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Globalization: The Global Village

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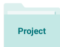

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1 Globalization: The Global Village

1.1 Introduction

The term 'globalization' is used so freely by politicians and activists, journalists and academics, that it has become rather over-familiar. However, if one had never heard of it before and was asked to imagine what it might mean, one might come up with a simple enough definition. One would surely look at how the word is constructed – it ends in '-ization', suggesting a *process* or a *transformation* of some kind, so surely it means the *process of becoming global*.

That might seem fair enough, but what actually would it *mean* to 'be' global? What indicators are there to measure the extent of such a transformation – to ascertain how 'global' something is? Again, the answer, perhaps surprisingly, would be relatively simple: it would involve the extent to which the subject of the transformation – be it a corporation's marketing strategy, a television programme, an individual's lifestyle or identity, or pretty much anything else – can relate directly to the globe, unmediated by the nation-state.

Such a definition is curious, perhaps, because it allows us to conceptualize the process of 'globalization' at multiple levels. The globalization, for example, of *me as a person* would involve the extent to which I am connected directly to this 'globe as a single place', perhaps because I relate to it in respect of my identity-construction, seeing myself as a 'citizen of the world' rather than of any nation-state, or because I act in such a way as to recognize this relationship – maybe I am an active member of the global environmental movement, maybe I spend a lot of time travelling, maybe I have a family or friendship network which spans the globe but with which I am in immediate and constant contact. But the globalization of me as a person hardly constitutes a significant global shift. It is important then to distinguish between globalization as a generic process which can apply to anything or anyone, and *the globalization of the world* – that is, the extent to which the world itself is becoming global. That is not a particularly easy concept to grasp.

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In this chapter, then, we are taking a very specific definition of globalization – as the process of becoming global – and distinguishing such a process from the alternative models of global change with which it is often confused. As Robbie Robertson says:

> [G]lobalization is … about human interconnections that have assumed global proportions and transformed themselves. If we focus on globalization simply as a modern strategy for power, we will miss its historical and social depths. Indeed, the origins of globalization lie in interconnections that have slowly enveloped humans since the earliest times, as they globalized themselves. In this sense, globalization as a human dynamic has always been with us, even if we have been unaware of its embrace until recently. Instead we have viewed the world more narrowly through the spectacles of religion, civilization, nation or race. Today these old constructs continue to frustrate the development of a global consciousness of human interconnections and their dynamism. (R. T. Robertson 2003: 3)

The key dynamics at play here are global *interconnectedness* and global *consciousness*. Although he does not make any such link explicitly, he could easily be citing his namesake, the sociologist Roland Robertson, who previously presented us with what subsequently became the most commonly used academic definition of globalization:

> Globalization as a concept refers to both the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole. The processes and actions to which the concept of globalization now refers have been proceeding, with some interruptions, for many centuries, but the main focus of the discussion of globalization is on relatively recent times. In so far as that discussion is closely linked to the contours and nature of modernity, globalization refers quite clearly to recent developments … But it is necessary to emphasize that globalization is not equated with or seen as a direct consequence of an amorphously conceived modernity. (R. Robertson 1992: 8)

So, for both Roland Robertson and Robbie Robertson (forgive us for this potentially confusing coincidence!) globalization involves twin processes: the physical process of interconnectedness, or 'compression', which implies that the world is getting smaller; and the awareness that we as individuals have of our relationship to the world as a single place. Both writers also emphasize that such a process has a very long-term history – and this seems perfectly reasonable, given that it refers to an evolutionary process of *becoming* rather than an actual state of affairs.

However, both also acknowledge that events and occurrences associated with 'modernity' have had a huge impact upon this long-term process. Other writers treat 'globalization' as an extension of or a consequence of

Table 1.1 The five phases of globalization

Phase	Characteristics
Phase I: The Germinal Phase (Europe: early 15th c- mid-18th c)	Growth of national communities; expanding scope of the Catholic church; accentuation of concepts of the individual and of ideas about humanity; heliocentric theory of the world and beginning of modern geography; spread of Gregorian calendar
Phase II: The Incipient Phase (mainly Europe: mid-18th century–1870s)	Sharp shift towards the idea of the homogeneous, unitary state; crystallization of conceptions of formalized international relations, of standardized citizenly individuals and a more concrete conception of humankind; sharp increases in legal conventions and agencies concerned with international and transnational regulation and communication; international exhibitions; beginning of problem of 'admission' of non-European societies to 'international society'; thematization of nationalism–internationalism issue
Phase III: The Take-Off Phase (1870s–1920s)	Formalization of the problematic relationship between national societies, individuals, 'international society' and humankind; early thematization of the 'problem of modernity'; increasing global conceptions of 'acceptable' national society; thematization of ideas concerning national and personal identities; inclusion of a number of non-European societies in 'international society'; international formalization and attempted implementation of ideas about humanity; globalization of immigration restriction; sharp increase in number and speed of global forms of communication; first 'international novels'; rise of ecumenical movement; development of global competitions (e.g., Olympics, Nobel prizes); implementation of world time and near-global adoption of Gregorian calendar; First World War
Phase IV: The Struggle-for-Hegemony Phase (1920s–60s)	Establishment of the League of Nations and then the United Nations; establishment of principle of national independence; conflicting conceptions of modernity (Allies vs Axis), followed by Cold War (conflict within 'the modern project'); nature of and prospects for humanity sharply focused by the Holocaust and use of the atomic bomb; crystallization of the Third World
Phase V: The Uncertainty Phase (1960s–90s?)	Moon landing; accentuation of 'post-materialist' values; end of Cold War and rise of the problem of 'rights'; widespread access to nuclear and thermonuclear weaponry; increasing number of global institutions and movements; sharp acceleration in means of global communication; societies increasingly facing problems of multiculturality and polyethnicity; conceptions of individuals rendered more complex by gender, sexual, ethnic and racial considerations; civil rights becomes a global issue; more fluid international system and end of bipolarity; enhanced concern with humankind as a species-community, particularly via environmental movements; interest in world civil society and world citizenship in spite of the 'ethnic revolution'; consolidation of global media system; Islam as a deglobalizing/reglobalizing movement; Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro

Source: Robertson (1992: 58–9).

modernity, industrialization and capitalism (Giddens 1990; Sklair 1991, 2002). Still others see it as a process which ushers in the *end* of the modern age (Albrow 1996). These distinctions, large and small, will be addressed in this chapter.

One of the clearest attempts to produce a general mapping of globalization across recent history has been offered by Roland Robertson (1992: 58–9). His useful sequencing of five 'phases' is re-presented below in tabular form for the convenience of the reader, although much of the wording is verbatim:

Much could be done to develop this model, and of course to update it (not least in the light of the events of 11 September 2001, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the 'war on terror', plus the global financial crisis). What remains useful, and interesting, about it is that it presents globalization in gradual rather than absolute terms, as a process involving real human experiences. In Robertson's mapping, the world becomes increasingly interconnected and thus 'smaller' because of a growing consciousness of it, while at the same time our consciousness of it is enhanced because it is becoming increasingly interconnected and compressed. In other words, globalization as a generic process and the globalization of the world are intertwined processes.

1.2 Compression: the growing interconnectedness of the world

Robbie Robertson's (2003) historical account of globalization claims that, while the drive to interconnectedness is as old as human civilization, the beginnings of a *global* interconnectedness can be traced to around 1500 AD, to the early mappings of the world, early European imperialism and the opening up of new trade markets. This, he says, is the 'first wave' of globalization. The 'second wave' emerged around 1800 and its catalyst was the industrial revolution, while its politics were driven by high imperialism. The 'third wave' is the wave of American globalism, beginning in around 1945, after the Second World War left much of Europe devastated and paved the way for the United States to emerge as the world's dominant power.

At a theoretical level, the concept of global interconnectedness is closely allied to the perspective of systems theory, as in the contributions of John Burton to the study of international relations and Niklas Luhmann to the discipline of sociology. Systems theory derives in part from the structural-functional analysis which was prevalent in the social sciences in the 1950s, the chief theoretician of which was Talcott Parsons, the eminent Harvard sociology professor. Across a series of publications Parsons provided a detailed blueprint for analyzing society in systemic terms. Society – and bear in mind that this tended to equate to *nation-state* society – was viewed in holistic terms, as a single entity comprised of multiple component parts, each of which performed a function that ensured the smooth continuation of the

wider whole. Component institutions such as the education system, the political system, religion and the family, for instance, were defined by the role they played in satisfying necessary 'functional prerequisites'.

Structural-functionalism faded from the scene during the 1960s, as a new generation of scholars felt that its vision of society was static and conservative. For some critics, it was seen as too holistic, incapable of appreciating human experiences and motivations. For others, it was too consensus-oriented, presenting an image of the 'ideal' and fully functioning system as one of equilibrium, from which was derived the idea that any deviations from this – crime, poverty, unemployment and other such 'social problems' – resulted from some systemic malfunction and could be 'fixed' in much the same way that an illness of the body can be treated, or a broken machine can be repaired. Even more damning, perhaps, was the suggestion made by more radical scholars that the 'ideal' society presented by the structural-functionalists mirrored modern, industrial, capitalist, Western society. This was most apparent in 'modernization theory', which emerged from structural-functionalism. Modernization theory carried an often-implicit assumption that Western industrial societies represented a 'higher' stage of development to which 'under-developed' countries should aspire, and that international institutions should seek to boost the infrastructures of such countries to help them achieve such an aspiration. Such problems with modernization theory were highlighted by more radical critics, whose work we will discuss in Chapter 4.

Perhaps as a response to this, modern systems theory emerged from the ashes of structural-functionalism. In 1972 the Australian-born, British-based academic and public policy advisor John W. Burton recognized the importance of general systems theory to study of international relations in his textbook *World Society*, and in doing so explicitly called for an interdisciplinary approach to the subject. Recognizing that the emergence of institutions, problems and experiences that transcend the nation-state level has laid down a gauntlet to the traditional field of *international* relations, Burton proposes that the study of 'world society' is more appropriate because it is 'a much wider study than the relations of units within it' (1972: 19), and such a global perspective would enable us to 'ask questions that are more fundamental and important to civilization, and be able to assess better the relevance of our own national behaviour to the wider world environment' (*ibid*.: 21).

This is precisely the point at which the contributions of the German social theorist Niklas Luhmann come into play. Luhmann studied under Parsons but he grew disenchanted with his mentor's particular take on systems theory. Instead he developed a more theoretically subtle and complex variant which begins with the assertion that a system is defined not just by the functions of its component parts, but also by adaptation to its environment, and, ultimately, by communication. All systemic activity operates as a form of communication, and the system itself is the bordered structure within which this communication takes place. If we assume, following Parsons and traditional systems theory, that a nation-state society is a kind of system, then to speak

of *societies* is effectively to speak of *systems* between which there is little or no communication. As a direct result of functional differentiation, which has defined the process of modernization, 'globalization' becomes, for Luhmann, almost inevitable, in that 'world society' is akin to a 'system of systems' (Luhmann 1990).

Such interconnectedness, read as it often is as a long-term, historical, evolutionary process, forms the objective dimension of the globalization of the world. Its associated subjective dimension, the recognition of the world, is the quality referred to as *globality*.

1.3 Globality: the evolution of global consciousness

As has been discussed, the historian Robbie Robertson distinguishes the history of contemporary globalization according to three 'waves'. The current wave, the phase of American globalism, is a post-1945 phenomenon. What is important to note is that for Robertson, in keeping with those writers who define globalization as a particularly modern thing, there is something quite distinct about this 'third wave':

> Its difference can be summed up in one word that suggests the emergence of something greater than the accident of interconnections. That word is globalism, meaning a conscious process of globalization or a set of policies designed specifically to effect greater global rather than international interactions. (R. T. Robertson 2003: 4)

The *novelty* of this 'globalism' is further explained:

> No such globalism existed under British hegemony in the nineteenth century. Britain rode the forces driving globalization but never pursued strategies designed to engender global relations. Its goals were always nationally or imperially focused. The same might be said of the United States, but its globalism set in place institutions capable, in theory if not in practice, of independently developing global policies. (*Ibid*.)

While much of the actual dynamics of this phase which, for Robbie Robertson, is defined by American globalism will be discussed in Chapter 4, the emergence of globalism as an ideology at the dawn of this phase is central to the thrust of this chapter. Again, this view is shared by Roland Robertson for whom globality is defined as a 'consciousness of [the problem of] the world as a single place' (R. Robertson 1992: 132). Roland Robertson clearly equates the contemporary phase of globalization to a heightening of globality.

In many respects, 'globality' is a far more useful term than 'globalization'. It is certainly more *concrete*. As a process, globalization is fluid, hard to pin down, impossible to observe with any accuracy and thus pretty much

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meaningless from a research point of view. *Globality*, by contrast, is a quality, the quality of being global (Albrow 1996), and thus entirely measurable. Globalization as a general process, applicable to anything, is itself measured according to the amount of globality its subject exhibits. Although so far we have presented it in subjective terms – and it is a subjective quality, in so far as it requires a subject – the subject need not be a person. For example, a corporation can be a subject exhibiting globality through its marketing strategies – Coca-Cola's classic campaign from the 1970s, the one about buying the world a Coke, was clearly aimed at a global audience, and thus consciously designed to sell the drink as a global product. Indeed:

> [Globality] appears increasingly to permeate the affairs of all societies and multitudes of people across the world. This is not simply a matter of an increasing awareness of the challenges of other cultures but also of what is very misleadingly called the 'global village'. In other words, it is not merely the rapid increase in 'knowledge' of global variety ... that is at issue. What we have to acknowledge is that there is clear evidence of an even more direct concern with the theme of globality. (R. Robertson 1992: 132)

Globality, then, is *the* central concept in Roland Robertson's theorization of globalization. It is not unreasonable to say that Roland Robertson has contributed more than anyone to the theorization of globalization as a process (see, for example, R. Robertson 1990, 1992, 1995; Robertson and Chirico 1985; Robertson and Lechner 1985). Influenced by Parsons and in a large part by the classical sociologist Emile Durkheim, Robertson presents a culturalist analysis of globalization which, though originating in pre-modern Europe, has been heightened by modernization such that the second half of the twentieth century has seen a dramatic increase in the *extent* of globality.

It is not difficult to imagine the reasons for this. Robertson himself lists them in his survey of globalizing events during the later 'struggle for hegemony phase' and the 'uncertainty phase'. Following the events of the Second World War, the second half of the twentieth century can be described as an 'age of fatality; an age in which we are made all too aware of our own mortality' (O'Byrne 2003: 101). It may be a bleak observation, but the dropping of the first atomic bomb made possible the realization that the destruction of the world was an empirical possibility rather than just a matter of theology; that one's death might not be a personal event but rather form part of nothing less than the destruction of everything, which is a sobering and wholly globalizing thought. Commentators such as Zygmunt Bauman (1989, 1991), Ulrich Beck (1992), Anthony Giddens (1991) and Darren O'Byrne (2003) have all discussed the extent to which this post-war generation was the first to live with the threat of total destruction, not merely from the bomb but from all manner of 'manufactured risks' (Beck 1992), including global environmental destruction and the spread of AIDS and other globalizing diseases. Is it any wonder that such generations have appeared to abandon the false security

offered by the nation-state, with its machinery of social control and the centralized means of violence rendered increasingly impotent in the face of such globalized threats, in favour of global social movements and campaigns? Environmental activism and a meaningful concept of global citizenship emerge as *very real* responses to the threats such populations face. We will look at these in more detail in the following section.

Biography Box 1: Roland Robertson

Roland Robertson (1938–) made his name as a sociologist of religion and was one of the first sociologists to engage in the international dimensions of culture, with work published in the late 1960s. He was certainly one of the first to use the term 'globalization', in a series of journal articles and most significantly in his 1992 book *Globalization*. He was for many years based at the University of Pittsburgh and is currently Professor of Sociology and Global Society at the University of Aberdeen.

But of course, before moving on from the concept of globality, we must recognize that though the potential for increasing global consciousness most certainly has been facilitated by these (destructive) late-modern tendencies, it is far too sweeping a generalization to talk of the mass emergence of this in practice. Clearly, globality as a quality is far more prevalent in the richer 'core' countries than it is in the poorer 'periphery', and even within the core, it remains a luxury enjoyed more by the cosmopolitan middle classes than by the working classes. We might go so far as to say, following O'Byrne (1997: 76), that globality exists as a form of *cultural capital*, actively encouraged and thus transmitted in some environments but not in others. Globality is a distinctively middle-class form of cultural capital.

1.4 Welcome to the global age?

The globalization of the world, then, entails the growing interconnectedness of its various component parts (people, places and so on) coupled with an increasing awareness on the part of actors (individual, corporate etc.) of the world as a single stage upon which to perform. It was, famously, the Canadian communications professor Marshall McLuhan who popularized the phrase 'the global village' in his 1962 work *The Gutenberg Galaxy*. McLuhan had suggested that the rapid developments in communications technology, allowing the instantaneous flow of information around the world, had made possible the existence of a single, interconnected (but by no means standardized or harmonious) world.

Biography Box 2: Marshall McLuhan

Marshall McLuhan (1911–80) is most famous for introducing the term 'the global village', as well as for his assertion that in an age of new media technology 'the medium is the message'. A Canadian-born communications theorist and professor of English at the University of Toronto for many years, his publications include *The Gutenberg Galaxy* and *Understanding Media*.

Since McLuhan introduced the term, casual commentators have happily made use of it to distinguish the *world of now* from the *world of then*. We have already discussed the extent to which the second half of the twentieth century was characterized by a heightening in both global interconnectedness and globality. Robbie Robertson speaks in historical terms of 'waves of globalization' but makes no claims that these represent distinct periods in broader global history. Roland Robertson identifies the globalizing factors which 'speed up' the process in the twentieth century, but is at pains to point out that these constitute a continuation of past events. Niklas Luhmann sees contemporary 'world society' as a 'system of systems' brought about by hyper-differentiation, but does not take his account down the route of postmodernism or epochal change. Numerous writers, primarily social scientists, have presented alternative accounts, unified in the belief that *to some degree or another* these changes do represent such a qualitatively different experience of the world as to constitute a *break from* the past. Naturally, there are disagreements over the *extent* of this disjuncture.

Two of the more radical statements in this respect have come from Howard Perlmutter (1991) and Martin Albrow (1996). While they have little else in common, both writers see globalization as a distinct and identifiable process ushering in a new period in history – for Perlmutter, the first 'global civilization', for Albrow, the 'global age'. In either case, these terms are used to identify a distinctly new form of society which cuts across nation-state boundaries, and is comprised of a web of transnational connections between people, networks and institutions. It is the result of the intensification of communications and interactions (Luhmann 1990), and of the relative decline in the role of the nation-state, which is replaced by the globe as a single unit of analysis as the key point of reference (Albrow 1996; Burton 1972; Bushrui, Ayman and Laszlo 1993; Modelski 1972; Perlmutter 1991).

Perlmutter's contribution is heavily indebted to postmodern theory (which we will say much more about in Chapter 6). Drawing on what was new terrain when this article was being written, the growing interdependence of the world, Perlmutter argues that not only are we approaching a truly global civilization for the first time in human history, but also, rather worryingly, 'we' (our leaders and our various institutions) are wholly under-prepared for

this transformation. The core factor in this change, according to Perlmutter, is the emergence and increasing significance of a new set of values which are not reducible to 'industrial' or 'de-industrial' values. The actual character of this new civilization is uncertain – at least three possible directions are visible: the trend towards 'homogenizing Westernization' (see Chapters 4 and 5 in this volume), the trend towards 'unbridgeable cultural chasms' (for which, see Chapter 8) and the trend towards 'global dynamic syncretism' (more on which in Chapter 6).

A more theoretically detailed account of this transformation is contained in Martin Albrow's theory of contemporary epochal change. Albrow's work is incredibly wide-ranging in its historical detail, much of which is intended to reintroduce the 'history of epochs', according to which each such epoch is defined according to a core 'project'. Albrow is a sociologist deeply influenced through much of his career by the work of Max Weber, so it is unsurprising to see him turn to Weber in order to locate the central 'project' of the 'modern age'. This, he argues, is the emergence and growing dominance of the centralized nation-state. Weber wrote at length about the extent to which the world in which he lived (the world of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, during which time the discipline of sociology was itself being formalized) was becoming increasingly characterized by the de-humanizing, faceless bureaucracy that accompanies the shifting of certain social relations and means of social control away from the immediate, the local and towards a distant, centralized machinery. Nonetheless, the nation-state was crucial in defining 'modern' progress – it represented the 'centralized means of violence', the machinery of law able to administer and execute an objectively rational and non-arbitrary system of social justice. With the formation of the nation-state as a political-legal institution comes the emergence of international society, as nation-states engage with one another, and through this comes the reinvention of the nation-state as a source of identity. In short, the nation-state is the key dimension of the modern age, the central unit of analysis, the space in which the everyday lives of individuals are acted out and against which they are made meaningful.

As the twentieth century drew to a close, various factors including territorial over-expansion – the 'contradiction of the modern age' – resulted in the de-centring of the nation-state from this core position. The emphasis he places on the declining role of the nation-state is by no means unique to Albrow's theory of globalization. What *is* significant is what this represents – for Albrow, if as Weber suggests the *modern* age is defined by the centrality of the nation-state, then, if the nation-state has been displaced, necessarily the modern age has come to an end. At this point it may be tempting to dismiss Albrow's analysis as an excuse for postmodern theoretical excesses, but Albrow is too clever a writer to fall into such a bottomless pit. Following the history of epochs, then the 'new age' which replaces the 'modern age' has its own distinctiveness, its own logic, its own project. If the postmodernists celebrate the end of modernity at both a substantive and a theoretical level,

Albrow maintains a 'modernist' stance while assessing the character of this *post*-modern epoch. At its core, he argues, is the concept of the globe itself, for all the reasons outlined by the other writers we have covered in this chapter. That being the case, we can refer to the age (or epoch) in which we live as the *global age*.

Biography Box 3: Martin Albrow

Martin Albrow (1937–) has been for many years one of the leading experts on the sociological theories of Max Weber and published extensively in that field until turning his attention to the problem of globalization, undertaking a theoretical project which culminated in the publication of his tome *The Global Age* in 1996. He is founding editor of the journal *International Sociology* and has held professorial posts at Cardiff and Roehampton; he is currently Senior Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Global Governance at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

It is worth bringing in the work of Anthony Giddens (1990) here because he, like Albrow, identifies the contemporary phase of globalization as representing a qualitative shift from earlier modernity. In so far as he identifies the post-war globalism and the rise of communications and information technology as key drivers in this globalizing process, Giddens seems to have much in common with other writers so far discussed. His theorization of the *processes* of globalization is distinct, however: his central concerns are with what he calls 'time-space distanciation' (the separation of the logics of time and space) and 'disembedding' (the decreasing significance of place). Thus, for Giddens, globalization involves our changing relationships with these dimensions – space, place and time. What *results* is the emergence of a *transnational* level, which we will deal with in Chapter 7. It is, however, convenient at this stage to locate Giddens within the context of this section, because while he, like Albrow, clearly sees the current phase as a disjuncture from rather than a continuation of modernity's broader project, and thus stands in opposition to 'long-term process' theorists such as Roland Robertson, Giddens does not go quite so far as Albrow; he is not willing to create such a break with the past as to speak of epochal change. For Giddens, globalization does represent a disjuncture but it is a disjuncture *within* modernity's logic rather than from it. Modernity is defined by Giddens as constituting the inter-relationship of capitalism, industrialization, surveillance and military power. Each of these dimensions is still prominent under contemporary globalized conditions, except in a radically altered form. For Giddens, then, globalization's effect upon modernity is that it 'speeds up' modernity's logic, it takes it to its extreme, like a juggernaut out of control,

and the resulting era can be best described as 'late' or 'reflexive' modernity. Again, we will return to this (and to other aspects of Giddens's writings on the subject, and also those of David Harvey, a major theorist who develops a similar theory of global change which is more Marxist in its orientation) in Chapter 7.

1.5 The practice of global citizenship

We have already introduced the central concept of *globality*, the quality of being global, and stressed that this quality can be exhibited not only by people but by other actors, such as corporations, who commonly make use of it in their marketing strategies. It is also the life-blood of many campaigning organizations, such as those concerned with disarmament, human rights and environmental protection, whose actions are motivated by a concern for the future of the planet regardless of nation-state borders.

The growth of such organizations and the causes they represent has encouraged some commentators to speak of the emergence of a new 'global citizenship'. So popular has this term been in activist, media and educational discourses that it has been rather stripped of its meaning – not unlike the term 'globalization' itself. If, though, we can sift through the rather casual and unsophisticated references to 'global citizenship' commonly used, we might find that a *meaningful* understanding of it provides us with an excellent case study of 'globalization in action'.

First of all, though, we need to make clear what global citizenship is *not*. O'Byrne (2003) makes a strong case for distinguishing global citizenship from what has for centuries been referred to as *world* citizenship by defining the former as 'world citizenship under the influence of globalized conditions' (2003: 118). World citizenship is not new – O'Byrne traces its development across history from Socrates to the Stoics, through the 'religious universalists' of the Middle Ages, to Kant and the 'moral universalists' from whom we get the modern idea of human rights (*ibid*.: 55–67; following Heater 1996). It is also not necessarily *global*. It does involve a recognition of a common humankind, but this recognition might be derived from the pursuit of empire (as with the Roman philosophers), the belief in one people under God (epitomized by Augustinian theology) or by a belief in the presence of abstract universal features of 'human nature' (as espoused by the early Enlightenment theorists and pursued by subsequent human rights scholars).

Global citizenship, by contrast, involves the purposeful intention of acting in a politically meaningful way on the global stage. It involves the construction of a political identity which is borne directly out of an unmediated relationship between the individual and the globe. In effect, it is the

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politicization of globality, and not only is it a pragmatic response to 'real' conditions, but it is also *performative* (Albrow 1996: 178):

> Global citizenship is world citizenship focused on the future of the globe … Global citizens are not ruling the state as Aristotle's citizens did, nor do they have a contractual relationship with it in the manner of modern nation-state citizens. In an important sense they are actually *performing the state*. (Albrow 1996: 177)

O'Byrne goes on to provide a clear example of just such a performance, in his account of the work of an organization called the World Government of World Citizens (the name is admittedly misleading in the context of the distinction between 'world' and 'global' citizens made above, but this cannot be avoided) and the exploits of an individual named Garry Davis. In 1948 former United States fighter pilot Davis had renounced his US citizenship in a public display in Paris and declared himself a citizen of the world. He was by no means the first person to do so, but it is the direction his declaration subsequently took that makes him an interesting case study. Davis decided that declaring oneself to be a world citizen would not be enough – for such a declaration to be meaningful, one would have to truly understand what is meant by 'citizenship'. It is clearly a *political* term, an expression of empowerment. Citizens have power and are actively part of the political process. Thus, *global* citizenship must involve an active recognition of the dynamics of power, rather than just a casual statement of solidarity or empathy with humankind as had been done many times before. In 1953 Davis launched the World Government of World Citizens. His philosophy was strikingly simple – if citizenship is about empowerment, and government is the servant of the people, then *we are the government*, and all that was required was to declare it so. In the nuclear age, as has already been discussed, the 'social contracts' between individual citizens and their nation-state governments are revealed as impotent. What Davis was effectively saying was that the only way to deal with the problems we as citizens face in such an age is to declare oneself a global citizen, to empower oneself on the global stage, to bypass the fallacy of nationalism:

> You take the words 'world' and 'citizen' … together and say that's what you are … [and] you're giving yourself a conceptual power … [T]he word 'world' is a conceptual word and 'citizen' is a power word. So you are re-empowering yourself on both levels, putting together concept and percept in terms of the problems of today. You can't say, 'I am a Buddhist and therefore I am meeting the problems of today head on', because you're not, or 'I am an American …' What you are doing is taking the crystallizations of religion and nationalism and falling into their relativity … So you identify yourself as a world citizen … Identity, in political terms, is sovereignty, the exercise of inalienable rights. (Davis, cited in O'Byrne 2003: 150–1)

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His World Government of World Citizens was not, then, designed to be an NGO campaigning *for* a world government – far from it, in fact. It was designed to serve *as* the government of the people, a world government in itself, and thus certainly *not* non-governmental, because, as Davis has pointed out in his own writings on the subject, non-governmental equates to powerless. Global citizenship is then not just reflected in Davis's personal commitments, his opposition to the divisive nature of nationalism and his belief in the undeniability of 'one world'; it is also reflected in the organization's practices. For example, through its administrative arm, the World Service Authority, it distributes 'world passports'. If a passport is somehow symbolic of one's allegiance to and membership of a nation-state community, then a world passport becomes a natural extension of this, but it is more than symbolic – the vast majority of nation-state governments have at some point accepted this passport as legitimate for the purpose of permitting entry across their borders. Not only does this highlight some striking inconsistencies in respect of border controls, but it also allows the organization to help people exercise what the organization perceives as being their fundamental right to cross borders, so it has a deeply pragmatic significance which is only made possible because of the globalized conditions of the second half of the twentieth century.

This, of course, is quite a distinctive example, and deliberately so. But the practice of global citizenship as the exhibiting of globality in an empowering way is by no means restricted to such cases. One might argue that environmentalism represents the most obvious form of this globality in practice. The modern environmental movement is, after all, operating by its very definition with the globe in mind. It is both a response and a contribution to globalization. Centuries of Enlightenment rationality and the scientific pursuit of 'progress' have resulted in what the sociologist Ulrich Beck refers to as 'manufactured risk', which is inherently global in its reach. Science and nature have become politicized as these consequences become apparent to us all. As Beck says, 'damage to and destruction of nature no longer occur outside our personal experience… instead they strike more and more clearly our eyes, ears and noses' (Beck 1992: 55). Furthermore, 'environmental problems are not the problems of our surroundings, but… are thoroughly social problems, problems of people, their history, their relation to the world and reality, their social cultural and political situations' (*ibid.*: 81).

According to Beck, the proliferation of risk has generated a feeling of perpetual uncertainty and insecurity among individuals across the globe, as well as an increasing distrust of scientific knowledge. Moreover, the perceived inability for individual nation-states to effectively deal with an increasingly global political field created a 'democratic deficit', leaving a political vacuum for alternative political cultures to prosper. For many social and political scientists, 'new social movements' have represented its special and essential product. Borne out of the 'expectations explosion' of the 1960s and 1970s,

new social movements are distinct from political parties in that they speak of personal autonomy and identity politics rather than an instrumental subscription to totalizing, old-fashioned discourses. Whereas traditional political identities tend to be dictated by class or region, the politics of new social movements are universal in both their subject and relevance. Their capacity to attract supporters, however, comes from the effects of 'disembedding' and 'time-space distanciation' that Giddens (1990) speaks of. This reordering of space and time has a profound effect on individuals, freeing us of our short-sightedness, stunted knowledge and self-absorption, and allowing us to see, understand and experience the global level more clearly and directly than ever before.

Embodying this move towards global political consciousness are a number of international non-government organizations (INGOs) which include the World Wildlife Fund, Greenpeace International and Friends of the Earth. These organizations campaign for a range of environmental issues both on a local and global level and are made up of multiple national affiliate groups. Overall, environmental politics has grown rapidly since the 1960s, with the combined memberships of the 12 leading organizations in the US rising from an estimated 4 million in 1981 to 11 million by 1990 as the green movement gathered momentum (Bramble and Porter 1992: 317). As of 2003, there were some 1,781 INGOs with specifically global political goals.

Despite the success of the green movement, *direct* political victories of new social movements have been few and far between, with traditional political parties continuing to dominate most democratic elections. A more fitting legacy, at least, has been the generalized impact of helping to stimulate a greater global consciousness, so that individuals have been more pressed to 'think globally' over issues such as recycling and the purchase of environmentally friendly goods. The extent to which this emerging global consciousness represents an evolutionary process of *globalization*, however, is debatable, and subsequent chapters will shed different light on many of the processes, actors and relationships involved.

1.6 Global events, global experiences

Having identified the existence of a global level via interlinking processes of modernization, as well as ample opportunity for the expression of a global citizenship via shared political interests, we can now turn to *how* one might access and experience globalization. Alongside education, a key part of this process is the role of the media. Whereas for most people the ability to travel and experience the world is both expensive and time-consuming, the media effectively offers us a round-the-world ticket for free: via books, magazines, television and the internet, the media provides us with the knowledge from which we derive most of our understanding and 'mediated experience' of the world.

Of course, the rise of media and the printed word has contributed to the establishment of a consciousness beyond immediate physical territories for thousands of years. Globalization, however, has radicalized this process to the extent that distinctions of space and time are no longer as easy to denote. Indeed, through satellite television and the internet, individuals and groups are now increasingly adept at accessing and interpreting information from a wide range of sources, both historically (such as the reproduction and broadcast of past events) and spatially (through vivid and detailed photographic reproductions of different cities and landscapes). Such is the power of media technologies that individuals across the world are now able to simultaneously experience events beyond the physical reach of the vast majority. In essence, globalization has allowed for the possibility of *global events* – events that are intrinsically global in their reach, audience and impact.

As Thompson (1995) reminds us, this is not entirely new. Media, from the printed word to the internet, has been used in order to give symbolic forms a degree of fixation, so that they can be stored and reproduced for a wider audience. But the intensification of media production in the past 60 years has transformed how we *experience* culture, which brings with it profoundly *social* consequences. Marshall McLuhan, already introduced as the man who coined the term 'global village', understood this well: 'Today, after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned' (McLuhan 1964: 11).

Since the 1960s, the opening of this 'global village' has established broader and more structural social consequences, both in how knowledge is accessed and identity is constructed. First, media reproduction plays a significant role in rationalizing and rearticulating history. Photographs, literature and television dominate our experience of and engagement with certain places, people and moments in history. This creates a 'mediated worldliness', as media shape our sense of place in the world, and what lies beyond the sphere of our personal experience. For example, world-famous landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower, the Pompeii ruins, the Empire State Building and the Taj Mahal gain a 'mediated familiarity', as they have been photographed, filmed and reported on from a multitude of different media outlets over history. The accessibility of images portraying these landmarks can give us a sense of knowledge and interest, but also stimulate inspiration, empathy and identity. As a result, we might feel that we know, understand and have feelings about a place without having ever physically been there ourselves.

So, as we can see, the globalization of media raises and extends our understanding of society, as the consumption of symbolic forms change the way we view ourselves, and our understanding of the rest of the world. But media can also be *interactive*, in that it can alter distinctions between 'public' and 'private'. As a result, everyday private actions such as shopping or sitting in the park become public if they are filmed and then broadcast as part of a news story. Moreover, private conversations and recordings might undergo a

similar transformation if they are deemed to be in the 'public interest'. Once a media form becomes public, it can be consumed by a plurality of recipients, using different points of receipt, and at different times in history. This invites a potentially infinite number of understandings, interpretations and opinions, and thus can be difficult to control. Through the mediation via images on television, of, say, Aboriginal peoples living in Australia, its audience gains an insight into other people's lives, and how they differ from our own. This, too, can be politicized, as we develop personal affinities and concerns for other individuals and populations that we may never meet. On the other hand, the mediation of violent and threatening action may extend our own quasi-experiences, and provoke strong political interests, be they human rights or protectionism.

There is, of course, a mediator involved in this process, which raises the important question of how and to what extent our interpretation of particular scenes and events are being shaped by its presentation. The potentially infinite number of different and contrasting interpretations might be dangerous to those associated with the media form, and as a result control may be sought as to how they are presented. This becomes especially significant during media events that invite political and moral debate, such as acts of war or violence, global poverty and human rights abuses. Such events, presented globally and instantaneously via the media, give greater opportunity for a 'globalized empathy' and communitarian responsibility, for stimulating a shared sense of *humanity* which transcends ethnic and national boundaries.

Of course, acts of charity, philanthropy and benevolence have taken place for centuries, often associated with either religious duty or good moral citizenship. The opening up of these acts and organizations to globalization, however, was a more awkward process as, despite the beginning of a media-assisted global visibility, nation-states continued to limit financial aid and welfare to their own territories, or at least those belonging to international coalitions and governing bodies such as the World Bank and the United Nations. Under this model, charitable pledges were largely controlled by governments, apparently reflecting the nationalistic and short-sighted interests of its citizens. By the latter twentieth century, however, awareness of international crises and political campaigns such as the civil rights movement, the Cold War and the campaign for nuclear disarmament, as well as the aforementioned rise in environmentalism, had signalled a political consciousness beginning to extend beyond national and local interests.

Yet crucial to achieving global empathy is the capacity to present events with a cognitive framework to aid the *understanding* of their importance and relevance, and also possibilities for responsive *action*. This is not an inevitable part of the package when news events are reported to a global audience. As Chouliaraki (2008) notes, global events that appear to be presented as 'adventure' are counterproductive to fostering global empathy as the singular and abstract placing of events (i.e., 'boat accident' in India, or 'biblical floods'

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in Bangladesh) via largely factual and context-free one-minute reports only succeeds in alienating viewers and blocking feelings of pity towards distant sufferers (*ibid*.: 375). In contrast, 'emergency' news stories, which produce a demand for action on the suffering, were more successful in eliciting concerted responses from its audience. These became more prominent in the 1960s through the news broadcasting of crises surrounding war, notably the proliferation of refugees in the aftermath of the Bangladesh Liberation War and the Vietnam War in the early 1970s, and provided individuals with readily available grounds for protest and activism.

For those more concerned by the humanitarian rather than political side of such international crises, the emergence and expansion of international social movement organizations and advocacy groups such as Amnesty International, Oxfam, UNICEF and Human Rights Watch provided a suitable outlet. These organizations were created in order to raise awareness over human rights issues with a view to pressurizing governments into providing more aid. As part of this process, these groups began to participate in fundraising benefits, with the intention of creating a media 'event' that could be reported prominently across the globe. Perhaps the first of this kind was the 'Concert for Bangladesh', organized by UNICEF and the former Beatle George Harrison, which took place in New York City in 1971. This was followed in 1982 by the Nuclear Disarmament Rally, where an estimated 750,000 people marched to Central Park, New York, to protest against nuclear weapons.

Yet perhaps the first truly global empathy event occurred shortly afterwards in response to the Ethiopian famine of 1984–5, in which over 1 million people died as a result of catastrophic harvests and a national government preoccupied by civil war. In the same year, a BBC news crew was the first to document the famine, with Michael Buerk describing 'a biblical famine in the twentieth century' and 'the closest thing to hell on Earth'. The report shocked Britain, motivating its citizens to bring world attention to the crisis in Ethiopia. In January 1985 the RAF carried out its first air-drops, delivering food to the starving people. Other countries including Germany, Poland, Canada, USA and the Soviet Union were also involved in the international response.

Yet the public response to the crisis continued to outweigh the actions of national governments, as organizations such as the Red Cross, Amnesty International and UNICEF had to buy grain on the open market in order to help those suffering. Among those who had been watching the BBC reports was the singer Bob Geldof, who responded by co-writing the hit single 'Do They Know It's Christmas' and organizing a simultaneous 'Live Aid' series of concerts in 1985. In total, the event was watched by an estimated 400 million viewers, across 60 countries, and raised over £150 million for famine relief. With the 'global level' now truly opened up, further globally broadcast concerts and telethons were set up, including recently Live 8 in 2005, the Concert for Diana in 2007 and the World Aids Day Concert in 2007.

Taking global interconnectedness further still, the 2004 Asian tsunami arguably represented the biggest and most collectively spontaneous act of global empathy event yet seen. Occurring during the Christmas period, the disaster was broadcast across the world, almost spontaneously provoking widespread donations and benefits. The *Guardian* newspaper reported on 6 January 2005 that 'a tsunami of human solidarity is sweeping across the surface of the globe in response to the physical tsunami that has ravaged the shores of the Indian Ocean', with private donations in Britain reaching about $90 million and worldwide public aid pledges surpassing $3 billion in barely a week. Overall, it was argued that the Asian tsunami had probably provoked 'the biggest humanitarian relief operation in history'.

However, the scale and depth of public engagement with the disaster brought with it several complications over the politics of global empathy. First, although charitable donors may have contributed on the assumption of a fully coherent level of global governance and regulation, the reality was far more complex. Like Live Aid before it, the lack of coordination of aid (with aid and donations being irregularly contributed and not always of practical use), as well as the sometimes inefficient or even nefarious states and leaders that received a high proportion of the funds, suggested that, in practice, the global level represented an ideal type to be bought into and taken advantage of. Taking a more Marxian perspective, one could argue that spontaneous acts of charity in the Western world satiate the desire to be recognized as a 'good moral global citizen', while at the same time indirectly benefiting from the structural power relations that allowed such disasters to either occur, or damage parts of the world to the extent that they did. Certainly, the sudden upsurge in global empathy hardly crystallized into any concrete condemnation of global social inequalities.

Second, many commentators claim excessive and competitive donor responses threaten less dramatic but equally important relief efforts elsewhere. Enriqueta Bond, president of the US Burroughs Wellcome Fund observed that, 'while everyone opens up their coffers for these disasters, the ongoing toll from malaria, AIDS and tuberculosis is much larger than these one-time events', and that 'we would do more good to invest in prevention and good public-health measures such as clean water' (quoted in Butler 2005). Tony Blair, then UK prime minister, also expressed concern that tsunami aid might detract from other areas of the world in need of relief, warning that Africa suffers 'the equivalent of a man-made, preventable tsunami every week' (*ibid.*). This leads to a third and final point that the conflicting interest groups, together with self-interested parties and the ecstatic media coverage of global disaster events had contributed to 'compassion fatigue'. This phrase was used in the media to describe the 'overexposure' of charitable causes directed at the general public throughout 2005, the tsunami of 2004 being soon followed by the series of Live 8 concerts to campaign for action against poverty, and another major natural disaster – Hurricane Katrina – which wrecked havoc upon the poorer territories of the United States in August 2005. If one could agree that the emergence of globalized empathy provided

key foundations for the creation of a global citizenship, one can nevertheless argue that there is still much to do in terms of building genuinely *global* interest groups to carry this forward.

As the previous case study illustrates, by providing individuals with images of, and information about, events that take place in locales beyond their own immediate physical territory, the media has the capacity to stimulate or intensify varieties of different opinions and even collective action. For 'distant sufferers' this may stimulate acts of empathy and compassion; for acts perceived to have a more immediate and direct impact, global events might instead stimulate feelings of personal fear, uncertainty and insecurity. This becomes especially sensitive when it comes to the media coverage of war: such is the persuasive power of media representation of enemies, allies, the innocent and the guilty, it has been often argued that modern day warfare now consists of a war on two fronts – the war as it is fought against the enemy and the war as it is portrayed and reported on television.

The visibility of war and conflict has been developing and expanding over a number of years. Whereas the immediacy and reach of media reportage in the First and Second world wars had been extremely limited, the advent of television during the 1950s consumer boom transformed how war and conflict was to be consumed. This effect manifested itself during the Vietnam War, where America's first major interventionist military campaign was given day-to-day coverage on television via on-the-spot news reporters broadcasting live to national and global audiences. This added significant visibility to the stages, methods and different protagonists of war: as Thompson notes,

> the vivid images of napalm attacks, wounded soldiers and civilians, screaming children and frightened refugees, as well as reports of US military setbacks and rising death tolls, fuelled the controversy in the United States concerning the legitimacy of the intervention and provided individuals with readily available grounds for protest. (Thompson 1995: 114–5)

By the first Gulf War in 1990, the American government took measures to limit negative news coverage, as access to the front line for journalists was strictly controlled by military authorities (*ibid*.: 115). Moreover, the war saw both sides making conscious efforts to use media coverage to its advantage and portraying positive images of success, reason and innocence in their campaigns. This strategic and creative use of media was picked up on by the French cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard (1995), who went as far as to assert provocatively that the Gulf War 'did not take place'. Although not denying that conflict or the deaths of innocent civilians occurred, his point was that the importance of portraying the war positively to a global audience overrode the actual events themselves. In other words, narratives were constructed by both sides to fit around the image of war, which did not necessarily correlate to reality. Baudrillard argues that the Western media helped to propagate the notion of an ongoing conflict by endlessly recycling images and scenes of war

to disguise the fact that very little action actually took place. By the end of the war, beyond the deaths of hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians, very little had changed – nobody won the war, nobody lost the war. The only victor, it seemed, was the television viewer.

Such practices in constructing global events were put into perspective on 11 September 2001, when the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were subjected to terrorist attacks. The attacks, almost immediately broadcast live across the world, arguably represented the most deliberate and strategic orchestration of a 'global event' that the world had yet witnessed. The planning was meticulous, from the two-year training for the terrorists to earn their pilots' licences, to the carefully sequenced nature of the attacks so that media coverage would be instantaneously broadcasted worldwide. Such was the scale and impact of the event that al-Qaeda did not even need to initially claim the event as its own – the goal of transforming global consciousness and provoking greater fear and uncertainty had truly been achieved.

For the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, 9/11 represented the 'symbolic end of the era of space', arguing that a terrorist assault on one of the best-known landmarks in one of the world's best-known cities live on television 'gave flesh to the heretofore abstract idea of…the wholeness of the globe' (Bauman 2002: 87). Like environmentalism, the emergence of global terrorism suggested that physical territories and national boundaries were no longer protective as attacks could take place anywhere, and at any time; this would be proved in subsequent attacks in Madrid, London, Bali and Istanbul. The ability to remain 'resourceful, distant and aloof' was compromised as Bauman notes how the events of 11 September 'made it obvious that no one…can any longer cut themselves off from the rest of the world' (*ibid*.: 88).

If 9/11 represented a defining moment of globalization in its ability to create 'global events', and as a consequence stimulate an increasing global 'commonality of fate', it perhaps also represented the model's first significant cracks. As Baudrillard wrote in his 2002 essay *The Spirit of Terrorism*, 9/11 was an intrinsically global event in that it did not simply represent a 'clash of civilizations or religions', or even a riposte to the 'spectre of America'. Rather, it represented 'triumphant globalization battling against itself' (Baudrillard 2002: 11); Baudrillard sees 9/11 as the high-water mark of globalization as a hitherto unassailable and evolutionary force. The idea of becoming 'one world', operating under a single consciousness and mode of exchange, has been unquestionably challenged and, with this 'global level' now established, the battle is over who, or what, defines globalization today.

1.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have sought to present a *strong* theory of globalization, not as some 'thing' in itself, or as a generic term appropriate for use in any scenario of global social change, but specifically as the process of becoming

global. Thus, globalization can occur at multiple levels. We can witness the globalization of a particular marketing strategy, whose target audience is nothing less than the world itself. We can acknowledge the globalization of individuals' self-identities and citizenships, indicators of which include the extent to which their political actions and orientations relate directly to the globe rather than through the level of the nation-state, which can of course take a 'soft' form (everyday environmentalism) or a 'hard' form (the case of Garry Davis being a good example). We have seen how identification with the world is heightened by particular 'global events', such as the Live Aid concert, the 2004 tsunami, or the terrible events of 11 September 2001, all of which serve to bring us closer to the 'one world' we all share. We have also seen how the *world itself can be globalized*, although, as Robertson insists, the outcome of such a process is far from clear.

The central factors in this discussion have been *globality* – the quality of being global, of engaging directly with the globe – and the physical *interconnectedness* of the world. When discussing globalization as defined in this chapter, whether at the very personal, micro-level, or at the level of the world itself, or indeed anywhere in-between, these factors come into play. Globality especially proves useful as an indicator of the extent of globalization, a measurable quality. Rather than seeing globalization as a single, almost unstoppable force, a 'thing', our definition of it allows for multiple globalizations to co-exist, and for different aspects of our lives to be relatively more or less 'globalized'. Those who think that we live in a global marketplace because of free trade might present the case for the economy to therefore be relatively globalized compared to, say, the political system, or culture; others may feel that increasing levels of globality have resulted in a considerable degree of cultural globalization while the economy, like the political system, remains heavily nation-state biased. These are all, effectively, judgement calls.

There are numerous criticisms of this approach, of course. Many would say, with good reason, that to treat globalization merely as an empty process which needs to be applied to something to have any meaning, is to ignore the power dimensions contained therein. Such critics may argue that it makes no sense to speak of 'cultural globalization' or the 'globalization of self-identities' in isolation from 'economic globalization', and that 'globalization' does represent a totalizing process which manifests itself in multiple forms. Thus, to understand its dynamics, we need to adopt a more critical perspective. We should ask, who is driving this process of globalization? What are its contours? How was it created? Who dominates? Who is accountable? Who can change it? Many who ask such questions suggest that this 'globalization' is better called by a different name, perhaps 'Westernization' or 'Americanization'. However, it is worth pointing out that the idea of globalization presented in this chapter is capable of accommodating such rival frameworks: 'Americanization', for example, can be treated as a recent phase in this long-term cultural evolutionary process (Maguire 1999; R. T. Robertson 2003).

Let us now move from globalization as a relatively apolitical process to this slightly more contestable terrain: to a series of far more ideologically driven interpretations of contemporary global change, many of which are often referred to as 'globalization' but which do not necessarily involve a process of becoming global. During the course of these subsequent chapters we shall be returning to a lot of what has been discussed already, and perhaps presenting it in a different light.

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