globalization, globalization of religion, science, health and medicine, globalization of sport, and globalization of higher education. Rather than a single point of origin for globalization as a whole, there are separate points of origin for different globalizations.

The factors that drive globalization are also hotly debated. The materialist approach tends to identify objective factors such as capitalism, technology, and multinational corporations as the driving forces of contemporary globalization. The idealist position stresses the role of idea systems, information, and knowledge as the prime movers in the process. Alternatively, we can see globalization as being driven by both material and ideal factors.

Some scholars have noted that in spite of greater liquidity and ever-more flows of various types, flows do not necessarily go everywhere. Even when they do, they affect different places with varying degrees of intensity. Using another metaphor, it could be argued that globalization “hops” from one locale to another, rather than flowing evenly through all locales. While globalization flows more easily through the developed world, it bypasses many locales in the less developed world.

Disputes exist regarding the future development and expansion of globalization. Some view globalization as an inexorable process. Here, it is important to distinguish between globalization from above and globalization from below. Globalization from above is a process that is created and controlled by centralized and powerful actors, such as wealthy elites or MNCs (especially in the North). Globalization from below, which involves marginalized groups and social movements that struggle to make globalization benefit more people and for global processes to be more democratic, can serve to make the process less inevitable.

A difference of opinion exists between globaphiliacs and globaphobics. Globaphiliacs emphasize the positive aspects of globalization. They argue that globalization leads to great economic growth and a contingent spread of democratization and civil society. Globaphobics tend to deemphasize its negative aspects, particularly the people who have not been beneficiaries of the process. The globaphobics’ critiques of globalization are diverse, emerging not only from left and liberal quarters, but also from the conservative right. These critics emphasize the negative impact of globalization on the less well-off portions of the world’s population. They contend that globalization leads to greater inequality. Some scholars adopt a middle ground in this debate.

Large groups of people feel disadvantaged by various aspects of globalization. Some are of the opinion that globalization is an inexorable process. Others argue that not only can the process be slowed down, it can be stopped completely. Another view is that the problems existing in globalization are being addressed by major players as well as International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). However, many activists feel that much more needs to be done to deal with the most problematic aspects of globalization.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is the current era unique in terms of globalization? What factors contribute to or detract from this uniqueness?
2. Is globalization a homogenizing process? Discuss.
3. Define globalization from below. Is it capable of offering adequate resistance to the pressures created by globalization from above?
4. Discuss the different drivers of globalization. Are materialist factors more influential than idealist factors?
5. Is globalization an inexorable process? Should it be?
6. Does globalization lead to a “flat world”? Discuss.

## ADDITIONAL READINGS .....

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## NOTES .....

- 1 The title of this chapter is derived from an anthology the first author edited many years ago. See Ritzer (1972).
- 2 Immigrants can be thought of as "transnational" when they are involved in a variety of relationships (e.g. social, economic, political) that cut across the nations of settlement and origin creating a new transnational field (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc-Szanton 1994). While there are certainly many immigrants who fit into this category and their number is likely growing, there has been a tendency to overestimate their number and to conflate transmigrants and immigrants. Thus, Portes (2001a: 183) concludes: "It is more useful to conceptualize transnationalism as *one* form of economic, political and cultural adaptation that co-exists with other, more traditional forms [e.g. assimilation]." He usefully limits the idea of transnational activities to "those initiated and sustained by non-institutional actors, be they organized groups or networks of individuals across national borders. Many of these activities are informal, that is they take place outside the pale of state regulation and control... they represent goal-oriented initiatives that require coordination across national borders by members of civil society. These activities are undertaken on their own behalf, rather than on behalf of the state or corporate bodies" (Portes 2001a: 186).
- 3 As globalization accelerates, ever-greater portions of the planet will be encompassed by it.
- 4 Others include, for example, the oceans in terms of the development of the trans-Pacific cable.
- 5 By the way, this idea of such a basic "urge" is quite controversial and is critiqued by postmodernists (and others) as being suggestive of "essentialism," or the notion that there is some fundamental characteristic of humans that lies at their essence and explains much of what they do. See Ritzer (1997a).
- 6 Robertson's analysis ends at this point since his essay was published in 1990.
- 7 Or as an end to at least a phase of globalization, see James (2001).
- 8 <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-09-22/russia-opens-north-korean-rail-link-for-iron-silk-road-.html>.
- 9 Not surprisingly, this discussion of types overlaps somewhat with the discussion of types of flows in the preceding chapter. This is the case because types of globalization are, to a large degree, types of flows.
- 10 To take another example, Wolf (2005: 19) says: "Globalization is defined in what follows as integration of economic activities, via markets." See also Rodrik (1997).
- 11 On the North–South distinction, see, for example, Arrighi, Silver, and Brewer (2007); Persaud (2007).
- 12 See Chapter 4 for a discussion of Friedman's work in the context of neoliberalism.
- 13 Goffman (1961: 81). The quotation: "To be awkward or unkempt, to talk or move wrongly, is to be a dangerous giant, a destroyer of worlds. As every psychotic and comic ought to know, any accurately improper move can poke through the thin sleeve of immediate reality."
- 14 This is also true of de la Dehesa (2006).