



# INTRODUCTION: PROSPECTS FOR A NEW SOCIOLOGY OF GLOBALIZATION

## INTRODUCTION

Over the last three decades, social scientists have taken the fact of globalization – the increasing interconnectedness of the world as a complex system – for granted. The processes of globalization, including its often negative consequences, have appeared to be inevitable and all-embracing. No society, however small and remote, could escape entanglement with such global cultural, political and economic processes. Any sociological analysis of a single society, region, city or village that did not take into account the global context was seen to be inadequate. Yet suddenly from September 2008 the unfolding of a global economic crisis that appeared to fan outwards from the problems in the American housing market to undermine the financial stability of whole societies such as Iceland brought into question many of our comfortable assumptions about the world and its economic foundations. There were rumours in the corridors of university social science faculties that the facts of globalization were perhaps not as secure as we had been led to believe. Why had economists in general failed to understand the fragility of the global financial system? Do we need as a result new perspectives on globalization? Will globalization as we know it come to an end? However, by the middle of 2009 the financial world appeared to have achieved some equilibrium and by September 2009 there were signs of a recovery in Europe and the United States which followed the recovery in Asia on the heels. A study commissioned by the United Nations (2009) revealed that there are deep and systemic problems with the global economy, the most important of which was social inequality. The Report recommended long-term solutions in addition to short-term stabilization measures. These questions about the economic character of globalization represent simply one

dimension of our approach to globalization which we consider from the perspective of the East and from the West. Although the financial crisis has already brought misery to many thousands of families in the developing world, we see new democratic opportunities within this crisis, but we also detect the need for some major rethinking of the actual nature of globalization.

In the wake of the global financial crisis of 2008 which developed into a global economic crisis in 2009 with a bleak prognosis for the future (World Bank, 2009; United Nations, 2009),<sup>1</sup> many writers are understandably blaming globalization for our economic difficulties. The extreme turbulence in the global economy and the snowballing of the crisis from one country to another have indeed raised questions about the sustainability of the world economic architecture. Is globalization – viewed as the unbridled free market at play – to be replaced by a return to managed or state-centred economic systems? While some commentators recommend protectionism as the most appropriate strategy to stabilize the global economy, other economists suggest a comprehensive rearrangement of the global economic system as the only long-term solution. A leading economist, Jagdish Baghwati (2007), was confident that further economic globalization will in fact be the cure, but the challenges that the world faces are largely rooted in the gap between economic and political institutions. While the world has in economic terms become sufficiently global to emerge as a loosely integrated global economic system, the global economy is not matched by the institutional development of a global polity. Inadequate and ineffective coordination between the global economy and regulatory institutions has given rise to the possibility of a deep and prolonged economic crisis extending into the future, despite President Obama's huge injection of funding into the American economy as a recovery strategy. Yet in both the diagnosis and the cure of the crisis, policy-makers, as well as large sections of the public, continue to equate globalization only with economic globalization. It is imperative that we broaden our perspective on globalization as a multi-dimensional process in which economic globalization is only one of the important factors.

Globalization, viewed as a macro-social process, inevitably gives rise to questions about its future. Do social processes come to an end, or do they change course according to newly emerging social and economic conditions? If we highlight the structural or systemic features of globalization alone, then the conclusion becomes inescapable. All systems – ecological and economic – are in a constant process of transformation and change. However, if globalization is seen as an all-encompassing social condition, the processes of globalization will continue to shape the lives of people in

the foreseeable future both at the level of everyday reality and at the level of social systems. The globalization process must change and adapt to newly emerging conditions if we are to plan more effectively for global pandemics, financial crises, economic inequality and imbalances in population movements through migration. As various writers in the last decade of the twentieth century celebrated the coming of the age of globalization, they also stressed the plurality of the processes of globalization, and hence it was important to speak in the plural of “globalizations”. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, other critics have started to talk about the possibility of some disengagement from globalization, referring to new concepts such as “assemblage” and “re-assemblage” to describe the possibilities of disconnecting and disaggregating the components of global systems. In addition, it is well known that the processes of globalization do not preclude certain parallel processes such as regionalization and that in fact the two are interrelated (Therborn and Khondker, 2006). Disengagement from globalization, entailing the temporary repositioning and redirecting of trade flows, is often an aspect of the trading strategies of nations and regions, but these processes should not be seen as incompatible with globalization. Although globalization cannot be seen as an example of Max Weber’s irreversible “iron cage”, it is perhaps better described in the words of Ernest Gellner as a “rubber cage”. While nation-states have some degree of flexibility in relation to globalization, they cannot enjoy complete independence from global constraints.

Will a new global catastrophe make people want to return to the secure boundaries of the nation-state? We are sceptical about the openness of social systems – at least in the medium term. While the idea of a “borderless world” has become somewhat tired as a result of excessive overuse, we see the erection of walls and fences separating borders between nations as evidence that the porosity of state boundaries should not be exaggerated. The world is only borderless for the privileged few, but for the great majority of humanity it is a tightly bordered and highly regulated world. We see as a consequence of such “gated communities”, “gated” or “walled” countries, the emergence of what Bryan Turner (2007) calls the “enclave society”, characterizing modernity in terms of immobility in opposition to the claims supporting ideas about global mobility and “flexible citizenship” (Ong, 1999). With the growth of widespread urban terrorism from New York to Mumbai, we believe that the need for securitization by modern states will limit the possibilities for human mobility and porous state borders. We follow Roland Robertson (2007) in believing that transparency and surveillance are simply the opposite sides of the same coin of this global condition. Given these assumptions about the emphasis on security as a priority concern of the modern state, we need to ask whether

some major catastrophe – environmental, political, or biological attack on a state or states – will bring an end to globalization as we know it. Such a catastrophe would not be confined to the developed world. Based on recent trends, most of the future pandemics of global scope would originate from the developing world.

The 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington and the fear of terrorism took a heavy toll on tourism and the travel industries but obviously did not halt global tourism. Soon after the attack, one commentator prematurely declared that globalization was over. Because of the physical impact on Wall Street in New York City, the financial market stalled temporarily but bounced back in full vigour in a matter of weeks. Yet 9/11 has become a template for understanding other acts of terrorism. The attacks in London in July 2005 were immediately labelled as the “7/7 terrorist attacks” and the Mumbai terrorist attacks on 26 November 2008 were equally quickly labelled as the “26/11” attack or “India’s 9/11”. The deeper processes of globalization did not rest for a moment as a result of such devastating attacks, despite the scale of the trauma, the collective sense of fear and the prospect of military conflict between India and Pakistan. The 9/11 attack itself could of course be seen as a global attack in its perceived causes, methods, and strategies as well as its consequences. Modern terrorism is a menace to the normal functioning of civil society, rather like “low intensity wars”, pestilence and pandemics, but the consequence so far has not been to halt or even necessarily to transform globalization. These disturbances are indeed the unpleasant underbelly of globalization that is often masked by the alluring world of global consumerism, tourism, popular culture and sport.

We are throughout this study struck by the deeply contradictory nature of globalization. In Chapter 4 we will argue that globalization points to the contradictory processes of wall removing and wall building. The modern world witnessed the dismantling of the Berlin Wall as part of the collapse of the Soviet system and at the same time there was the emergence a new ideological Berlin Wall – between the East and the West – as a negation of the historical transactions and exchanges between cultures and civilizations over the centuries. The international relations perspective of Samuel Huntington, who coined the phrase “the clash of civilizations” in which world-views, cultures and values remain incommensurable, has not been borne out either by recent history or by the opinion polls. A recent book based on Gallup surveys, where the authors analysed 50,000 face-to-face interviews in 40 Muslim countries, found that only 7 per cent justified the 9/11 terrorist attacks in terms of political reasons. The study also found that what Muslims most admired about the West was its technological progress and its democratic politics.

What both Muslims, and a large number of Americans, admired least about the West was its moral decay and the breakdown of traditional values (Esposito and Mogahed, 2008).

Although in everyday usage and in political rhetoric, as well as in some popular social science discussions, phrases such as “East versus West” and “the Christian world versus the Islamic world” are freely used, we argue that such simple binaries fail to capture the actual complexities of the contemporary world. One of the deeper consequences of globalization is in fact the obliteration of such differences. Although our study is called *Globalization East and West*, our main aim is to question such traditional geographical divisions. Contrary to other popular views, the world has not become flat; far from it. Globalization has rendered the world more complex and hence more difficult to understand, and therefore we need to abandon simple slogans about globalization such as “the world is flat”. In an interview on CNN’s chat show *Global Public Square* hosted by Fareed Zakaria and aired on 28 September 2008, the Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, not only referred to Adam Smith’s *The Causes of the Wealth of Nations* as a guide to economic development, but also alluded to the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* in order to buttress the importance of ethical considerations in a market-driven world. He stressed moral questions and raised issues relating to social equity and justice. Whether Marxist idealism can coexist with market-driven capitalism is an issue that only the future of China’s development can settle. In fact one could see the spread and survival of the socialist ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and their continuing hold on the global, as a concrete historical example of globalization. However, Wen identified Marcus Aurelius’s *Meditations* rather than Marx’s *Capital* as the principal inspiration for his moral and ethical position. Surprisingly, he did not quote from either Confucius or Mencius. In fact the Chinese leadership is slowly abandoning references to Marxist-Leninism and favouring a restoration of neo-Confucianism as a state ideology with its powerful emphasis on respect for order and social peace. It is far from self-evident that globalization will bring about the hegemony of neo-liberal ideas as the necessary underpinning of a market economy.

Another feature of globalization is that the leadership of global processes is constantly changing. Several writers have, for instance, commented on the shifting centres of global economic power. In the theories of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974), the core economies of the world system in the past were never permanent – their fates changed with historical circumstances. In the contemporary world, the economic powers of the twentieth century – North America, Europe and Japan as represented in the G7 and G8 (with Russia) – are increasingly being forced to take notice

of the emerging BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China). The rise of these new centres of economic power is illustrated by the fact that, of the 500 firms listed by the business magazine *Fortune*, 62 are from the BRIC countries (*The Economist*, 20 September 2008, p. 3). Some of these firms, such as Lenovo of China and Tata of India, have also displayed remarkable creativity and innovative styles.

## CAN SOCIOLOGY EXPLAIN GLOBALIZATION?

While books on globalization grow like conceptual mushrooms, the quality of theories of globalization is often poor, and research often scanty and inadequate. In fact, is there a distinctly *sociological* perspective on globalization? Our answer is affirmative. However, most sociological theory deals with micro–macro relations but typically within the nation-state, the region or the city. There seems to be some difficulty in thinking analytically about global processes, despite the encouragement and example of a minority of sociologists such as Roland Robertson. The main exceptions showing how we might develop genuinely sociological perspectives are probably George Ritzer on McDonaldization, Ulrich Beck on the risk society and cosmopolitanism, Anthony Giddens on dis-tantiation theory, and Manuel Castells on the network society. From each of these sociological viewpoints, they make important contributions to our understanding of some selective aspects of globalization but do not provide a complete or comprehensive picture. Castells’s work, however, makes significant strides in linking the role of communication in a networked society of capitalism and outlines several critical processes in which globalization can be challenged. Furthermore, he does not prematurely make a judgement about the outcome of globalization, because he sees the control and ownership of the global media as the outcome of endless struggles between various elites.

There is nevertheless a lot of theoretical speculation but little genuine research. For example John Urry (2000) talked about “sociology beyond societies”, but just how mobile are the majority of people? How many people globally at least make one international flight per year? How many have international holidays, own a holiday home, have a passport, migrate to secure a higher income, marry a foreign person, or send their children overseas for education? What little research we have suggests people have strong subjective ties to their local town, city or region and do not exhibit strong cosmopolitan values. This emphasis on locality in people’s lives was illustrated in *Globalization and Belonging* (Savage et al.,

2005). What are the implications of high mobility for elites? How does this impact on the concept of the self? Under what conditions could we anticipate the emergence of cosmopolitan identities? Do only cultural elites qualify for cosmopolitan status? What about the underclass of globe-trotting, undocumented, casual workers? Is there a cosmopolitanism from below as well as from above? Against the processes of geographical mobility, the crisis of terrorism and the emergence of new wars – which are also genuine examples of globalization – have produced a new emphasis on security, surveillance and the sovereignty of the state. Unfortunately, the outbreak of a pandemic, which many public health officials believe is inevitable, would certainly place significant limits on human mobility. The swine flu pandemic of 2009 may be less severe than originally predicted, but it provides a clear if chilling example of how rapidly such infections would spread from society to society.

One might argue that the scale of the issues relating to globalization appears to be too large to undertake adequate social science research. Hence, most global studies are in fact comparative and historical rather than global in orientation. Most social scientists appear to work happily with old methodologies of single-sited research. We need new methodologies, innovative theories and almost certainly revised epistemologies to do good research on globalization processes. We do not pretend to escape from this criticism and we do not have ready-made answers to these various questions. Multi-sited, comparative and collaborative research will address some of these issues. However, it is ironic that at a time when the frontiers of methodological nationalism need a certain erasure, some social scientists are bent on reverting to a methodological parochialism under the guise of promoting indigenous social science.

Most sociological theories of globalization, despite the call from C. Wright Mills and the example set by sociologists such as Immanuel Wallerstein and Charles Tilly, remain historically shallow. It is naïve to suggest, for example, that globalization started with the rise of the modern media or with the spread of American consumerism. These claims ignore the historical role of the missionary work of the world religions or the role of trade and merchant cultures since the fifteenth century or the global reach of ancient empires. Many sociologists continue to employ crude explanatory models that are typically based on some form of technological determinism such as the rise of the Internet. Understanding globalization almost certainly requires a high degree of interdisciplinarity, but sociologists too frequently fail to reach outside their own disciplinary assumptions. Unsurprisingly, much of the most interesting recent work has been undertaken by human or social geographers such as David Harvey. Creative reconfigurations of the sociological discipline would be

a timely step towards redesigning methods appropriate to understanding global processes.

Except perhaps in journalistic writings, little sociological attention is paid to Asian globalization or to the impact of Asian commodities and cultures on the modern shape of globalization. Much globalization theory is based on narrow Western assumptions, for example, that modernization and globalization inevitably produce secularization. In short, globalization is normally understood from the viewpoint of some Western issue, process or location. Little attention is paid to the impact of a Japanese aesthetic on car design or fashion or the impact of Korean film on global culture. These West-centric assumptions are still persistent despite the changing global circumstances that are consequences of the economic and political rise of China and India – two societies that account for one-third of the world's population.

## **TRACKING CHANGES IN THE FIELD OF GLOBALIZATION STUDIES**

### ***THE SPATIAL TURN***

Theories of globalization have been the dominant paradigm in sociology for at least two decades, but certain features of the globalization debate have been part of sociological discourse for much longer. In mainstream academic sociology, one of the earliest publications on the topic was W.E. Moore's (1966) "Global sociology: the world as a singular system". He argued that sociology was becoming a global science and that "the life of the individual anywhere is affected by events and processes everywhere" (Moore, 1966: 482). "Globalization" in this framework refers, then, to the process by which the "world becomes a single place" (Robertson, 1992), and hence the volume and depth of social interconnectedness are greatly increased. Globalization can also be seen as the compression of social space (Giddens, 1990). Giddens's definition of globalization was influenced by the so-called "spatial turn" which involved a revival of human geography which came to have a significant impact on the debate about globalization. In particular, there has been an important emphasis on the study of the global city. Globalization in this respect is treated as urban or city globalization in which a series of mega-cities (London, New York, Paris, Delhi, Tokyo and so on) became the principal sites of globalization – especially financial globalization. Cities such as London, Paris and Tokyo dominate the political and



economic life of their own societies, and as a result the chief political officers of such global cities (or “lord mayors”) are often dominant political figures within the national landscape. The linkages and flows between these mega-cities are thought to be more important than the linkages between states. In her major publication *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, Saskia Sassen (1991, 2001) has been concerned to illustrate the mobility of capital and people within the network of such sites. These cities pose interesting political issues with respect to the national sovereignty of their own societies.

### **ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL GLOBALIZATION**

While it is often difficult to measure or describe social and cultural globalization, economic globalization is often relatively visible, obvious and to some extent uncontested. What is frequently debated is the actual impact of neo-liberal globalization. What needs some attention, however, is the fact that neo-liberal globalization is not historically the only form of economic globalization. Social Keynesianism based on the economic ideas of J.M. Keynes, the Cambridge economist, had been a dominant but certainly contested orthodoxy in the period 1950–70. This strategy had emerged in the post-war period as a policy to improve the level of employment by directing state expenditure towards building infrastructure such as roads, railways and ports. Because Keynesianism involved major state intervention in the management and direction of the economy, it was often thought to be incompatible with liberal (and more recently neo-conservative) ideas. Towards the end of this period, economists and sociologists started to talk about the profit crisis of capitalism – falling profits, rising taxation, expanding state expenditure, declining investment, increasing strikes, high wages, and eventually stagflation. The state was now thought to be inimical to economic growth because it was assumed to impede private investment and to depress entrepreneurship. This produced new economic theories and strategies such as Reaganomics, Thatcherism and neo-liberalism, which promoted low personal taxation, rolling back the state, low corporate taxation, enterprise culture, consumer sovereignty, free trade, and the end of state subsidies. These strategies became global partly because the Cold War came to an end with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989–92. The collapse of communism revealed a number of societies suffering from corruption, low investment, industrial stagnation and inefficiency. With socialism in retreat, neo-liberal ideas became the dominant global orthodoxy and were often propagated by the Bretton Woods institutions as mantras for economic success. An efficient market became the main criterion of social development.

State socialism, despite its inefficiencies, had represented an alternative form of economic and political globalization. These communist social movements had not been given the adjective “International” for nothing. This history of global socialism (from Cuba to Vietnam and China) has been largely suppressed in the mainstream globalization literature which has concentrated on the period since the 1970s. Economic globalization has been largely seen as essentially liberal economic globalization, and hence anti-globalization movements have been largely against liberal capitalism, against free-trade orthodoxy, and against privatization and free markets. Of course, in the late twentieth century, some communist states began to liberalize their economies. In China, the Eleventh Congress of 1977, in the wake of the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, unveiled four modernization programs in four sectors – industry, agriculture, science and the military – to make China an industrial giant by the late 1980s. In modern-day Cuba and Vietnam there have been similar experiments to attract foreign capital, develop markets and diversify financial institutions such as banks.

The pros and cons of this economic debate about global capitalism are difficult to assess. What is clear is that this aspect of globalization has increased inequality both within and between societies. Liberal economic globalization has also had very negative effects on the environment, increasing political conflicts over basic resources. On the other hand, the old centralist, state-dominated programs do not appear to have worked either. Towards the end of its historical centrality, the Soviet Union became excessively corrupt and inefficient, developing an oversized and suffocating bureaucracy. The lack of political freedom, which was part of the trade-off for economic security, became unbearable in the face of ongoing economic deprivations. Bread-lines became a common sight in the Soviet Union of the 1980s. Chronic underemployment, underinvestment and industrial inefficiency and technological backwardness came to characterize these socialist societies. In addition, the powerful Soviet state had not solved its ethnic divisions and had brutally repressed its ethnic and religious minorities. With the re-establishment of the eastern Orthodox Church after the fall of communism, religious divisions and repression have resurfaced in recent years along with the growth of political authoritarianism. The collapse of the Soviet Union had been perceived by some commentators in the United States and Europe as the final victory of the liberal-democratic consensus. Francis Fukuyama’s “end of history” thesis gained widespread notoriety in which he claimed that the old struggle between liberalism and socialism was over, and hence history had come to a conclusion in which liberal ideas were finally triumphant. Thus the

continued unflagging and apparently unstoppable march of liberal capitalism and democracy was taken for granted.

The global economic crisis of 2008–9 was a rude awakening for these champions of unfettered market capitalism and has exposed hitherto hidden forms of corporate corruption and ineptitude. Bernie Madoff in the United States was sentenced to 150 years' imprisonment for his corrupt financial practices in June 2009. The crisis in the United States and other heartlands of liberal capitalism has had significantly negative effects as far afield as Singapore, China and Vietnam, and some countries such as Iceland are now bankrupt. These catastrophic developments are inevitably raising questions about market-driven strategies and the deregulation of financial services. These economic difficulties cannot be understood within an economic framework alone, because these economic problems have multiple causes. It is thus imperative to reconsider the non-economic bases of globalization.

### ***THE CULTURAL TURN***

In mainstream sociology, the most influential writer on the importance of religion (or more generally culture) in globalization has been Roland Robertson (1992), who has complained with some justification that social scientists had overstated the economic nature of globalization (free trade, neo-liberalism, financial deregulation, and integrated production and management systems), to the neglect of its social and cultural characteristics, especially its religious dimensions. Theories that emphasize the technological and economic causes of globalization (such as computerization of information and communication or economic and fiscal deregulation in the neo-liberal revolution of the 1970s) show little appreciation for long-term cultural, religious and social conditions. These theories of economic globalization tend to be somewhat simple versions of economic or technological determinism. Whereas Ulrich Beck (1992) and Anthony Giddens (1990) have approached globalization as an aspect of late modernity (and therefore as a feature of the risk society and reflexive modernization), Robertson has been concerned with long-term cultural developments. These include the unification of global time, the spread of the Gregorian calendar, the rise of world religions, the growth of human rights, values and institutions, and the globalization of sport. In short, we also need to attend to the various dimensions of globalization and their causal priority: such dimensions as the economic and technological (including global markets in goods, services and labour); the informational and cultural (such as global knowledge, religious

revival movements and radical fundamentalism); the legal and political (human rights, legal pluralism and legal regulation of trade), and the environmental, medical and health aspects (such as pollution, ageing populations, and the market in organs and epidemics). We can simplify this discussion by suggesting that globalization has four major dimensions: economic, cultural, technological and political. Any comprehensive analysis of the future of globalization would have to consider all four dimensions and their interaction.

In the 1960s Marshall McLuhan (1967) had introduced an influential vocabulary to describe the role of “the global village” in the analysis of culture and mass media in order to understand how the world was shrinking as a result of new technologies of communication. In more recent years, Castells’s research on information technology and its role in shaping the world has also made a significant contribution in understanding the media in the global world. Castells’s analyses touched on the globalization of information and knowledge. He also dwelt on the problems of democracy and information. The growing capacity of the Internet as knowledge provider marked a new chapter in the communication of ideas. For example, the digitalization of all library-based knowledge opens up new possibilities of a globalized knowledge society. At the same time, the issues of intellectual property rights become hugely complex. The impact of communications technology on work, as well as the growth of new types of consumerism and popular culture, are all areas of great importance in a globalized world.

The globalization literature grew apace in the 1970s and 1980s. Within the sociology of religion, religious revivalism or fundamentalism was increasingly seen as a global process (Beckford and Luckmann, 1989; Robertson, 1987a). By the 1990s globalization had been identified as the “central concept” of sociology (Robertson, 1990). Religious dimensions of globalization have, however, been somewhat neglected, and most explanations focus broadly on technological and economic causes (Beyer, 1994). For example, while Ulrich Beck (2000: 53) clearly recognizes the importance of cultural globalization and “ideoscapes”, his *What is Globalization?* contains no discussion of fundamentalism, Islamic radicalism, or religion in general.

Sociologists have, in addition, had little to say about military globalization or about warfare. The impact of war and militarism on the origins and development of globalization has thus been neglected (Black, 1998), and yet military conflict has played a crucial part, especially with the rise of world wars, in transforming the international order into a global system. In the globalization literature, there has developed an unfortunate gap between sociological and international relations theory.

Religion and military violence are therefore important but somewhat neglected causal aspects of globalization processes.

## **GLOBALIZATION AND ITS CRITICS**

Social sciences are known to be windows on the present. Some fields in social sciences are too engrossed with the present to take either the past or the future seriously. In this book, because we have tried to situate the forces and processes of globalization historically, it is also incumbent on us to attempt to predict the future of globalization processes. What is the future of globalization both as a phenomenon and as an intellectual framework? Does the historical process of globalization come to an end at some point in the future? What are the chances of the world retreating into autarchic nation-states? Or is the world moving into a post-globalization phase? What would the world look like in the post-globalization phase? What kind of intellectual tools should be brought to bear to understand such hypothetical processes?

As the chapters in this study try to show, globalization theories broadly deal with the state of the affairs of the world as a whole and seek to explain the functioning of the world and its future. There are several other intellectual traditions in social sciences that also aim to understand the same processes. In examining the future of globalization, we also consider those theories that compete with the globalization paradigm. In mainstream sociology, theories of multiple modernities may, for example, present an alternative to (monocausal) globalization theories. A number of writers on the Left have always been suspicious of globalization theories, accusing them of being simply an aspect of the neo-liberal project. Critical theory was more inclined to advance versions of the theory of imperialism or what we might call empire studies against orthodox assumptions about liberal globalism. Others have advanced versions of dependency and world-system theories, which they believe are more adequately grounded in modern political economic realities. Yet there are other writers who bring to the study of globalization a vision of an interdependent world by invoking the ideas of Gandhi and other visionaries who refused to abandon hope in human creativity and their passion for a better world.

Some of these competing theories have emerged out of anti-globalization protests or have even been proposed by the global institutions themselves. At the World Social Forum held in Mumbai in 2004 the popular slogan was: Is another world possible? The answer to this rhetorical question

was affirmative. Various writers have promoted the use of an alternative terminology such as “globalization with a human face” or “just globalization” or “ethical globalization”. Related expressions such as “fair trade alongside free trade”, or notions such as sustainable development, more inclusive development, and democratic governance have made a fruitful contribution to public discussions.

Globalization has certainly created its detractors. Now there are clearly pro-globalists and anti-globalists. These critiques of globalization have already formed the basis for a social movement against globalization in which the anti-global movement itself has become a global movement. From Porto Alegre to Mumbai, the movement has grown in strength. In subsequent chapters, we examine the origin and future of the anti-globalization movements in greater detail. Some of the critical views of globalization have been translated into ideas of action and protest, especially targeted at the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and related institutions. Organizations such as ATTACK, a French non-governmental organization (NGO), and similar organizations have emerged in mobilizing protests against rapacious economic globalization.

In two important books, *Empire* (2000) and *The Multitude* (2004), Michael Hardt, an American Left intellectual, and Antonio Negri, an Italian radical social activist and philosopher, have provided their critical assessment of the world. In the first book, they developed a theory of empire which is very different from the empires that were collections of subordinated states. In the modern empire, multinational corporations and other non-state organizations work together and often assume some kind of sovereignty. In *The Multitude* they argue that the grip of the empire cannot last for ever and that it is increasingly being challenged by the people from below with their own democratic aspirations. These masses – the multitude – seek true emancipation and can mobilize an enormous emancipatory power.

Here we raise two sets of questions. At the theoretical level what comes after globalization? Post-globalization, glocalization, or neo-globalization, or the world of new empires? At the empirical level we must deal with the question of the fate of the earth as an ecosystem, as a place where all can live in peace, minimally defined as the absence of war and violence and an end to hunger and social insecurities in an environment of freedom. The idea of development as freedom is a powerful one and a goal that all can pursue without allowing the issue of cultural relativism to stifle debate. A minimum set of welfare provisions such as food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless, and medical care for the sick must be made available and such aspirations can be satisfied within the resources of the world. Gandhi was surely right when he said that the earth has enough to meet everyone’s need but not everyone’s greed.

In the 1970s a number of writers studied the finiteness of the resources of the earth. Their views, represented in the Club of Rome reports, identified the limitations of the ecosystem. In order to save the earth, one has to limit consumption. On the theme of the survival of humanity, *North-South: A Program for Survival* (1980), also known as the Brandt Report, and the subsequent Earth Summit report, *Our Common Future* (1987), made valuable connections between environment and development issues. Not only was the idea of sustainable development promoted, but the report also underscored the ecological interdependence among nations.

The last decade of the twentieth century saw the failure of a social experiment that created the false impression and an equally ideologically charged belief that the market would solve all the problems of the world, provided the market was allowed to function without interruption, interference or distortions. Serious problems of inequality, social disorganization, violence and ecological decay marked the first decade of the twenty-first century, leading to a world-wide economic crisis.

The United Nations has taken bold, visionary and often effective measures towards dealing with global poverty and various life-threatening epidemics. In the Millennium Development Goals, the UN charted a plan of action to reduce the problems of hunger and gender inequities. Regrettably little progress has been made in exercising the collective will and taking concrete actions against war and global violence. However, the UN role is limited to dispatching blue-helmeted soldiers who under the auspices of the United Nations play the role of peace keepers but not peace makers.

It is now widely accepted that the global public must take a more active and collective role in stemming the tide of social dislocation and violence. The goals of a liveable-in and peaceful world are not only desirable but also achievable if the public or the people have the will to make the necessary changes. True empowerment will only come from such shared knowledge and real change can only come with collective action against pollution, sex tourism and poverty. We need new values and effective institutions to combat these shared problems, and in this volume we attempt to describe some of these values as a form of “cosmopolitan virtue” in which recognition and respect for others are key components.

As we write these lines in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the world is under the shadow of a growing economic crisis and is faced with mounting violence resulting from ethnic and religious intolerance. Terrorist attacks have grown out of local conditions, which have often been neglected by international agencies such as the UN, to spawn as global conditions. There is a need for renewal of certain basic, universal values such

as the right to life for all. Rights to life and dignity must be cornerstones for the creation of a peaceful and compassionate world. A peaceful world must be guided by human rights and a tolerance for diversity, creating institutions to provide collective security against vulnerability. The forces of globalization must be harnessed to build solidarity and peace rather than war and destruction. An important starting point, which can itself be seen as a consequence of globalization, is to recognize our mutual vulnerability in an interconnected and interdependent world. In a world of scarcity, failure to work towards collective solutions to global problems must inevitably lead to our mutual destruction.

This book will explore those themes in conjunction with the role of the global civil society and mobilization of people across cultures in charting a more comfortable future. Our expressed hope is that by reading this book, students and other readers will not only have a better understanding of the complexities – both conceptual and practical – of the world we live in but also be able to contribute to the peace that we need.

## NOTE

- 1 According to the World Bank (2009) press release, “Amidst global economic recession and financial-market fragility, net private capital inflows to developing countries fell to \$707 billion in 2008, a sharp drop from a peak of \$1.2 trillion in 2007. International capital flows are projected to fall further in 2009, to \$363 billion.” The UN (2009) revised its already pessimistic scenario published earlier in mid-2009, projecting that “the world economy is expected to shrink by 2.6 per cent in 2009, after an expansion of 2.1 per cent in 2008 and nearly 4 per cent per year during the period 2004–7”.