Part I

Introduction
Part I offers a series of essays that, in combination, constitute a general introduction to the study and phenomenon of globalization, especially from the point of view of sociology and the other social sciences.

We begin with Anthony McGrew’s wide-ranging and magisterial overview of globalization studies from both an intellectual and political perspective. In fact, the issue of globalization, and the debate over it, has served to invigorate both scholarly work and political action. On the one hand, many scholars have been drawn to the study of globalization and, because it is such a highly contested idea, into many scholarly debates, as well. On the other hand, many politicians, lay people and activists (and some scholars) have become enmeshed in the red-hot political debates on problems, and protests over them, associated with many of the real-world effects of contemporary globalization. Since the process of globalization is not going away anytime soon, if ever, public discussion, protests and scholarly work will continue and, if anything, accelerate. At the same time, the political issues that surround globalization (for example, the inequities that seem endemic to the process), like the scholarly ones, show every sign of continuing, and likely increasing in number and intensity.

Broadly speaking, the debate involves, as discussed in the Introduction to this volume, those who have ‘globophilia’ versus those who suffer from ‘globophobia’. The former group includes, among others, those who adopt a neoliberal approach, especially capitalists and politicians who see their firms and countries benefiting from globalization. Those who can be said to suffer from globophobia include those who adopt both far right and far left political positions. Those on the right often see their nation and identity being threatened by global flows, while those on the left are enraged by the injustices associated with globalization. Many activists, both from the right and especially the left, can be seen as having globophilia.

Among scholars, especially sociologists, another source of their interest in, and concern about, globalization is that it threatens some of their most basic and long-lasting ideas. Many of the basic units of analysis in sociology – economy,
polity, society and especially the state – are threatened, if not undermined, by globalization. All of these phenomena seem to interpenetrate in a global world and are increasingly difficult to clearly distinguish from one another. Many of them, but especially the state, seem to be undermined by the process of globalization. Most generally, there are those who believe that the basic unit of analysis in today’s world should be the globe rather than social science’s traditional units of analysis.

At its most extreme, this indicates that the social sciences in general, and sociology in particular, are in need of, if not undergoing, a paradigm shift. In Thomas Kuhn’s (1962/1970) now classic work on paradigms and revolutions in scientific fields, basic to any paradigm is its fundamental image of the subject matter of the science in question (Ritzer 1975/1980). It is arguable that in the past sociology, at least at the macro-level, has focused on society in general and the nation-state in particular, but such foci seem weak in the era of globalization since society and the nation-state are being penetrated and eroded by the process of globalization. This is leading to a shift towards the globe as the fundamental unit of analysis, at least in macro-sociology. Such a shift would have profound implications for much of sociology, especially its theories and methods (see Robinson and Babones in this part of the book). It could be argued that sociology, and other social sciences, are undergoing a paradigm shift, a revolution, as a result of the growing power and importance of globalization.

McGrew offers two basic ways of mapping globalization scholarship. The first involves outlining four ‘waves’ that have framed academic scholarship on the topic. The second is four ‘modes’ of analyzing globalization.

The first ‘wave’ is theoreticist involving theoretical work that addresses several basic issues, all of which are contested and hotly debated. First, there is the issue of how to conceptualize globalization. This issue, and differences among scholars on it, will reappear throughout this book, especially in the various efforts to define globalization. Indeed, the very fact that there are such differences in definition makes it clear just how contested the entire idea of globalization is and remains. Second, there is the question of what are the basic dynamics involved in the process of globalization. Finally, there is the question of the systemic and structural consequences of globalization as a secular process of social change. That is, what is its impact on, among others, social structures, social institutions and so on.

A second wave of scholarship is historicist. Here a key issue, indeed a central issue in globalization scholarship in general, is what, if anything, is new about globalization today in comparison to other periods in history. There are those who see globalization as beginning with the fall of the Soviet Union, others who trace it to the end of World War II, still others who see its beginnings centuries ago, and even those who argue that globalization can be traced back thousands of years. For those who see globalization today as something unique in history, there is the issue of its general implications, and most specifically its implications for progressive values and projects of human emancipation. Most generally, the issue is whether globalization improves or worsens the overall human condition. A key question is whether globalization promises to reduce or exacerbate social inequality within given nations (say, the United States) and the world (say, between the global North and the South).
The third wave identified by McGrew is institutionalist (the Thomas and Boli and Petrova chapters in this section are strongly affected by this wave). Here the focus is on social institutions, especially economic, political and cultural institutions. The issue is, most generally, whether – and in what ways – globalization is leading to change in these institutions, especially whether there is continued global divergence, or increasing convergence, throughout the world in these institutions. This bears on a general issue that is central to the globalization literature in general, and this volume in particular, and that is whether globalization brings with it increasing homogenization, supports extant heterogenization or even brings with it further heterogeneity.

The final wave identified by McGrew is the poststructuralist (or constructivist). This involves several shifts in focus in globalization scholarship. For one thing, concern moves from globalization as an all-encompassing macro-process to one that is contingent and that involves the importance of agents and the ways in which they construct it as a process. Relatedly, this involves a shift in the direction of the importance of ideas about globalization, especially as both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourse. This focus leads to several key issues such as whether the definitions of agents and the rise of counter-globalization discourse is leading to the demise of globalization; whether we are in, or moving toward, a post-global age. At the minimum, it leads to the view that there is not one form of globalization, but multiple globalizations. That is, we should think in terms of globalizations rather than globalization.

Given these four waves of globalization scholarship, McGrew turns to a second mapping device – four modes for analyzing globalization, the first of which is defensive globalization. In this view, globalization is a really existing and enduring condition (although far from inexorable or irresistible) that is changing societies throughout the world. It can be divided into liberal and transformationalist perspectives.

In the liberal view (for an overview and critique, see Antonio, below), globalization is generally seen as a benign process that has continuities with the past and historical changes. It is primarily economic in nature and leads to increasing integration through the market and technology. While liberals see merit in globalization, they can be differentiated from the crude neoliberal, Washington Consensus view that globalization is an unmitigated good producing increased prosperity, democratization, cosmopolitanism and peace throughout the world. The liberals recognize that there are problems associated with globalization, but adopt the view that it can be made to function better.

In contrast, the transformationalist position is that globalization today is unique in history and that it involves much more than simply economic changes. Not only are there political, cultural and social manifestations of globalization above and beyond the economic manifestations, but all of them, including the economic, can be distinguished from one another and are often contradictory. While there are benefits to globalization, especially market-led globalization, there are also problems such as great inequality in and across societies. Democratic reforms are needed to produce a process of globalization that leads to both economic efficiency and social justice.

Post-globalizing is the second mode of analysis. Here the view is that globalization either never occurred, or that it is in decline or disappearing as borders of
nation-states are being reasserted (e.g. between the United States and Mexico), nationalism is being revived and so on (all of these changes can be seen as involving ‘deglobalization’). In any case, in this view the whole idea of globalization has been ‘oversold’ as a description of social reality, an explanation of social change and as an ideology of social progress. Rather than a global world, we continue to live in a world dominated by national societies and states. Thus, the issue is the construction of a better world either through the better use of extant state power or by taking control over and transforming the uses to which it is put.

Whatever its status in the real world, globalization remains important as an idea and as discourse (in the speeches of politicians and the rhetoric of protestors). It provides people with social means and with frames with which to think about and act in the social world. Ideas associated with globalization also serve to both legitimate and de-legitimate social and political change.

The third mode is critical globalism. As its title suggests, this view is critical of globalization because it is associated with the extension and transnationalization of power. The best-known idea associated with this perspective is Hardt and Negri’s (2000) ‘empire’. However, this mode goes beyond critique to point to new subjective and transnational forms of resistance to this extension of power (Hardt and Negri’s [2004] ‘multitude’). Agency, subjectivity and social struggle are central to this resistance. The conflict between, for example, empire and multitude is leading to struggles over the distribution of the world’s resources and over recognition and identity (ethnic, gender and so on). Globalization is generally accepted as a social reality, but the issue is how to realize its progressive, even more its revolutionary, potential.

The final mode of analysis is glocalism. This involves the widely accepted view among contemporary globalization scholars that the focus of studies on this topic should be on both the global and the local in combination with one another, the dialectical relationship between the two. There is a great deal of work in the field that focuses on the issue of glocalization, or on the closely related ideas of hybridization and creolization. In fact, this mode of analysis is so hegemonic that I recently suggested the idea of ‘grobalization’ as a complement to the concept of glocalization (Ritzer 2004a). That is, it is important not only to focus on the integration of the global and the local, but also on the imposition of the latter on the former. The need for both ideas is clear in a distinction made by McGrew and others in this volume (e.g. Kahn and Kellner) between ‘globalization from below’ (McGrew associates this with critical globalism) and ‘globalization from above’. Glocalization would be more in tune with the former while grobalization well expresses the latter.

McGrew offers one of many possible road maps for understanding the literature on globalization, as well as the remainder of the chapters in this volume. Given the diversity of approaches, McGrew anticipates the continuation of disagreements in the study of globalization and that the concept itself is likely to remain fiercely contested.

Robertson and White outline their thinking on globalization which is informed by the glocalization perspective discussed by McGrew and which is closely associated with the work of the senior author of that chapter. That concept plays a role in this piece, but it is subordinated to a larger set of arguments about globalization. The main point made here about glocalization is that it means that globalization
is a self-limiting process, at least as far as homogenization is concerned. That is, because all ideas and practices must adapt to the local, there can be no such thing as globalization; the latter ‘makes no sense’. In making this move Robertson and White seem to be reducing globalization to glocalization and thereby are largely ignoring the importance of what has been called above grobalization (although they do touch on its importance briefly, including the fact that it is not self-limiting).

The more general argument made by Robertson and White is that globalization follows a pattern composed of four basic elements. First, in contrast to a number of scholars in the field, they argue that the nation-state, while it is changing, must continue to be seen as part of globalization. Second, globalization should not be seen as solely a macroscopic process and ‘individual selves’ must be included as part of it. Third, globalization involves an international system. Finally, even more broadly it encompasses humanity as a whole including such issues as our relationship to the environment, animals and human rights. These four elements and their interrelationship constitute Robertson and White’s broadest answer to the question: What is globalization?

Antonio critically analyses an updated version of the liberal theory discussed by McGrew – neoliberalism, or what is sometimes referred to as the ‘Washington Consensus’. He does so in a critique of the popular and influential work of the journalist Thomas Friedman, especially his most recent book, *The World Is Flat* (Friedman 2005). Antonio’s critique is based on his argument that neoliberalism in general, and Friedman’s position in particular, has much in common with an outdated and discredited theory, *social Darwinism* (as well as Malthusian theory; see Turner, concluding chapter of this volume).

Neoliberalism (and the Washington Consensus) have strong roots in, and overtones of, America and Americanization. Antonio associates the following ideas with neoliberalism – a free market, deregulation, tax cuts, minimization of welfare, limited government, free trade and global capitalism. Support for these policies (for a very different view on government policy, see Blackman, Part II) is seen as the motor force of globalization.

Antonio focuses on Friedman’s ideas not only because of his wide readership and influence, but also because the main sources of his thinking are interviews with high-level corporate and political leaders. Thus, his reportage offers much insight into how these leaders view and justify neoliberalism. Friedman’s work is not highly regarded by scholars; it is often seen as ‘trite’ and ‘lightweight’ (although, to be fair, his 2005 book offers, among other things, useful insight into a topic – outsourcing – that scholars have tended to ignore [see Ritzer and Lair, Part II]). Nonetheless, Antonio sees his work as offering ‘what may be the most comprehensive, widely read defence of neoliberal globalization’.

Friedman uses a term – ‘inexorable’ – to describe globalization (other similar ideas in his work are ‘irreversible’ and globalization as a ‘Golden straitjacket’) and, as we will see, this idea recurs in several definitions of that process in this volume. Such an idea not only justifies the future expansion of globalization, but in this context it justifies the continued expansion of *one type* – neoliberal – of globalization (as we will see at a number of points [especially, Kahn and Kellner in Part III] in this book, and Antonio will argue, there are, or could be, other varieties of globalization).
Antonio offers the following enumeration of Friedman’s basic cultural and institutional ideas: the fall of communism was a key step in the increasing flatness of the world; technology, especially information-communicative, is key but the main driver of globalization is still neoliberal policymaking; globalization is defined by fluid, loosely coupled, flexible networks (rather than traditional bureaucracies) that, among other things, make it easier for individuals anywhere in the globe to compete and collaborate (central to the idea of the flat world); nomadic individuals are on the move not only spatially but also in the creation of new identities; some inequality is inevitable and although Friedman is ‘compassionate’ and suggests palliatives, no major social programmes are suggested; the democratization of ownership by the ‘electronic herd’ (no one is in charge) through the democratization of technology, finance, information and decision-making; the reactionary backlash against globalization by a wide range of anti-globalization forces (made increasingly dangerous by the flatness of the world) that slows the process; self-regulation of the global system; and the lead role played by the United States in globalization as its model (and flattest spot) taking the lead in such key neoliberal processes as downsizing, privatizing, streamlining and outsourcing.

Antonio associates Friedman’s ideas with the work of a number of social theorists (Herbert Spencer, William Graham Sumner and Talcott Parsons) and theories (modernization, classical liberalism, social Darwinism) that have been discredited and have few supporters today in the social sciences. Such theoretical roots are the source of the neoliberal emphasis on the laissez-faire economy that leads inevitably to great inequality which, in turn, makes it difficult to integrate and legitimate society. Instead of reiterations of old ideas in a neoliberal guise, we need in Antonio’s view to decouple the concepts and processes of neoliberalism and globalization. To do so, we need to create a ‘more just, institutionally embedded, social regulated democratic capitalism’ that draws on an array of perspectives such as ‘postwar democratic socialism, social democracy and other liberal democratic models’.

Thomas offers us another kind of road map than the one presented by McGrew, this one of the key players in the process of globalization. He begins with the two strong actors in the process – transnational corporations and states, nation-states. The thrust of much of the literature in globalization is to accord transnational corporations the greatest power over the process (e.g. Sklair 2002). The state is often accorded a secondary role because it is either a pawn in the hands of transnational corporations or unable to contain or control their necessarily transnational operations. However, Thomas argues that the power of the transnational corporations may be overestimated because, for example, of internal differences among them, because of the power of other actors (especially the state), or because they are being modified by globalization itself. While transnational corporations and the state retain pride of place at the top of the hierarchy of global actors, even they need to be viewed within a global institutional context to which they must both react and adapt. This serves to moderate not only their power, but the power of all of the other key actors.

Next Thomas deals with international governmental organizations (IGOs) which, while they are created and used by states, have become significant collective actors themselves. Among the key IGOs are the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (both created by the 1944 Bretton Woods agreements), as well as
the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Among other things, these IGOs were oriented to reconstructing the post-World War II world economy; providing support for national development; keeping poorer nations viable in the capitalist system and resistant to (communist) revolution; and facilitating the flow of raw materials from peripheral to core nations and the reverse flow of finished products. Later came the Group of 77, formed by developing nations to counter the deleterious effects on them of the global economic system. This was followed by the Group of 7 (later 8) of core nations that were more interested in maintaining the global economic system as it was, or even getting it to operate even more to their benefit.

By the 1980s there was a global shift in focus from national development to economic liberalization and this new orientation was firmly established by 1989. A series of GATT meetings (the Uruguay Round) beginning in 1986 culminated in the formation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995. This became the organization whose primary task was the development and enforcement of that which liberalized trade or, in other words, supported the much ballyhooed idea of ‘free trade’. This was linked to the development of regional free trade IGOs such as the controversial North Atlantic Free Trade Association (NAFTA) and the hotly debated proposal for the creation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

These IGOs are key players in the global economic system and their influence extends to other areas such as population and women’s rights. However, many of their actions are hotly contested because they are seen as not being truly democratic, not being accountable to all interested parties, and as serving to support an unjust system and even to further inequality and injustice. A series of global actors have emerged to combat these IGOs and some see them as forming the basis of a global civil society. In any case, the system of IGOs and the opposition to them have come to form a global field in which a wide array of both supporters and opponents act. While the opposition seeks to undermine these IGOs, Thomas argues that they may inadvertently be furthering them by defining them as the key actors in the global field.

Also of note as an IGO is, of course, the United Nations which while it is strongly influenced by powerful states, is also autonomous of them, at least to some degree. Then there are a variety of increasingly important international courts (e.g. International Court of Justice, World Court, the more recent International Criminal Court) and tribunals (ad hoc courts that have dealt with human rights issues in Rwanda, Yugoslavia and elsewhere).

Then there are the international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). These are distinguished from IGOs by the fact that they are not established and run by states. They are independent, not-for-profit organizations whose major goal is to exert influence (largely moral) over other major players – transnational corporations, states, IGOs and other international organizations. Among the best-known of the INGOs are Amnesty International, Greenpeace, World Wildlife Fund. Of increasing importance are INGOs like the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) which are moving to create a variety of global standards for products, accounting, ethics and a wide array of other technical matters and issues. There is a trend towards at least some INGOs cooperating in the formation of supermovements such as the World Social Forum (established in Porto Alegre in 2001). It
claims not to be an actor *per se* and, controversially, it does not take political positions and make political pronouncements. Rather it sees itself as a formal space for a global civil society; a space for various groups to come together. While many IGOs are increasingly successful, others such as those associated with labour have been less so.

Thomas then discusses a wide range of other global actors, perhaps the most notable of which are religious and terrorist (e.g. Al-Qaeda) groups. Finally, he includes individual professionals, scientists, writers and celebrities (e.g. Bono) as important actors on the global stage.

Overall, Thomas envisions a world in which the results of unbridled individual interest have brought into being collectivities that see such action as a problem and are oriented to dealing with it, as well as the many other problems that arise on the global stage.

Yet another kind of mapping is undertaken by Boli and Petrova. What is of primary interest to us is the various social entities that they see being globalized, but they begin with other forms of globalization. First, they argue that everyday experience has been globalized. On a day-to-day basis we increasingly find the process inescapable, but we usually do not object to this (in fact, we desire it) because it has become so much a part of our lives and because we find it legitimate rather than feeling as if it has been imposed on us. Second, globalization has become a taken-for-granted reality; we see it as less and less exotic. Third, globalization encompasses more and more people; it has descended the social ladder and become more democratized. However, Boli and Petrova recognize that there are still poor people who are not enmeshed in the global system. They are likely to be on the receiving end of that system, to be driven by it rather than drivers of it, and they have little or no access to the advantages, let alone the niceties, of globalization.

Their discussion of the various social entities that have been globalized is shaped by a (fluid) distinction between cultural forms and organizations. Cultural forms are abstract, disembodied models of social entities that form part of the constituting edifice of world culture. Organizations are the more or less formalized institutions of world society that are built around, embed and sustain particular types of entities. These cultural models and institutions are primarily cognitive, but also normative, both enable and constrain actors, and have served to accelerate globalization, making it increasingly elaborate, but also more incoherent.

Turning to the social entities, Boli and Petrova begin with the globalization of the individual, of individual personhood. Fundamental to this is the globalization of schooling and of standardized models of how the individual is to be developed in the educational process. The individual is also at the heart of the exchange economy (e.g. is paid, has property rights). An ideology of human rights has become increasingly pervasive around the world. And, the World Values Survey confirms that people increasingly see the self as belonging to the world.

Next as a social entity is the state and the view that there is greater global acceptance of the view that a viable state is central to contemporary world culture, of what constitutes a model state and for the need for performance assessment to ascertain how well a state measures up to the model. In that model, the state has a series of responsibilities to its citizens including schooling, medical care, economic development, gender empowerment and reduction or elimination of state
corruption. Further the state has a responsibility to the environment and affluent states have the added responsibility of aiding poorer countries. Just as there is a model state, there is an increasing global model of what constitutes a failed state including one rife with poverty, violence and social disorder traceable to state inadequacies.

Like the state in the political realm, the corporation (or transnational corporation) has become the globally favoured organizational form within the economy. In addition, also like the state, the corporation has become a global model(s) for economic organizations throughout the world. This process has been expedited by the ISO (see Chapter 4), the major global accounting and management consulting firms and a wide range of consultants with their various standards and models for organization structure and quality, employee relations and so forth. These organizational forms are not restricted to corporations, but through ‘organizational isomorphism’ have become models for universities, sports teams, clubs, professional associations, even hobby groups.

Corporations have also come under increasing moral pressure from global critics. There are, for example, general statements on the moral responsibilities of corporations (Sullivan Principles, UN Global Compact). INGOs like Corpwatch and INFACT focus on the need for corporations to have a triple bottom line focusing not just on financial matters, but also their environmental and social impacts (INFACT has a Hall of Shame for those that fail to measure up on such dimensions). Then there are INGOs like Social Accountability 8000 and AA 1000 that focus on such things as measuring the social responsibility and ecological sustainability achievements of corporations. Also of note here is the growing attractiveness of social choice investments.

Civil society, that evanescent world that exists between the state and markets, has become globalized. Involved here are a wide range of scientific, medical, technical, professional, educational, recreational and sporting INGOs. Many INGOs come together at the World Social Forum which, as we will see (Thomas), has become a critical counterpoint to the World Economic Forum in Davos. Overall, Boli and Petrova see greater standardization of voluntary associations throughout the world, although they also see greater variety through the process of glocalization (see above).

Finally, even the transcendental has been globalized in great concern for the planet as a whole (climate change, global diseases etc.), cosmologies and more specifically in religion in which ecumenicism, fundamentalism and evangelism are all global in their reach.

In conclusion, Boli and Petrova address an issue that is of central concern among scholars of globalization and will reappear throughout this volume (for example, Caldwell and Lozada). That is, once again, the issue of global homogenization versus heterogenization. While they certainly see homogenization through the proliferation of global cultural models and organization forms (isomorphism), they also see local resistance to them. However, in their view a model of homogenization and resistance is too simplistic. They argue that globalization itself produces and legitimates differences and diversity; that there are many conflicts and contradictions in world cultural models, and that globalization produces both homogenization and new forms and levels of competition and conflict.
The next two chapters deal with efforts to map two critical aspects of the study of globalization – theories of globalization and the methods that are used to study it empirically. Clearly, we must venture forth and collect data on this process, but also just as clearly we cannot be content with the simple accumulation of such data; we must reflect theoretically on the meaning and importance of the data and of globalization more generally.

As Robinson makes clear, mapping theories of globalization is no easy matter. However, before we get to that we should make clear that Robinson traces most theory, indeed the entire field of globalization studies, to the 1970s. This bears on the issue, discussed above, of whether or not globalization is something new. While Robinson is not necessarily taking a position on this issue (and in fact sees the debate over the beginnings of globalization as one the key domain questions in the field), he is arguing that the theoretical and other scholarly work on globalization boomed, indeed became an increasingly identifiable field of globalization studies, after 1970. This is traceable to a series of developments that included the emergence of a globalized economy, culture and political processes; the unprecedented multidirectional movement of people around the world with profound effects on identities and communities; as well as new patterns of global inequality and domination. All of these became central topics in globalization studies and to them have been added significant work on global corruption, the media, sexuality and so on. All of these topics, and many more, will be covered in this volume.

There is a large variety of theories of globalization derived from a number of different fields. Furthermore, theories are rapidly changing and new theoretical perspectives are continually emerging. Thus, Robinson eschews trying to come up with a definitive classification system, but rather simply offers an enumeration of the major theories while recognizing that it is far from being comprehensive.

World-system theory, created by and closely associated with Immanuel Wallerstein, is interesting in that it can be seen as a globalization theory even though many of those associated with it (including Wallerstein himself), as well as observers of globalization theory, do not see it in that way. Yet, its primary focus is the capitalist world system that had become a global system by the late nineteenth century.

Theories of global capitalism (Sklair 2002; Robinson 2004; Hardt and Negri 2000) have several things in common with world-system theory including a critique of capitalism, emphasis on long-term, large-scale changes that culminated in globalization, and the central importance of global economic structures. Among the differences with world-system theory are that theories of global capitalism see globalization today as a qualitatively new stage in the history of capitalism (‘capitalist globalization’), involving new global and production systems that have supplanted earlier national ones, systems that cannot be put into traditional frameworks that focus on nation-states or the inter-state system (as does world-system theory).

Network society theory is traceable to the work of Manuel Castells (1996). Here the focus shifts from capitalism to technology as the motor force in globalization. Recent technological changes associated with computers and the Internet have led to a new mode of development: informationalism. Capitalists used this new technology to create a ‘new economy’, ‘informational capitalism’. Thus, the new economy
is knowledge and information based, is characterized by production on a global scale, and productivity is generated through networks. The latter is a key idea to Castells who associates it with the networked enterprise and ultimately the network society. Indeed, networks and networked enterprises are linked to the new post-Fordist more horizontal and flexible corporate structures. This more flexible and fluid system is tied into Castells’ view that we have moved from a world characterized by ‘spaces of places’ to one of increasingly important ‘spaces of flows’ (and similarly fluid ‘timeless time’). Castells offers a more positive view of globalization than the previous two types of theories, although that may be because he ignores a variety of problems, especially the ‘digital divide’ (Drori 2005).

Another set of theories deals with the relationship between space, place and globalization. Spaces and places have been restructured in both a general sense (spaces have tended to replace places, or as Auge [1996], Ritzer [2004a] and others put it, ‘non-places’ have replaced ‘places’), as well as in global capitalism. As Harvey (1989) (and Giddens 2000) sees it, time and space have been compressed, so that the constraints of both have been greatly reduced. Business can be conducted in almost any place at any time and this permits not only the increasing globalization of capitalism but a whole new stage in the history of capitalism.

Also under this broad heading is the body of work that sees a new spatial order in the world with the growing importance of global and world cities.

Next is a series of theories of transnationality and transnationalism. Among the concerns here is the issue of increasing migration and its role in globalization. In many cases, these migrants are forming transnational communities made possible by an inexpensive and readily available international telephone service, the Internet and international travel. More generally, transnationality is not restricted to immigrants, an increasing number of people are having transnational experiences.

Then there is a series of theories surrounding the issue of modernity and postmodernity. On the one hand, there are theorists (Giddens 2000; Beck 2005; Bauman 1998) who argue that even with globalization we continue to live in the modern, albeit a late-modern, world. Others, such as Albrow (1997), see a much more profound change from a modern age to a global age in which, among other things, the nation-state has lost its centrality and various institutions relate directly to the globe thereby rendering the nation-state increasingly less important. It is the globe, rather than the nation state, that is the primary source of identity and major arena for action.

A wide range of theories have addressed global culture. Much of it surrounds the issue, once again, of whether, from a cultural point of view, the world is growing increasingly homogeneous or heterogeneous. Tending to emphasize homogeneity are theories that stress such ideas as global culture (see Thomas; Boli and Petrova), coca-colonization, McWorld (Barber 1995) and Ritzer’s ideas on McDonaldization (2004b) and the globalization of ‘nothing’ (2004a). On the heterogeneity side are a set of theories mentioned above that focus on glocalization, hybridity and creolization as well as Appadurai’s (1996) work on global landscapes and their disjunctures.

In a parallel essay, Babones seeks to chart methodologies involved in the study of globalization. He differentiates between quantitative and qualitative studies of
globalization, but focuses most of his attention on the former. Most of the most sophisticated quantitative work in globalization is in the economic realm and this work tends to rely on published compilations of existing data rather than involving the collection of new data. Three variables have typically been used in cross-national panel studies of economic globalization – foreign trade, foreign direct investment and foreign portfolio investment.

Other studies have focused on national income, most commonly measured by gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP). A big issue among those who work with such data is the conversion of the different currencies into a common currency, usually US dollars. The issue of conversion has led to huge debate in the globalization literature between world-system theorists and demographers. In fact, the major protagonists (Firebaugh and Goesling; Korzeniewicz and Moran) in this debate discuss this issue and others in later chapters in this volume.

Turning to non-economic issues, Babones discusses studies of cultural globalization that rely on the World Values Survey. In this survey, researchers in 80 countries have asked parallel questions on values and beliefs in four waves between 1981 and 2001. This is an invaluable source on various cultural issues such as whether there is increasing homogeneity or heterogeneity throughout the globe.

Political globalization can be studied through the use of various published data sources on diplomatic relationships between countries (Europa World Year Book), military matters (The Military Balance and the Armed Conflict Database) and terrorism (Patterns of Global Terrorism).

While all of the other chapters in Part I map a variety of issues that relate to globalization, this part closes with a much more focused essay by one of the world’s most important theorists, Ulrich Beck. In this chapter Beck argues for the need to replace a focus on the nation-state with a more cosmopolitan orientation that adopts an inherently critical perspective on globalization and the place of the nation-state in it. While Beck does not see the nation-state as disappearing, he sees it as only one of many actors in a global power game. The focus needs to be on that global power game and not the nation-state.

Such a shift in focus requires the restructuring of the social sciences conceptually, theoretically, methodologically and organizationally. All of their fundamental concepts – especially the nation-state – need to be re-examined. Many are ‘zombie concepts’ that continue to live on even though the world that they related to at one time no longer exists.

Cosmopolitanism, as pointed out above, not only involves a fundamental reorientation of the social sciences, and a dramatic shift in focus, but it also must be critical in its orientation. The critical focus must be on the increasing inequality in the world. The focus on the nation-state has led to a concern with comparatively ‘small’ inequalities within nations, but it has also led to a shameful neglect of the ‘large’ global inequalities. A cosmopolitan orientation overcomes the blinders of a national orientation and attunes us to global issues.

Thus, we have not only surveyed a wide range of realities of, and approaches to, the global world, but also included one view on the need for a total overhaul of, a paradigm revolution in, the social sciences in general and especially in their approach to the issue of globalization.
References


INTRODUCTION

Globalization incites controversy. Both within and beyond the academy it provokes vociferous debate and contradictory responses. Within the academy opinion divides over the reality and significance of contemporary globalization but more especially with respect to its supposed revolutionary implications for the classical paradigms of the human sciences. In the wider public sphere globalization elicits sharply divergent responses and fuels radically different political projects, from the globaphobia of the extreme right to the globaphilia of neoliberals. On closer inspection, however, this apparent polarization of views dissolves into a far more complex and nuanced set of arguments which cut across orthodox ideological and disciplinary fault lines. Globalization has not imposed a ‘golden straitjacket’, to use Friedman’s phrase, on the academy nor upon social activism either. On the contrary it has provoked a radical resurgence, if not renaissance, of social and political theory not to mention popular mobilization and dissent. This chapter seeks to map the intellectual and political controversy surrounding the idea of globalization, explaining why it has become such a fiercely contested and detested idea amongst academics and activists alike.

In the first part of the chapter the discussion focuses upon what is at stake in the great globalization controversy and, by implication, why it matters so much both academically and politically. This anchors the subsequent elaboration of a heuristic framework for mapping this diversity and the identification of the principal contending schools of thought. The remaining sections discuss and critically evaluate each of these broad schools, relating these to the contentious politics of globalization. In the conclusion the discussion reflects upon the current controversy about globalization and why it is likely to remain of central concern to social scientists and social activists well into the twenty-first century.
There is some validity in the phrase that ‘globalization is what we make of it’. How globalization is socially constructed, in the media and academic discourses, frames, if not constrains, its meaning for both academics and activists. Contemporary discourses of globalization tend too readily to construct its meaning in terms of a titanic struggle between its advocates and its opponents, between the forces of globalization and those of anti-globalization, between globalists and sceptics, between cosmopolitans and communitarians, or between the global and the particular. Such antimonies certainly have heuristic value in helping define what is at stake – in the intellectual and social realms – if globalization is to be taken seriously. Too often, however, such antimonies oversimplify the complexity of academic and political contestation about the nature and meaning of globalization. If taken too literally they can readily tend towards the substitution of rhetoric for rigorous analysis. To move beyond such antinomies is the principal task of this chapter. Before confronting this task, however, it will be useful to rehearse some of the reasons why globalization has become such a contested and detested idea within and beyond the academy.

In the inaugural edition of the journal Globalizations, V. Spike Petersen argues that, ‘We cannot makes sense of globalizations through conventional analytical and disciplinary frameworks’ (Petersen 2004: 50). Jim Rosenau, also in the same edition, observes that ‘Social scientists, like the people they study, are prone to habitual modes of behaviour, and thus are more likely to cast their inquiries into habitual frameworks that are taken for granted than to treat their organizing principles as problematic’ (Rosenau 2004: 12), while Martin Shaw calls for the ‘the global transformation of the social sciences’ (Shaw 2003: 35). What globalization brings into question are the core organizing principles of modern social science – namely the state, society, political community, the economy – and the classical inheritance of modern social theory which takes them for granted as the units or focus of social explanation – sometimes referred to as methodological nationalism. Recursive patterns of worldwide interconnectedness challenge the very principle of the bounded society and the presumption that its dynamics and development can be comprehended principally by reference to endogenous social forces. By eroding the distinctions between the domestic and the international, endogenous and exogenous, internal and external, the idea of globalization directly challenges the ‘methodological nationalism’ which finds its most acute expression in modern social theory. It implies, as Scholte and others conclude, the need for ‘a paradigm shift in social analysis’ in order that the emerging condition of globality in all its complexity can be explained and understood (Scholte 2000: 18).

Such revolutionary claims have not gone uncontested. Many reject such a hasty dismissal of classical social theory and consider the ‘globalization turn’ as simply the folly of much liberal and radical social science in which advocacy has displaced scepticism or ‘balanced social scientific reflection’ (Rosenberg 2005: 66). Rather than presenting an insurmountable intellectual challenge to orthodox social science, however, globalization has been largely incorporated into contemporary social analysis through a concern with spatiality, and by implication globality, in the development and functioning of modern societies (Brenner 2004). Aspirations for
a globalization theory have given way to a proliferation of theories of globalization as different traditions and disciplines, from anthropology to world history, seek to incorporate its dynamics into their explanatory schemas. Although this ‘global turn’ has not displaced classical social theory, the idea of globalization has now colonized the human sciences. Amongst those of a sceptical disposition, what is principally at stake in this ‘colonization’ process is not so much the displacement of social theory as the descriptive and explanatory purchase of the very concept of globalization itself. This strikes at the very *raison d’être* of globalization studies since, as Rosenberg amongst others argues, if the concept provides no convincing ‘guide to the interpretation of empirical events’ it must in any meaningful sense be analytically redundant (Rosenberg 2005: 1; Hay 2004). For both Rosenau and Rosenberg, as representatives of opposing arguments, what is at stake in these academic disputes is nothing less than the very soul of the social sciences as a reflexive and critical undertaking which seeks to explain and understand the principal forces shaping the contemporary human condition. In short, globalization constitutes either the new ‘social imaginary’ of the human sciences – as explanans or explanandum – or alternatively a subversive conceptual ‘folly’ (Taylor 2004; Rosenberg 2000).

If one critical source of academic contention over globalization stems from competing assessments of its descriptive (ontological) and explanatory (epistemological) value a second, but no less important source, issues from differing normative and ethical positions. These are inextricably bound together with matters of empirics and theory in so far as analyses of globalization are necessarily imbued with ethical judgments about its tendencies and consequences. Whether globalization is good for the poor, to take an obvious example, involves not just empirical assessments but judgments about what is good for the poor. Deliberations about globalization, whether in the academy or beyond, are inescapably inflected – whether explicitly or implicitly – with normative reasoning. To paraphrase Sandel, ‘Everyday we live out many of the concepts of normative theory’ (Sandel 1996). Whether it is considered benign, malign or both is a judgment conditioned by normative reasoning and ethical assessments of its consequences for the human condition. But there is no simple correspondence between particular normative positions – such as left or right – and attitudes towards globalization. Rather, as Tormey has suggested, the more significant distinction is between what might be broadly defined as ideological and post-ideological reasoning, between those who judge globalization in relation to how far it advances or constrains progress towards a particular ideal of the ‘good life’ and those who judge it in relation to how far it facilitates or hinders different and multiple ‘ways of life’ or what Haber refers to as ‘radical pluralism’ (Tormey 2004: 75; Haber in Noonan 2003: 92). In this respect ethical assessments of globalization do not mirror a traditional left–right binary opposition but on the contrary dissolve it. Ethical critiques of globalization, whether on the grounds of justice or community, transcend orthodox left/right thinking as do ethical defences of globalization, whether rooted in cosmopolitanism or conservatism. Tracking these broader intellectual currents within the social sciences the controversy about globalization has become increasingly framed by normative and ethical deliberations concerning whether different or better worlds are either imaginable or possible.
To recap: two key issues are at stake in the academic controversy about globalization. The first concerns the contested intellectual hegemony of the concept of globalization in the social sciences: its descriptive, analytical and explanatory purchase. The second concerns the normative trajectory of globalization: whether on ethical grounds it is to be defended, transformed, resisted or rejected. When combined these two axes provide a conceptual space for thinking about what distinguishes the many different voices and contributions to the controversy about globalization. Figure 1.1 attempts a mapping of this space. The vertical axis represents the contest over the intellectual hegemony of globalization characterized by a privileging of either globalist forms of analysis (methodological globalism) or alternatively statist or societal forms of analysis (methodological territorialism). The horizontal axis represents the normative domain differentiating between ideological and post-ideological forms of reasoning: that is, the privileging of a vision of the ‘good community’ as opposed to the advocacy of many coexisting ‘good communities’ (ideological versus post-ideological reasoning). This figure constitutes a heuristic device for identifying, mapping and differentiating between the multiplicity of globalization scholarship. It provides the basis for the construction of a simple typology, one which moves beyond existing binary oppositions – for and against globalization, globalizers versus anti-globalizers, or globalists versus sceptics – to acknowledge the nuanced nature of current controversies.

As Holton and others have suggested, globalization scholarship has come in three overlapping but distinctive waves: the hyper-globalist, the sceptical and the post-sceptical (Holton 2005: 5; Bruff 2005). The wave analogy is useful in so far as it alludes to the successive diffusion and churning of distinct research programmes over time in which core research problematiques come to be reappropriated and
redefined by new research agendas. Significantly, too, it does not imply a notion of cumulative knowledge or epistemic progress. Building upon Holton's schema, but inevitably modifying it, four successive waves of globalization scholarship can be identified: the theoreticist, the historicist, the institutionalist and the deconstructivist. As with all such schema it is neither definitive nor exhaustive but rather a partial way of organizing a highly complex field of study.

As manifest in the works of, amongst others, Giddens, Robertson, Rosenau, Albrow, Ohmae, Harvey and Lawrence the initial theoreticist wave was generally concerned with debates about the conceptualization of globalization, its principal dynamics and its systemic and structural consequences as a secular process of worldwide social change (Albrow 1996; Giddens 1990; Robertson 1992; Rosenau 1990; Ohmae 1990; Harvey 1989; Lawrence 1996). By contrast, the historicist wave, drawing upon the historical sociology of global development, was principally concerned with exploring in what ways, if any, contemporary globalization could be considered novel or unique, whether it defined a new epoch, or transformation, in the socio-economic and political organization of human affairs and, if so, its implications for the realization of progressive values and projects of human emancipation (see amongst others, Held et al. 1999; Hirst and Thompson 1999; Frank 1998; Castells 1996; Bordo et al. 2003; Dicken 1998; Baldwin and Martin 1999; Gilpin 2001; Gill 2003; Scholte 2000; Mann 1997; Hopkins 2002; Sassen 1996; Hardt and Negri 2000; Hoogvelt 1997; O’Rourke and Williamson 2000; Boyer and Drache 1996; Appadurai 1998; Amin 1997; Tomlinson 1994; Taylor 1995). Sceptical of these arguments about structural transformation, the third (institutionalist) wave sought to assess claims about global convergence (and divergence) by concentrating upon questions of institutional change and resilience, whether in national models of capitalism, state restructuring or cultural life (see amongst others here Garrett 1998, 2000; Swank 2002; Held 2004; Keohane and Milner 1996; Campbell 2004; Mosley 2003; Cowen 2004; Hay and Watson 2000; Pogge 2001). Finally, the fourth and most recent wave reflects the influence of poststructuralist and constructivist thinking across the social sciences, from Open Marxism to postmodernism. As a consequence there is an emphasis upon the importance of ideas, agency, communication, contingency and normative change to any convincing analysis of the making, unmaking and remaking of globalization understood as both a historical process and a hegemonic discourse. Central to this wave is a debate about whether the current historical conjuncture is best understood as a post-global age, in which globalization (as aspiration, discourse, material process and explanatory category) is (or should be) in retreat, or on the contrary an epoch of sometimes competing and alternative globalizations (in the plural), what Hoffman has referred to as the ‘clash of globalizations’ (Hoffman 2002; Rosenberg 2005; Hay 2004; Urry 2003; Bello 2002; Held and McGrew 2002; Callinicos 2003; Keohane and Nye 2000; Rosamond 2003; Wolf 2004; Saul 2005; Eschele 2005; Beck 2004; Harvey 2003).

These four waves of analysis frame contemporary academic deliberations about globalization. As will be discussed subsequently, they also significantly influence how the wider public debate is constructed. Since they draw upon different epistemic traditions in the human sciences the contention over globalization is defined as much by contests over substantive matters as it is by competing, although not necessarily
incommensurable, modes of social enquiry. That said even within similar modes of
enquiry conflicting views of globalization are in evidence. This suggests, as noted
earlier, that simple binary oppositions or antinomies do little justice to the com-
plexity of the controversies about globalization.

Returning to the task of mapping, the general field of enquiry involves, in the
first instance, drawing together this discussion of the sources or dimensions of con-
tention and the four waves of scholarship. Figure 1.1 identifies at least four different
modes of analysis: that which takes globalization to be a really existing condition
and considers it either on balance broadly benign or, subject to greater political
direction, that it can be harnessed to progressive ideals and the creation of a ‘better
world’; that again which takes it seriously although as a new form of domination
to be resisted along with any grand projects for remaking the world according to
abstract universal principles; that which is deeply sceptical of the idea of globaliza-
tion, or its presumed benign nature, emphasizing instead the continued importance
of ‘methodological territorialism’ to social theory and the centrality of state power
to the improvement of the human condition; and that which also rejects the privi-
leging of the global in social theory emphasizing the intermeshing of processes of
globalization and localization but with a normative attachment to community,
autonomism, sustainability and difference. These four modes of analysis are referred
to here as: defensive globalism, critical globalism, post-globalism and glocalism
respectively (see Figure 1.2). Clearly these are generic labels which themselves
conceal a spectrum of arguments from the more orthodox to the more radical. This
does not invalidate the heuristic value of the typology as a tool for more systematic
analysis and comparative enquiry into the question of why globalization, as a
concept and/or really existing condition, is the source of so much controversy within
and beyond the academy.
DECONSTRUCTING THE GLOBALIZATION CONTROVERSY: IDENTIFYING THE SOURCES OF CONTENTION

In identifying these four general modes of analysis within globalization scholarship the principal aim is to understand the substantive sources of their disagreement and agreement. This, in the first instance, requires some explication of their core arguments and assumptions.

Defensive globalism

There are broadly two main strands of literature which can be located under this label: liberal and transformationalist. Both acknowledge that recent decades have witnessed a new historical phase of globalization although they tend to disagree as to whether it is unprecedented. Liberal theory tends to emphasize continuities with the past, especially with the ‘first global age’ of 1870–1914, whereas transformationalist theory tends to emphasize globalization’s unique and radical consequences. Nevertheless, both consider it central to understanding and explaining the current human condition and the possibilities for creating a ‘better world’. However, both differ considerably in how globalization is conceived and whether it is to be judged broadly benign or malign. Whereas liberal theory offers a primarily economistic reading of globalization, as the growing integration of the world through market-led and technological forces, the transformationalist literature emphasizes its distinct, and often times contradictory, political, cultural, economic and social manifestations, that is, its multidimensional character. Moreover, whereas liberal theory stresses its generally benign character, the transformationalist literature offers a far more circumspect and critical assessment. This is associated with very different normative prescriptions for improving the global human condition – one rooted in an individualist market philosophy and the other in a collectivist philosophy of global regulation and control. What both share, however, is the belief that contemporary globalization, though far from inevitable or irresistible, is an enduring phenomenon which is changing societies across the world.

Amongst the most thoughtful liberal accounts of globalization are those offered by Martin Wolf (in his Why Globalization Works, 2004) and Jagdish Bhagwati (In Defense of Globalization, 2004). Both defend a sophisticated liberal position which is, in part, a critique of the rather crude neoliberalism which informs the ‘Washington Consensus’ and the ideology of corporate globalization. This crude neoliberalism asserts that the globalization of markets, through amongst other things free trade and unrestricted capital movements, is the harbinger of a more prosperous, democratic, cosmopolitan and peaceful world. Rooted in the ‘commercial liberalism’ of Adam Smith, and nineteenth-century thinkers such as Cobden and Bright, it views the ‘creative destruction’ of globalizing markets as a source of social progress and prosperity which provide the conditions within which democracy, cosmopolitanism and world peace may flourish.

Whilst both Wolf and Bhagwati argue that contemporary globalization has been principally benign their analysis is nuanced and qualified. Both emphasize how globalization is re-structuring the world economy as freer trade and the
transnationalization of production create a new world division of labour, eroding the North–South hierarchy, and facilitate the rise of new economic powers such as China, India, and Brazil. This shift, they argue, has brought worldwide material benefits, in so far as it has reduced world poverty, inequality, and contributed to democratization and social progress in many parts of the world (Bhagwati 2004; Wolf 2004). It has, according to Cowen, also contributed to the renaissance, rather than the destruction, of local cultures (Cowen 2004). However, its benefits have not been uniformly experienced since, for various institutional and structural reasons, its transformative potential is unevenly realized (Wolf 2006; Bhagwati 2004). Moreover, as Wolf observes, globalization has not necessarily created the basis of a more stable or cooperative world nor overcome ‘humanity’s characteristic tribalism’ (Wolf 2004, 2006). To address its distributional consequences they argue, in different ways, for more ‘appropriate governance’ to ‘preserve and celebrate the good effects that globalization generally brings but supplement the good outcomes and address the phenomenon’s occasional downsides’ (Bhagwati 2004). Although this distinguishes them from the neo-liberal advocates of market globalization it is essentially an argument for making liberal globalization work better rather than for effectively regulating or restraining it.

In contrast transformationalism theory presents a much less benign and economistic reading of globalization. Amongst the principal works which share such a perspective, although rooted within different theoretical and methodological traditions, are those of Castells (1997), Rosenau (1990, 2003), Giddens (1990), Held et al. (1999), Held and McGrew (2002) and Scholte (2000). Rooted in the theoreticist and historicist waves of analysis they present a rich account of the distinctive features of contemporary globalization from within a broadly historical sociology tradition. This maps the scale and complexity of worldwide social relations, across all dimensions from the economic to the cultural, arguing that their historically unprecedented extensity and intensity represents a significant ‘global shift’ in the social organization of human affairs.

Contrary to an economistic analysis, globalization is conceived as operating across different domains, from the cultural to the political. Nor does it display a simple logic of global integration or convergence. On the contrary it is considered dialectical, integrating and fragmenting, uniting and dividing the world by creating winners and losers, including and excluding locales, as it proceeds. Whilst it generates pressures for socio-economic convergence these are mediated by domestic factors such that significant divergence, whether in levels of national social spending or economic growth, may often be the result. Rather than imposing a ‘golden straitjacket’ on all states its consequences are significantly differentiated. Yet increasingly states and societies confront similar problems of boundary control as the separation of the global and the domestic becomes less tenable. Political problems, from people trafficking to the management of the national economy, are simultaneously both domestic and global matters. This erosion of the internal and external, domestic and international, articulates the growing compression of time and space in an epoch of instant global communications. A resultant structural consequence is that the relationships between territory, economy, society, identity, sovereignty and the state no longer appear as historically fixed and congruent – even if this was imaginary – but rather as relatively fluid and disjointed. For the transformationalists it
is this apparent dislocation or destabilizing of the institutional coordinates of modern social life that is the source of both heightened conflict and insecurity at all levels from the local to the global. This dislocation takes many forms, from the political to the cultural. It finds, for example, particular expression in the political domain in the apparent disjuncture between national sovereignty and the suprastate locus of many aspects of the actual business of contemporary government.

Unlike neoliberal thinking, the transformationalist account does not imbue globalization with any particular telos, neither an inevitably more prosperous nor peaceful world, nor the inevitable emergence of a singular world society or the coming anarchy. However, there is broad agreement that its structural consequences do much to multiply the complexity of modern societies and thereby their governance whilst simultaneously creating a range of new transnational problems, from global warming to global financial stability, which such complexity makes even more difficult to resolve. One consequence is the restructuring of the state evidenced in the shift from government to governance. Furthermore, since decisions in one country can directly impact on the interests of citizens of other societies a whole new range of trans-boundary problems is generated which challenge the efficacy of national democracy. Beyond the political domain, the consequences of globalization present comparable challenges to the organization and functioning of modern societies.

In addition to its structural consequences the transformationalist literature has much to say about the distributional consequences of globalization. In particular Castells, amongst others, argues, contra the Washington Consensus and liberal accounts, that economic globalization is associated with a polarizing and divided world, as the gap between rich and poor widens, whilst much of humanity remains on the margins or is excluded from its benefits (Castells 2000). This structural exclusion and structural inequality, it is argued, is an inevitable consequence of market-led globalization. However, this need not be the case if globalization could be harnessed to the ideals of social justice. The normative thrust of the transformationalist analysis is thus an argument for an ethical or humane globalization that combines economic efficiency with equity or social justice. This is a demand for nothing less than a fundamental transformation of contemporary globalization itself in so far as its ‘challenges are likely to be of enduring significance’ (Held 2004: 11). For Held, Castells, and others this takes the form of variations on a project for global democracy (Held 2004; Castells 2005; Scholte 2005) – a project that, building upon the reform of existing infrastructures of global governance and civil society, seeks the democratic regulation of globalization in order to address its more socially malignant structural and distributional consequences.

**Post-globalism**

Post-globalist scholarship echoes Joseph Stiglitz’s quip that ‘globalization today has been oversold’ (Stiglitz 2005: 229). It is oversold in at least three senses: as a description of social reality (a social ontology), as an explanation of social change (an explanans) and as an ideology of social progress (a political project). In all these respects, most particularly in the wake of 9/11, globalist rhetoric increasingly appears rather hollow. Amongst others, the historian Niall Ferguson (2005) writes...
of ‘sinking globalization’, Saul (2005) ‘the end of globalism’ and Rosenberg (2005) ‘the age of globalization is unexpectedly over’. These critiques of globalization have inherited from the historicist and deconstructivist waves of analysis a theoretically informed and empirically rich scepticism which points to the demise of globalization (deglobalization) both as description and prescription.

Central to this scepticism is the work of, amongst others, Hirst and Thompson (1999), Hay (2004), Rugman (2000) and Gilpin (2002). Though their analyses differ in significant ways their studies concur that contemporary globalization is not historically unprecedented, that the dominant economic trends are towards internationalization and regionalization, and that the idea of globalization has been much more significant than its descriptive or explanatory utility. In effect, they argue that radical, liberal and transformationalist scholarship significantly exaggerates its empirical and normative significance arguing that the world remains principally one of discrete national societies or states. Accordingly much contemporary theory exaggerates the significance of the global in explanations of the social world often by disregarding the continuing significance of endogenous sources of social change and the powerful insights of classical social theory. In short, globalization is both bad description and bad theory.

Qualifying this scepticism, however, Hay argues that there is one sense in which globalization remains absolutely central to any account of the current epoch: as an idea or discourse which provides social meaning and frames, as well as legitimates, social and political change (Hay 2004). As an idea or discourse, globalization finds expression across the world in the speeches of politicians and the rhetoric of protesters as a rationale for social and political action. Within an interpretative tradition, globalization, as the discursive construction of the social world, remains essential to understanding the contemporary epoch.

These sceptical arguments have acquired particular force in the current context. For today, borders and boundaries, nationalism and protectionism, localism and ethnicity appear to define an epoch of radical deglobalization, the disintegration of the liberal world order and the demise of globalism. Ferguson suggests that the current epoch has many similarities with the ‘sinking’ of the ‘last age of globalization’, which ended in the destruction of World War I and the subsequent world depression (Ferguson 2005). J.R. Saul, in similar vein, argues that the ideology or discourse of globalism, upon which globalization as a ‘social fact’ or social ontology depends, is rapidly receding in the face of the resurgence of nationalism, ethnicity, religious fundamentalism and geo-politics (Saul 2005). As Rosenberg concludes, the current conjuncture demonstrates the follies of globalization theory not to mention just how far its proponents misread and misunderstood the 1990s period in the context of world historical development (Rosenberg 2005). The rapidity of the slide ‘backwards’ towards an increasingly deglobalized world demonstrates not only the intellectual bankruptcy of globalization as description, explanation and ideology but also paradoxically that “globalization” did not even exist’(Rosenberg 2005: 65).

Post-globalism, on the whole, does not mourn the passing of globalization. On the contrary, for many, but admittedly not all, of its adherents it constitutes a welcome return to grounded or immanent critique, to understanding both the real possibilities and real obstacles to the construction of a better world. For those of a
historical materialist persuasion this requires capturing state power, building a post-capitalist society and developing a progressive internationalism as opposed to the utopia of global democracy; more anti-capitalism perhaps than anti-globalism per se (Tormey 2004). Amongst those of liberal persuasion it means using state power to create the conditions of a more just international order - a form of liberal internationalism. What both share is a commitment to the state as the principal, but not the sole, agent of social and political progress, or building a better world from the inside out rather than the outside in.

**Critical globalism**

Although it spans a diverse set of literatures critical globalism is perhaps best described as encompassing that ‘engaged’ scholarship which takes globalization seriously because it is constitutive of new global structures and systems of transnational domination (Mittleman 2000; Rupert and Solomon 2005; Gill 2003; Hardt and Negri 2000; Eschele 2005; Petersen 2004). As such, critical globalist scholarship not only acknowledges the ways in which the organization and exercise of social power is being radically extended and transnationalized by the social forces of globalization but also how, in the process, new subjectivities and transnational collectivities of resistance are formed. Variously referred to as the ‘global matrix’, ‘global market civilization’ or ‘Empire’, a new globalized social formation is held to be in the making which, according to critical globalist theory, requires new ways of thinking about and acting in the world (James and Nairn 2005; Gill 2003; Hardt and Negri 2000). Issuing principally from first and fourth wave theorizing it draws upon critical theory, poststructural and post-Marxist scholarship to understand the making and unmaking of these new globalized forms of domination as well as the possibilities for their remaking or progressive transformation.

Amongst the more influential of this scholarship is the work of Hardt and Negri. In *Empire* they theorize and explain the emergence of a historically unique form of global domination with globalization at its core. Though they refer to this as ‘Empire’ it is distinguished from classic imperialism:

By ‘Empire,’ . . . we understand something altogether different from ‘imperialism’. . . . Imperialism was really an extension of the sovereignty of the European nation-states beyond their own boundaries. . . . In contrast to imperialism, Empire establishes no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers. It is a decentered and deteritorializing apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers . . . (Hardt and Negri 2000: Introduction)

Central to the making of Empire, they argue, are processes of globalization which they consider enduring rather than contingent. These same processes, however, engender projects of transnational resistance which create the social basis for alternative globalizations in opposition to the totalizing logic of Empire:

The passage to Empire and its processes of globalization offer new possibilities to the forces of liberation. Globalization, of course, is not one thing, and the multiple
processes that we recognize as globalization are not unified or univocal. Our political task, we will argue, is not simply to resist these processes but to reorganize them and redirect them toward new ends. The creative forces of the multitude that sustain Empire are also capable of autonomously constructing a counter-Empire, an alternative political organization of global flows and exchanges. The struggles to contest and subvert Empire, as well as those to construct a real alternative, will thus take place on the imperial terrain itself—indeed, such new struggles have already begun to emerge . . . (Hardt and Negri 2000: Introduction)

Hardt and Negri’s ‘Empire’ has much in common with Gill’s neo-Gramscian account of the hegemony of a globalized capitalist order (Gill 2003). Both consider globalization as a historically distinctive mode of domination which is not only economic but cultural, social, ideological and political. Both also emphasize the highly contested nature of this domination articulated in diverse local and transnational struggles of resistance and recognition, from the Zapatistas in Mexico to the World Social Forum, which constitute the solidarist networks of alternative globalizations.

Agency, subjectivity and social struggle are thus vital expository concepts in the critical globalist lexicon. As Evans, amongst many others, observes, globalization has been associated with the emergence of a globalized contentious politics in which local and global struggles are conjoined since ‘the defence of difference and quests for local power require global strategies and connections, likewise transnational social movements must have local social roots’ (Evans 2005: 7). These alternative globalizations, which are not necessarily progressive, partly reflect both the rise of identity politics and global consciousness constituting new subjectivities, or ways of thinking about and acting in the world. The sources of alternative globalizations are thus to be located not simply in distributional struggles but also in struggles over recognition, whether of indigenous peoples or gender discrimination. This ‘globalization from below’ perspective focuses attention on the significance of individual and collective agency, from fair trade consumerism to G8 protests, in the making and remaking of global society.

In certain respects, as with the transformationalists, there is an assumption that, irrespective of its particular form, globalization per se is integral to (post)modernity or (post)modern social life. Corporate globalization is neither its sole face nor is it inevitably hegemonic. Nor is globalization per se inherently malign but rather harbours, as in the multitude, progressive potential. The principal normative and political question is whether and how that potential is to be realized. In this regard critical globalism resists the valorization of any singular normative vision of ethical globalization or its institutionalization, whether global democracy or a post-capitalist order, in favour of a radical pluralism, that is the positive prospect of a multiplicity of alternative globalizations (Tormey 2004).

**Glocalism**

Contrary to the claims of Rosenberg, globalization theory has far from colonized the human sciences. Indeed poststructuralism has encouraged a shift away from macro-social analysis to a concern with the particular, the local and the micro-social.
Glocalist scholarship takes this shift seriously. It seeks to problematize the local–global complex rather than a priori to assert, or presume, the causal primacy of either or to conceive them in a structurally contradictory relationship. In simple terms glocalist analysis, which inherits much from third and fourth wave thinking, takes both globalization and localization seriously without necessarily privileging either in explanations of the social. Holton refers to this as ‘methodological glocalism’ because it is an approach whose ‘defining characteristic...is to observe the interpenetration of the two [local and global]’ and to ‘recognize the co-existence and inter-relations between these various layers of social life’ acknowledging that such inter-relations ‘are not necessarily corrosive or incompatible’ since ‘the global and the national or local may under certain circumstances depend on each other’ (Holton 2005: 191). Glocalist scholarship charts via media between the divergent approaches of ‘methodological globalism’ and ‘methodological nationalism’ which inform much contemporary social theory.

Some of the more influential work in this genre is located within cultural studies, anthropology, social and urban geography. Brenner, for example, argues that capitalism has always operated at different spatial scales, from the local to the global, but that the restructuring of capitalism in the 1990s brought with it a more complex spatiality (Brenner 2004). Social relations increasingly are articulated and rearticulated simultaneously across a multiplicity of spatial scales, from the sub-local to the local, national, transnational, regional and global. Thus much of the work on global cities illuminates how they are simultaneously local, national, transnational, regional and global centres of power (Smith 2001; Taylor 1995). Rather than conceiving this multiplicity of spatial scales as necessarily organized in a hierarchical or contradictory fashion Brenner argues that they are mutually constitutive (Brenner 2004). By this he does not mean that the global and local can simply be dissolved into one another, for they retain their distinctive forms, but rather that explanation of one necessarily requires an account of the other. Brenner’s work is a critique of that globalization scholarship which privileges any particular spatial scale: in other words that suggests social relations are becoming increasingly deterritorialized, denationalized or alternatively regionalized or nationalized. On the contrary, he argues, the multiplicity of spatial scales are relational not containers of social relations. Territory still matters but not in the way in which it is conventionally theorized – as deterritorialization or reterritorialization. Within this spatial matrix state power and sovereignty may be far from being eroded by globalization but is being restructured and rearticulated across a multiplicity of spatial scales.

Similar arguments are made in many studies of cultural globalization. Whereas much first wave thinking about globalization associated it with cultural convergence or homogenization – McDonaldization – second wave thinking emphasized its polarizing dynamics in strengthening traditional identities and leading to the resurgence of nationalism and ethnicity (Ritzer 1995; Barber 1996). By contrast, Hannerz and Appadurai, amongst others, have argued that it is associated with cultural hybridization, fusion or creolism (Hannerz 1992; Appadurai 1998). Stressing the social construction, rather than primordial origins, of individual and collective identity, they point to ways in which local and global cultural resources are conjoined in the production of new kinds of identities and cultural imaginings, from the self-identification of Irish-Americans to the indigenization of world religions.
explain these processes of cultural hybridization requires moving beyond the antinomies of the global and the local to a recognition of their mutual imbrication.

Recognition of the complexity and contingency of this mutual imbrication informs the normative thinking of much glocalist scholarship. Although it is animated by a concern to identify the structures and processes of domination which range in, across and through societies it necessarily rejects the crude binary division of the global as the principal source of domination and the local as the principal source of resistance or emancipation. Transnational domination, as with the politics of resistance, is constituted through complex interrelationships between the local and global. This produces a scepticism both towards visions of an ethical globalization, with its emphasis both upon the remaking of global institutions, and towards unqualified faith in the politics of resistance, namely Hardt and Negri’s ‘multitude’ (2004). Some emphasize the significance of the new localism through which regimes of urban governance harness local, national and global social forces to the realization of progressive social purposes (Smith 2001; Brenner 2004). Others the new (global) regionalism which, Hettne argues, provides a cooperative framework for states to manage collectively their engagement with the world economy in socially progressive ways (Hettne 2000). And others still, strategies of autonomous development as articulated by the Zapatista movement which Olesen notes relies upon ‘a growing imbrication of local, national and transnational levels of interaction rather than their increasing disconnection’ (Olesen 2005: 54). As with critical globalism, there is no singular normative vision of a better world only an aspiration for ‘a world in which many worlds fit’ (Olesen 2005: 12).

**ONE GLOBALIZATION OR MANY?**

These distinctive ways of thinking about globalization represent general modes of analysis in the existing literature, rather than discrete theories. They differ as discussed in respect of their substantive and normative interpretations of globalization. This does not mean, however, that at some level they are necessarily incommensurable or incompatible. But the disagreements between them are significant for they arise from disagreements about matters of social ontology, epistemology and theory (both explanatory and normative).

Much of the controversy about globalization, and its consequences, is a disagreement about whether or not it represents a valid or convincing social ontology: a description of a really existing condition. Thus for Rosenberg and others such as Hirst and Thompson, globalization is a highly misleading description of contemporary social reality (Rosenberg 2005; Hirst and Thompson 1999). It distorts and misinterprets social reality since it posits a world in which social relations transcend states and societies, whether as Empire or the global market, when the actuality is that the world remains organized into territorially bounded capitalist societies. If globalization means anything more than simply interdependence between societies, it is more prescription rather than accurate description. Only to the extent, as Hay suggests, that globalization is an important idea or dominant discourse does it constitute a really existing condition (Hay 2004). By contrast, much contemporary social theory accepts, implicitly or explicitly, that it is, both materially and
discursively, a principal facet, if not the dominant feature, of the contemporary human condition. Whilst its significance and impact on societies may be debated its existence is both undeniable and enduring. In part this is because, moving beyond the economism which informs the more sceptical position, globalization – and by definition social ontology – tends to be conceived more expansively not just simply in terms of market globalism or the social relations of production. Rather than economic globalization *per se* emphasis is placed upon multiple globalizations, from the cultural to the criminal, the corporate to the religious. This more Weberian approach engenders a focus upon the multiple ways in which globalization pervades social existence, not just in terms of abstract systems binding people's material fate together, whether in finance or trade, but also with respect to the life world. Globality, as the consciousness or awareness of the global, many argue, is an important aspect of the contemporary life world in so far as it constitutes a social imaginary, that is, how people locate themselves and act in the world.

Discussion of social ontology necessarily connects to matters of epistemology, or the meta-theories of knowledge and explanation. Controversies about many substantive questions, from whether globalization is good or bad for the poor, or whether it encourages cultural homogeneity or heterogeneity, are infused with epistemological questions. Different aspects of globalization appear to lend themselves to different forms of social enquiry, from the econometric studies of its causal links with world inequality, to the post-positivist studies of its discursive construction. This divide between the broadly orthodox, fallibilist or historicist social science and post-positivist, hermeneutic epistemologies is highly significant. It is not just that there is simply (ontological) disagreement about whether globalization is a historical or social fact but that there is also (epistemological) disagreement about what constitutes valid knowledge of globalization in the first instance. Since there can be no objective resolution of this problem aspirations for a singular theory of globalization are likely to remain unrealized. It is also why there is effectively no globalization *debate* – since this implies the possibility of shared judgment – but rather enduring deliberation. This is intellectually uncomfortable although it demonstrates the importance of identifying whether disagreement is of a substantive or epistemological kind.

Arguably the most critical sources of disagreement are theoretical. Globalization theory as such does not exist. Rather, for the most part, it has been incorporated into the explanatory frameworks of existing social theory, both as explanans and explanandum, from historical materialism to postmodernism. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that there are competing, if not contradictory, readings of its causal powers, the significance of agency, dialectics and social transformation. Many discussions of globalization confuse cause and effect, that is, whether it is the phenomenon doing the work of explanation (the explanans) or alternatively that which is the object of explanation (the explanandum). Tendencies to elide the two, such that the social phenomenon to which globalization refers become effectively its causes, are clearly problematic. However, the real issue which courts disagreement is not the inversion of explanans and explanandum, on which there is probably general agreement, but rather whether globalization is essentially *epiphenomenal*. If, as historical materialist accounts argue, it is solely the consequence of the expansionary logic of capitalist societies, then it has no independent causal powers, that is, it
is clearly epiphenomenal. By contrast much of the work on globalization disagrees fundamentally with this line of reasoning, including most other neo-Marxist and Weberian historical sociological analyses. These argue instead that globalization, whatever its underlying causes, has systemic or emergent properties which make it causally significant, rather than simply epiphenomenal, in effect it structures social action or social change. This interpretation shares much in common with those historical materialist or historical sociology accounts of imperialism which conceive it as a product of capitalist logics but also nevertheless causally significant.

At least some of the tension between different interpretations of globalization is attributable to embedded conceptions of structure and agency. To the extent that, as with world systems theory or neoliberalism, globalization is understood in primarily economistic or technological terms it appears inevitable and irresistible: a structural imperative of capitalist or technological development. Within such accounts agency, institutions or cultural difference tend to be undervalued leading to overly deterministic explanations which have some implicit teleology of global convergence, or a singular modernity. By contrast much second and third wave thinking, as noted, has contributed to a greater focus on agency and the making, or unmaking, of globalization. This is not a return to voluntarism but on the contrary draws upon the idea of structuration to explain globalization as both structure and process, as a social phenomenon that is both constructed and reproduced through human agency (Scholte 2000). This leads to a recognition of the contingency of globalization, its potential limits, and the significance of agency, ideas and institutions to mediating and shaping its impact. Rather than global convergence it implies a more dialectical understanding of the world: one which emphasizes simultaneous integration and fragmentation, convergence and divergence, particularism and universalism, and localism and globalism. It also brings to the fore the idea of alternative and multiple globalisms whilst highlighting the multiple scales at which both local and global processes operate. However, for those of a more structuralist persuasion the extent to which difference prevails over the convergent pressures of globalization, whether in respect of different national capitalisms or resurgent cultures, is powerful evidence of its social limits and limited explanatory power. This underdetermination of theories of globalization remains in part rooted in different meta-conceptions of agency and structure.

Some of the fiercest disagreements about contemporary globalization concern the invocation of epochal change: that it represents a profound organizational shift in the spatio-temporal constitution of modern societies and world order. Whether understood as the emergence of a global informational capitalism, the global market civilization, the post-Westphalian world order or the new global complexity, there is, as noted, a powerful tendency in the existing literature to emphasize its epochal nature. This remains deeply contested, as discussed earlier, by a range of work which points to the continuing significance of territory, the state, endogenous forces of change and the general overselling of globalization and its historical novelty. What is at issue in these disagreements are not just substantive matters of empirics and historical interpretation but differing theoretical conceptions of conjunctural and epochal social change. Whereas historical materialists calibrate epochal change principally by reference to transformations in the organization of production those of a neo-Weberian persuasion do so with reference to the multiple domains of social
production and reproduction, including the economic, the cultural, the political and so on. Put simply the differences can be construed in terms of restrictive or expansive criteria of epochal change. Of course these are only given meaning in the context of some broader theory of social change. In this respect differences of interpretation are not just matters of empirics but also importantly theorization. Theories of social change influenced by an economism or alternatively post-positivism, tend to produce rather different assessments of the transformative potential and impact of globalization. But even where economism dominates, as in historical materialist and liberal accounts of the global, significant differences arise because of very different theoretical and also normative commitments. Normative assumptions and outlooks, as discussed above, have a central role in shaping academic controversies about globalization.

Amongst the most significant normative debates is that between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism. Although best thought of as a normative continuum, in so far as both are tendencies not absolutes, there remain sufficient principled differences between both to suggest the distinction remains useful. Whilst there are many variants of cosmopolitanism, nevertheless it embodies a general tendency, which though critical of market globalization accepts some notion of its perfectibility or the possibility of constructing alternative globalisms for progressive ends. By contrast much communitarian thinking is sceptical of globalization because of its universalizing tendencies and therefore doubts its assumed perfectibility or its progressive potential emphasizing instead an ethical preference for difference, diversity, the local and self-determination. Of course the same ideological and post-ideological continuum can be grafted onto this binary divide, highlighting the significance of grand visions versus multiple possibilities within both ethical camps. Thus ideas of cosmopolitan democracy – the democratization of globalization – share ethical ground with radical notions of alternative globalizations but both differ radically in their understanding of whether a better world is to be designed or to emerge out of ethical and political struggle. Similarly, despite common ethical outlooks, there are important differences between statism and communitarianism (see Figure 1.3). Since all explanatory theories of globalization are implicitly, if not explicitly, normative, disagreement about its essential nature is, in part at least, often rooted in different ethical outlooks. Indeed the most contentious aspect of the study of contemporary globalization concerns the ethical and the political: whether it hinders or assists the pursuit of a better world and whether that better world should be defined by cosmopolitan or communitarian principles or both?

THE POLITICS OF GLOBALIZATION: REFORM, RESISTANCE OR REVOLUTION?

Beyond the academy, the struggle for globalization’s soul finds its most visible expression in the annual summits of the World Social Forum, the critics of corporate globalization, and the World Economic Forum – the elite defenders of cosmopolitan capitalism. Porto Alegre and Davos have become symbols of the ‘clash of globalizations’, a contest of ideas and projects for forging very different worlds. In the media
this is largely represented as a clash between elite globalizers and the people’s anti-
globalizers but, as most studies conclude, this is a significant misrepresentation. At
its core the politics of globalization is shaped by the contest between the advocates
of capitalism and a liberal world order and those who seek a world order ‘within
which many worlds are possible’. It is in crude terms principally a clash between
the social forces of globalizing capitalism and those of anti-capitalism. It is, too, a
historic political development in an age in which ‘bowling alone’ is the dominant
metaphor since it brings collective agency ‘back in’ and opens up social imaginaries
to the possibility that ‘other worlds’ might indeed be desirable, if not necessary.

To the extent that globalization is the foil for capitalism much of the rhetoric
and politics of capitalism/anti-capitalism revolves around globalization. It draws,
too, in complex and often inconsistent ways, upon academic controversies about
globalization such that in significant ways these have become overlapping dis-
courses. As studies of the anti-capitalist movement conclude, the organizing master
frame of ideas which binds these disparate causes together is opposition to the
Washington Consensus as the modernizing project of global capital (Ayres 2004).
The liberalizing and free market logic of the Washington Consensus is conceived as
extending the reach and reproducing the power of a globalizing capitalist order, a
system of domination which is responsible for growing global poverty, inequality
and the extinction of alternative and sustainable ‘ways of life’. This juggernaut of
globalizing capitalist modernity, far from benign as the liberals might have it, is
structurally malign. By contrast, the advocates of global capitalism consider it the
sole route to a more prosperous, stable and democratic world in which different
ways of life remain quite possible.

What is at stake in this political contest is of vital importance to humanity, for
it is nothing less than a struggle over the trajectory of global development: put
simply, over who rules, on whose terms, by what means and for what purposes.
Central to this is the issue of whether globalization can or should be made good or better: whether it can be made to serve human interests and wider social objectives as well as economic efficiency, or whether alternative post-global, post-capitalist futures are both necessary and more desirable. In this respect the political contest cuts across the traditional left–right and red–green divides, bringing together unlikely allies, of reds, greens and blues on both sides of the globalization/post-globalization fracture. Thus in the 1999 Seattle demonstrations, which influenced the collapse of the WTO talks, environmentalists, trade unionists and protectionists protested together against trade liberalization whilst corporate leaders, social democratic politicians and global social justice campaigners sought to defend it. This illustrates the remarkably complex and heterogeneous social composition of the various constituencies in this political contest which is interpreted by some as delineating a new kind of globalized contentious politics transcending the conventional political categories of left, right, green and red/blue. Moreover, whilst there remain avid defenders of a Hayekian free market globalized capitalism or alternatively the radical re-localization of social life, increasingly the locus of contention has come to revolve around the questions of how contemporary globalization can be regulated, transformed or alternative globalizations pursued, as opposed to an \textit{a priori} rejection or unqualified advocacy of its current form. Thus Joseph Stiglitz, one time arch-defender of the Washington Consensus, now advocates its greater regulation, whilst Subcommandante Marcos of the Chiapas Zapatista movement calls for alternative globalizations. Constructing the politics of globalization, as with the academic controversy, in terms of adversarial pro- and anti-globalization factions is no longer convincing.

One way to envisage this contentious politics of globalization is to draw on the earlier distinctions between cosmopolitan and communitarian, and ideological and post-ideological thinking. Figure 1.4 locates some of the more significant political
projects or constituencies according to their underlying cosmopolitan or communitarian sensibilities and the extent to which they coalesce around a singular institutionalized vision of a better world (ideological) or seek ‘merely to establish that worlds other than the neoliberal variety are possible’ (post-ideological) (Tormey 2004: 167). These projects differ not only in substantive terms but also with respect to their radicalism, from reform to rejection, and political strategies, from lobbying to protest. Here the focus is necessarily limited to a brief overview of the broad projects which define the parameters of the current politics of globalization rather than a detailed survey of its myriad constituencies.

Market globalists defend neoliberal globalization but in qualified ways whilst recognizing that it has to be, by necessity, rule-governed (Wolf 2004; Bhagwati 2004). Rather than simply the triumph of markets they advocate essential but limited global and national regulation, the social embedding of markets, as well as differential integration of poorer countries into the global economy. In many respects such thinking informs the emerging post-Washington Consensus. By contrast reformist globalists, as with the transformationalists discussed above, seek in varying degrees to regulate or reconstruct globalization primarily through global institutional change or its transformation. This encompasses both notions of incremental reform, making the global governance complex more transparent and sensitive to the needs of the world’s most needy, and the advocacy of global social democracy, the fundamental transformation of global institutions in order to realize a more just and democratic world order (Held 2004). Whilst the motivations of reformists may be admired, those of a more radical persuasion remain sceptical of the possibilities of authentic reform because of the problem of cooptation – of being socialized into the values and logics of the ‘system’. This leads to greater emphasis upon projects of resistance, to the activities of both global governance institutions and global corporations, but also to constructing alternative networks of transnational solidarity, of promoting alternative globalisms to the dominant neoliberal variety. Such ideas are effectively rooted in a cosmopolitanism from below rather than, as with the reformers, from above. In its more revolutionary expressions it leads to the advocacy, drawing upon neo-Gramscian Marxism, of a counter-hegemonic global politics which emphasizes the construction of broad coalitions of globalization’s discontented confronting and eroding from without the institutional and ideological legitimacy of market globalism. It is a project for the democratization of global and national governance from without, rather than from within, and it seeks not the regulation of global capital but its transformation towards a post-capitalist world order.

Although the notion of a counter-hegemonic politics finds resonance amongst many radical critics of capitalism some remain convinced that its principal focus should remain the national in so far as the levers of global power remain firmly rooted within states, or at least the most powerful states. Thus for many of a radical or reformist persuasion ‘capturing’ the state, as an instrument for realizing progressive social change, is both the proper and more convincing response to the challenges of globalization. Moreover, it provides the institutional platform for creating more progressive forms of multilateralism and global governance. And for some, since capitalism remains essentially national capitalism, it is the only realistic political strategy for constructing not just a better world but a post-capitalist world.
Interestingly, those constituencies of a more conservative persuasion also advocate a stronger focus on state power but principally to protect the ‘nation’ from the modernizing and corrosive consequences of globalization from without. This leads to an emphasis upon protectionism, deglobalization and a form of neo-mercantilism which prioritizes national autonomy over other values or obligations.

Finally, there are those constituencies which are somewhat distrustful of both the idea that the state can, or should, be the primary locus of governance in a globalizing world and of vesting power with remote global institutions. Accordingly, many politicians and civil society groups across the globe advocate forms of suprastate regionalism as a political strategy for combining effective collective governance of globalizing forces with the decentralization of power away from global institutions (Schirm 2002). This new regionalism has become increasingly significant especially beyond the Western core of the global order. In large part this is because it is conceived as the basis for a multicentric or pluralistic world order in which different versions of the good life simultaneously can be nurtured whilst coexisting with each other in a globalizing world (Amin 1997). In contrast, others – most especially from within the environmental movement – advocate a much more radical decentralization of power away from the global and national to localities and communities. This resonates with notions of autonomism, of the recovery of local and communal self-determination, whether at the city or neighbourhood level. It reflects an incipient desire for the deglobalization of social life although it is not necessarily incompatible with notions of alternative globalisms.

As this brief discussion has attempted to demonstrate, the politics of globalization is more complex than the simple popularized versions of the antimony of ‘pro and anti’ factions. It embodies both progressive and reactionary forces. It is this complexity which has in many respects confounded those who argued that, in the wake of 9/11, the ‘anti-globalization’ movement would wither away. Not only has this not transpired but on the contrary the contentious politics of globalization has been reignited by the prosecution of the ‘global war on terror’ and the resurgence of global justice as the political terrain on which that contention is mobilized. Whether this contentious politics ultimately proves a progressive or reactionary force remains to be realized. Historical studies of contentious politics suggest that for progressive change to be successful requires, in the first instance, a growing recognition that the world could be otherwise, that the future is more contingent than predictable, that agency, collective or otherwise, does matter (Tilly 2004). If this is the only achievement of progressive forces today that in itself may prove, as with earlier struggles for democracy, a significant but enduring development in the politics of globalization (Tormey 2004).

**CONCLUSION: A POST-MORTEM FOR GLOBALIZATION?**

This chapter has sought to explain why globalization is the source of so much contention within and beyond the academy. In so doing it has identified and elaborated some of the principal contending modes of analysis and how these are inflected in the current contentious politics of globalization. It has argued throughout that the academic and political disagreements concerning globalization no longer, if they
ever did, coalesce around polarized arguments or factions captured by the labels ‘pro’ and ‘anti’. On the contrary the controversies are far more nuanced and complex reflecting, in part, differences of an ontological, epistemological, theoretical and normative kind. Not all take globalization seriously either as explanans or explanandum, and even amongst those that do there exist competing interpretations of its sources, consequences and dynamics. Moreover, the contentious politics of globalization transcends not only orthodox political alignments but also the crude ‘pro’ and ‘anti’ labelling. Radical critics of corporate globalization often defend alternative forms of globalization whilst national capital often advocates deglobalization.

To understand why globalization is so contested, what is at stake, and the underlying sources of disagreement requires moving beyond the metaphor of debate to that of the web metaphor of a multi-logue, a conversation between multiple differently situated – spatially and epistemically – participants. To this extent globalization, whether real or imaginary, has been associated, for good or ill, with a powerful renaissance of social and political theorizing as well as social and political activism. For these reasons alone it is likely to remain, for the foreseeable future, a fiercely contested idea within and outside the academy.

References


